UNINTELLIGIBLE BODIES:
GENDER, TIME, AND THE POLITICAL IN THE PHILIPPINES

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Abstract

By what distribution of the sensible does a Kalinga woman revealing and squeezing her lactating breasts become an expression of rage and repudiation? What regimes of recognition are at work in the encounter between a Bontok woman elder who exposes a vengeful vulva, and the opponents she thus curses? How is the Muslim woman victim of electoral violence rendered incomprehensible because she cannot be situated in time? How can an interarticulated analysis of cinema and post/colonial regimes of pacification and policing counter such incomprehensibility? This dissertation addresses these questions by mobilizing embodiment as an image of thought as much as a category of analysis. I examine the corporealization and temporalization of the political through analyses of indigenous political subjectivity and necropower in the Philippines. My analysis of Bontok and Kalinga women’s opposition to extractive sovereign power, indigeneity and Philippine cultural governance, and gendered violence and trauma associated with mass killing in Ampatuan, Mindanao highlights how gendered bodies are rendered eligible or ineligible for political claim-making. I argue for an entangled analysis of Philippine politics and contemporaneity that is attentive to masculine crisis and seeks to disrupt the instrumentalization of Filipina femininity.
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Introduction

Western philosophy has betrayed the body; it has actively participated in the great process of metaphorization that has abandoned the body; and it has denied the body. The living body, being at once ‘subject’ and ‘object,’ cannot tolerate such conceptual division, and consequently philosophical concepts fall into the category of the "signs of non-body."

-- Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* ¹

…I want to argue that if we are to make broader social and political claims about rights of protection and entitlements to persistence and flourishing, we will first have to be supported by a new bodily ontology, one that implies the rethinking of precariousness, vulnerability, injurability, interdependency, exposure, bodily persistence, desire, work and the claims of language and social belonging… The "being" of the body to which this ontology refers is one that is always given over to others, to norms, to social and political organizations that have developed historically in order to maximize precariousness for some and minimize precariousness for others… The body is exposed to socially and politically articulated forces as well as to claims of sociality - including language, work, and desire - that make possible the body's persisting and flourishing. ...[I]t is the differential allocation of precarity that, in my view, forms the point of departure for both a rethinking of bodily ontology and for progressive or left politics in ways that continue to exceed and traverse the categories of identity.


I. Gender, time, and the political: two trajectories

What is the relation between the gendered body, time, and the political? It is clear there can be no general elaboration of this relation. Rather, the relationship between the three terms – gendered body, time, and the political – is contingent upon how each term is specified, the ways in which they are put into relation, and for what analytical purpose. For example, Achille Mbembe puts the gendered body, time, and the political into relation to theorize the postcolony. The postcolony is a concept that rejects the ordering logic of modernity by pluralizing the temporalities, rationalities, and political subjectivities of contemporary African societies. Julia Kristeva puts the gendered body, time, and the political into relation in order to theorize “women’s time.” “Women’s time” refers to the ways in which feminists mobilize to restore

women’s presence within linear, masculinist national history, but also to create woman-centered histories that organize events according to women’s reproductive rhythms and location in family genealogies. Drawing upon the thought of Mbembe and Kristeva, among others, my dissertation puts the gendered body, time, and the political into relation in order to theorize two divergent objects of analysis in the Philippines – *indigenous political subjectivity* and *necropower*. These two analytic trajectories structure the two sections of the dissertation.

The study I initially proposed was to be a kind of genealogy of indigenous subjection in the Philippines, as constituted primarily through law and policy. As I imagined it, this genealogy would demonstrate historic transformations and continuities in conceptions of nativeness instantiated in colonial forms of rule and post-independence techniques of governmentality, ranging from the U.S. creation of the Moro (or Muslim) Province in the southern Philippines in 1903, and the Mountain Province in the Cordillera region of northern Luzon in 1908, to contemporary indigenous rights regimes. But I was also interested in how ‘rights’ of citizenship or political community membership, resource access, and land tenure were elaborated in the customary law and traditional governance practices of Cordillera peoples in northern Luzon. As I was researching these, I began to encounter narratives of Cordillera peoples’ opposition to Martial Law-era mining and hydropower projects in the 1970s and 1980s, on the front end of neoliberalization in the Philippines.

During this period, Bontok and Kalinga villages in northern Luzon organized in unprecedented ways to oppose extractive development projects that would pollute their irrigation sources, require the inundation of their *ili*, or villages, and force their displacement and resettlement by the hundreds of thousands. Bontok and Kalinga villagers lobbied local and national officials. They launched petition and media campaigns. In direct confrontations – and
led by women – they tore down dam workers and soldiers’ campsites, threw their construction lumber into the Chico River, and created human barricades to prevent project workers from accessing their equipment. They also mobilized other, distinctively feminine modes of power.

In the literature documenting the Chico IV opposition, these gendered enactments have received little scholarly attention. I first learned of them from a fleeting, cryptic comment by Jill Cariño, former director of the Cordillera Women’s Education, Action, and Resource Center (CWEARC).

In a report about the Chico IV mobilization, Cariño writes that when Bontok and Kalinga villagers confronted dam workers and soldiers and dismantled their campsites, women “bared their breasts so that the soldiers could not touch them” (Cariño 2000:248).

What is most arresting about Cariño’s tiny phrase is everything it makes absent and potential – the absent contextualizing details, for example, or the absent explanation of the cause-effect relation that is simply asserted. I had not encountered indigenous women elsewhere using this particular tactic in mobilizing against expropriation of ancestral lands, though of course, there are many illustrations of women in different moments and circumstances corporealizing politics in similar ways. To my frustration, Cariño’s report provided no additional context about Bontok and Kalinga women’s act of “breast-baring,” and failed to address my many questions about its purported effectiveness. What were the conditions of its enactment? How did dam and mine workers and soldiers respond? What did this embodied mode of confrontation suggest

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3 Women have engaged in resonant forms of explicitly politicized bodily display in widely-divergent contexts. Such contexts range from late 19th-century Paris, where women participants removed their clothing in the uprising that culminated in the Paris Commune, to 1980s India, where women protested military violence by removing their clothes and picketing with signs that read “Indian Army Rape Me.” In the early 1990s, members of the Cameroonian women’s NGO TAMANJONG protested the military’s attempted seizure of an opposition presidential candidate by removing their clothes, kneeling down, and holding their breasts in confrontations with soldiers (Goheen 1996). And, in 2004, Code Pink activists in the United States protested the U.S. occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan by removing their shirts in street demonstrations.
about Bontok and Kalinga femininities, ethics of sexual difference, and political subjectivities? What accounted for its efficacy, if it was, indeed, effective? Intrigued and confounded by Bontok and Kalinga women elders’ mobilization of their bodies in these confrontations, my project shifted away from a juridical genealogy of indigeneity to an analysis of Bontok and Kalinga women’s corporealized political subjectivities.

While doing fieldwork in the Cordillera in 2009, I never imagined my project would take up questions related to contemporary extrajudicial killing in the Philippines, much less in Mindanao, although I had done previous research on the Muslim secessionist movement active there since 1972. Then, in November 2009, in Ampatuan, Maguindanao, 58 people were abducted and killed in what was popularly designated the Maguindanao or Ampatuan Massacre. This incident was mediated as an exceptional event due to the manner of its perpetration, the gender and occupation of the victims, and the extremely public way in which elected officials, military, and police were all implicated in its perpetration. I was haunted and undone by the misogynist forms of violence that were perpetrated in this event, and the ways these forms of violence were mediated. Thus emerged the dissertation’s second analytic trajectory, which attends to the dispositifs and gendered dimensions of Philippine necropower.4

Achille Mbembe theorizes necropower as “the power and capacity to dictate who may live and who must die.”5 As a mode of sovereign power, necropower’s “central project is not the struggle for autonomy but the generalized instrumentalization of human existence and the

4 M. Foucault and C. Gordon, Power/knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977 (Vintage, 1980), 194. “What I’m trying to pick out with this term is, firstly, a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions—in short, the said as much as the unsaid. Such are the elements of the apparatus. The apparatus itself is the system of relations that can be established between these elements.”

material destruction of human bodies and populations.” In the contemporary Philippines, this mode of sovereign power is not monopolized by clearly delimited state security apparatuses. Necropower is exercised by heads of local patronage networks, their private armies, mercenaries, and prominent figures in the formal and illegal economy – any of whom may also be employed or formerly employed as law enforcement or military, or members of civilian counterinsurgency militias. Contemporary Philippine necropolitics takes the form of electoral violence, violence that enforces law enforcement racketeering, salvaging (the spectacular display of tortured, executed bodies), or any combination of these.

I did not set out to research both these trajectories when I began my dissertation research. My analysis of indigenous political subjectivity and necropower in the Philippines emerged from an event-driven research method. How was my research driven by events? Rather than beginning with an argument for which I systematically sought to provide evidence or illustrations, or a concept or problem I sought to comprehensively elaborate, my research was animated largely by events about which I found myself unable to stop thinking. I couldn’t stop thinking about these events because, as I will explain in my discussion of the case studies, each offered a different shock to thought. Yet the prevailing rationalities, concepts, historiographies, and moralizations employed to analyze these events largely reproduced what was already ‘known’ – about the barbarism of Muslims; about noble indigenous subjects; and about why Philippine society is pathologically doomed to underdevelopment and political chaos. My analysis of the events I examine seeks to disrupt the dominant regimes of intelligibility required to reproduce the indigenous subject, electoral violence, and cinematic violence as familiar epistemic objects.

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II. Research questions

The puzzle that serves as the project’s primary provocation is, how can political subjectivity be understood as simultaneously corporealized, and temporalized? Further, in the polar configurations of power represented by (1) the gendered body’s mobilization as a mode of political subjectivity, and (2) the gendered body’s subjection to necropower, how does the gendered body – in particular, the peripheral feminine body – animate conceptions of political community? How does time figure in these conceptions? How does a gendered body’s comportment or condition render it eligible or ineligible for political claim-making? And how do concerns about temporality shape the frame of intelligibility through which a body is recognized as acting politically?

The gendered bodies that this dissertation takes up are what I refer to as peripheral bodies. These indigenous and Muslim bodies are bodies that have historically been relegated to the political, cultural, and economic – indeed, ‘civilizational’ – peripheries of Philippine society. As such, they serve as the constitutive other of the cultural dominant in the Philippines, and their peripheralization is a legacy of colonial and postcolonial governmentality. The Spanish colonial ethnoscape, for example, first demarcated populations into Christian and non-Christian. Cordillera peoples were designated tribus independientes and Muslims, Moros, in order to distinguish both from indios. Indios comprised those populations who, in William Henry Scott’s satire of the Spanish biopolitical imaginary, were “dark-skinned…, [wore] pants, attended mass, paid taxes, obeyed Spanish laws, and only went to war when [instructed to].”

7 Spanish colonial techniques of subjection were successful in establishing a paradigmatic distinction in modes of rule for indios and infieles, which designated both animists and Moros collectively. This

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7 Scott, Discovery of the Igorots, 3.
distinction was predicated on the *indio’s* ostensible capacity for submission, conversion, and
civilization, contrasted with the *infieles*’ unassimilable independence, recalcitrance to Christian
conversion, and warlike disposition.

Under U.S. colonial rule (1901-1946), this distinction was reproduced to consolidate
what Paul Kramer calls a “bifurcated racial state,” one that subjected Christianized and non-
Christianized populations to different forms of domination and entitlement. This biopolitical
bifurcation was racialized, but it was also *territorialized* – it involved the creation of special
provinces, a “Mountain Province” in Northern Luzon for Igorots, and a “Moro Province” in
Mindanao for Muslims. While much of the rest of the archipelago was participating in the
country’s first elections, at local levels, populations in Moro Province (Mindanao and Sulu) and
Mountain Province (the Cordilleras) were subject to direct U.S. rule until 1913, and thus no
elections were held, “as assimilation was predicted to be at least two generations away.”

However, this conjunction of the indigenous and Muslim as simultaneously excluded from the
cultural dominant, is not a facile conflation. Though the historic effects of peripheralization
remain strikingly similar – disproportionate poverty and lack of access to basic services;
disproportionate lack of educational and economic opportunity, disproportionate vulnerability to
land and resource theft and exploitation – indigenous and Muslim populations have been
historically peripheralized for different reasons, and in some different ways. For example, while
the Mountain Province was governed by the civilian U.S. Philippine Commission after 1913,
Moro Province remained under direct military control of the U.S. Army until 1914.

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8 Patricio N. Abinales and Donna J. Amoroso, *State and Society in the Philippines* (Rowman &
9 Paul A. Kramer, *The Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the
III. Theoretical interventions

Indigenous women's assertions of political autonomy and Muslim women’s subjection to gendered violence cannot be easily thrust into the same conceptual frame. To attend as fully as possible to the complexity and singularity of the events I examine, some dissonance in the modes of their analysis is necessary. I therefore do not rely on one conceptualization of gendered embodiment, temporality, or the political, but draw on a range of theory, methods, and archives to think the events and concepts I examine. I drew primarily upon the theoretical interventions of scholars in the fields of indigenous studies, feminist studies, politics and political philosophy, decolonial/postcolonial studies, anthropology, and cultural studies.

The ways in which Achille Mbembe puts the gendered body, time, and the political into relation to theorize the postcolony proved capacious for both trajectories of my project. The postcolony is Mbembe’s counter-concept to modernity, understood as a universal grammar whose condition of possibility is western rationalism.\(^{10}\) The postcolony opposes the twined social science teleologies of modernization and development, and Africanist social science discourses of Africa as lack, negation, and arbitrariness, the “absolute other” of western plenitude, history, and reason. In positing the multiplicity and entanglement of temporalities, rationalities, and subjectivities of the postcolony, Mbembe highlights “the peculiar ‘historicity’ of African societies, their own \textit{raison d’être} and their relation to solely themselves.”\(^{11}\) In concert with the work of Kristeva and Eric Alliez, Mbembe’s critique of the monotemporal modernization and development imaginaries, and his positing of temporal multiplicity as a feature of every age, are productive for theorizing Bontok and Kalinga women’s time in confrontation with capital times, indigenous times in confrontation with national times, Moro

\(^{10}\) Mbembe, \textit{On the Postcolony}, 9.

\(^{11}\) Ibid.
traditional time in confrontation with liberal secular time, and the blurred distinction between necropolitical and family time.

Mbembe is, in fact, primarily responsible for the framing of my two central research questions: What is the relation between the gendered body, time, and the political? And, how can political subjectivity be understood as simultaneously corporealized, and temporalized? Mbembe’s theorization of the postcolony was in part animated by his intuition that “there is a close relationship between subjectivity and temporality – that, in some way, one can envisage subjectivity itself as temporality…” (emphasis mine). 12 This intuition has also animated my messy contemplation of how proliferating temporalities and modes of thinking time might help to proliferate and render intelligible subjectivities – in particular, peripheral political subjectivities – in the postcolonial Philippines.

Mbembe’s analysis also foregrounds the gendered body by attending to the phallic forms of domination characteristic of colonial and postcolonial commandement, understood as “the inscription of…sovereignty in the structures of everyday life” and requiring, for example, the subjection of the gendered body to domestication, labor or pleasure maximization for others, or the ceremonial celebration of state power as fetish. 13 Mbembe highlights how the gendered body and its parts – mouth, belly, and phallus – serve as important images of power and resources for political culture and critique. 14 If the body is, for Mbembe, “the principal locale of the idioms and fantasies used in depicting power,” 15 during the colonial era and its aftermath,

Male domination derives in large measure from the power and the spectacle of the phallus – not so much from the threat to life during war as from the individual

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12 Ibid., 15.
13 Ibid., 28, 43, 46, et al. See in particular Chapter 1, “Of Commandement.”
14 Ibid., 107.
15 Ibid.
male's ability to demonstrate his virility at the expense of a woman and to obtain its validation from the subjugated woman herself.\textsuperscript{16}

This analysis, along with that of Jean Franco, Veena Das, Jill Bennett, Urvashi Butalia, Eva-Lotta Hedman, John Sidel, Neferti Tadiar, Judith Butler, Adriana Cavarero, Sarah Deer, and Gayatri Spivak, helps to frame the gendered forms of violence to which peripheral feminine bodies in the Philippines are subjected, the ways in which these violated bodies are mobilized in the conceptualization of political and national community, and the Bontok and Kalinga ethico-visual regimes which render such phallic forms of domination unintelligible.\textsuperscript{17}

In order to examine Bontok and Kalinga women’s corporealized political subjectivities, the work of Aileen Moreton-Robinson and Elizabeth Povinelli, among others, enabled me to query and extend the concept of indigenous embodied sovereignty, recoded as geontological enfleshment, which I theorize as the ontopolitical assertion of authority and ownership of places


constituted in geontological relation with ancestral and other beings. Geontological enfleshment is a temporal multiplicity in that it brings multiple generations, forms of life and authority, and histories into relation. This modality of power repudiates extractive sovereignty as postcolonial governmentality, and enables a rejection of the grammar of sovereignty and the coherence of the state as a totalized or unitary formation. This rejection opens up an analysis of heterogenous forms of sovereign power, as well as the possibilities of indigenous corporeal politics to intervene in, and disrupt, these other modalities of power.

Beyond the gendered body’s subjection to power, or mobilization for political critique, however, the body becomes, for Mbembe, a locus for thinking and experiencing the ‘emerging time’ distinctive to the postcolony. The postcolony, as a temporality, is theorized as plural and multi-directional – “neither linear time nor sequential time, but an interlocking of presents, pasts, and futures” capable of reversal, ebbs and flows, sharp breaks, volatility, disturbances, and the unforeseen. However, for Mbembe, “what distinguishes the contemporary African experience is that this emerging time is appearing in a context – today – in which the future horizon is apparently closed, while the horizon of the past has apparently receded.” Mbembe argues that this understanding of emerging time as a temporality seemingly closed off from both past and future is, in part, what imbues the present with a particular urgency.

Fundamentally, this emerging time of African contemporaneity is “lived and espoused” by an embodied African subject. This subject is not only a subject of perception and consciousness, but also “a subject of experience and a validating subject… to the extent that

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20 Ibid., 17.
his/her experience of ‘living in the concrete world’ involves, and is evaluated by, his/her eyes, ears, mouth – in short, his/her flesh, his/her body.”21 This living and espousing of contemporaneity is, to borrow a phrase from Elizabeth Povinelli, enfleshed – the enfleshed evaluation and validation of lived experience, an embodied rationality and engagement with the world.22

This notion of enfleshed thought and time bears a relation to what Vivian Sobchak, in ‘feminizing’ phenomenological accounts of the body derived from Merleau-Ponty, refers to as embodiment. For Sobchak, embodiment is a “radically material condition of human being that necessarily entails both the body and consciousness, objectivity and subjectivity, in an irreducible ensemble. Thus we matter and we mean through processes and logics of sense-making that owe as much to our carnal existence as they do to our conscious thought.”23 Elizabeth Grosz advances a similar position in advocating for a “corporealized feminism.” Her image for the irreducible ensemble of carnality and consciousness is the Mobius strip, a twisting figure without definable interior or exterior. For Grosz, this figure illustrates the “torsion…, passage, or uncontrollable drift” of the putatively psychic interior and corporeal exterior common in dualistic feminist and masculinist theorizations of subjectivity.24 Along with Grosz, Judith Butler, Diana Coole, Hannah Pitkin, Genevieve Lloyd, Christine Di Stefano, and Kathy Ferguson, among others, have observed how mind, psyche, interiority, consciousness, and reason are rendered masculine attributes and capacities and occupy privileged positions in masculinist

21 Ibid.
22 Povinelli, The Empire of Love, 3, 36, 45, et al.
24 Elizabeth Grosz, Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism (Indiana University Press, 1994), xii.
philosophical and psychoanalytic accounts of subjectivity and sexual difference. Grosz, like Butler, also rejects the body’s abjection, naturalization, or pregivenness in the theorization of feminist projects, a disavowal that subordinates the body’s materiality to psychic animations, a constant displacement of the surface for depth, exterior for interior. Grosz’s project is to undermine and invert this dualism, by recentering the body in feminist theorizations of subjectivity. For Grosz,

Bodies have all the explanatory power of minds. Indeed, for feminist purposes the focus on bodies, bodies in their' concrete specificities, has the added bonus of inevitably raising the question of sexual difference in a way that mind does not. Questions of sexual specificity, questions about which kinds of bodies, what their differences are, and what their products and consequences might be, can be directly raised in ways that may more readily demonstrate, problematize, and transform women's social subordination to men.

These theorizations by Sobchak and Grosz, among others, enable us to corporealize feminism by corporealizing women’s subjectivity, thus reclaiming – rather than effacing, as liberalism requires – the specificity of the feminine body as a site for political agency and critique. This analysis is central to my examination of Bontok and Kalinga women’s corporealized curse, traumatized national and Muslim political communities, and the juridical illegibility of the raped, genitally-mutilated, murdered Muslim victim of electoral violence. Further, the theorization of enfleshed thought, as suggested by these thinkers and elaborated more fully in the Deleuzian concept of the body without organs, enables analysis of the body not merely as political resource

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or site of subjection but as an image of thought. This analysis serves as launching point for my speculations on vulval visuality.

IV. Structure and methods of the dissertation

The affection-image…can bring us to the direct experience of time through the body.
-- Laura Marks, *The Skin of the Film* 27

The BwO is about making conceptual operations physical ones, about the physicality of thought.
- Eric Alliez, “The BwO Condition or, The Politics of Sensation” 28

*Part I: Indigenous Political Subjectivity*

Part I begins with a prelude chapter introducing questions that constitute the poorly-defined terrain of indigenous politics in the Philippines: What does it mean to be indigenous in the postcolonial Philippines? What type of unstable, ambivalent, moralized identity does indigeneity mark? How is the instability, ambivalence, and moralizing associated with indigenous identity in the Philippines temporally construed? And how is indigenous identity mobilized to address postcolonial anxieties regarding national identity?

I approach these questions by examining the discourse of indigenous peoples and the concept of indigeneity in the Philippines, drawing heavily upon the analyses of Philip Deloria, Jodi Byrd, and Sharon Delmundo. 29 I then analyze how indigeneity is mobilized in narratives of national liberation, and how indigenous subjects are ‘temporally policed’ through contemporary

Philippine cultural governance. Specifically, I discuss the National Living Treasure Award (Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan), given annually to “folk and traditional artists [who] reflect the diverse cultural traditions that transcend their beginnings to become part of [the] national character, and provide Filipinos with a vision of themselves and their nation” (Philippine National Commission on Culture and the Arts). I map the anxious relation of the National Living Treasure to its complement, the National Living Artist, who receives “the highest national recognition given for significant contributions to the development of Philippine arts; namely, Music, Dance, Theater, Visual Arts, Literature, Film, Broadcast Arts, and Architecture.” I argue that the uneasy but necessary disjunction of “national artist” and “national living treasure” performs the schizoid desire for recognized entry into modern liberal statehood, and for a living, precolonial national subject whose practices authenticate decolonization and an unconquerable, uncolonized life world. As a practice of cultural governance, this celebration of the indigenous subject’s symbolic role in the project of national culture works in tandem with techniques of indigenous dispossession, such as extractive sovereign power, to put under erasure indigenous political claims. This prelude helps to set up my more focused discussion of Bontok and Kalinga women’s political subjectivity.

Chapter Two, “Contextualizing the Ethico-Visual Regime of Lusay, Enlafos, Kulap, or the Vulval Curse,” foregrounds indigenous political subjectivity and political claim-making, as well as embodiment and temporality. Here I establish some historical and ethnographic context regarding the Cordillera, the Bontok, and the Kalinga. I begin by discussing the Spanish and U.S. colonial presence in Bontok and Kalinga. I then discuss Bontok and Kalinga customary law regarding land and natural resource use, and how this differs from the private property regimes established under colonization. I also highlight the ways in which Bontok and Kalinga
dispossession has intensified in the post-independence period. Further, I provide important historical, empirical background regarding Bontok and Kalinga opposition to the hydropower project known as Chico IV, as well as to commercial mining projects, in the 1970s and ‘80s. The chapter concludes with a summary of the literature regarding Bontok and Kalinga gendering. Since there is so little research regarding gendering in Bontok, it will appear that I rely disproportionately on too few sources. Since there is almost no research at all regarding gendering in Kalinga, it will appear that I simply failed to conduct a literature review. Neither assessment is accurate. I saw no way around this lack of primary research other than to conduct it myself. While this is certainly a prospect for future research, it was not an inquiry I could pursue with this project.

The peculiar ethnography that comprises Chapters Three and Four – “The Ethico-Visual Regime of Lusay, Enlafos, Kulap, or the Vulval Curse,” Parts I and II, respectively – is an ethnography of Bontok and Kalinga women’s exposure of sexed body parts in confrontations with extractive sovereign power in the 1970s and ‘80s. This ethnography is peculiar in that its focus is not a people, a place, an institution, or a clearly-delineated social practice. When I set out to do field research in the Cordillera, it was not in order to produce an ethnography of the Bontok or Kalinga, or of Bontok and Kalinga women, or of Bontok and Kalinga resistance to development or globalization. My ethnography does not track a social phenomenon as it changes over time, nor does it provide a portrait of said phenomenon in a given historical moment. Neither of these approaches were possible options for my research, simply because actual primary data regarding my topic was so sparse. I had set out to create an ethnography of Bontok and Kalinga women’s mobilization of their bodies in confrontations with mine and dam project workers during Martial Law. These confrontations occurred some 30-odd years ago.
While conducting my fieldwork, it eventually became apparent that my primary challenge was the lack of an archive.

The corporealized forms of feminine confrontation I discuss in Chapters Three and Four are not well-documented in any existing literature, academic, activist, or popular. Despite exhaustive literature searches of Cordillera Studies collections and related materials at the University of Hawai‘i-Manoa (Honolulu), the University of Philippines-Baguio (Baguio City), St. Louis University (Baguio City), the University of the Philippines-Diliman (Manila), Ateneo de Manila University (Manila), the Philippine Social Sciences Research Council (Manila), and the Baguio Midland Courier (Baguio City), I found no published scholarly or media accounts documenting Bontok and Kalinga women’s exposure of sexed body parts in confrontations with hydropower or mine workers in the 1970s and ‘80s. Given that the Philippines was under Martial Law during this period, and news outlets were heavily censored, this may not be too surprising, though of course I found the situation frustrating. While I did find a handful of media reports from the late 1980s to late 2000s that make passing reference to Bontok and Kalinga women’s tactic in the 1970s and ‘80s (and the historical reference – “in the 1970s and ‘80s” – is consistently this vague), these articles provide no substantial data. I had better luck in the libraries of Baguio City-based Cordillera NGOs and POs such as the Cordillera Women’s Education, Action, and Research Center (CWEARC), the Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA), and TebTebba Foundation. In the activist literature, I found three similarly passing references – and by references, I literally mean references one or two lines long – to the same three events of Bontok and Kalinga women’s ‘disrobing’ or ‘breast-baring’ in the opposition to hydropower and
mining in the 1970s and ‘80s.\textsuperscript{30} While these also provided no substantial empirical or historical
treatment of Bontok and Kalinga women’s tactic, I found one CWEARC newsletter article that
did offer some baseline data regarding the tactic’s deployment in the Martial Law period I was
researching. Though it was written more than a decade after the actual events had occurred, it
contained details derived from interviews, such as dates, locations, and incidents, details that I
then attempted to verify, with mixed success.\textsuperscript{31}

After seven months of archival research in Baguio City and Manila, during which time I
was also conducting interviews, it became apparent that published literature would not be a
significant source of data for my project. That said, it also became apparent that while there was
no real published archive of Bontok and Kalinga women’s corporealized confrontation tactic
under Martial Law, there did exist references in the relevant published ethnographic and oral
literature that described resonant enactments. In these enactments, Bontok and Kalinga women
exposed sexed body parts under conditions of confrontation; however, these events occurred
decades before the events I sought to document. Within the academic literature, I found three
accounts from the 1930s of women’s embodied social practice pertaining to the Bontok, and one
account pertaining to the Kalinga in the post-WWII period, from a study published in 1970.

\textsuperscript{30} Bernice Aquino-See, \textit{Organizing Indigenous Women in the Cordillera}, Chaneg (Manila:
Cordillera Women’s Education and Resource Center, 1989); Jill Carino, “The Situation of
Women in the Cordillera from the Perspective of the Militant Women’s Movement in the
Cordillera,” in \textit{Towards Understanding Peoples of the Cordillera: A Review of Research on
History, Governance, Resources, Institutions, and Living Traditions}, vol. Vol. 2, 3 vols. (Baguio
City, Philippines: Cordillera Studies Center, University of the Philippines, 2001), 236–249;
Unpublished, “Indigenous Women in the Cordillera: Asserting Their Right to Their Territory and
Resources, Defending Their Dignity, and Standing up Against Capitalist Aggression and State
Terrorism” (INNABUYOG: Regional alliance of women’s organizations in the Cordillera, April
26, 2005); Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, \textit{The Cordillera Women in the Struggle for Self-Determination},
Chaneg (Baguio City: Cordillera Women’s Education and Resource Center, 1994).
\textsuperscript{31} Tauli-Corpuz, \textit{The Cordillera Women in the Struggle for Self-Determination}. 
To my knowledge, the Bontok accounts are the only ones published of Bontok women’s corporealized confrontation against foreign miners that are not written by contemporary activists. One appears in Howard Fry’s *A History of the Mountain Province* (2006). Fry’s mediation cites the other two accounts as primary sources. These are a *Manila Bulletin* article dated April 2, 1937, entitled “Igorots Make ‘Last Stand’ on Mining Claims,” and a *Philippine Graphic* article dated April 8, 1937, entitled “Treat Igorots with Tact, Says Quirino.” I discuss these accounts in Chapter Four.

The significance of Bontok and Kalinga women’s embodied enactments, however, cannot be adequately indicated by appearances in publications. Every one of the 50-odd Cordillera activists, cultural workers, scholars, elected officials, and community members whom I interviewed in Bontoc, Kalinga, and Baguio City was, to some extent, familiar with this feminine mode of confrontation. Incidents of its occurrence have been represented in *Dumaloy Ang Ilog Chico* (*And So the Chico River Flows*), a children’s book published in 1995 by GABRIELA (the largest coalition of women’s groups in the Philippines). The exhibition of sexed body parts by Bontok and Kalinga women is also memorialized in a 1988 Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA) production entitled *Macli-ing Dulag*, which deals with the movement opposing the proposed Chico IV hydropower project in Kalinga and Bontok in the 1970s and ‘80s, and the 1982 assassination of Kalinga opposition leader Macli-ing Dulag. I found that though the significance and details of incidents of women’s bodily exposure were inconsistently narrated, most explanations of the tactic were unequivocally celebratory.

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32 On several occasions, after I introduced myself as a researcher of women’s involvement in the anti-Chico IV protests, research participants immediately asked if I knew about Bontok and Kalinga women’s corporeal protest tactic. I was struck by this pre-emptive mention of the event that was a primary subject of my field research, prior to my asking about it directly. I interpreted the immediacy of the linkage ‘women - Chico Dam opposition – *lusay/enlafos*’ as an indicator that, at least for some, this protest tactic is the exemplar of women’s anti-Chico IV organizing.
The data contained in Chapters Three and Four was gathered during 12 months of field research, six as a Fulbright grantee. I was based in Baguio City, Benguet, for most of my grant period, but traveled to various villages in Bontok and Kalinga for a total of nearly four months. In Baguio City, I interviewed more than twenty people, including cultural workers, scholars, journalists, and staff members of the Cordillera People’s Alliance (CPA), the Cordillera Women’s Education, Action, and Research Center (CWEARC), Innabuyog, and TebTebba. All of these NGOs except for TebTebba are formally aligned with the National Democratic Front (NDF), the ‘legal left’ formation of the Maoist Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its New Peoples’ Army (NPA), which has been engaged in guerrilla war to overthrow the Philippine state since 1969. My friends at CWEARC, Innabuyog, and CPA, along with scholars at UP-Baguio, connected me to a wide range of research participants in Baguio, Bontok, and Kalinga, which I extended using the snowball method. All told, I conducted more than sixty individual and group interviews during my field research period. I would have spent more time in Bontok and Kalinga had it not been for the exceptional severity of the 2009 typhoon season.

While in Bontok I interviewed twenty people, including scholars, indigenous rights advocates, peace pact holders, council of elders members, current and former elected officials, Bontok legal advocates, founders of the Bontoc Women’s Brigade (a local women’s community policing organization) and Bontok women involved in more recent protests (in the 2000s) against extractive development projects. Two Bontok women elders gave me a tour of the ato, or ceremonial public spaces, of Bontoc ili. Interviews were conducted in Bontoc ili, Bontoc poblacion, Tukukan ili, and Betwagan ili in the municipality of Sadanga. While in Kalinga I traveled to the villages of Bugnay, Tinglayan, Buscalan, Sumadel, Lubuagan, Duppag, and the provincial capital of Tabuk. I interviewed more than thirty people, including barangay captains,
municipal and provincial officials, peace pact holders, council of elders members, cultural workers, educators, community members, and participants in the anti-Chico Dam opposition during the 1970s and 1980s. I also interviewed scholars at St. Louis University and Kalinga State University in Bulanao, Tabuk.

In interviews, I asked questions about Bontok and Kalinga peoples’ mobilizations against hydropower and commercial mining projects in the 1970s and ‘80s. I asked about the gendered dynamics of these mobilizations and the conditions of, and reactions to, women’s exposure of sexed body parts. I inquired about transformations in Bontok and Kalinga society and culture since the 1970s, about Bontok and Kalinga traditional political institutions and their relationship to contemporary political mobilizations, about the significance of gender and the body in the everyday practices and thought-worlds of Bontok and Kalinga. I asked about the social conditions of women, and gender relations. I also gathered data regarding gendering and traditional governance, and how violence against women is addressed in Bontok and Kalinga intervillage treaties, called pechen or bodong. I actually gathered too much data in these latter areas to include in the dissertation, but I felt all of this contextual data was necessary to produce an ethnography of Bontok and Kalinga women’s mode of embodiment.

It is important to note that the generation of Bontok and Kalinga women who would have participated in opposition to hydropower or mining projects in the 1970s and ‘80s is largely passing on. While I interviewed five women elders who had participated in the opposition to the Chico IV or commercial mining projects in Bontok and Kalinga, I was only able to interview one woman who actually engaged in the bodily display known as lusay in Kalinga, enlafos in Ilokano, or kulap in Bontok; she is now in her 80s. Several women I interviewed witnessed their mothers, aunties, or grandmothers participate in the events I discuss. Thus my research objective
was not to reveal the true and traditional cultural explanation of lusay or enlafos or kulap, but to attend to the ways in which Bontok and Kalinga women across generations mobilized stories about these acts and provided accounts of their meaning and significance.

My initial observation is that this enactment resists facile naming. This is for several reasons. First, Bontok and Kalinga women’s mode of embodiment is a multiplicity – it is not one, clearly-delimited social practice enacted in the same way every time. There are general contours that repeat from event to event, incident to incident, but, at least in recent decades, it is an enactment that is highly contingent and mutable. Bontok and Kalinga women’s mode of embodiment is also a multiplicity not merely because it is contingent and circumstance-specific, but because it is not a singular act. It is rather an interconnection of multiple acts, bringing heterogenous rationalities and temporalities into relation. In the accounts I discuss, exposing sexed body parts overlaps with other acts, such that it is difficult to determine when Bontok and Kalinga women’s enactment actually begins or ends. Popular and activist discourses describe Bontok and Kalinga women’s mode of embodiment as “disrobing,” “breast-baring,” or “stripping naked,” but, as previously mentioned, it is also referred to as enlafos (an Ilocano iteration of the Bontok), lusay (in Kalinga), and makulap (in Bontok).

It is also unclear whether or not there are significant differences in the way this social practice is understood and engaged in by the Bontok compared to the Kalinga. The Bontok and Kalinga are often grouped together in the Cordillera Studies literature due to similarities in traditional modes of agricultural production, political institutions, practices of warfare and peacemaking, ethics, cosmologies, the contiguity of their territories, the strength of their inter-village relations, and common experiences of colonial incursion and entry into capitalist relations of production. Nonetheless, Bontok and Kalinga remain linguistically, and in many other
respects, distinct peoples. The relative lack of literature documenting Bontok and Kalinga women’s embodied social practice contrasts sharply with the abundant anecdotal knowledge of its enactment among scholars, journalists, elected officials, students, villagers, and of course, activists, with whom I spoke – regardless of their professed ideological inclinations or political projects. Nonetheless, I simply do not have enough data to be able to state conclusively that the embodied social practice I examine is commensurable in both Bontok and Kalinga contexts. Further, my analysis is disproportionately weighted towards Bontok contexts, simply because more relevant data were available.

Another reason, however, that Bontok and Kalinga women’s embodied social practice resists its own naming has to do with the incommensurabilities of language. The embodied social practice I examine also resists its own naming because of the variegated nomenclature by which it is named – in Ilocano, Bontok, Kalinga, and most importantly, English. It is not incidental that English is the language that I use, in the wake of everyone else who has written about these enactments, to think about this corporealized tactic of Bontok and Kalinga women, in Mountain Province and Kalinga, northern Luzon, Philippines.

For the past several years, I have been vexed by this embodied social practice, its significances, its contested meanings and deployments. Fieldwork has both illumined and obscured ways in which I may frame these. By what distribution of the sensible does a woman revealing and squeezing her lactating breasts become an expression of rage and repudiation? What regimes of recognition are at work in the encounter between an old woman exposing sexed body parts, and the opponents she thus curses? How can we conceptualize the forms of power immanent in such an encounter? How are such feminine, corporeal enactments effectuated and disseminated as epistemological and cultural objects? In Chapters Three and Four, I attend to the
ways in which Bontok and Kalinga women’s modes of embodiment are rendered intelligible and contested as explicitly political acts, how they are mobilized pedagogically, and how they index forms of political personhood that exceed or disrupt those enframed by a neocolonial liberal imaginary. I propose we view such acts not as transparently accessible artifacts or practices, or as primarily pedagogic resources for feminist nationalism, but as haeccities with contested genealogies.

Ultimately, my ethnography of Bontok and Kalinga women’s corporealized confrontations with extractive sovereign power does not offer definitive accounts of their genealogy, practice, or significance. Instead what emerges is a rich collection of multiple, at times competing accounts. I argue that some of these accounts thicken and pluralize the meanings of this mode of embodiment, while others reduce their complexity and elide their indeterminacy in order to narrate a coherent, Cordillera women’s history of the present. I posit Bontok and Kalinga women’s corporealized confrontation tactic as an assertion of political autonomy and territorial control that “refigures or litigates what is perceptible,” by enacting the political in ways that are largely unintelligible or unrecognizable within colonial and postcolonial political imaginaries. In making this argument, I theorize indigenous women’s embodiment not only as a category of analysis, but also as an image of thought. I argue that the ethico-visual regime instantiated by Bontok and Kalinga women’s display of sexed body parts under conditions of confrontation is an incitement to think a form of relationality I refer to as vulval visuality. My contemplation of these acts is an effort to think indigenous politics, ethics, femininity, and coloniality, simultaneously, in the Philippine context. It is my hope that such a discussion of corporealized politics can interrupt biopolitical value-codings of Filipina bodies and femininity, and their instrumentalization, in the contemporary Philippines.
Part II: Necropower

My analysis of Philippine necropower comprises two chapters. In Chapter Five, “Trauma, Time, and Mediated Massacre: 2009, Maguindanao,” I analyze the gendered dimensions of the mass killing in Ampatuan, Maguindanao and the ways in which temporality has been foregrounded in the event’s effectuation. This incident of mass violence, popularly known as the Maguindanao or Ampatuan Massacre, has been mediated as an exceptional event due to the manner of its perpetration, the gender and occupation of the victims, and the extremely public way in which elected officials, military, and police were all implicated in its perpetration. My discursive analysis draws upon news articles from national and international outlets; academic sources; and NGO and state reports. In addition, I mobilized scholarship on gendered violence as an aspect of collective violence, genocide, and other forms of political violence, from contemporary political, feminist, and cultural studies scholars. Animating Gilles Deleuze’s philosophy of the event and temporality, I also theorize the mass killing and its mediation as illustrations of event-time and embodied-time. My analysis examines mediation of the gendered aspects of the violence and their traumatizing effects, highlighting how the violence has been disseminated through images and attributions as a source of national, Muslim, feminine, and masculine trauma.

I argue that the violated, Muslim, feminine body’s coding as a nationally grievable life mobilizes civilizational and political discourses in which the problem of temporality is foregrounded. Invoking a culturalist discourse of feminine immunity from violence, Philippine Muslims mourned the event as a transgression of tradition. By contrast, non-Muslim, feminist public figures such as Philippine House representative Liza Maza designated the gendered violence pedagogic, a warning to women who participate in politics and deviate from ‘traditional
gender roles.’ University of the Philippines-Diliman anthropologist Randy David, meanwhile, posited modern institutions as one of the incident’s enabling conditions. Gendered violence in this incident is made know-able, in part, as an anomaly in the movement of both theological (Muslim traditional) and secular (modern liberal), national times. The raped, Muslim woman victim of political violence emerges as a figure of temporal indeterminacy – a body whose precarity is attributed both to her ‘non-traditional’ participation in politics, and the erosion of traditional Muslim respect for women in the modern present. Thus the raped, genitally-mutilated, executed Muslim woman participant in electoral politics is a figure of temporal multiplicity who cannot be firmly situated in time, and is rendered ineligible for juridical claim-making based on her subjection to gendered violence.

I also consider the more general significance of temporal indeterminacy in discourses of the incident and, in particular, the anxieties this temporal indeterminacy indicates regarding conceptions of political modernity in the postcolonial Philippines. This incident was viewed as an eruption of primordial conflicts, an anomalous event in liberal modernity. Yet the victims were engaged in a modern bureaucratic protocol (filing forms), the perpetrators included members of a national security apparatus created by the U.S., and both victims and perpetrators were officials with patronage networks funded in part by ‘modern’ forms of illegal gambling. Interpretations of the violence thus recode liberal modernity by abjecting its malignant aspects and conditions of possibility.

Chapter Six, “De-banalizing Misogyny: Kinatay (Butchered), Necropower, and Classed Masculine Crisis in Neoliberal Manila” interarticulates analysis of the 2009 Brilliante Mendoza film Kinatay (Butchered) with an abbreviated genealogy of the dispositifs of necropower from the U.S. colonial era to the present. This genealogy foregrounds the ways in which 20th century
regimes of coercion and violence in Philippine politics have been decisively shaped and re-shaped by U.S. colonial and neocolonial political rationalities, technologies of violence, and geo-strategic imperatives. In weaving together an analysis of violence in the film, and a historical analysis of technologies of violence, I seek ‘counter-effectuate’ or disrupt problematizations of gendered violence that emerged in discourses of the 2009 mass killings in Ampatuan. While juridical, media, and some activist discourses render the misogynist violence perpetrated during the mass killings in Ampatuan incomprehensible, illegible, anomalous, an index of state failure, or unworthy of criminal prosecution, *Kinatay* stages misogynist violence as a chilling spectacle of masculine, police pedagogy. In inviting the viewer to consider how an ordinary, earnest, hard-working, loving, young husband and father can find himself complicit in the brutalization of women, the film compels contemplation regarding the conditions of possibility for the banalization of misogyny.

By situating the perpetration of misogynist brutality within regimes of policing and economic insecurity, the film posits this brutality as a contemporary crisis of masculinity. The film renders violence against women as a process that is violent to men, violently classed, and whose conditions of possibility include a nexus of policing, misogyny, informal economic exchange, and neoliberal regimes of accumulation with a colonial patrimony. In part, the film does this by mobilizing conventions of family melodrama and film noir in order to query the exceptionalism of gendered violence in postcolonial modernity. Sound, city-scape, and domicile function as characters as the film examines, through repeated affection-images, the micropolitics of gendered violence as a masculine pedagogic project whose trauma is registered on the bodies, through the affects, of men.

*Kinatay* stages power relations micropolitically, as scenes of contestation among
gendered cultures of class. Further, *Kinatay* posits the perpetration of misogynist violence as a masculine, pedagogic project linked to livelihood, labor, and professional advancement; the reproduction of the family; and the rearing of sons. What is at stake in these contestations is the family and a vision of futurity for the Philippine boy citizen as urban *masa* (of the masses). In staging the misogynist violence as perpetrated by off-duty policemen, *Kinatay* effectively undermines the conceptual separation of state from society, licit from illicit policing, and formal from informal economic exchange in ways that provoke more complex possibilities for conceptualizing and addressing the multiple regimes of violence to which Filipinas – and Filipino men – are subjected.

My discussion of the dispositifs of Philippine necropower is intended to vitalize and enrich my analysis of how gendered aspects of the 2009 mass killings in Ampatuan, Maguindanao have been mediated, and how the film *Kinatay* posits misogynist violence as a classed crisis of masculinity. To this end, I proceed by highlighting some of the conditions and techniques of violence – in particular, its visual spectacularization as well as its concealment – that were common under Martial Law, though they resonate historically with techniques of violence common under colonial rule and have in fact intensified in the era of ’post-democratic transition.’

V. Project lacunae and contribution to knowledge

There is much in my work that remains to be developed further. I hope to develop field data not included in this project to further examine gendering in Bontok and Kalinga, particularly as regards traditional modes of governance. I am particularly interested in the ways in which sexual violence is addressed in Bontok and Kalinga customary law, for example, and I gathered
substantial data regarding this subject, data that remains excluded here. I would also like to do primary research on the social conditions of women and gendered violence, in particular, in Philippine Muslim societies. These are areas in which research gaps are glaring. There is additional ethnographic data regarding political violence in western Mindanao that could also be included to deepen my analysis of the 2009 mass killings in Ampatuan.

An additional, major lacuna of this dissertation is extended discussion of the Maoist Philippine Left (CPP-NPA-NDF) and the ways in which it has shaped women’s political organizing and the conceptualization of feminist political projects in both the Cordillera and Mindanao, as well as in Manila. Given the complexity of the current project, and the complexity of the history and current formations of the Philippine Left vis-à-vis Cordillera and Muslim civil society, however, I felt compelled to bracket such analysis until I am able to attend to such a complex subject in the sustained way it requires.

As it stands, I see my project as a contribution to indigenous women’s studies, in which there is relatively little work on Asian indigenous women. While there is significant literature on violence in Mindanao, there is almost none on gendered violence, so my work is also an intervention in Mindanao studies. My project contributes to the decentering of Philippine feminist studies away from Manila, and offers a unique ethnography of Bontok and Kalinga women’s embodiment that does not exist in Cordillera Studies. My work will also be of interest to scholars in the fields of feminist studies, cultural studies, Southeast Asian studies, indigenous studies, and comparative politics more generally.

VI. Provisional conclusions

How can political subjectivity be understood as simultaneously corporealized, and
temporalized? I argue that Bontok and Kalinga women’s exposure of sexed body parts in confrontations with extractive sovereign power mobilizes an ethico-visual regime of the vulval curse. I posit this enactment as a distinctly Bontok and Kalinga mode of feminine political subjectivity which can be thought of as an example of indigenous embodied sovereignty or geontological enfleshment. In the case of the 2009 mass killings in Ampatuan, the political subjectivity of the sexually violated, executed Philippine Muslim woman as autological subject, as liberal democratic participant, was paradoxically mediated. Constituted as vulnerable to violence for violating tradition, and due to the erosion of traditional Muslim ethics of sexual difference, she is a temporally dislocated figure in her subjection to violence. Her subjection to necropower generates trauma publics who mobilize political claims seeking justice for those executed, but the sexual violence to which she is subjected is rendered ineligible for juridical claim-making.

Why put the gendered body, time, and the political into relation as a method of analysis? What unique purchase does such an analytical method provide in examining Philippine politics since Martial Law (1972-1986)? My thinking of the relation of the gendered body and time in the context of the events I examine brings into focus several political projects. One is the memorialized mobilization of the corporealized enactments of Bontok and Kalinga woman elders in order to vitalize contemporary Cordillera women’s organizing to protect ancestral lands from ongoing extractive development. Another is the pluralization of modes of political subjectivity in the contemporary Philippines, particularly those that are not ready legible within a liberal political frame. Yet another political project I take up is the varied mobilizations of the violated body of the thwarted Muslim woman voter as a figure who is unprotected by either ‘tradition’ or ‘modernity.’ Finally, the body of the salvaged prostitute is mobilized to show how
the perpetration of misogynist violence requires its banalization through a reiterative production of masculinity that traumatizes men as well as women.

My earliest writing on Bontok and Kalinga women’s enactment of lusay or enlafos or kulap came on the heels of research regarding discourses of agency and victimization in the feminist literature regarding Filipina care and sex work. Bontok and Kalinga women’s embodied enactment expresses an ethic that counters the instrumentalization of the Filipina as export or industrial vagina – a “little brown fucking machine powered by rice” -- in an era of neoliberalism and global war. I mean instrumentalization here in the same sense as Pheng Cheah’s gloss on Kant’s categorical imperative in the Third Critique; an injunction against the instrumentalization of humanity: “FDWs [foreign domestic workers] are viewed in terms of sheer technical utility: as mere means to the ends of others, without any ends of their own that need to be taken into account in the state's calculations” (Cheah 208).

I was drawn to examine Bontok and Kalinga women’s mode of embodiment because it so clearly disrupted the heteronormative, masculinist, and neoliberal frames – both porno-tropical and official nationalist – constituting Filipina femininity as ideal for service, a perfect gender. Of course, export of the perfect gender commodity cannot be separated from the feminization of labor under regimes of export-oriented industrialization, the movement of women in post-industrial societies into paid labor, international competition for foreign direct investment (particularly in low value-added manufacture), increased mobility of capital under the WTO, uneven development and underdevelopment in Southeast Asia, and forced cuts in basic social

services required by structural adjustment programs in response to foreign indebtedness. In the Philippines, pursuit of an aggressive, temporary labor exportation policy under the Marcos regime as a means of increasing foreign exchange inflow and reducing unemployment is now represented by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) as a long-term means for achieving economic growth and national development. We are talking about 8.1 million OCWs, 10 percent of the Philippine population, 65 percent of whom are women, constituting a larger feminine paid labor force than exists inside the country.

The ways in which Bontok and Kalinga women’s embodiment continues to be narrated within activist accounts of women’s opposition to extractive development in the Philippines and the diaspora speaks to its celebration as an emancipatory mode of feminine embodiment. As with any social text, a definitive reading of this social practice is neither possible nor desirable. My interest in the multiple, conflicting readings of an overwhelmingly celebrated Bontok and Kalinga women’s corporeal politics lies in the desires such readings make possible – the desire to disrupt the feminine body’s overcoding by capital and the state as a productive, national laboring body; the desire to disrupt the developmentalist telos of postcolonial modernity requiring rural peoples to nation-build via entry into circuits of capital; and the desire to unmoor bodies from the strictures of a Catholic, burgis femininity. Kalinga and Bontok women’s corporealized confrontations compel us to think an indigenous feminist politics in the Philippines.

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PART ONE:
INDIGENOUS POLITICAL SUBJECTIVITY
This chapter provisionally examines questions that constitute the poorly-defined terrain of indigenous politics in the Philippines, and in Asia more generally. What does it mean to be indigenous in the postcolonial Philippines? What type of unstable, ambivalent, moralized identity does indigeneity mark? How is the instability, ambivalence, and moralizing associated with indigenous identity in the Philippines temporally construed? And how is indigenous identity mobilized to address postcolonial anxieties regarding national identity?

I approach these questions by examining the discourse of indigenous peoples and the concept of indigeneity in the Philippines. I then analyze how indigeneity is mobilized in contemporary Philippine cultural governance. Specifically, I discuss the National Living Treasure Award (Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan), given annually to “folk and traditional artists [who] reflect the diverse cultural traditions that transcend their beginnings to become part of [the] national character, and provide Filipinos with a vision of themselves and their nation” (Philippine National Commission on Culture and the Arts). I map the anxious relation of the National Living Treasure to its complement, the National Living Artist, who receives “the highest national recognition given for significant contributions to the development of Philippine arts; namely, Music, Dance, Theater, Visual Arts, Literature, Film, Broadcast Arts, and Architecture.” I argue that the uneasy but necessary disjunction of “national artist” and “national living treasure” performs the schizoid desire for recognized entry into modern liberal statehood, and for a living, precolonial national subject whose practices authenticate decolonization and an unconquerable, uncolonized life world. As a practice of cultural governance, this celebration of the indigenous subject’s symbolic role in the project of national culture works in tandem with
techniques of indigenous dispossession, such as extractive sovereign power, to put under erasure indigenous political claims.

I. Indigenous peoples and national time

As I observed in the introduction, indigenous peoples in disparate locations across the globe are clearly engaged in similar battles to assert their political autonomy and sovereign status against settler colonialisms and other modalities of indigenous dispossession. Indigenous peoples the world over seek to maintain indigenous life worlds in the face of public and private land and resource expropriation, militarization, juricide, desecration of ancestral remains and sacred sites, commercial cultural appropriation, gendered hate violence, and myriad forms of erasure. Despite resonances in the nature of indigenous political claims and movements, the concept-identity ‘indigenous peoples,’ and its corollary, ‘indigeneity,’ are themselves historically- and geographically-contingent.

Discourses of indigenous political subjectivity and indigenous political claim-making have gained visibility and proliferated globally since the 1990s. This is in large part due to indigenous peoples’ organizing efforts at the international level, particularly for passage of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Nonetheless, discourses of indigenous political claim-making and indigeneity are not uniformly applicable in all sites; they do not travel easily. The historical experience of indigenous peoples in North America, Hawai`i, Aotearoa, and other sites of settler colonialism includes forms of violence and biopolitical technologies that have fundamentally shaped indigenous peoples’ social conditions and political projects. Neither the forms of colonial violence nor the decolonial indigenous political projects that emerge in these sites map unproblematically onto other sites in Asia, including in the Philippines, particularly in the post-independence era.
The ‘indigenous person’ is a recent object of governmentality in the Philippines. Indeed, the indigenous subject as such did not officially exist prior to 1997, when Republic Act 8371, also known as the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act, was passed. Therefore, in analyzing indigenous politics in the Philippines, it is critical to begin by distinguishing between indigenous peoples and indigeneity, even though this distinction may occasionally prove to be unstable.

Even cursory examination of the discursive precursors of ‘indigenous peoples’ in the Philippines reveals a profound and fascinating conceptual instability – one that William Henry Scott, committed anti-imperialist historian of the Cordillera, could not himself truly approach. Prior to passage of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act in 1997, the populations now referred to as indigenous peoples (IPs) were popularly, academically, and juridically designated as infieles (infidels), tribus independientes (independent tribes), non-Christian tribes, wild tribes, head-hunters, highlanders, cultural minorities, cultural communities, and indigenous cultural communities. Spanish and U.S. colonial administrators and the postcolonial state reserved this nomenclature for populations most recalcitrant to entry into capitalist relations of production, and to Christian conversion – in particular, animists and Moros.

The adoption of the anglophone discourse of ‘indigenous peoples’ for collective self-ascription has been widespread among Philippine indigenous activists working at the international level, such as Kankana-ey activist Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, who have popularized this discourse within the realm of Philippine policy-making (as R.A. 8371 demonstrates). Discourses of collective self-ascription of indigenous peoples in the Philippines also include the Tagalog katutubo (more common on Luzon) and the Cebuano lumad (more popular in Mindanao). Katutubo and lumad are designations also utilized by non-indigenous advocates,
cultural workers, and allied NGOs and POs. The discourse of indigenous peoples is dominant within activist scenes such as conferences, protests, and gatherings inclusive of local, regional and foreign participants and TANs. Official adoption of the discourse of indigenous peoples reflects its increasingly widespread political use by katutubo and lumad themselves.

Discourses of ‘indigenous peoples’ demonstrate the concept’s mutability – as a marker of the historical experience of colonialism, a transnational political solidarity among diverse groups, the sign of a subject due protection under international law, and a biopolitical designation attaching to or detaching from rights and resources determined by state policy. These are only the most obvious codings of indigenous peoples; as this concept continues to migrate globally, others remain to be considered in all their dangerous usefulness.

Mbembe reminds us that the temporalities, trajectories, and rationalities of the postcolony are multiple, entangled, multidirectional, and always ‘on the move’ (Mbembe 2001). In the postcolonial Philippines, as temporal multiplicity, the figure of the indigenous subject is oddly situated. This is because indigenous peoples are uniquely ‘hard to place’ within the idioms of postcolonial modernity. In his reading of the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of


37 In Gayatri Spivak’s elaboration: "One of Derrida's most scandalous contributions is to begin with what is very familiar in many radical positions and to take it with the utmost seriousness, with literal seriousness, so that it questions the position (de)constructively as the wholly intimate other. One is left with the useful yet semimournful position of the unavoidable usefulness of something that is dangerous." ("In a word: Interview," Outside in the Teaching Machine (1993).
Indigenous Peoples, Colin Perrin attributes indigenous peoples’ ‘dislocatedness’ to their incalculable relation to the nation. Perrin argues that Articles 5 and 9 of the Declaration demonstrate this incalculability:

**Article 5**
Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinct political, legal, economic, social and cultural institutions, while retaining their right to participate fully, if they so choose, in the political, economic, social and cultural life of the State.

**Article 9**
Indigenous peoples and individuals have the right to belong to an indigenous community or nation, in accordance with the traditions and customs of the community or nation concerned. No discrimination of any kind may arise from the exercise of such a right.

Indigenous peoples are thus authorized to participate fully in the political life of the state, while simultaneously ‘belonging to an indigenous community or nation, in accordance with the traditions and customs of the nation concerned’ (Perrin 1999:21). Perrin contends that this doubling of national political belonging is fraught with anxiety, an anxiety that can be traced in the debates regarding the Declaration.

This split or incalculable relation to the nation-form, the ambiguity of the spatio-temporal location of the indigenous with respect to postcolonial modernity, and the ambivalent alterity indigeneity performs in postcolonial nation-building all render the figure of the indigenous subject a source of anxiety and confusion for non-indigenous people in the Philippines. Whether figured as ‘ethnic,’ ‘indigenous,’ or ‘folk,’ the figure of this ‘hard to place,’ unassimilable national other is mobilized in narratives to affirm both the nation’s roots in an unconquered antiquity, and entry into modernity.
II. Indigeneity and anxiety

My understanding of the concept of indigeneity, and its mobilization in the Philippines through cultural governance, is primarily informed by Philip Deloria’s and Jodi Byrd’s theorizations of Indianness. For Deloria, Indianness refers to a historically-morphing set of attributes ascribed to actual Indian peoples – attributes that are spectral and imagined, as well as materialized or performed, by non-Indian people. In Playing Indian, Deloria demonstrates how predominantly white, masculine ‘Indian play’ – the materialized performance of imagined Indianness – has been central to the cultural practices of 18th century U.S. revolutionary carnival and Tammany societies, 19th century anti-rent rebellions and fraternal orders, and 20th century benevolent societies, youth reform movements such as the Woodcraft Indians, Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls, ‘Indian hobbyists,’ and counterculture movements. For Deloria, Indianness “provided impetus and precondition for the creative assembling of an ultimately unassemblable American identity.”38 One valence of indigeneity that I mobilize in the Philippine context, then, is Deloria’s notion of Indianness as the materialized performance of imagined Indianness, deployed to assert a settler national identity that puts under erasure actual Natives’ lives, histories, conditions of existence, and political claims. My analysis of ‘Indian play’ in the Philippine context comprises the following section, regarding the ‘Indian’ in Philippine revolutionary narratives of national liberation.

While Deloria’s work sites practices of Indianness within North America, Jodi Byrd demonstrates how Indianness functions as a mobile, ordering logic of U.S. imperialism, across multiple sites and formations of U.S. empire. In The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism, Byrd argues that “Indianness becomes a site through which U.S. empire orients and

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38 Deloria, Playing Indian, 5.
replicates itself by transforming those to be colonized into ‘Indians’ through continual reiterations of pioneer logics, whether in the Pacific, the Caribbean, or the Middle East.” A second valence of indigeneity which I examine in the Philippine context, then, is what Byrd posits as this “paradigmatic ‘Indianness,’” this “becoming savage” and rendering savage, that functions to transit, or propagate, U.S. empire. I explore this valence of indigeneity or Indianness a bit further in Chapter 2, where I discuss discourses of benevolence in U.S. colonial policies of separate governance for the Cordillera, and in the Chapter 3, where I discuss the annual tour of the Cordillera ‘tribes’ taken by Secretary of the Interior of the Philippine Islands, Dean Conant Worcester, in 1910. These analyses attend to U.S. colonial techniques of domination in the Cordillera and the ways in which Cordillera indigenous peoples were coded as ‘Indians’ in the imaginary of administrators such as Worcester and Cornelis Willcox.

Byrd also observes, however, that in the current conjuncture, U.S. empire is reproduced as the global ascendance of multicultural liberal democracy. Within such a frame, Byrd and others argue, indigenous peoples’ claims to territory, political status as sovereign nations, and their ongoing colonization, genocide, and dispossession are “pushed to a vanishing point,” as their identities become racialized and recruitable into a liberal narrative of democratic inclusion and equality. This erasure of indigenous peoples’ claims to territory and, in the parlance of Cordillera indigenous activists, “genuine regional autonomy for Cordillera indigenous peoples,” and the recoding of these claims as claims to inclusion and equality within a multicultural liberal frame, is the third valence of indigeneity I gesture to in the Philippine context. This analysis comprises the bulk of this chapter, but I focus less on explicitly political claims to multicultural

39 Byrd, The Transit of Empire, xiii.
40 Ibid., 10.
41 Ibid., 3.
inclusion (for example, as illustrated by indigenous rights regimes such as R.A. 8371) than on the ways in which indigenous peoples are incorporated into the multicultural nation through cultural governance – specifically, the temporally fraught National Living Treasure Award program. Byrd’s theorization of indigeneity as Indianness and Indianness as a transit of empire is particularly useful because it provides a conceptual analytic for comparative examination of the ‘modularity’ of colonial forms of domination and technologies of violence, and their historic and place-based specificities and transmogrifications. Byrd and Deloria thus offer a critical launching point for analysis of indigeneity in the contemporary Philippines as a national, temporal, conceptual, legal, and cultural problem.

Freud considered birth the “source and prototype” of the affect of anxiety; all anxiety is a repetition of the affective response to the trauma of birth and separation from the mother (Freud 1936:396). In postcolonial theory we can see querying, traces, and complicating of Freud’s formulation. Fanon’s litany of psychoaffective damage caused by colonial violence; the colonized subject’s fantasies of vengeance against, and replacement of, the colonizer; and the ‘cleansing’ violence of anti-colonial revolution all speak to the trauma associated with the ruptural origins and social transformations of colonialism and the rageful birth of the decolonized nation. Cheah argues the vitalist ontology of anti-colonial nationalism is apparent in notions of the nation’s auto-genesis as a free, self-organizing being, with the capacity to regenerate itself spontaneously (Cheah 2003). And Bhabha argues that political unity of the nation – including the postcolonial nation – “consists in continual displacement of the anxiety of its irredeemably plural modern space – representing the nation’s modern territoriality is turned into the archaic, atavistic temporality of Traditionalism” (Bhaba 1994:149). This impulse towards an atavistic temporality in postcolonial modernity is well illustrated in the figuration of
the indigenous. I trace the anxiety of this figuration in two types of narratives that constitute the postcolonial Philippine nation – narratives of national culture, and narratives of national liberation.

III. The ‘Indian’ in narratives of national liberation

At the end of the 20th century Filipinos would... appeal to the figure of the Indian as the imaginative basis for separation from their colonial masters. Whereas the U.S. discourses of expansion ultimately turned on the displacement/conquest of Native Americans by Anglo settlers, Rizal’s construction of Los Indios Bravos [anti-Spanish revolutionary organization] turned on a notion of shared indigenous visibility through the assertion of a transnational Indian identity. Jose Rizal and his fellow Filipinos read the exhibitions of the [Wild West] show Indians’ prowess and the defiance they displayed during the show’s reenacted battles as demonstrations of anti-colonial rebellion.


These indigenous brothers and sisters of ours have been described as the least influenced, though affected, by both Hispanization and Americanization. More importantly, they have maintained the closest link – direct – to our ancestral past. Through the Spanish and American invasions, they have fought to preserve not only what they still have but tenaciously struggled to preserve what they are; and therefore, what we are.


I now wish to give a little explanation to my confused identity or label as “non-indigenous” woman. As a result of many years of subjugation of the lowland Filipinos who are now the so-called majority Filipinos, we have no real sense of identity... There are three groups of peoples in the Philippines, the indigenous peoples, the Moro peoples and the rest of us. The extremely colonized peoples (the rest of us) took up Christianity as a result of colonization. We have lost our identities. We have become Westernized and assimilated the “Coke and hamburger” culture... We have lost memory of our original dances, indigenous origin, and practices... I believe that all native Filipinos colonized by Spaniards were all part of the indigenous peoples. So I strongly feel that the empowerment of indigenous peoples, particularly of women, is critical to the recovery of a Filipino identity that upholds high human values, and characterizes our past towards a life-nurturing and peaceful society.

– Nelia Sancho, Chairperson, Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN) [New Patriotic Alliance] and Convenor, Asian Women Human Rights Council (CWERC 1993: 15).
On the cusp of revolution against Spain in the 19th century, another kind of transformation of Filipinos into ‘Indians’ took place in the Philippines. Its impetus was not the reiteration of colonial pioneer logics, per se, but the appropriation of the figure of the ‘Indian’ as a heroic revolutionary. I am referring, of course, to Jose Rizal’s *Los Indios Bravos*. Rizal’s appropriation of the figure of the Indian demonstrates the romance of the Philippine revolutionary with the aura of indigeneity. This appropriation represents a mode of resistant self-fashioning whose power derives from the figure of the indigenous, fantasized as a fierce anti-colonial warrior (Delmundo 2004:31). The fact that the figure of the indigenous Rizal appropriates is an American Indian is, as Sharon Delmendo has carefully documented, significant in many ways. This act of appropriation, as an anti-colonial technology of the self, is a form of ‘Indian play’ (in the sense elaborated by Philip Deloria), in that it mobilizes an idealized image of the Indian (Deloria 1998).

One condition of possibility for this act of appropriation is Rizal’s *ilustrado* class position and education in the Spanish metropole. This location makes it possible for him to view, at the *Exposition Universelle* in 1889, ‘Buffalo Bill’s Wild West Show.’ Though the Wild West exhibition was a project intended to spectacularize, celebrate, and pimp Manifest Destiny and U.S. accomplishments as an imperialist power to an international audience, Rizal’s resistance to his colonial subjectivation42 compelled him to read the Indians as *bravo* — not connoting *salvaje*, or savage, but courageous in battle (Delmundo 2004: 27-9).

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42 With the concept of ‘subjectivation’ Foucault in fact specifies three modes of objectification or ‘objectivizing’ that transform human beings into subjects (ibid): (1) *modes of inquiry* that arrogate to themselves the status of sciences, for example, economics’ objectivizing of the productive or laboring subject, biology’s objectivizing of the living subject, or linguistics’ objectivizing of the speaking subject; (2) objectivization of the subject through “dividing practices” that divide the subject internally, from himself, or from others – the mad from the sane, the criminal from the “good boy,” the sick from the healthy; and (3) *technologies of the*
Rizal’s appropriation occurs during a moment in the Spanish colonial organization of the Philippine ethnoscapes when the discourse of the Filipino subject first emerges. The discourse of the Filipino is a problematization of colonial governance. *Filipinos* – interchangeably with *insulares* or *creoles* – were Spaniards born in the Philippines. *Peninsulares* were Spaniards born in Spain (Delmendo: 2004, 26, Rafael 2000: 6, Anderson 1983:57). As documented by Benedict Anderson in the American colonies, natality was the primary condition of possibility for “vertical ascent” in the hierarchy of the colonial territory, or for “lateral movement” from metropole to colony. The *insulare* was irremediably subordinate to the *peninsulare* (ibid). Rafael observes that

Filipino emerges in the first place as a way of accounting for the existence of those who, looking like Spaniards, were in actuality born… in the colonies where the climate and civilization were seen to be so radically different from that of the motherland. We could thus think of Filipino as that which initially referred to a liminal group, … native neither to the place of their parents nor that of their birth. (Rafael 2000:7)

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Foucault’s theorizations of disciplinary and repressive power in modern Europe cannot be productively extended to particular historical moments in colonial Africa and India. I would argue this is also certainly true of Spanish colonial Philippines. I would also argue, however, that Foucault’s notion of subjectivation does possess a general utility in describing subject formation in the colonial and contemporary Philippines, with the caveat being that his notion of ‘technologies of the self,’ designed primarily to describe practices of the ‘care of the self’ in Greek and Roman antiquity, needs serious reworking as an analytic in order to properly account for the particular forms of self-fashioning that characterize the Philippine colonial and decolonizing subject.

Given the origins of the discourse of Filipino as a colonial technology, I disagree with Delmundo’s multiple assertions that, during this period, “Filipino had been appropriated by the colonizers” (Delmendo 2004:28). Delmundo’s reading works backwards from a 20th century deployment of the term. The Spanish were not ‘appropriating’ a discourse they created. It would be Rizal’s *Los Indios Bravos*, other *indios*, or later revolutionaries, inasmuch as they arrogated the identity of Filipino for themselves, who can properly be understood as ‘appropriating’ the *Spanish colonial* – not 20th century Filipino – discourse of Filipino in the 19th century.
The Spanish used *indio*, not *Filipino*, to refer to the native populations of their empire both in the Americas and in the Philippine islands. William Henry Scott notes that as repeated attempts at Spanish pacification of the Cordillera region from the mid-16th to the mid-19th century failed, the Spanish discourse of the *indio* diverged from that of the *tribus independiente* who refused efforts at conversion. This image of the *indio* was, as noted earlier, of “a dark-skinned person wearing pants who attended mass, paid taxes, obeyed Spanish laws, and only went to war when the government told him to” (Scott 1974:3).

It is in this context that Rizal’s appropriation occurs. In Rafael’s account, as recounted by Delmendo, Rizal and his fellow *illustrados* were so struck by the daring of – and enthusiastic audience response to – the ‘Wild West’ Indians performing on horseback that they decided to name their mutual-aid association Los Indios Bravos (Delmendo 2004:27). This appropriation, as Delmendo discusses at length, was ironically based on a ‘play Indian’ at a time when real Indians in the U.S. were surviving the effects of allotment, mass relocation, and juricide. Rizal’s appropriation recruits this play Indian for a “revolutionary act of self-naming” that subverts the discourse of the *indio* and reclaims it for anti-colonial purposes (Delmendo 2004:29). This revolutionary act of self-naming by a reformist *ilustrado* helped, as Delmendo argues, to create an ‘ethnopolitical’ identity that “laid the groundwork” for later revolutionary insurrection against the U.S. (ibid 29).

Rizal’s ‘Indian play’ is a precursor to similar appropriations of the figure of the indigenous in the contemporary era by the Philippine left, though in these mobilizations it is imagined natives in the Philippines, and not America, that figure prominently. In these invocations of indigeneity, the figure of the indigenous bears an aura of exteriority to colonization and postcolonial modernity, conjures an unconquered and unconquerable condition
of independence and self-sufficiency, and marks the authenticity of a living relic connecting contemporary Christianized, hispanicized Filipinos to their precolonial past. Philip Deloria’s observation of Indian play in the U.S. context, which “provided impetus and precondition for the creative assembling of an ultimately unassemblable American identity,”\textsuperscript{44} is thus apropos in the Philippine context. Rizal’s appropriation of indigeneity was central to his conceptualization of a revolutionary nationalist identity.

IV. The ambivalence of the indigenous ethnic

If it is to survive and prosper as a modern nation, the Philippines has no choice but to develop its own cultural identity through the arts. Such a task is not easy, because, unlike Japan or Spain, the Philippines does not have a single, monolithic culture with a centuries-old history. Rather, it is heir to separate cultural traditions that still have not merged or adapted to each other… As the country moves towards full independence and democracy in economy, politics, and education, it should also try to define its cultural identity through the performing, visual, literary, and media arts, whether these be traditional or modern, oral or written. The importance of such a national identity in the arts cannot be underestimated, for it provides nothing less than the soul of the nation, the core of being that provides both the anchor and the rudder to all our efforts for a better life in society. It is this core of arts and history that will provide the face and features of a nation, that will unite the people against forces that may overwhelm them.

– Nicanor G. Tiongson, Vice-President of the Cultural Center of the Philippines
(Tiongson 1995: 22)

In this epigraph, Tiongson sacralizes the function of national culture and asserts, in no uncertain terms, its importance for a postcolonial Philippine modernity burdened with the specter of division and ‘overwhelming forces.’ In describing the almost totemic power a national culture provides, he begins with a weighty supposition of what is at stake – no less than survival and prosperity – and concludes with an impassioned concatenation of metaphors: a national cultural identity gives the nation its soul, its stability, its direction, its core of being. Everything about Tiongson’s rhetoric and mode of address in this injunction – for undertaking the project of

\textsuperscript{44} Deloria, \textit{Playing Indian}, 5.
national culture development is not a matter of ‘choice’ – clearly signals that we are in a peculiarly postcolonial moment, with all the urgency and historical import this portends. It is a time to recognize our condition of cultural distinctness vis-à-vis our former colonizers, a time of transition towards full independence and democracy, a time to define who we are – in short, it is national time.

Tiongson’s project is cultural governance. The two components of the “nation-state” can be understood separately as signaling territorial fixity (the state) and cultural cohesiveness (the nation). Cultural governance, then, is statecraft that seeks to “support a state’s claim to contain a coherent or unitary national community” (Shapiro 2004:60). Cultural governance is statecraft that seeks to “complement coercive monopolies of power with diverse modes of cultural containment” (Shapiro 2004:3). In the Philippines, examples of such diverse modes of cultural containment include the establishment of a national language despite a plurilingual social order; the production of official historiography and compendia documenting national culture, such as encyclopedias; and the creation of National Artist and National Living Treasure award programs that, in Tiongson’s figurative language, attempt to ‘merge’ the forward-moving trajectory of postcolonial modern art with the backward-moving trajectory of pre-colonial folk art.

45 The Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) and the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (NCCA) are the two state agencies responsible for the formulation of cultural policy and arts promotion in the Philippines. The CCP’s 1994 publication of the country’s first encyclopedia of national art is the ambitious attempt to document the history of national cultural production in the Philippines, and contains volumes on music, theater, literature, architecture, visual arts, film, and dance – the “western” arts. The encyclopedia illustrates how Philippine cultural historians “have developed consciousness of [Philippine culture’s] historical depths and trajectories,” such that a cultural history can be composed “as a sign of the modern.” See Nicholas Dirks, “History as a Sign of the Modern,” Public Culture: Bulletin of the Center for Transnational Cultural Studies, Vol. 2, No. 2. Philadelphia: Center for Transnational Cultural Studies, Spring 1990. p.25
Tiongson’s project of cultural governance, which he calls ‘Filipinization,’ clearly embodies a decolonizing impulse. How can one possibly disavow such an impulse? Our interest in Tiongson’s project, however, is neither to justify why it should be embraced or rejected, but to explore the anxieties, desires, and foreclosures it indicates – particularly in figuring indigeneity and the indigenous – and to understand the ways in which these anxieties are animated, and made urgent, by the conceptual framing, temporality, and perceived historical demands of postcolonial modernity.

Tiongson problematizes postcolonial national culture primarily as a project of consensus-building. He explains that the challenge is not whether the Philippines, as a developing country, should aspire to “develop its own national identity in culture.” This is a project in which “the majority of citizens believe.” The issue is how the Philippines should brand itself, its people, as practitioners of culture. (Fanon names this anthropology in decolonization as one of the many trials and tribulations of national consciousness.) Tiongson does, from one view, have a point – how, indeed, to represent the 60+ languages, the historical cultural formations and transformations, the complex ethnoscape, the sacred and profane, the moving economies of value

46 The decolonizing impulse is meant to counter the colonization of Philippine aesthetics: “The return to the native is relatively recent. In the past five decades, the movement of art in the Philippines has been centrifugal, with arts and culture being “dispensed” from Manila to the “provinces.” Because Manila artists were the most heavily Westernized, this movement primarily meant the dissemination of Western arts and culture to the provinces… As if this were not bad enough, the educational system contributed further to the Western orientation of arts and artists by presenting legitimate forms of art. For a long time, appreciation of the visual arts meant the study of Greek sculptures, Gothic cathedrals, Renaissance murals, Baroque and Rococo statuary, and modern European and American painting. Legitimate theater was equated with Sophocles, Shakespeare, Williams, and Miller, while music meant Mozart, Beethoven, Stravisnky, and Poulenc. Dance was classical ballet… Literature was Anglo-American, from Chaucer to Eliot, while architecture was the history of the structures of Western civilization, from the Parthenon to the Guggenheim museum. Fortunately, the nationalist movement of the 1970s questioned many of the premises of Philippine education and culture…” (Tiongson 1995: 25).
of something called ‘Philippine culture?’ But the problem of how to singularly represent multiplicity displaces the questions of why there must be a unitary cultural identity, and who will determine what aesthetic practices might qualify for its constitution. In order to make the how determination, and in good liberal tradition, Tiongson argues ‘we’ must make some decisions – we will have to come to some agreement about how national culture should be formed. Why? Because – and here is where the figure of the indigenous first erupts – a multiplicity of ‘ancient ethnic cultures’ persist, in spite of (indeed, enabling the postcolonial Philippines’ modernity. The ‘ancient ethnic cultures’ to which he refers are all now officially-recognized indigenous peoples and Muslim groups: the Mangyan, Aeta, Manobo, Cordillera peoples, etc.

In Tiongson’s formulation, identifying what comprises Philippine national culture involves agreement, reigning in multiplicity, and accounting for the ancient in the modern. Thus far it is the ancientness and plurality of indigeneity, named as ethnic, that represents a challenge to coherent national culture formation. Notably, Tiongson’s impassioned desire for such a coherent, national cultural identity is animated by another anxiety attendant to decolonization – an anxiety of simulacra. In a discussion of Philippine theater, Tiongson laments the “chameleon mutability of the Philippine performer whose talent lies in the unconscious

47 Here Peter Fitzpatrick’s observation regarding the conceptual imbrication of savagery and modernity is apropos. Modernity functions via a logic of negation and tensile apposition: “[c]ivilization emerges from a savagery that is beyond it and escapes its terms, but there cannot be a state of savagery until there is a civilization to endow it with a knowable existence” (Fitzpatrick 2001: 17).
48 My master’s thesis contains an extended discussion of the problematization of ethnicity in Filipinist social science discourses. Rather than reproduce that analysis here, I will restate my argument. ‘Ethnicity’ functions as code for ethno-linguistic groups perceived historically to be non-Christianized and non-Hispanicized. (It must be noted that groups identified as historically non-Christian often practice some form of Christianity or have syncretized Christian and traditional practices.) The adjective ‘ethnic’ thus visibly marks otherness and marginality, particularly in describing ‘culture’ or ‘communities.’ No one describes the dominant Tagalog or Ilokano or Cebuano cultures as ‘ethnic,’ as cultures they require no qualification.
imitation of the original” (Diamond 1996:141). This talent, according to Tiongson, “reveals the Filipino’s own lack of cultural identity and the culture’s lack of a core tradition.” He contrasts this with the enviable “strong, unbroken, classical tradition” of Indonesian performers, who, in encountering colonial and other foreign art forms, “assimilated [them] into their own stylistic structure” and “made them identifiably Indonesian” (ibid). Another obstacle to national culture formation in the Philippines, then, is lack – the absence of an undamaged “core tradition,” as indicated by aesthetic practice that is ‘mindlessly’ mimetic. For Tiongson, unlike for Bhabha, mimicry carries no camouflaguing, parodic, or subversive potential (Bhabha 1994:120) – it is only a symptom of colonial mentality. An anxiety of simulacra – the fear that nothing coherent or authentic exists to constitute a national culture.

Our growing list of obstacles to national culture formation in the Philippines now contains ethnic multiplicity and antiquity, lack of a core tradition, and an aesthetic practice that is merely derivative of colonial culture. What to do? Tiongson proposes that Philippine artists reimagine their imperative as a double movement – a movement first to the native, and then, to the national (Tiongson 1995: 25). He figures the outcome of this double movement with the metaphor of a river: “the separate streams of culture running down from the past can be made to come together to form one river of contemporary national culture” (ibid).

Today it is accepted by almost everyone that the Filipino artist who is interested in creating Filipino art must start by going back to his/her ethnic roots, whether these roots be in the cultures which were not substantially westernized, such as those of the Cordilleras and certain Mindanao groups, or in the lowland Christian cultures which, in spite of Hispanization and Americanization have retained their indigenous worldview and aesthetics. [C]ommonalities of artistic expressions in the various traditions may lead the sensitive artist to identify the possible foundation of a national aesthetics (Tiongson 1995: 26).
Although his metaphor is rhizomatic, Tiongson’s conceptualization is arborescent. Culture is territorialized hierarchically. Multiple and localized roots combine to form a higher, reconstellated unity of national culture. But what is most notable for our purposes is how indigeneity erupts again. This time, and in complete opposition to their standard discursive deployment, ethnicity and indigenousness are extended to the culturally dominant. In effect, Tiongson asserts that everyone is ethnic, everyone is indigenous.

This assertion, viewed in light of Tiongson’s earlier claim regarding those multiple, but necessarily exceptional, ‘ancient ethnic cultures,’ highlights the ambivalence and indeterminacy associated with indigeneity as concept and identitarian assertion in the contemporary Philippines. Exceptional and ordinary, shared by a few and common to all – this ambivalent image of the indigenous ethnic resurfaces time and again when indigeneity or indigenous peoples are invoked in the Philippine context. It is expressed as a query, sometimes indignantly, whenever I present my research to a non-indigenous Filipino audience: “What makes them indigenous and not me?” Even as this question highlights the conceptual instability of indigeneity in the Philippine context, it also reveals an anxious suspicion that indigenous subjectivity has been moralized, and imbued with a desirable cultural use-value, that should rightfully apply to non-indigenous peoples and cultures as well. We get a glimpse of this aura in Tiongson’s injunction that artists go ‘native’ before going ‘national.’ If for Benjamin ‘aura’ is the value-enhancing authenticity the original possesses over its reproduction (– a value-enhancing power that, in Benjamin’s view, must be disavowed –) then the aura of indigeneity lies in its authenticity and association with untainted origins (Benjamin 1969:217-251). For Tiongson, this ‘return’ to indigeneity is a prerequisite for cultural decolonization and inauguration of a new, distinctly Filipino aesthetics.
And yet, if indigeneity is understood somehow to indicate an origin all Filipinos share, there is also no denying the pervasive discourses of indigeneity in the Philippines as exceptional, static, retrograde, and associated with a deep and barbarous, pre-colonial past. These discourses give the lie to indigeneity’s appropriation or interrogation by the culturally dominant. The work of indigenous activists to challenge racializing caricatures and representations of indigeneity in the Philippines has successfully shifted public discourse within the last few decades. However, the image of the indigenous – and Muslim – in the postcolonial imaginary is still haunted by the Spanish and American colonial bifurcation of Philippine populations into ‘converted souls’ and ‘infidels,’ ‘Christians’ and ‘Non-Christian tribes.’

V. The artist and the artifact

The legacy of this bifurcation of the Philippine ethnoscape is evident in the realm of contemporary cultural policy, particularly in the creation of National Artist Award and National Living Treasure Award programs. The uneasy but necessary disjunction of ‘national artist’ and ‘national living treasure’ can be viewed as animated by the desires and anxieties we saw expressed by Tiongson – the desire for a prosperous and modern nation replete with a coherent tradition of national art, the desire for a national aesthetic practice that is not mindlessly mimetic and derivative of colonial genres, and the anxiety that Philippine culture has no core, is too plural, and cannot reconcile the ancient with the modern.

The disjunction between the ‘artist’ and the ‘living treasure’ clearly indicates there can be no easy reconciliation of the ancient and the modern in the postcolonial topography of Philippine culture. Yet this disjunction also provides for a national self-presentation of culture that does account for both the unconquered ‘folk’ traditions of the nation’s living pre-colonials and the traditions of its modern, erudite, western-trained ‘artists.’ Both are essentially national.
The National Artist Award (Gawad Pambansang Alagad ng Sining), created in 1972, is “the highest national recognition given to Filipino individuals who have made significant contributions to the development of Philippine arts; namely, Music, Dance, Theater, Visual Arts, Literature, Film, Broadcast Arts, and Architecture” (see www.ncca.gov.ph/organization/ncca
national-arts.htm). The objectives of the National Artist Award include: “to give appropriate honor to Filipino artists who have made significant contributions to the cultural heritage of the country, to recognize Filipino artistic achievement at its highest level, and to promote creative expression as significant to the development of a national cultural identity” (ibid). What are the award criteria? Eligible artists must: “have been Filipino citizens for the last ten years,” be artists “who have helped build a Filipino sense of nationhood through the content and form of their works,” and have received “prestigious national and/or international recognition” (ibid).

By contrast, the National Living Treasure Award (Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan), created twenty years later in 1992, celebrates “the folk and traditional artists [who] reflect the diverse heritage and cultural traditions that transcend their beginnings to become part of our national character. As Filipinos, [these artists] bring age-old customs, crafts and ways of living to the attention and appreciation of Filipino life [sic]. They provide us with a vision of ourselves and of our nation” [italics mine] (see www.ncca.gov.ph/culture&arts/profile/gamaba.htm). To become a ‘National Living Treasure,’ candidates must be “an inhabitant of an indigenous/traditional cultural community anywhere in the Philippines that has preserved indigenous customs, beliefs, rituals and traditions and/or has syncretized whatever external elements that have influenced it” (ibid). In addition, potential National Living Treasures must have “engaged in a folk art tradition that has been in existence and documented for at least 50 years,” “consistently performed or produced over a significant period, works of superior and
distinctive quality,” “possess a mastery of tools and materials needed by the art, and a reputation in the art as master,” and “passed on and/or will pass on to other members of the community their skills in the folk art for which the community is traditionally known” (ibid). National Living Treasure Awards are given in each of the following categories of “traditional folk arts:” “folk architecture, maritime transport, weaving, carving, performing arts, literature, graphic and plastic arts, ornament, textile or fabric art, pottery and other artistic expressions of traditional culture”. The Philippine National Commission on Culture and the Arts administers both of these award programs.

While the national artist is prized for her artistic mastery and role in developing the unmarked-as-modern “Philippine arts,” the national living treasure is valued not merely for her artistic mastery, but for her ability to practice “age-old customs, crafts and ways of living.” The national living treasure is prized for the diversity of cultural heritage she embodies, and her pedagogical function in bringing her antique culture to the “attention and appreciation of Filipino[s].” The self-conscious repetition of the assertion that folk artists are, indeed, Filipinos – part of the ‘national character’ and ‘Filipino life’ – affirms that their diverse cultural practices have ‘transcended’ their profane origins and entered the sacralized space of the postcolonial nation. And what is this cryptic “vision of ourselves and our nation” that the national living treasure, unlike the national artist, provides? The living treasure allows us to ‘see’ ourselves, as we used to be, before we became modern. Appropos of a cultural practitioner whose ancient art is threatened by the exigencies of postcolonial modernity, the national living treasure – unlike the national artist – is expected to train others in her community in order to keep her treasure living. Notably, the art of the national living treasure is subject to explicit, yet inscrutable, ‘temporal policing’ – only the practice of folk arts with a documented existence of at least 50
years qualifies for recognition, while, oddly, the national artist may be recognized for performance of a genre emerging under Spanish colonialism (this would certainly include genres of music, dance, theater, literature, and architecture). This irony undermines the attempt to fix the living treasure’s practice unproblematically in a deep past.

It is significant that the National Artist award is created in 1972, at the front end of World Bank and IMF efforts to make the Philippines a test case for neo-liberalization and economic restructuring. The 1970s were a time of brutality and elite aspirations to modernity via new modes of entry into global capital. Martial law greased the wheels of foreign capital and the structural adjustment policies required by international lending institutions, policies that Philippine elites believed would motor the Philippines towards newly industrializing country status. Neither is it insignificant that the National Living Treasure award is created twenty

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49 The Philippines, considered a “would-be” newly industrializing country (NIC) in the 1970s, was a test-case for World Bank (and later IMF) structural adjustment programs in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s (Broad 1988, Bello 2001). These programs emphasized trade liberalization, debt repayment, and rapid deregulation and privatization of various economic sectors. However, in the early 1980s – years of debt crisis and international recession – exports fell instead of rising, while the liberalized regime for imports severely eroded Philippine industries (ibid). As debt continued to mount, increasing proportions of the Philippine budget were allocated to debt service, reaching 50 percent of the budget in 1987 (ibid 259). Philippine state debt, as of January 2008, stands at P3.798 trillion or U.S. $84.9 billion. In the last decade, the government has allocated an average of 26 percent of the national budget to interest payments. The figure is much larger when principal amortization is included, averaging 38 percent of the total budget. In the 1990s, lucrative state enterprises such as oil-refining and water supply management were privatized, and nationality restrictions on foreign investment were considerably loosened, with 100 percent foreign equity permitted in all but a few sectors. Even the retail trade sector, long a “sacred cow,” was opened to foreign firms (Bello 2001:264). Measures of this sort were taken in the early 1990s in order to secure the IMF seal of approval necessary to re-enter world capital markets closed in the 1980s. In the 1990s, the Philippines became one of the most foreign capital-friendly economies in Southeast Asia. According to Walden Bello: “The capital account was almost fully liberalized, with most foreign exchange restrictions lifted, making the peso fully convertible; full and immediate repatriation of profits, dividends, and capital; and the free utilization of foreign currency accounts. Significant liberalization was also imposed on the financial sector. After being closed for 50 years, the insurance sector was opened up to 100 percent foreign-owned companies in 1994. Especially critical in facilitating capital flows was
years later, in 1992 – three years after UNESCO publishes its “Recommendations on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore,” and three years prior to the first “U.N. Decade of the World’s Indigenous People.” Perhaps it is a unique feature of post-WWII decolonization that the postcolonial nation seeks to affirm its modernity before seeking to affirm its tradition.

The ambiguous relation and co-presence of these two awards is symptomatic of an ambivalent conceptual and temporal positioning of the indigenous to postcolonial modernity. That the National Artist Award alone was considered an inadequate idiom for the recognition of indigenous-as-folk art and life – for every National Living Treasure Award has, indeed, been conferred upon a member of an indigenous or Muslim community – indicates that the figure of the indigenous and Muslim remain irredeemably other and unassimilable to the modern, yet necessary to affirm and consolidate a modern cultural identity. Temporally linked to the folk, but not folk, the national artist illustrates how, as Peter Fitzpatrick argues, modernity functions via a logic of negation and tensile apposition: “[c]ivilization emerges from a savagery that is beyond it and escapes its terms, but there cannot be a state of savagery until there is a civilization to endow it with a knowable existence” (Fitzpatrick 2001:17). The national living treasure is an unstable sign for the traditional, folk, indigenous, ethnic, and Muslim, while the national artist is the equally unstable sign for the modern, colonized, Christian, western. Each needs the other in postcolonial modernity, even though this coexistence is anxious. The National Artist showcases the Philippines’ modernity – you see, we have ballet, photography, painting, film and theater, too! But the National Artist alone cannot sufficiently represent authentic national culture, for, as Tiongson suggests, this figure produces simulation anxiety: What if Filipino art is primarily a

the liberalization of the banking system… which was opened up to foreign banks” (ibid 266).
reproduction of colonial genres? Does this mean there is no such thing as authentic Filipino national culture? Relax! The National Living Treasure is evidence that Philippine art is not simply colonial and mimetic in form, but also traditional and authentic. The figure of the master weaver or carver or Hudhud chanter affirms that Filipino culture was in fact never completely colonized, and possesses living, pre-colonial roots.

Unlike an artist, who is a subject, the living treasure is an artifact. Treasure indicates the discourse of accumulated wealth and precious metals (Oxford English Dictionary). The national living treasure is the figure of the noble savage. The anthropological discourse of the national living treasure is institutionalized internationally in UNESCO’s regimes for the safeguarding of culture – specifically, the aforementioned 1989 Recommendations, the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity of 2001, and the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. The Philippines’ National Living Treasure system closely follows UNESCO’s published “Guidelines for the Establishment of National ‘Living Human Treasures’ Systems.” The National Living Treasure is the proper name of an exceptional, un-locatable, artifact subjectivity – the unassimilable expert cultural practitioner who must be protected from extinction.

This discourse of ‘cultural preservation’ problematizes indigenous cultural practices as doomed by a vaguely defined, ineluctable process of modernization. Neoliberal multiculturalist governance celebrates the diversity of Philippine national culture but elides and depoliticizes the postcolonial state’s violence towards IPs. Such violence includes forced relocation of rural, indigenous, and Moro populations for Christian resettlement; militarized economic development programs ranging from logging and mining to agribusiness, geothermal, and hydropower; the failure to allocate resources to indigenous and Muslim communities; and an orientation of the
economy towards mass labor exportation abroad. The desire to preserve the cultural forms represented by the National Living Treasure must be understood as ironic. Renato Rosaldo names this irony *imperialist nostalgia* – a mourning of the passing of what we ourselves have transformed or are transforming (Rosaldo 1993:69). The National Living Treasure award illustrates a kind of *internal* imperialist nostalgia, a mourning of the loss of the kinds of cultural practices being decimated by the postcolonial state’s development aggression, counterinsurgency, and historic neglect of “ethnic” communities. It is a nostalgia, I would argue, many can ill afford.
Chapter Two
Contextualizing the Ethico-Visual Regime of *Lusay, Enlafos, Kulap*, or the Vulval Curse

The previous chapter examined how indigeneity and indigenous subjects are mobilized in discourses of national liberation and cultural policy in the Philippines. I attended to how an incalculable relation to the nation-form, an ambiguous spatio-temporal location with respect to postcolonial modernity, and an ambivalent alterity in the project of postcolonial nation-building all render the figure of the indigenous subject a source of anxiety and confusion for non-indigenous people in the Philippines. Whether figured as ‘ethnic,’ ‘indigenous,’ or ‘folk,’ the figure of this ‘hard to place,’ unassimilable national other is mobilized in narratives to affirm both the nation’s roots in an unconquered antiquity, and entry into modernity.

While the previous chapter’s discussion of indigenous politics highlighted the problems of indigeneity and temporality in official and revolutionary nationalist projects, this and the subsequent two chapters foreground indigenous political subjectivity and political claim-making, as well as embodiment and temporality. Rather than discuss these issues broadly, in the remainder of Part I of the dissertation, I investigate them specifically within Bontok and Kalinga. This investigation of embodiment, temporality, and indigenous political subjectivity analyzes accounts of Bontok and Kalinga women’s corporealized confrontations with extractive sovereign power in the 1970s and ‘80s.

This chapter provides some context for the peculiar ethnography contained in Chapters Three and Four. This ethnography is peculiar in that its focus is not a people, a place, an institution, or a clearly-delineated social practice. When I set out to do field research in the Cordillera, it was not in order to produce an ethnography of the Bontok or Kalinga, or of Bontok and Kalinga women, or of Bontok and Kalinga resistance to development or globalization. My
ethnography does not track a phenomenon as it changes over time, nor does it provide a portrait of said phenomenon in a given historical moment. Neither of these approaches were possible options for my research, simply because actual primary data regarding my topic was so sparse. The peculiar ethnography that comprises Chapters Three and Four, then, is a study of Bontok and Kalinga women’s exposure of sexed body parts in confrontations with extractive sovereign power.

This chapter seeks to set up that peculiar ethnography by establishing some historical and ethnographic context regarding the Cordillera, and the Bontok and Kalinga. I briefly discuss the Spanish and U.S. colonial presence in Bontok and Kalinga. I then discuss Bontok and Kalinga customary law regarding land and natural resource use, and how these differ from the private property regimes established under colonization. I also highlight the ways in which Bontok and Kalinga dispossession has intensified in the post-independence period. Further, I provide important historical, empirical background regarding Bontok and Kalinga opposition to the hydropower project known as Chico IV, as well as to commercial mining projects, in the 1970s and ‘80s.

The chapter concludes with a summary of the literature regarding Bontok and Kalinga gendering. Since there is so little research regarding gendering in Bontok, it will appear that I rely disproportionately on too few sources. Since there is almost no research at all regarding gendering in Kalinga, it will appear that I simply failed to conduct a literature review. Neither assessment is accurate. I saw no way around this lack of primary research other than to conduct it myself. While this is certainly a prospect for future research, it was not an inquiry I could pursue with this project.
The Cordillera, Bontok, and Kalinga

As far as Bontok behavior is concerned, it is part of their nature not to be impressed by the material wealth of the lowlander, educated brother or foreigner. The Bontok considers himself the equal of any man [sic] regardless of his skin color or wealth.

- June Prill-Brett, *Bontok Warfare*  

“Akala nyo... tao po ako, hindi ako Igorot!”
[“You know… I’m human, I’m not Igorot!”]

-Candy Pangilinan, television actress and comedian, May 10, 2009

Bontok and Kalinga peoples are two of nine officially recognized indigenous, ethnolinguistic groups whose ancestral lands are located in the Cordillera mountains of northern Luzon, Philippines. Within the Spanish colonial ethnoscape, Cordillera peoples, whom the Spanish referred to as Igalotes, were designated *tribus independientes* to distinguish them from *indios*. *Indios* comprised those populations who, in Scott’s satire of the Spanish biopolitical imaginary, were “dark-skinned…, [wore] pants, attended mass, paid taxes, obeyed Spanish laws, and only went to war when [instructed to].” Uneven subjectification of the *indio* occurred through *reducción*, forced labor, and mandatory tribute, in addition to military terror, from the 16th century through the 19th centuries. Due to the relative inaccessibility of Cordillera mountain settlements, and the substantial resources required to subdue more geographically accessible areas, Spanish incursions into the Cordillera were few. Gold also animated Spanish attempts to establish Christian missions and *commandancias* (military garrisons) in the region; however, these attempts were largely unsuccessful. Spanish colonial techniques of subjection were

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51 Cordillera indigenous peoples also include Ibaloy, Ikalahan, Ifugao, Isneg, Northern Kankanaey, Southern Kankanaey, and Tingguian or Itneg.
52 Scott, Discovery of the Igorots, 3.
53 *Reducción* reorganized dispersed, mobile, and territorially fluid settlements into compact, fixed, and clearly-bounded *cabaceras* or towns. *Cabaceras* were designed for permanent settlement, so that native populations would be concentrated and thus more easily monitored, controlled, and converted to Christianity.
successful in establishing a paradigmatic distinction in modes of rule for “lowland” and “Igorot” (mountain) peoples, a distinction predicated on the former’s ostensible capacity for submission, conversion, and civilization, contrasted with the latter’s unassimilable independence, paganism, and barbarism.

U.S. colonial authority in the Cordillera was also predicated upon this racializing distinction, producing what Paul Kramer calls a “bifurcated racial state.” The two “special provinces” – Moro Province in the south (present-day Mindanao and Sulu) and Mountain Province in the north (the Cordillera) were subject to direct U.S. rule by the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes until 1913, while Christianized indio populations were given opportunities for limited self-rule. In the first decade of the 20th century, municipal and provincial elections included indios’ participation under severely constrained conditions of suffrage, but no elections were held in the special provinces, “as assimilation was predicted to be at least two generations away.”

Separate, direct rule of the special provinces was officially justified by U.S. officials such as Dean C. Worcester (who served first as Philippine Secretary of the Interior and then director of the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes), through discourses of protection and preservation. Aptly illustrating what Jodi Byrd calls the transit of empire through the figure of the Indian, ‘pagan tribes’ in the Cordillera mountains were to be spared abusive misrule by Christian Filipinos and properly prepared for democratic participation in ways that preserved their distinct ‘nobility.’ This ‘preparation’ included the total destruction of selected Cordillera villages in attempts to

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56 Byrd, *The Transit of Empire*.
eradicate head-taking, while in the south, Muslim populations were pacified through systematic slaughter, as in the case of the Bud Dajo Massacre of 1906.

The Mountain Province was conceived as a ‘mountain reservation’ for the non-Christian tribes of the Cordillera. Features of U.S. colonial rule included the establishment of an urban enclave for American administrators (Baguio City, declared the “Summer Capital” of the Philippines by the Philippine Commission in 1903), the entry of Catholic and Episcopalian missionaries, attempts to systematize knowledge regarding the Cordillera tribes, and the development of infrastructure – particularly roads and trails – which facilitated the eradication of head-taking and the rapid growth of extractive industries in the region, particularly commercial mining and logging during the gold boom of the 1930s. After 1913, the policy of separate governance of the Cordillera was abandoned in favor of assimilation, and emphasis was placed on the provision of health services and education, with English as the medium of instruction.57

Having gone through multiple re-mappings over time, the contemporary bureaucratic cartography of the contemporary Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) includes the provinces of Abra, Apayao, Benguet, Ifugao, Mountain Province, and Kalinga. The CAR is home to 1.25 million people, approximately 80-85 percent of whom are indigenous to the area (Carino 1999:1, Foy-Os et al 2000:59). Ilokanos comprise a significant proportion of the regional population, particularly in the region’s urban hub Baguio City and the lowland areas of Abra, Kalinga and Ifugao provinces.58 Collectively, Cordillera peoples were sometimes referred to by the Spanish

as *Ygolotes*, and then as ‘Igorots’ under U.S. rule. Gerald Finin has documented how the discourse of collective Cordillera identity transformed in the post-WWII period, moving from disavowal of the designation ‘Igorot’ to its appropriation by Cordillera peoples in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.\(^{59}\) The term ‘Igorot’ has a complicated colonial and anti-colonial genealogy; because it remains contested for self-ascription by Cordillera peoples, I choose not to use it here.

The Cordillera Administrative Region ranks 5\(^{th}\) among all regions of the Philippines with the highest incidence of poor families. Four of ten families in the Cordillera live below the official poverty line.\(^{60}\) All six Cordillera provinces are among the country’s poorest. The 2008 Minimum Basic Needs Survey conducted by local government units in the Cordillera found that the greatest unmet needs in the region were income and employment, water and sanitation, and basic education and literacy (ibid). Carling notes that there are both shared and divergent aspects of Cordillera peoples’ culture and practices. While each group has its own language, the lingua franca of the region is Ilokano (native to the adjacent ‘lowland’ provinces of the Ilocos). Carling observes, however, the following shared characteristics:

> Subsistence economy largely prevails in the remote villages. The people collectively perform the agricultural cycle from planting to harvesting, observing indigenous rituals and practices. They also follow indigenous ways in managing communally owned lands and resources, such as forests, rivers, and other water bodies. Community unity, collective work, mutual cooperation and assistance, selflessness and upholding the common good are the underlying values which villagers and tribes live by for peaceful coexistence.\(^{61}\)

Bontok territory (estimated 2005 population: 51,000) includes eighteen villages, or ili, located in central and eastern areas of Mountain Province, particularly in the municipalities of

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\(^{60}\) Maria Nela B. Tolentino Florendo, *Fragments of a City’s History: A Documentary History of Baguio / Rovillos, Raymundo D.* (Baguio City: Cordillera Studies Center, 2009).

Bontoc, Barlig, and Sadanga. Kalinga territory (estimated 2005 population: 115,000) is comprised of dozens of villages located throughout the province of Kalinga. Some scholars organize the Kalinga into three “subcultural areas” – northern Kalinga (villages in the municipality of Balbalan), southern Kalinga (villages in the municipalities of Pasil, Lubuagan, and Tinglayan, and southern Kalinga (villages in the municipality of Tanudan). Bontok and Kalinga village economies are largely based on subsistence wet rice agriculture, cultivated on terraced mountain slopes, with one or two croppings annually. Swidden or *kaingin* cultivation of sweet potatoes, a wide variety of beans, millet, maize, sugarcane, taro, peanuts, and some vegetables and fruits complements rice agriculture. A minimal percentage of produce is sold for cash at local markets.

The village, or *ili*, constitutes the largest political unit within Bontok and Kalinga modes of governance. For Prill-Brett and Reid, the ili is “an organized agricultural community, politically and economically independent from outside forces with regard to its internal affairs, …defined by territorial boundaries and [exerting] control over its own social, political and religious institutions.” Magannon avoids geographic conceptions, defining ili as a “second self,” a “permanent home of people and spirits embodying both familial and religious affections and loyalty.” “Ili citizenship” is established by birth, marriage, and permanent residence. Ili range in size from 600-3,000 people (ibid).

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65 See Magannon 1984:22.
The Bontok and Kalinga unevenly maintain traditional institutions and processes for collective decision-making, conflict resolution, and inter-village armed conflict and diplomacy. U.S. efforts to eradicate head-taking in the first half of the 20th century led to transformations in the practice of both inter-village war and treaty-making, both of which persist today. With the exception of violent reprisals against head-taking, and the codification of Spanish property regimes predicated on Regalian doctrine, U.S. administrators avoided interference in customary law regarding most other aspects of Bontok and Kalinga life.67

Bontok and Kalinga maintain laws regarding land tenure and use of water, forests, mineral, and other natural resources; established rights of access and ownership are clearly-defined. The Cordillera is radically, juridically heterotopic. The intensification of non-indigenous legal regimes governing public lands, mineral resources, and watersheds in the post-independence period has occurred simultaneously with the emergence and refinement of national indigenous rights regimes. A proliferating body of case law seeks to resolve constitutional and jurisdiction-related questions obtaining from these competing legal regimes.

While varying from group to group and in different historical moments, Prill-Brett notes that historically, customary law has defined prior rights to land Cordillera peoples have traditionally occupied. These prior rights are passed from generation to generation based upon the following factors: (1) the extent to which a group has built its rice fields and set up permanent hunting traps in a given area; (2) frequency in a hunting area; (3) being the first to tap water from mountain springs to irrigate fields; (4) the extent to which pasture lands are used

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continuously by a community; and (5) improvements made to forest swidden gardens.\textsuperscript{68}

Territorial boundaries were marked by physical features such as mountain ridges, plateaus, the courses of a river or creek, ditches, and trees planted and aligned for this purpose.\textsuperscript{69} Historically, indigenous governance institutions such as the Bontok pechen or Kalinga bodong (intervillage treaty) have been used to resolve boundary disputes. Disputes, of course, nonetheless occurred, and, prior to the establishment of serious American presence in the Cordillera at the turn of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, such disputes could lead to intervillage warfare.

Notably, the Indigenous People’s Rights Act of 1997 distinguishes between \textit{ancestral lands} and \textit{ancestral domain}. Ancestral land under the IPRA refers to lands occupied by individuals, families, and clans who are members of indigenous cultural communities/indigenous peoples (ICCs/IPs), including residential lots, rice terraces or paddies, private forests, swidden farms, and tree lots. These lands are required to have been “occupied, possessed and utilized” by ICCs/IPs or their ancestors “since time immemorial, continuously to the present” (IPRA Sec. 3.b). The IPRA defines ancestral domains as areas generally belonging to ICCs/IPs, including ancestral lands, forests, pastures, residential and agricultural lands, hunting grounds, worship areas, and lands no longer occupied exclusively by ICCs/IPs but to which they had traditional access, particularly the home ranges of nomadic or shifting cultivator communities. Ancestral domains also include inland waters and coastal areas and the natural resources therein. Again, these are required to have been “held under a claim of ownership, occupied or possessed by ICCs/IPs, by themselves or through their ancestors, communally or individually since time immemorial, continuously to the present” (IPRA Sect. 3.l).

June Prill-Brett writes,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Ibid.}
\item \textit{Ibid.}, p. 8
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Ancestral domain is a concept applied to the territory occupied and recognized by an indigenous group since “time immemorial,” and in many instances, long before the existence of a Philippine Republic. The concept of ancestral domain includes (1) the indigenous peoples’ right to avail of the direct benefits from the exploitation of resources within its territories and (2) the right to directly decide how land, water, and other resources will be allocated, used, or managed. These are included in indigenous tenurial laws.

The Spanish introduced a legal regime -- the Regalian Doctrine -- which has, over time, eroded the force of Cordillera peoples’ customary law regarding land use. The Regalian Doctrine asserted the legitimacy of land seizure for the Spanish crown, and was instituted through a policy of encomienda, the appropriation of tracts of land thousands of hectares large in the form of a land grant. Each encomienda was managed by an encomiendero, who collected taxes and enforced the economic policies of the Spanish Crown. Later, the Spanish enacted the Maura Law, which reiterated that all pueblo lands were public domain -- protected lands that could not be alienated because they belonged to the king. Lack of significant attempts to enforce these laws resulted in the continued efficacy of customary law. Under American colonial rule, Regalian Doctrine was retained, and additional laws were enacted to reinforce the state’s control over the public domain. American colonial administrators complained that new laws were necessary because the Spanish had never instituted an effective system of land registration.

Laws regarding land tenure passed during the American colonial period include the following:

- the 1902 Land Registration Act No. 496, which declared all lands subject to the Torrens system of paper titling;
- the 1902 Indigenous Peoples/Ethnic Minorities and Poverty Reduction Act No. 10, which empowered the State to issue to any legitimate claimant a proof of title over a parcel of land;
- the 1903 Philippine Commission Act No. 178, which ordered that all unregistered lands become part of the public domain, and that only the State had the authority to classify or exploit these;
- the Mining Law of 1905, which gave Americans the right to acquire public land for mining purposes; and
- Public Land Acts of 1913, 1919, and 1925, through which Mindanao and all other
areas of fertile lands that the State considered “unoccupied, unreserved, or otherwise unappropriated public lands” became available to homesteaders and corporations, despite the fact that these lands constituted IPs ancestral domain (Rovillos & Morales 2002: 7).

Cordillera scholars and activists note that the expropriation of ancestral domains has intensified in the post-independence period. The 1935 Constitution stated that “all agricultural, timber, and mineral lands of the public domain, [including] waters, minerals, coal, petroleum, and other mineral oils, all forces of potential energy, and other natural resources of the Philippines” belong to the state (Rovillos & Morales 2002: 9). This constitutional mandate gave rise to a number of laws that continue to deny indigenous peoples’ control of their ancestral domain. Among the most controversial of these is the 1975 Presidential Decree (PD) 705 of the Revised Forestry Code, also popularly known as the “18% slope rule.” PD 705 states that

no lands of the public domain with a slope of 18% or more shall be classified as alienable and disposable, nor any forest land 50% or more in slope, as grazing land. Lands 18% or more in slope that have already been declared as alienable and disposable shall be reverted to the classification of forest lands… to form part of the forest reserve… that when public interest so requires, steps shall be taken to expropriate, cancel effective titles, reject public land applications, or reject occupants thereof (Rovillos & Morales 2002: 11).

The 1987 Philippine Constitution also retained the Regalian Doctrine. Section 2, Article XII, of the 1987 Constitution states that all “lands of the public domain, waters, minerals, coal, petroleum, and other mineral oils, all forces of potential energy, fisheries, forests or

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timber, wildlife, flora and fauna, and other natural resources are owned by the State. At the same time, the 1987 Constitution also contained provisions that recognized “the rights of indigenous cultural communities within the framework of national unity and development” (Art. II, Sec. 22) and the creation of autonomous regions in Muslim Mindanao and in the Cordillera (Art. X, Secs. 15–19). According to critics, the state’s constitutional recognition of indigenous rights “in the context of national development” has not fundamentally altered the situation of indigenous peoples. Evidence of this includes ongoing implementation of extractive industries’ expansion and Official Development Assistance (ODA) projects in indigenous ancestral domain, enabled in part by the National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act of 1992 and the Mining Act of 1995. Such enterprises have resulted in the reduction of IPs’ ancestral domain from 15 million hectares in the 1950s to 3 million hectares by 1997 (Manzano 1999:66), and the areas of remaining ancestral domain continue to decrease.

The Chico IV opposition in Kalinga and Bontok

The Philippine state-owned National Power Corporation (NAPOCOR) conducted its earliest hydropower economic feasibility surveys in Kalinga in 1965, in the ili of Tomiangan and Lubuagan. When villagers approached NAPOCOR engineers to inquire about their presence, the engineers failed to disclose for whom they were working, telling villagers they were planning to construct a hospital. This was welcome, if surprising, news to Kalinga villagers, who have historically experienced structural abandonment by the postcolonial state’s public health and

other agencies. After the initial surveys, NAPOCOR engineers did not return to Tomiangan and Lubuagan until 1974. When villagers again inquired about their presence, NAPOCOR staff disclosed they were to begin construction of a dam. In March and April of that year, provincial and military officials called meetings with Kalinga and Bontok villagers to announce that NAPOCOR surveying would continue, with construction of four separate dams along the Chico River throughout Bontok and Kalinga scheduled to begin in 1977. Precipitated in part by the global oil crisis, the Chico IV project was intended to provide electricity primarily to areas of Luzon outside of the Cordillera, especially rapidly-globalizing MetroManila. The project would have required the relocation of approximately 15,000 Kalinga and Bontok families, or 100,000 people, from their ancestral lands. The relocation plan offered each family P10,000 (approximately $231.00 at the current exchange) and 2 hectares of irrigated farmland in areas of northern Luzon to be specified later.

Villagers’ opposition to the project was immediate and overwhelming. Bontok and Kalinga ili appealed to provincial officials to advocate for their interests at the national level, to no effect. Several ili, such as Tanglag, boycotted meetings with provincial officials altogether. Bontok and Kalinga villagers enlisted the aid of supportive clergy to organize a meeting of 140 village elders in Manila on May 12-13, 1975. This Vochong Conference attracted heavy media

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73 Tauli-Corpuz, The Cordillera Women in the Struggle for Self-Determination, 11.

74 (Cariño et al 1979, 49)

75 (Finin 238)

76 Carino, “The Situation of Women in the Cordillera from the Perspective of the Militant Women’s Movement in the Cordillera.”

77 Sagyam Ngayaan interview, February 4, 2010.
presence, due in part to strategic performances of Bontok and Kalinga ferocity orchestrated by Bontok and Kalinga themselves.78 Meeting participants committed to a united opposition to the construction of any of the four proposed dams along the Chico River. This position was articulated in a letter to Malacanang.79 Within a week after the letter was delivered to Marcos by Catholic Bishop Gaviola on May 15, an administration official flew to Bontoc to inform local officials that the project had been suspended (ibid). ‘Suspension’ of the project inaugurated an effort coordinated by Manuel Elizalde, Presidential Assistant for National Minorities (PANAMIN), to bribe, coerce, dazzle, terrorize, and ‘educate’ resistant Bontok and Kalinga villagers into acquiescence. This effort involved a five-week PANAMIN tour of Kalinga by an entourage of sixty-plus people including armed soldiers, doctors, lawyers, cinema operators, "hospitality girls," and magicians traveling one-lane, intermittently paved mountain roads in four freight trucks, three buses, eight vans and cars, and a helicopter.80 Elizalde distributed cash, scholarships, rice, sardines, cigarettes, chocolate bars, basketballs, liquor, and axes. Elizalde announced, "I am doing this for your own welfare so that you will be able to send your children to school, have them graduate and get a very good job and enjoy good whiskies on the mountains."81 The PANAMIN public relations effort concluded with Elizalde obtaining a letter

78 The Vochong conference was orchestrated to provide maximum impact and exposure for the Manila-based media and government agencies regarding Cordillera peoples’ opposition to the Chico IV project. Realizing the potential to mobilize Manileños’ stereotypes of Igorot savagery to their advantage, Bontok and Kalinga organizers made sure that the 140 village elders in attendance wore traditional dress and performed ceremonies utilizing the gangsa. As one observer commented, “[p]rojecting the Igorots as savage warriors capable of creating ‘another Mindanao,’ ready to launch a headhunting rampage if provoked, and bringing these headhunters down from the mountains to Manila was intended to create news and strike fear into the ‘enemy’” (Bagadion 1986:11 as quoted in Finin 2005:244).
80 Rocamora 1979b, 14.
81 Ibid, 11.
of support for the Chico Dam project signed by 68 Kalinga residents, only 16 of whom were from directly affected villages. As has been widely documented, Elizalde collected signatures on blank sheets of paper from Kalinga villagers scheduled to meet with Marcos, later fabricating them into statements of support for the dams.82

The arrogance with which such spectacular duplicity and coercion were conducted, the ways in which PANAMIN reproduced affective, moral, racialized, and material economies in part through rhetorics of benevolence and upward mobility, echo Dean Worcester’s Cordillera tour eighty years earlier during the first U.S. attempts to pacify peoples of the region. PANAMIN’s efforts constitute a postcolonial formation whose enabling conditions include structural adjustment, the world oil crisis, the legacy of the U.S. Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes, U.S. military assistance, and the state of emergency. The PANAMIN public relations campaign failed to alter the anti-dam position of the overwhelming majority of Bontok and Kalinga.

In 1976, the NAPOCOR returned to Kalinga. As diplomatic and media zones of contestation intensified, so did the zones of confrontation in Kalinga ili. Duppag ili was closest to the proposed dam site of Tomiangan, an ili less than one kilometer away from Duppag but where very few people resided.83 When the NAPOCOR arrived to establish camps in Tomiangan, the villagers of Tomiangan and Duppag were forced to organize quickly. At an ili-wide meeting, villagers agreed that everyone – elders, children, women, men – would participate in dismantling the NAPOCOR camp. According to one observer, “[t]he traditional strategy of making the women the strike force was adopted” (Tauli-Corpuz). Duppag resident Leticia “Inay Letty” Bula-at, who was 28 at this time, confirms that the gendered division of action was deliberate. Speaking in Ilokano and translated by Ruel Bimuyag, Bula-at disclosed, “men and

82 See Finin, Agbayani, Goransson, et al.
83 In contemporary maps of Kalinga, Tomiangan no longer appears as an inhabited village.
women of the affected communities decided together that it would be women on the frontlines” because women were less likely to be physically assaulted by their armed male opponents. This creation of a feminized buffer zone was “a planned strategy. The women told the men not to join, because if the men join, there will be tension, and they will be hit by the soldiers,” she explained. The men and boys of the ili observed carefully from the periphery of the zones of confrontation – knives, bolos, and sometimes rocks in hand – close enough to intervene if the women were seriously threatened.

Initially, the contingent of Philippine Constabulary and Integrated National Police accompanying NAPOCOR engineers numbered less than a dozen men. Bula-at stated, “when the women and girls tore down their campsite the first time, the men [NAPOCOR workers, soldiers, and police] were shocked. We said, ‘Don’t build [your camps] again, we don’t want the dam!’ The [NAPOCOR workers, soldiers, and police] were just watching and didn’t do anything. They gave us no resistance the first time.” Even young girls participated in dismantling the campsite, using rocks in the absence of other tools to knock down tent stakes. After this incident, NAPOCOR engineers returned with more than twice as many armed men, and began hauling in building supplies to construct more permanent encampments. In some ili, such as Tanglag, NAPOCOR surveyors also wore military uniforms, rendering any civilian-military distinction irrelevant.

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84 In an interview, Jill Cariño explained: [The barricades were] sometimes mixed[-gender], but it’s usually women who were on the front lines, because people were afraid that if the men are the ones in front, they would be too hot-headed, and some violence would happen. And that’s the reason why women are usually in the front lines because then, the men who are the ones trying to break up these barricades, they would be less likely to be violent to them, because they’re women. But if men are on the front lines, the violence could come from either side.”
85 Bula-at interview, February 20, 2010.
Realizing no single ili alone could effectively confront such intensification of force, a series of “multivillage consultations” was organized. These meetings were attended by members of various ili along the Chico River slated for inundation and relocation, or whose irrigation sources would otherwise be affected. These included the Kalinga ili of Tanglag, Ableg, Cagaluan, Dugnak, Mabongtot, Bangad, Lubuagan, Naneng and the Bontok ili of Bontoc, Betwagan, Anabel, Tukukan, and Bontoc poblacion (also known as Bontoc central).\textsuperscript{87} Tomiangan, the site of the largest NAPOCOR campsite in Kalinga, became the focus of action planned by villagers representing many of these ili. Leticia Bula-at disclosed, “we confronted the engineering battalion four times in one month. Villagers from different ili rotated. For one month we guarded the construction site” (Bula-at interview). This rotation of villagers was mirrored by the frequent substitution of military personnel in these zones of confrontation. Many of the especially higher-ranking officers were Ilokano, from areas such as Pangasinan and Cagayan provinces. But by 1976, PANAMIN had effectively recruited a military force that also included some Kalinga men from villages who would not have been affected by the Chico IV project, or who had histories of conflict, including intervillage warfare, with ili most resistant to the dams.\textsuperscript{88}

Leticia Bula-at’s father, working with other men, teenagers, and boys tasked as lookouts, was responsible for sounding the call notifying villagers when NAPOCOR militia could be sighted returning to Tomiangan to rebuild their campsites. Each of the confrontations in Tomiangan between villagers and the NAPOCOR militia during this period escalated in intensity

\textsuperscript{87} Bula-at interview, Ngayaan interview, Tauli-Corpuz, Carino.
\textsuperscript{88} Finin 246. There was a clear generational split among those who knew and acknowledged this, and those who did not. Research participants I interviewed who were in their 60s and 70s acknowledged the presence of Kalinga among the military forces whom they confronted, while younger generations in their 30s and 40s claimed all the soldiers in these confrontations were Ilokano. See Sagyam Ngayaan, Leticia Bula-at interviews.
and size, but the general contours remained consistent. Women from the various ili took on
different duties:

Some of us would physically hold onto the Kalinga soldiers, embracing them, to keep the other women from being physically attacked. The other women were tearing down the tents, clearing out the building materials, throwing lumber into the river. This was the women from Tanglag, Cagaluan, Ableg, Lubuagan, Tomiangan, Naneng... The men [villagers] were watching from the top of the hill, waiting to see what would transpire. Men and women from these ili planned this action together. It was a quick action. (Letitia Bula-at interview)

Bula-at states that while some planning went into the confrontations, conditions were highly contingent and “chaotic,” with “more than 50 women, from all the different ili” involved.

Each time the plan was the same. Some women grabbed the soldiers, other women tore down the tents, other women grabbed the construction materials and threw them into the river… I was supposed to throw lumber into the river and I remember this so well. I was carrying a two-by-three plank of lumber, and two soldiers came and grabbed both ends. I’m so tiny and they were so big, they picked up the wood and lifted me high into the air. But I didn’t let go! I was dangling in the air because I would not let go [chuckles]. I’ll never forget that.

In subsequent confrontations, members of the NAPOCOR militia positioned a large construction truck onto the bridge from which women were launching the lumber, blocking their access to the river (Bula-at interview).

The NAPOCOR militia re-erected their camps three times, and each time, the Kalinga women and girls, at times joined by Bontok women, were able to disassemble them. During the third confrontation, according to one account, “the military surrounded all but one of the large canvas tents with armed soldiers. Folding the one unguarded tent and fourteen cots inside, a group numbering in the hundreds walked through the night to confront the Philippine Constabulary's provincial commander [in Bulanao, Kalinga] some 28 km away” (Finin 246).

According to another account:

The seized belongings were surrendered to the Philippine Constabulary (PC) headquarters in Bulanao with the villagers demanding a dialogue with the
NAPOCOR and the PC command, but to no avail. The PC returned the confiscated belongings to the NAPOCOR. Less than a week later, a truckload of lumber arrived for the construction of more permanent structures.\(^8^9\)

Both Leticia Bula-at, from Duppag, and Sagyam Ngaya-an, from Tanglag, who are now in their 60s and 70s, respectively, have vivid memories of these events. Bula-at stated,

After the women tore down the camp we carried all the NAPOCOR materials to Bulanao. Many people, women and men, young and old, from different ili. We walked all night to bring everything we could to Camp Duyan in Bulanao [Kalinga]. We returned those things to the military. But the next day, the soldiers brought all the materials back to Tomiangan and began erecting their camp again. (Bula-at interview)

Sagyam Ngaya-an affirmed this account.

MCS: When you brought the materials to Bulanao, were you men and women and children, everyone from the community? How far was that?
STN (in Kalinga and Ilokano, through a translator): Yes, yes. It was more than 20 kilometers, probably 28. We reached Calanan at 3 pm then Bulanao at 7 am. The following day, there was a military truck and they brought all of it back to the site. They started rebuilding the camp again. And, it was not a temporary camp but a permanent structure. Then they placed armed detachments in all the barangays along the Chico line.
MCS: This was when they deployed the 51st and 53rd battalions?
SN: Yes, that was the time when militarization started and they began abusing people, even older women and pregnant women. That was the time too when most people had trauma because of what is going-on.
MCS: Even after you brought all the materials to the dam site, did the people try to destroy them gain?
SN: Yes, when they tried to rebuild their camps again, the people resisted but they were overpowered because of the military deployment and so they were able to rebuild their camps and not just a temporary camp but more of a permanent one.

After this incident, when the women tried to confront the NAPOCOR militia as they rebuilt their campsite yet again, the villagers were met with aggression. Armed men rounded up both women and men, put them in constructions trucks, and drove them to Bulanao, where they

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were detained for several weeks at the military installation of Camp Duyan. A few months later, the 700-strong 60th Police Constabulary battalion arrived in Kalinga (Finin 245).

The militarization of the conflict at this time, and the nature of military violence against civilians, have been well-documented. Many Kalinga and Bontok villages sought to arm themselves with guns, but few had the means to purchase weapons in significant numbers. According to Sagyam Ngaya-an, “even if there were few people who had guns, those with no guns, they will buy bullets to support and contribute. And people will take turns using the rifle” (Ngaya-an interview). Hundreds of people from villages opposing the Chico IV project were jailed. Theresita Lammawi, from Ngibat, Tinglayan, stated that women from her ili traveled to the detention centers in Bulanao to plead for the release of their male kin (Ngaya-an interview).

Soldiers at times required women to perform acts that ranged from embarrassing to humiliating, such as singing songs or kissing their family members before large groups of other soldiers and prisoners. Lammawi stated, “women elders always said, when they asked us to sing propaganda songs we only sang the salidummay,” a traditional song sung while working in the rice paddies and kaingin fields.

Military theft of villagers’ rice, crops, and livestock; random and targeted killing of civilians; and violence against Bontok and Kalinga women generated more armed resistance than complicity. Catalina Bungaoen expressed a commonly-held sentiment, stating “[i]n Tanglag, we said it was better to be bombed than to relocate!” (Bungaoen interview). Thousands of Bontok and Kalinga men and women joined the Maoist New Peoples Army, and later, the Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army, during this period. In one ‘encounter’ between the NPA

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91 For more on the fascinating history of Cordillera peoples’ involvement in the New Peoples’ Army and the Cordillera Peoples’ Liberation Army, see Finin and Agbayani.
and the military, a woman elder from Tanglag, a Mrs. Dinnayao, was killed by soldiers of the 63rd battalion while harvesting *palay* (unhusked rice) in her fields. Saygam Ngaya-an, who shared this story, asserts, “[t]he military shot the woman and even put a palay stalk in her sex organ.” Such an act of phallic domination and hatred of indigenous women signals a masculinist visual regime antithetically opposed to the gendered Bontok and Kalinga ethico-visual regime examined in the following chapter.

Some of the ways in which the Kalinga and Bontok organized to oppose the Chico IV Dam project are well-documented. These included lobbying of local and national officials, including Marcos, by five different delegations of Kalinga and Bontok elders and leaders. An anti-dam petition campaign gathered the signatures of thousands of villagers throughout the Cordillera, as well as their supporters in Manila, for presentation to the president. A well-coordinated media effort targeted international journalists, whose reports helped incite European and U.S.-based activists to put pressure on the World Bank for its capitalization of the project.\(^\text{92}\) Bontok and Kalinga villagers, with tremendous support from allies throughout the Cordillera region, in Manila, and internationally, eventually exerted enough pressure on the Marcos regime and the World Bank that the Chico IV project was shelved. The assassination of Macli-ing Dulag, a Bugnay, Kalinga *pangat* (council of elders member) and opposition leader was a key catalyzing event for the opposition.

**Opposing extractive sovereign power in the Cordillera**

Cordillera peoples (along with indigenous peoples in Palawan, Mindanao, Masbate, Mindoro, et al) have been particularly adversely affected not only by a proliferation of

\(^{92}\) See Finin, Goransson, Claver, Cariño, Agbayani.
hydropower projects in the region, but also by the intensification of commercial mining in the Philippines since the 1970s. In areas of Benguet province such as Itogon and Mankayan, Ibaloi and Kankanaey have engaged in labor-intensive, small-scale mining with no adverse effects on natural resources for more than 1,000 years. Historically, small-scale mining, supplemented by subsistence agriculture, provided a stable livelihood for some Ibaloi and Kankanaey communities, but since WWII, large-scale commercial mining has increasingly marginalized this practice (Carino 2002:16).

U.S. pacification of Cordillera peoples was fundamentally entangled with the advent of mining industrialization in the region. Corporate mining in the Cordillera began with the establishment of the Benguet Consolidated Mining Company in 1903 by Americans Henry C. Clyde, M.A. Clarke, and Nelson Peterson. Former members of the American Colorado Volunteer Army established Lepanto Consolidated Mining Corporation in 1936 (Bolislis, 1998). These two corporations, under the Mining Acts of 1872 and 1905, acquired mining patents covering large swaths of Itogon, Benguet with underground tunnels, violating Ibaloi and Kankanaey tenurial law which designated these areas as collectively- and privately-owned forests, pasturelands, kaingin (swidden) fields, and irrigated rice fields. Because the Ibaloi and Kankanaey overwhelmingly did not register their land by acquiring a paper title, or Torrens Title, which was required to prove ownership under the Spanish-era Public Land Act, the US Mining Act of 1872 enabled the accumulation of “unclaimed mineral lands” by American individuals and corporations (Carino 2002:17). Since underground or tunnel mining also requires extensive use of timber, the expropriated land and forest resources were exploited for commercial logging operations, contributing significantly to deforestation in the region (Carling 2001). By 1989,

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93 See Finin, Fry, *Globalization of Philippine Mining*. 

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Benguet Corporation, Inc. (BC) had depleted the underground mineral veins of its concessions and was shifting to open-pit mining operations.

During Martial Law in the 1970s, the “parity rights” provision of the Bell Trade Act between the US and the Republic of the Philippines (RP) expired, enabling the Philippine state to legally require 60% Filipino ownership of all business enterprises conducted in the country. Thus majority ownership of Benguet and Lepanto corporations, the Philippines’ two largest producers of gold, copper and silver, changed hands from Americans to Marcos cronies. This ownership pattern is currently under reversal, a consequence of the liberalization of the Philippine mining industry inaugurated by the passage of RA 7492, the 1995 Philippine Mining Act. Under RA 7492, land previously restricted from mining was made accessible, companies were granted full control of land approved through mining claims with even less environmental accountability, and the 60% Filipino ownership rule was scrapped to allow 100% foreign ownership of mining firms and 100% foreign profit repatriation, in addition to tax holidays. Further, corporations were granted timber and water concessions (“prior rights” to water and forests) in areas approved for mining, and the right to evict residents located in mining operation areas, or “easement rights” (Carling 2001). RA 7492 has made approximately 15 million hectares in the archipelago legally available for mining operations, 53% of which is located in IPs’ ancestral domain (primarily in northern Luzon and Mindanao) (Dela Cruz 2006). By December 2005, the Philippine state had granted mining concessions to 762 medium- and large-scale companies. The Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has received 272 mining applications covering nearly 1.3 million hectares in the Cordillera and nearby provinces, or about two-thirds of the total area of the Cordillera (ibid). In addition to Lepanto and Benguet Corporation (which has in recent years
begun to diversify its operations to include eco-tourism, property development, economic zone
development, and mineral water production), firms such as Philex Mining Corporation-Anglo
American Mining Company, Cordillera Exploration, and Wolfland Mining Company are
currently active in the Cordillera (Innabuyog 2006). Corporate mining has resulted in increased
militarization of the Cordillera since the mid-1990s. Although the Legal Rights and Natural
Resources Center, an IP legal advocacy organization, filed a 2004 lawsuit challenging the
constitutionality of the Philippine Mining Act, the law’s legality was ultimately upheld by the
Supreme Court (ibid).

As has been well-documented by NGOs and POs (people’s organizations) such as the
Cordillera Women’s Education, Action, and Resource Center (CWEARC), Alliance of
Cordillera Women’s Organizations (INNABUYOG), and the Cordillera Peoples’ Alliance
(CPA),94 the consequences of corporate mining for affected communities – particularly women –
are profound. The state’s granting of corporate mining concessions on IPs’ ancestral domain is
itself jurispathic of indigenous tenurial law.95 Environmental impacts of large-scale mining
include deforestation of local pine groves, which renders watersheds vulnerable to erosion;
drought caused by deep tunnel drilling, which dries up natural springs and water sources used for
irrigation and daily life; and air pollution caused by dust from abandoned open pit mines and

94 These NGOs and POs are avowedly ‘militant’ in that they are ideologically aligned with the
Maoist Communist Party of the Philippines, its armed formation, the New Peoples Army, and its
unarmed, ‘legal left’ formation, the National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF).
95 In Like a Loaded Weapon: The Rehnquist Court, Indian Rights, and the Legal History of
Racism in America (Williams 2005), Williams elaborates the ‘jurispathic’ function of U.S.
colonial state law regarding Indian rights, which is to ‘kill’ the ‘luxuriance’ of multiple legal
traditions, including indigenous law, by asserting the primacy and exclusivity of colonial law’s
jurisdiction (ibid, 21). This homicidal function is carried out by Supreme Court Justices, who are
recognized by the colonial state as exercising ultimate interpretive authority over law in a
situation of legal pluralism, and is backed by the state’s willingness to use violence to enforce
the Court’s decisions.
excavated rock piles. Further, siltation and damage to dams is caused by toxic mine waste
dumping in rivers. Other impacts include women’s greater economic dependence due to loss of
traditional livelihood as small-scale miners and rice farmers (whose agricultural productivity is
decreased due to drought and pollution of irrigation sources); and health problems associated
with commercial mining’s environmental consequences, including high incidences of respiratory
illness and skin diseases, especially among children. The effects of these diseases are
compounded by lack of access to basic social services, including health care (Carino 2002:18).
Finally, large-scale mining continues to marginalize small-scale, environmentally low-impact
practices of mining.

Since the 1970s, Cordillera NGOs CPA and CWEARC have published numerous
accounts of women’s involvement in confrontations between Cordillera ili and large mining
corporations seeking to expand their concessions or utilize resource-intensive, highly-polluting,
high-yielding commercial methods such as open-pit mining (OPM). On the commemoration of
the International Day of Indigenous Peoples in August 2002, women from the mining
community of Mankayan, Benguet participated in a protest at the offices of Lepanto Mining
Company. They spilled toxic tailings from Lepanto’s mining operations in Mankayan in front of
the company’s office building to protest Lepanto’s claim that the presence of its tailing ponds
(containing mining-related waste) posed no environmental hazard (Yocogan-Diano 2004).
Between 1989 and 1997, women were instrumental in efforts to stop expansion of Benguet
Corporation’s open pit mining operations into the Benguet province ili of Ucab, Tuding,
Keystone and Virac (Carino 2002:19). In Kalinga province in the 1980s, women in Tabuk and
Pinukpuk organized to force the closure of the Batong Buhay mines (Carino 2002:18). In Itogon
and Mankayan, Benguet, in the 1980s, women participated in human barricades to prevent mining companies from bulldozing their villages (Yocogan-Diano 2004).

Activist accounts such as these, and those which I discuss in further detail in the following chapter, are efforts to narrate a Cordillera feminist history of the present. This indigenous feminist history of struggle and triumph is one that is mobilized to vitalize ongoing contestation against geothermal, commercial mining and agriculture, hydropower, and tourism projects in the region. These accounts are largely written by urban-based Cordillera indigenous women organizers ranging in age from their 20s to their 40s. With the exception of those obtained from interviews, the accounts I engage below are published 15-35 years after the events they effectuate. These reports circulate in English- and Ilokano-language print newsletters and through NGO websites of activist networks. Their publication is usually timed to coincide with contemporary mobilizations that reflect changes in techniques of governmentality and relevant juridical regimes.

On gendering in the Cordillera

Research on Cordillera women, gendering, and sexuality is substantial when compared to that regarding indigenous peoples elsewhere in the Philippines. However, this literature remains sparse, with scholarly attention unevenly distributed among different Cordillera peoples. Extant studies are concentrated on Bontok women,96 Ifugao women,97 Ibaloy women,98 and Kankanaey

women. In addition, there exist thematic works that address issues pertaining to women across Cordillera ethnolinguistic groups. The absence of research regarding Ikalahan, Isneg, and

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98 (Santos 1993; Tauli-Corpuz 1994)

Tingguian/Inneg women is unsurprising given the general dearth of work on these Cordillera ethnolinguistic groups. However, the absence of research regarding Kalinga women is notable given the relatively extensive extant literature on the Kalinga within the field of Cordillera Studies.

Obviously, it is impossible to understand gendering as an unvariegated set of reiteratively performed practices, processes, and norms among all Cordillera peoples. This is especially so given the substantial linguistic and socio-cultural diversity which typifies the Cordillera, the sometimes dramatic divergences in historical experience of different Cordillera peoples, the size and dispersion of Cordillera populations, their migratory rhythms and conditions, and the effects of uneven, increasing resource extraction, marketization of labor, and commercialization of production in the region since the 1970s. As categories of analysis, gender and sexuality surface relatively infrequently in Cordillera Studies.

The scarcity of research on women, gender, and sexuality, coupled with an inclination to conceptualize distinctions in gendering between Cordillera peoples collectively and ‘lowlanders’ results in an odd epistemological status for research on Cordillera women. For concerns both practical and ethical, much of this research aspires to be place-based and ethnolinguistic group- or even ili-specific, and, at its best, historically located and attentive to social transformations. Yet research regarding Cordillera women is also interpellated to posit epistemological claims about gendering within the region more generally, claims that transcend the specificity of a particular ethnolinguistic group, and that can be comparatively analyzed with and against gendering in ‘lowland’ Philippine societies.

Research regarding women in the Cordillera is concentrated in the following areas:

gender norms regarding division of agricultural, reproductive, and other forms of labor, including ceremonial labor;¹⁰¹ women’s economic power and challenges faced by women due to neoliberal globalization, such as rapid agricultural commercialization in the province of Benguet and the masculinist implementation of rural development programs in Ifugao;¹⁰² women’s reproductive health;¹⁰³ women’s political power as illustrated by their participation in traditional

¹⁰¹ Cherneff, “Gender Roles, Economic Relations and Culture Change Among the Bontoc Igorot of Northern Luzon, Philippines”; Athena Lydia Casambre, A Preliminary Study on Women’s Participation for Sustainable Development in the Cordillera (Baguio City, Philippines: Cordillera Studies Center, University of the Philippines College, Baguio, 1992); Casambre et al., A Study on Women’s Participation for Sustainable Development in the Cordillera; Gender Roles in Traditional Agricultural Societies: Case Studies; Prill-Brett, Gender Relations and Gender Issues on Resource Management in the Central Cordillera, Northern Philippines; Rovillos, “Continuities and Discontinuities in Gender Roles: the Case of the Central Cordillera Agricultural Programme (CECAP) in Ifugao”; McKay, Imagining Igorots Performing Ethnic and Gender Identities on the Philippine Cordillera Central; Fiagoy, “Women in Agricultural Production: Case Studies in the Cordillera.”

¹⁰² Casambre, A Preliminary Study on Women’s Participation for Sustainable Development in the Cordillera; Casambre et al., A Study on Women’s Participation for Sustainable Development in the Cordillera; Tauli-Corpuz, Asia-Pacific Women Grapple with Financial Crisis and Globalisation; Rovillos, “Continuities and Discontinuities in Gender Roles: the Case of the Central Cordillera Agricultural Programme (CECAP) in Ifugao”; Jefremovas, “Gardens and Gastos: Initial Impressions on Gender and Cashcropping in Sagada, Mountain Province”; Prill-Brett, Gender Relations and Gender Issues on Resource Management in the Central Cordillera, Northern Philippines; Cherneff, “Gender Roles, Economic Relations and Culture Change Among the Bontoc Igorot of Northern Luzon, Philippines”; Tauli-Corpuz, Globalization and Its Impact on Indigenous Women; McKay, Imagining Igorots Performing Ethnic and Gender Identities on the Philippine Cordillera Central; Aquino-See, Organizing Indigenous Women in the Cordillera; Santos, Center, and (Organization), Sharing Commonalities and Diversities; Carino, “The Situation of Women in the Cordillera from the Perspective of the Militant Women’s Movement in the Cordillera”; Guerrero, Women and Gender in Population and Development.

and state political institutions and forms of governance; the ways in which women’s rights have been negotiated through indigenous and state law; effects of contemporary militarization, counter-insurgency, Maoist armed revolution, and intervillage or ‘tribal’ war on women; norms, indigenous and state law, and community response regarding violence against women; women’s social movement organizing in the Cordillera; and women’s presence in the historiography of the Cordillera.

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104 Rovillos, “Continuities and Discontinuities in Gender Roles: the Case of the Central Cordillera Agricultural Programme (CECAP) in Ifugao”; Prill-Brett, “Bontok Warfare”; Prill-Brett, Gender Relations and Gender Issues on Resource Management in the Central Cordillera, Northern Philippines; Unpublished, “Indigenous Women in the Cordillera: Asserting Their Right to Their Territory and Resources, Defending Their Dignity, and Standing up Against Capitalist Aggression and State Terrorism”; Casambre, Negotiating Indigenous Women’s Rights Through State Law and Customary Law in the Cordillera (Northern Luzon, the Philippines); Aquino-See, Organizing Indigenous Women in the Cordillera; Carino, “The Situation of Women in the Cordillera from the Perspective of the Militant Women’s Movement in the Cordillera”; Foy-os, “Women as Catalysts of Change: Revitalizing Traditional Institutions in the Cordillera, Philippines.”

105 Casambre, Negotiating Indigenous Women’s Rights Through State Law and Customary Law in the Cordillera (Northern Luzon, the Philippines); Foy-os, “Women as Catalysts of Change: Revitalizing Traditional Institutions in the Cordillera, Philippines.”


107 Prill-Brett, “Bontok Warfare”; Prill-Brett, Gender Relations and Gender Issues on Resource Management in the Central Cordillera, Northern Philippines; Gender Roles in Traditional Agricultural Societies: Case Studies; Casambre, Negotiating Indigenous Women’s Rights Through State Law and Customary Law in the Cordillera (Northern Luzon, the Philippines); Aquino-See, Organizing Indigenous Women in the Cordillera; Tauli-Corpuz, Asia-Pacific Women Grapple with Financial Crisis and Globalisation.

108 Roy and Tebtebba (Organization), Beyond the Silencing of the Guns / Tauli-Corpuz, Victoria.; Judy Carino and Rene Villanueva, Dumaloy Ang Ilog Chico = And so the Chico River Flows / Villanueva, Rene. ([Manila?]: Gabriela, National Alliance of Women’s Organizations, 1995); Tauli-Corpuz, Globalization and Its Impact on Indigenous Women; Unpublished, “Indigenous Women in the Cordillera: Asserting Their Right to Their Territory and Resources, Defending Their Dignity, and Standing up Against Capitalist Aggression and State Terrorism”; Aquino-See,
Spanish and U.S. colonial ethnographers commented on the egalitarian gender relations that appeared to typify the Cordillera, positing that “men and women are of equal social and economic worth among the Igorots” and, in Ifugao, that “women are not considered slaves to the whims and passions of men. Motherhood is well respected in the family, her position is almost equal to the husband, and she controls the family purse.”

Among the Kankana-ey, Eggan observed, “the position and activities of the sexes are balanced and sex distinction terminology are restricted for the most part to the parental generation and the immediate family. Perhaps nowhere in the world is there less discrimination between men and women in matters of customary laws.”

Although it is difficult to make broad claims about women and gendering among Cordillera peoples collectively, scholars have attempted to trace patterns and areas of convergence. Bilateral kinship, gender-neutral property inheritance law based on birth order, and women’s widespread ownership, management, and control of all forms of property including payew or irrigated rice fields – the most highly-valued form of wealth among all Cordillera peoples – are common throughout the region. Increasingly since the 1970s, subsistence rice and other agricultural production is supplemented in many households by commercial agriculture.

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particularly in Benguet province, as well as non-agricultural forms of commoditized production including weaving, carving, small-scale mining, etc., which are performed by both men and women. In addition to agricultural and non-agricultural production, and depending upon educational attainment, Cordillera women are increasingly entering into waged and salaried labor as education or civil service professionals, service workers in urban centers such as Baguio City and other provincial capitals, or joining the migrant labor force.112

Bontok anthropologist June Prill-Brett posits that Bontok women exercise “a high degree of autonomy” over decision-making regarding economic activity, such as which agricultural and other products (e.g. weaving, pottery) will be prioritized for commercial exchange, and at what price. In addition, “husband and wife jointly manage” products created by their joint labor. Within the context of traditional indigenous resource management systems, Prill-Brett argues that “dualistic models [of sex and gender]… in which women [are] identified with the domestic sphere and men with the public or social sphere do not necessarily apply to most of the highland societies of northern Philippines; especially the Bontok.”113 Prill-Brett’s analysis of the gendered division of agricultural and other forms of productive labor, reproductive labor, and ritual labor highlights that while a gendered division of labor clearly exists, it is not predicated

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113 Prill-Brett, Gender Relations and Gender Issues on Resource Management in the Central Cordillera, Northern Philippines, 21.
upon nor does it uphold the primacy of masculine over feminine forms of labor. Rather, many forms of “men’s work and women’s work [are considered] interchangeable and complementary” (ibid). Women and men both participate in agricultural work, with men largely responsible for clearing and plowing payew (rice paddies) and kaingin (swidden fields) and grazing carabao and cows, and women performing the sowing, transplanting, and gathering of food for animals used for ceremonies such as pigs and chickens. Both women and men participate in harvest, transport, and storage of crops, and rearing of livestock. According to Prill-Brett, “men and women equally share” the reproductive labor of cooking and childcare, an assertion which generally appeared to be borne out by my own observations during the limited period of my field research.

Casambre, Torres, and Ramos similarly observe a fluid, non-hierarchically gendered division of labor in their study of Ibaloy and Kankanaey women in the agricultural community of Bineng, La Trinidad, Benguet. They state that “the perception in the community is that men and women work together, side by side, with no particular distinction or separation as to fields, or crops, or tasks.” Women play important roles in cash-crop production, often functioning as ’suppliers’ who advance or sell agricultural inputs to farmers in exchange for prioritized, discounted sale of farmers’ products (ibid, 91). Further, “there is no pronounced tendency to divide productive and reproductive functions between male and female… women and men...

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114 In Prill-Brett’s words: “There is no higher value attached to work done by men, in comparison to work done by women. Neither is women's work perceived as having low status. Both are valued in the society, although viewed as different -- yet complementary and often interchangeable (Prill-Brett 2004, 14). Also: “There are no dichotomies between men's work and women's work, there is no assignment of a higher value to men's work and lower to women's work” (ibid, 19).

115 Other scholars and activists whom I interviewed echoed this assertion, including Ibaloy scholar-activist Joanna Carino (see interview, March 23, 2009).

116 Casambre et al., A Study on Women’s Participation for Sustainable Development in the Cordillera, 90.
equally participate in agricultural work as much as in childcare, cooking, and laundry…

[consequently] women do not experience the so-called 'double-burden’” (ibid, 92).

Prill-Brett further argues that Bontok women – particularly if unmarried – “control their own sexuality without the intervention or control of male kinsmen” (ibid, 20). Prill-Brett mentions one caveat to this sexual autonomy, pertaining exclusively to the kakachangyan, or most propertied class of Bontok society, who seek to restrict marriage of their children to other kakachangyan in order to keep wealth concentrated within their families (ibid, 14; interview, 2.28,10). Prill-Brett writes that “[f]ertility, more than virginity, is highly valued in traditional Bontok society, since infertility is a primary ground for divorce. Infertility is not perceived as the fault of either spouse, but believed to be caused by the ancestors' displeasure of the union” (ibid). Divorce, while illegal under Philippine state law, can be initiated by either husband or wife under Bontok law, with each maintaining possession of any wealth brought into the marriage upon divorce.

Regarding the Bontok, Prill-Brett observes:

Overall, there is a sharing of economic, social, and ritual powers between men and women in the domestic and public contexts. This is expressed in the full participation of women in the ceremonial aspects of public life. There is also freedom of women, similar to the men, to form associations or ties with other members of the community and outside the community such as the enduring association of female peer groups [created to perform collective agricultural labor, called kapangis or khakayam]. Thus, women are neither confined to the house, nor isolated from other public (social) activities. (Prill-Brett 2004, 21)

Many scholars have commented on the centrality of women throughout the Cordillera to the ceremonial life of their ili. Among the Bontok, Prill-Brett and Fiagoy posit the significance of women elders in various rituals, including those conducted during the commencement of the traditional rice agricultural cycle, in which the ceremonial sowing of rice seeds is performed by a
woman elder on behalf of the whole ili.\textsuperscript{117} Others, however, argue that Bontok women’s ceremonial role has been undermined by social transformations such as the introduction of imported alcohol, which diminishes women’s ceremonial role as rice wine producers.\textsuperscript{118}

Prill-Brett posits that the one area of village life from which women are excluded is defense and warfare; “decisions [of] this nature are necessarily the domain of men. The men of the ator [public ritual space] handle peace pacts, which entail the policing and defense of the community’s integrity from internal or external violations or threats.” However, in her own research on Bontok warfare and in my field research, there exist accounts both of women’s participation in head-taking and assumption of the role of peace pact holders.

Research by Cordillera women’s organizations, however, contests any monolithic portrait asserting the absence of women’s oppression in Cordillera societies. According to one researcher, Cordillera women face disproportionate poverty and lack of social services; disproportionately poor labor conditions as farm workers, informal sector workers, or factory workers in economic processing zones; and disproportionately limited opportunities for participation in both indigenous and imposed structures of governance (Carino 2000:239).

\textsuperscript{117} Fiagoy, “Women in Agricultural Production: Case Studies in the Cordillera,” 6; Prill-Brett, \textit{Gender Relations and Gender Issues on Resource Management in the Central Cordillera, Northern Philippines}, 15.

\textsuperscript{118} Unpublished, “Indigenous Women in the Cordillera: Asserting Their Right to Their Territory and Resources, Defending Their Dignity, and Standing up Against Capitalist Aggression and State Terrorism.”
Payew, Betwagan ili, Sadanga municipality, Bontok territory, Mountain Province
Kalinga tapis
Donald H. Rubinstein and University of Guam, *Fabric Treasures of the Philippines* (Mangilao, Guam: ISLA Center for the Arts at the University of Guam, 1989).
Chapter Three
The Ethico-Visual Regime of *Lusay, Enlafo*, *Kulap*, or the Vulval Curse, Part I

By what distribution of the sensible does a woman revealing and squeezing her lactating breasts become an expression of rage and repudiation? What regimes of recognition are at work in the encounter between an old woman exposing sexed body parts, and the opponents she thus curses? How can we conceptualize the forms of power immanent in such an encounter? How are such feminine, corporeal enactments effectuated and disseminated as epistemological and cultural objects? In this and the following chapter, I attend to the ways in which Bontok and Kalinga women’s modes of embodiment are rendered intelligible and contested as explicitly political acts, how they are mobilized pedagogically, and how they index forms of political personhood that exceed or disrupt those enframed by a neocolonial liberal imaginary. I propose we view such acts not as transparently accessible artifacts or practices, or as primarily pedagogic resources for feminist nationalism, but as haecccities with contested genealogies. These acts are modes of Bontok and Kalinga feminine embodiment that are singular, contingent, and indeterminate. My contemplation of these acts and the ways in which they instantiate what I call *vulval visuality* is an incitement to think indigenous politics, ethics, femininity, and coloniality in the contemporary Philippines. It is my hope that such a discussion of corporealized politics can interrupt more biopolitical value-codings of Filipina bodies and femininity, and their instrumentalization, in the contemporary Philippines.

In the following analysis of activist, scholarly, and *ili*-based accounts of Bontok and Kalinga women’s nakedness and forms of bodily display, I discuss how some accounts of these modes of embodiment thicken and pluralize their meaning, while others reduce their complexity and elide their indeterminacy in the interests of expediently moralized knowledge and political
positions. Anglophone, activist accounts of Bontok and Kalinga women’s display of sexed body parts at times celebrate these acts in ways that evacuate their contested and indeterminate genealogies. Such accounts, like mediations of the Bontok Women Power protest, primarily call attention to the radical alterity of this feminine mode of embodiment. In the conceptual, temporal, and occasionally pedagogic spaces opened by this rhetorical emphasis on radical alterity, contestation over meanings of indigeneity, woman, femininity, and difference can be enervated or vitalized. For some, what is at stake in this contestation is an unconquered feminist history of the present, a time immemorial feminism, a temporality absent of the need for feminism. For others, what is at stake is the authenticatability of Bontok or Kalinga tradition as an epistemological object, the status and reproduction of tradition as knowledge, and the continued vitality of genealogies of tradition. For still others, what is at stake is the memorialization of political martyrs and struggles that must be revivified and (re)enacted as an indigenous dissensus – as self-determined political expression that refigures or litigates what is perceptible.

I. Narrating a feminist history of the present: activist ascriptions of Kalinga women’s corporealized confrontation with the National Power Corporation (NAPOCOR)

The bilingual children’s book *Dumaloy ang Ilog Chico*, poetically translated on the cover as “And so the Chico River Flows” (hereafter, *Dumaloy*), was published in 1995, a full decade after the Chico IV opposition movement’s triumph. Published by GABRIELA, a Manila-based national coalition of Philippine women’s organizations, *Dumaloy* is beautifully illustrated and written in two languages – Filipino, the national language of the Philippines, accompanied by an English translation. Though Filipino and English are widely understood in the Cordillera region,
it is rare that either of these languages are used preferentially. Thus the authors’ choice to write in Filipino and English indicates that *Dumaloy*’s intended cosmopolitical audience extends far beyond the Bontok, Kalinga, or Cordillera peoples generally. This intended audience includes a national readership of Filipinos, and a transnational readership of English-speakers (including U.S.-born Filipinos like myself).

*Dumaloy* narrates the Bontok and Kalinga peoples’ struggle against the Chico Dam from the vantage of Kalinga women elders from the ili of Duppag. As a children’s book, it is explicitly pedagogic: “to show that simple, ordinary peasant women are courageous and heroic, too” (*Dumaloy*, authors’ preface). The authors seek “to convey that, above all, the Chico River Dam struggle was a triumph of a [sic] valiant people – the Kalinga and Bontok women, men, and children. For Filipino children, this triumph is something to take pride in.” The book’s pedagogic functions are multiple. *Dumaloy* moralizes peasant populism, rendering “simple, ordinary peasant” heroism exemplary. It inscribes the Cordillera into a nationalist history “from below” by narrating the victory of “a [sic] valiant people” against neocolonial capitalism.

Further, *Dumaloy* is intended to advance and pluralize Philippine feminism, in foregrounding the

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119 Most Cordillera peoples are bilingual, if not trilingual. Bontok people speak Bontok, and Kalinga people speak Kalinga, though there are localized variants of these and the dozens of other Cordillera languages. In addition to a mother tongue, Cordillera peoples also speak Ilokano, the region’s *lingua franca*, when communicating with those outside of one’s ethnolinguistic group. While English and Filipino are also spoken by many in the Cordillera region, use of English is relatively rare outside of formal educational settings, and Filipino has not supplanted the widespread use of Ilokano. The use of the national language of Filipino in the Baguio public market, for example, immediately destroys any bargaining power one may have, and frequently doubles the exchange value of any purchase.

120 Judy Carino, *Dumaloy Ang Ilog Chico = And so the Chico River Flows / Villanueva, Rene.* ([Manila?): Gabriela, National Alliance of Women’s Organizations, 1995). The book's narrative is based on interviews with villagers from Duppag, Kalinga who were participants in the mobilization opposing construction of the Chico Dam mobilization.

121 Ibid.

122 This conflation of two different ethnolinguistic groups, Bontoks and Kalingas, into “one people” is a misleading reduction, against which many scholars have written.
critical role of Bontok and Kalinga women in achieving this victory. Finally, *Dumaloy* is nationalist – it narrates a triumph in which all the nation’s children, not only the Bontok and Kalinga, can take pride.

In the excerpt below, *Dumaloy*’s narrator has just described how villagers were imprisoned for their opposition to the project. She proceeds to give an account of how the confrontation between villagers, and dam workers and soldiers, escalated.

After several months, the prisoners were released. We all went home rejoicing. But when we returned to our village, we saw that the dam builders had built a bigger and stronger camp.

Again, we fought and we fought hard. We used our hands, our feet, our bodies. Some used stones and sticks. Some used arms. But the dam builders were so many, and they had more arms. We could not drive them away.

“We have to stop them,” we cried.

Then, in a final gesture of resistance, an old woman cried out, “HWOOO-OW! HWOOO-OW!” and shed off her clothes. One by one, our mothers, sisters and aunts followed. We held each other by the arms as we all disrobed.

“We are your mothers, sisters and aunts,” we told the dam builders and soldiers. “Why are you doing this?”

The dam builders and the soldiers were put to shame. They left covering their faces with their hands.123

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123 Carino and Villanueva, *Dumaloy Ang Ilog Chico = And so the Chico River Flows / Villanueva, Rene.*
While Cariño describes the women’s act as “breast-baring,” in Dumaloy it is rendered more imprecisely and expansively as “disrobing.” Dumaloy suggests that not just any women, but women elders, specifically, led in the perpetration of this act. Curiously, however, in the related illustration, no women elders are figured. Cariño writes that the purpose of “breast-baring” was to prevent soldiers from engaging in physical contact with villagers who were dismantling their camps. Dumaloy does not explicitly state why the women chose this tactic as their “final gesture of resistance,” but the reason is implied by the tactic’s effects. The soldiers are “put to shame” and retreat from the confrontation with their faces in their hands.

Additional accounts document this and similar incidents. Frequently, these accounts are too brief to have any explanatory value. But they do indicate that opposition to the Chico Dam project is not the only context in which women from the Cordillera have engaged in this, and
related, forms of embodiment. I found the following account in a report published by Survival, a London-based indigenous advocacy group, regarding the devastating effects of commercial mining on indigenous farmers: “[i]n Mainit, Philippines, in the 1970s, Bontok women fought with mining company surveyors and drove them away. In some protests, they removed their clothes to shame their attackers into retreat” (Survival 1998). Notably, in this account, Bontok women’s action is explicitly ‘politically’ as a form of protest against commercial mining – not as a ‘cultural practice,’ as in the accounts regarding the Bontok “Women Power” protest. As with other accounts, however, any genealogy of this enactment is absent. Women’s intent is attributed to a desire to produce the affect of shame, the political effect of retreat. Finally, like Dumaloy, this account is intended for cosmopolitical circulation through transnational activist networks, particularly networks of indigenous activists.

Indeed, prior to my field research in Baguio City, Bontok, and Kalinga from 2009-2010, every account I found of these events of Bontok and Kalinga women’s embodiment was traceable to an anglophone activist source. In the newsletter of Innabuyog, an alliance of Cordillera women’s organizations affiliated with GABRIELA (the country’s largest coalition of women’s organizations), Bontok activist Vernie Yocogan-Diano states that women “bared their breasts” in anti-mining actions in the 1980s and 1990s as “a signal that there is no more negotiation to do and the mine representatives better leave or they never see another day.”

Yocogan-Diano’s reading of the women’s action departs from all those previously mentioned in that she does not posit its intent as the production of shame. Rather, women’s “breast-baring” is an assertion of authority, backed by the threat of violence, even death.

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124 Innabuyog is an Ibaloi word designating the forms of collective agricultural labor commonly practiced throughout the Cordillera.
125 Aquino-See, Organizing Indigenous Women in the Cordillera.
From these brief, provocative accounts emerges a discourse of women’s “breast-baring” and “disrobing” to incite “shame” or to threaten violence. This discourse explicitly asserts Bontok and Kalinga women’s embodiment as a mode of political opposition to extractive development and expropriation of land and natural resources. It is not rendered as an encounter with complex conditions of possibility and a contested genealogy, a practice that exceeds the immediacy of these confrontations. Absent any robust historicization or discussion of the ontopolitical frame in which it is anchored, the act becomes one whose meaning is transparent, easily coded, modular. This reduction unproblematically celebrates Bontok and Kalinga women’s corporealized alterity, with no compulsion to account for it.

II. Activist ascriptions of Mainit women’s corporealized confrontation with the Benguet Corporation

Among the most popularized narratives of women’s opposition to corporate mining in the Cordillera is the story of Mainit’s mobilization against the Benguet Corporation in the early 1970s. Mainit is a Bontok ili located in central Mountain Province, approximately four kilometers from Bontoc poblacion, the provincial capital. Various ili of the central Bontoc area, including Mainit and Bontoc ili itself, have a documented history of successful resistance to foreign mining interests that dates to the US and Spanish colonial periods. Petra Tannaw “Inay Petra” Macli-ing was born and raised in Mainit; she views this history of resistance as part of her genealogical inheritance. Now in her 80s, Macli-ing is a beloved public voice of the Cordillera Peoples’ Alliance (CPA), the most prominent – and avowedly militant – NGO advocating for Cordillera peoples in the region. A founding member of the CPA, she remains on

its Advisory Council. Macli-ing is also a founding member of the Kalinga-Bontoc Peace Pact Holders Association (KBPPHA), a federation formed in 1997 comprised of individuals who perform inter-village diplomatic functions in the *binodgnan* areas\(^\text{127}\) as peace pact holders. Over the last decade, Macli-ing has been developing organic agricultural techniques on her farm in Isabela, Nueva Vizcaya. In 2009 she was awarded a Women’s World Summit Foundation Laureate Prize for Rural Women.\(^\text{128}\)

In the following excerpt of my 2009 interview with Macli-ing, she discusses the context of her involvement in organizing to oppose commercial mining in Mainit. Macli-ing indicates the importance of such generationally reproduced efforts against the encroachment of foreign mining for the ili’s perpetuation. During the interview, I asked questions in Tagalog and English, and Macli-ing responded in Bontok, Ilokano, and English; the Bontok and Ilocano were translated by Judith Banga-an and Manang Vera (a pseudonym).

> When we were young, my grandma used to carry a deerskin where she put one *salop* [a metric for grains] of uncooked rice and if you ask where she was going, she would say, “We are going to drive away the *Arangki* [foreign miners] who come here to mine.” Since then, I’ve been thinking about this statement, maybe I was still in kindergarten.
> When my grandma died, my mom replaced her as one of those women driving Arangkis away. Maybe this happened because she’s one among those

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\(^{127}\) *Binodgnan* areas refer to those areas which continue to practice inter-village treaty-making, or areas governed by peace pacts. Although the practice of inter-village treaty making was historically practiced throughout the Cordillera, it is now primarily Kalinga and Bontok ili who maintain such agreements. See Albert Somebang Bacdayan, “The Peace Pact System of the Kalingas in the Modern World”, 1967; Prill-Brett, “Bontok Warfare”; Prill-Brett, *Pechen, the Bontok Peace Pact Institution*.

\(^{128}\) “The Women’s World Summit Foundation (WWSF) Laureate Award honors creative and courageous women and women’s groups worldwide for their contribution in improving the quality of life in rural communities, for protecting the environment, transmitting knowledge and standing up for human rights and peace. WWSF has awarded 354 prizes in more than 100 countries. The WWSF is a humanitarian, non-government, non-profit, and international organization with United Nations consultative status which works for a new development paradigm with and for women and children. WWSF was established in 1991 in Geneva, on International Working Women’s Day.”
people who owns a small portion of farmland and pastureland. We see her then always carrying the deer bone and rice going to drive away mine surveyors. We asked why? And she said they needed to do this to prevent the water source from becoming unclear or dirty [makibol nan danum] and to prevent the trees from being cut down [mapatpat nan kaew]. They explained that because there are many rice fields surrounding the ili, if the ili would not guard against these surveyors, then the ili would be destroyed. Also, there were no soldiers who came before, so when surveyors came in the 1950s and 1960s, like people from Lepanto Mining Company [based in Mankayan, Benguet Province], it was easier for us to drive them away.

Among those active in the Cordillera women’s movement, Macli-ing is probably best known for her organizing efforts in the 1970s. With other villagers from Mainit and Bontoc ili, Macli-ing participated in actions to support the anti-Chico IV mobilization in Tomiangan, Kalinga in 1976. In these actions, Mainit and Bontoc villagers – with women on the front lines – barricaded the roads leading to Tomiangan to delay passage of the Philippine National Power Corporeation (NAPOCOR) militia, giving Kalinga ili more time to organize. Macli-ing’s involvement in the Chico IV resistance, however, is less well-known than her participation in Mainit ili’s opposition to Benguet Corporation just a few years prior.129 This mobilization is particularly popular in Cordillera activist historiography not only because, as in the case of the Chico IV resistance, it marks a victory in Cordillera peoples ongoing battle to maintain political autonomy and control over their territories. Decades after, narratives of this mobilization persist and are regularly revivified because Mainit women engaged in corporealized forms of confrontation with Benguet Corporation workers.

129 Ownership of the Benguet Corporation in 1998 was structured through an equity agreement between five US multinationals (Cede & Co., Pacific & Co., Kray & Co., BHP, and Echo Bay Mines); one Canadian multinational (TVI Group); the Philippine state (PCGG), and Philippine multinational The Ayala Group. See Tujan and Guzman, *Globalizing Philippine Mining*, 1998, 50-51.
According to a 1994 report by Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, then director of the Cordillera Women’s Education and Resource Center (CWERC), the Benguet Corporation (BC) sent a contingent of 40-odd engineers and support staff to prospect in Mainit in 1973. Of this mining contingent, none were armed – a significant difference between this confrontation, and those that occurred in the Chico IV resistance in Kalinga. Tauli-Corpuz asserts that twice, Mainit villagers hiked to the prospectors’ campsite and initiated dialogue, ultimately demanding that the BC team leave. Twice, BC workers refused. Writing in 2009 of these events, a commentator with the Cordillera Peoples Alliance highlights women’s role in attempts to engage BC, stating, “[it] was the women [of Mainit] who initiated dialogues with the mining engineers, [taking] the lead role to avert any violence which would have erupted [had] their hotheaded male counterparts” been the ones to enage. This attribution of the gendering of the confrontation to women’s greater affective control and reduced vulnerability to violent attack echoes Leticia Bula-at’s account of the feminization of the barricades in the Chico IV confrontations.

After being rebuffed by BC workers a second time, Mainit villagers seized their equipment and fled. Angered by the BC team’s intransigence, disregard for their concerns, and unwillingness to dialogue, Tauli-Corpuz notes, “the Mainit people camped overnight near the [BC] camps…as a last warning for the mining team to leave. The next day, dialogue between the two sides failed, tensions rose...so the women undressed themselves and scared the men who finally ran away.” The CPA account details further that when a series of dialogues failed, and the mining engineers continued their exploration activities against the community’s will, Mother Petra led the women in strategizing their next move which finally drove the mining engineers away. In

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130 Tauli-Corpuz is founder of Tebtebba Foundation and the current United Nations Special Rappatteur on Indigenous Peoples.


the cover of night, the village mothers and grandmothers approached the mining camp, then started shouting at the top of their voices for the mining engineers to leave, at the same time unclothing and exposing their breasts to the men in the camp.

Augmenting details of Tauli-Corpuz’s account, the CPA narrative highlights the leadership of “mothers and grandmothers,” and notes women’s deployment of voice as well as bodily display in the confrontation. In a 1989 account of the same events, CWERC organizer Bernice Aquino-See states simply that the women of Mainit “scared the wits out of [BC prospectors] by baring their breasts.”

A discourse of “undressing,” “unclothing,” “breast-baring,” “exposing the breasts” is prominent in all three of these published activist accounts. This discourse was constantly reproduced in the narratives I gathered from interviews with staff of NGOs such as CPA, CWEARC, and Innabuyog in Baguio City, or organizers working with local chapters of these regional NGOs at the ili, barangay, or municipal levels in Bontok or Kalinga (see interviews with Jill Carino, Joann Carino, Vernie Yocogan-Diano, Tony Sagyaam, et al). While these accounts feature Mainit women tactically exhibiting sexed body parts, it is notable that Petra Macli-ing’s account, below, does not:

In 1975, I can remember that this was the time when surveyors do not sleep at night working for the gold. We even saw the white round bag where they put gold samples. They began to bring heavy equipment near the ili to get these. So whether it is planting season or harvest season, the women would try to watch what is happening until one among us stood as the leader and she asked us to work together to drive these surveyors away. She divided us into groups for there were very many of us who joined. She reiterated that it was high time for us to act because the [surveyors] already had their tents, radio phones, and gold samples.

So we went to the top of the mountain overlooking the place where they built their camp and we realized that there were many of them. We thought of a plan on how to attack. We agreed that we should choose four strong and tall women – I was one of them – to attack Engineer Perfecto, the person leading the

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surveying team. It didn’t happen so easily. We thought again about what we would do when they reached the tent. Plus they have airplanes! We also thought about whether we [should] take their things, or just bind them and throw them into the river to be destroyed. Finally, we agreed that different groups would do different tasks. The four women will attack Engineer Perfecto, others will bind their radio phones and throw them into the water, and others would destroy their tents. We agreed not to use fire to destroy their things because it would be too destructive. (Macli-ing interview)

Like the published accounts of Tauli-Corpuz, Aquino-See, and the CPA, Macli-ing’s narrative foregrounds Mainit women’s critical role in the mobilization. However, Macli-ing stretches the temporal frame of the interaction between villagers and the mining corporation beyond the condensed time of the direct confrontation itself. This elongated time of the event takes on a rhythmic quality when Macli-ing notes that the time of resistance encompasses women villagers’ vigilant observation of mine workers through harvest and planting season. Macli-ing’s narrative constitutes a diegetic space in which women organize and consider possible tactics collectively, surfacing within their deliberations the affective memory of Spanish and US colonial techniques of pacification such as wholesale village-burning in reprisal for the continued practice of head-taking and intervillage warfare. While the CPA account identifies Macli-ing as a leader of the action, her focalization clearly assigns this role to another woman. When juxtaposed to the published and oral accounts of Cordillera NGO workers, the effect of Macli-ing’s narrative is de-heroicizing, particularly when Macli-ing reflects on the feelings of vulnerability she experienced as an effect of the physicality of the confrontation itself:

When we went down to the [mine workers’] tents and attacked, it was then that I realized that men are a lot stronger than women. I still vividly remember how we fought with Engineer Perfecto… I remember myself with my three [women] companions being thrown in the air as we tried to attack him. He’s really strong and he was holding tight onto their tent. I still remember how hard it was. I cried then and would feel like crying when I remember the incident.
It is worth noting that Macli-ing – the only commentator whose phenomenology of the event is based on her presence as a participant – makes no reference to the ‘breast-baring’ and ‘undressing’ that are central to other activists’ effectuations. Indeed, Macli-ing only affirmed women’s utilization of such bodily display when I asked her about the tactic directly. Rather than intentionalize this difference in emphasis or account for it in any number of facile ways – for example, by framing it within a narrative economy transposing coherence and rupture, a psychoanalytic economy transposing absence and presence, or an ethnographic economy transposing objectivity and interest – I prefer to focus on the effects and potentialities of these divergent representational emphases.

Occasionally, divergences of effectuation have to do with details that can reinflect the significance of Mainit’s women’s mode of embodiment. A minor example is how the CPA account suggests the Mainit women’s exhibition of sexed body parts was a planned tactic of confrontation, while Macli-ing states unequivocally that it was not: “the women who undressed did not plan this [in advance], it was a lightning decision” (Macli-ing interview). A more substantive example is an ambiguity regarding which sexed body parts women revealed. With a few notable exceptions, all the published and interview-based narratives I gathered from Macli-ing’s inattentiveness to the embodiment of women’s opposition could be attributed to endless factors, of course – Christian gender ideology, selective memory, concern about reproducing images of Bontok savagery, an unwillingness to position herself as informant tasked with elaborating the complexities of a Bontok ethico-visual-corporeal regime, etc. Methodologically speaking, however, I have no interest in diagnosing irretrievable psycho-affective causality for divergences, incoherence, or absences in research participants’ narratives, particularly in order to create more coherence and seamlessness in my narrative.

These two exceptions are Taulli-Corpuz’s 1984 account and the 2009 CPA newsletter article. I feel compelled to note that the CPA article was published in September 2009, several months after a series of interviews I conducted with Macli-ing and other CPA women organizers regarding the confrontation between Mainit and BC in the mid-1970s, and women’s mode of embodiment in these and other similar mobilizations. I cannot help but wonder what effect my

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134 Macli-ing’s inattentiveness to the embodiment of women’s opposition could be attributed to endless factors, of course – Christian gender ideology, selective memory, concern about reproducing images of Bontok savagery, an unwillingness to position herself as informant tasked with elaborating the complexities of a Bontok ethico-visual-corporeal regime, etc. Methodologically speaking, however, I have no interest in diagnosing irretrievable psycho-affective causality for divergences, incoherence, or absences in research participants’ narratives, particularly in order to create more coherence and seamlessness in my narrative.

135 These two exceptions are Taulli-Corpuz’s 1984 account and the 2009 CPA newsletter article.
Cordillera NGO workers stated that the Mainit women exposed only their breasts (Aquino-See, Joanna Carino, Jill Carino, et al). However, Macli-ing asserted that women “removed all their clothes.”

For Tauli-Corpuz, the mobilizations in Mainit, Bontoc and in various Kalinga ili during the 1970s illustrate the central role of women in Cordillera peoples’ assertions of political autonomy and self-determination. She posits the feminine modes of embodiment utilized in each mobilization as essentially commensurable, offering spare explanation of women’s choice of tactics:

In these cases, stripping naked had been used as a common weapon by women. The act was believed to divert the enemy’s attention which would then give the women a chance to attack and strike upon the unsuspecting foes. It is equally believed to neutralize danger of any form…

For Tauli-Corpuz, “stripping naked” is a diversionary tactic that also bears a protective function in that it “neutralizes danger.” Tauli-Corpuz does not elaborate how this tactic neutralizes danger, but both she and Aquino-See concur that women’s undressing produced fear, not merely shame. Others contend that Mainit women’s exposure of sexed body parts is not epiphenomenal to the action – a mere diversion – but constituent of the form of confrontation itself. In the following accounts, commentators offer various explanations of how unconcealment of feminine sexed body parts produces an ethico-visual zone of confrontation which works to ‘neutralize danger’ in part by producing shame.

Zenaida “Manang Briggs” Pawid is an Ibaloy-Bontok woman in her 70s who grew up attending school in Baguio City, Benguet and spending summers in Bontoc ili. She attended the University of the Philippines-Diliman where she majored in Political Science. Pawid’s political research had on CPA’s framing of the event for this article, particularly because I freely shared my interview transcripts with those whom I interviewed.
organizing began as a college student under Martial Law and continued after Marcos’ ouster in
the fields of indigenous policy and peace advocacy. From 1992-93 she was selected by
Cordillera activists to participate in a delegation representing Cordillera indigenous peoples to
the National Unification Commission, which created a framework for ‘national reconciliation’
with Corazon Aquino’s administration. From 1993-98 Pawid represented Cordillera IPs as a
member of the negotiating panel in peace talks between the state, the CPP-NPA-NDF, the CPA,
and the CPLA (Cordillera Peoples Liberation Army). Pawid is the author of a commonly-taught
university text entitled *A People’s History of Benguet*. Among the narratives she has gathered
over the years are stories shared by direct participants in the Mainit mobilization against Benguet
Corporation.

At first, I couldn’t quite understand why they did this. One of the women
from Mainit who actually unrobed, who is dead now, I asked her, “Why did you
have to remove your clothes? Why didn’t you just hack the men on the head?”
She said, “You know I told [the mine workers], ‘You come, come and look at me
and look at where you came from,’” that’s how she explained it. She told them,
‘Look at me in my nakedness, this is where you came from. You’re looking at
your mother.’” And of course, some of the men who were there were from
Bontoc and they understood that. They understood the taboo, so they dropped
everything and ran, not because they were scared of the women but because this is
*paniyaw* [taboo].

And when she told me that, I asked her, “So is that why you unrobed?”
And she said, “Yes, we took off our skirts and said, ‘you come, you come—you
see where you came from!’” And everybody just put down and ran away. So I
said, “You know what, they thought that you were going to rape them!” I told
her. Then she said, “Maybe the Ilokanos among them, but not the [Bontok]
men!”

I asked her because I wanted to know exactly, “Was it true? Why did you
do that?” and her explanation was they knew it would be futile to do any physical
action because they were women. So the best thing they thought was, “Let’s put
shame into these people. Anyway some of them are from are from Mt. Province,
from Bontoc so they would understand.” That’s what she said, “They understood
so that’s why they wouldn’t insist.”

Pawid’s account above resonates with Macli-ing’s in many details. Macli-ing, too,
affirmed the significance of the utterance accompanying exposure of sexed body parts: “When
the women of Mainit undressed, they told the men [the confronted], ‘Before you mine my mountain, mine me!’ and ‘Come see where you came from!’” (Macli-ing interview). In Pawid’s account, the Mainit woman emphasizes that her bodily exposure is accompanied by the exhortation to look. She urges the mine workers not simply to observe her nakedness, but to “see where you came from” – the vulva, the vagina. In inviting the men to look at their mother, she invokes what Lumbee legal scholar Robert Williams calls ‘fictive’ kinship. Rhetorically pluralizing her sexed body and rendering it interchangeable with those of the mothers of the men she confronts, she becomes their mother. Through her utterance, she attempts to force ascription to her vulva and vagina their reproductive – rather than erotic – capacities. The mode of address of her utterance and its content - enunciation, interpellation, and exhortation; you, come, look – renders her sexed organs an object of masculine visuality, an object from which the men originate.

III. Testicular targets

There is another corporealized aspect of the Mainit women’s confrontation with Benguet Corporation that is mentioned by Macli-ing, but does not surface in any other accounts. In recounting the four Mainit women’s attack on Benguet Corporation’s Engineer Perfecto, Macli-ing remembered, “We were supposed to squeeze his balls but because he was wearing maong pants [denim jeans], it was really hard” (Macli-ing interview). When I asked why the women chose this tactic, Macli-ing explained, “That was the only remedy because we didn’t have guns and we can’t use bolos. Because if they saw us approaching with bolos or guns, then they would

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have known our plan and would have been ready to fight us back” (ibid). She added that testicle-crushing was “our only remedy to fight with men who are a lot stronger than us” (ibid).

In the interview excerpt below, Macli-ing links testicle-squeezing in the context of anti-mining confrontation to a narrative regarding testicle-squeezing in the context of *kalon*. Kalon is the practice of arranged marriage between *kakachangyan*, the most propertied class among the Bontok, as a means of perpetuating and concentrating wealth (measured primarily in terms of *payew*, or irrigated rice fields). Macli-ing speaks in Bontok and Ilokano, and is translated by Judith Banga-an and “Manang Vera” (a pseudonym).

MC (Melisa Casumbal): But with regard to the testicle squeezing, what is the context of this? Is this something that women did even before the action against Benguet Corporation?
PM (Petra Macli-ing): Such practice started before when kalon were highly observed especially among rich families. So men from rich families made sure to marry women from rich families as well. Parents insist on this to guard against their lands being divided with poor people. During the honeymoon of one “fixed” couple, the woman who does not agree with the concluded wedding squeezed the balls of her husband and killed him. Such event was not known in the community for many years. The people were confused about why the man died on the night of their honeymoon. The answer was known eventually after the woman was married to a man from a poor family. When the balls are broken, the men died.
MC: Is this a practice done mainly in Mainit?
PM: No! It is a known thing within the Cordillera.

While several Bontok women with whom I spoke concurred that testicle-crushing is understood to be a profoundly insulting, emasculating act, Macli-ing is the only one who associated it with an assertion of feminine romantic autonomy or murder.

Notably, however, Agnes Panay, from Bontoc ili, did also situate testicle-crushing within the intimate, micropolitical sphere of heterosexual marriage *as well as* in the context of the Bontok “Women Power” election protest of 1988. Panay stated that within the sphere of the home, testicle-crushing is a common response of women to masculine violence. In the interview excerpt below, Panay begins by describing how women participants in the “Bontok Women
Power” election protest did not ‘strip naked,’ ‘beat up,’ or ‘maul’ any of the male election
officials – but they did crush some testicles.

MCS: So there was no disrobing, no physical assault, no mauling…but there was some testicle grabbing.
Mng. Agnes Panay: Yes [laughs]. We tried to grab the mayor as he was climbing the stairs, we tried to pull his feet to keep him from going upstairs to count ballots. It was the older women...
MCS: So the older women… they were the ones squeezing his testicles?
AP: Yes.
Mng. Mering Merero: Including the police.
Mng. Agnes Panay: Even the police, wherever the police goes, we try to stop them from going up to the canvass. So that they will not block us when we go to stop the ballot-counting. We are guarding on the stairs so that nobody will go there.
Mng. Mering Merero: To drive them away.
MCS: Why grab their testicles? Why not hit them with something? Or push them with something?
Mng. Agnes Panay: No, we do this because that is insult to them. The women were trying to insult them. Because when you hold those private parts of the body that is something like a malice for them according to culture. If you are really a man, why fight with us? Something like that—why fight women? When they are there, why do you trespass against them?
MCS: Is this technique used in other contexts?
Mng. Agnes Panay: Yeah, when you fight. When a man fights you, they use that. When they try to slap you or what.
MCS: So if a man tries to be physically violent with a woman, she’ll do like that? And it’s common knowledge, that this is what you do to…
Mng. Agnes Panay: It is a common defense but you don’t have to use it that much.

IV. Kalinga women’s corporealized confrontation with the National Power Corporation (NAPOCOR) as lusay or enlaños

Duppag, Kalinga villager Leticia “Inay Letty” Bula-at has been an active member of the Cordillera Peoples’ Alliance, as well as Cordillera women’s organizations Innabuyog and CWEARC (Cordillera Women’s Education, Action, and Research Center), since their inception in the 1980s. Now in her 60s, she was 28 during the height of Kalinga opposition to the Chico IV project in Tomiangan, Kalinga in 1976, and participated in all of the multiple confrontations
that occurred between various Kalinga ili and the NAPOCOR militia, as discussed in the
previous chapter. Bula-at recounted the rage that villagers experienced when their efforts to
oppose the Chico IV project, which ranged from diplomatic initiatives to direct confrontation,
seemed initially to produce no effect. In Tomiangan, repeated efforts to dismantle the
NAPOCOR encampments were led by Kalinga women. The women, Bula-at explains, were
driven by rage: “[w]e were so angry that the soldiers don’t want to leave!” Bula-at notes that in
two of these confrontations, women expressed this anger in ways that were completely
unplanned, and unanticipated by their opponents.

It was chaos, because it was quickly planned. [Everyone] was already shouting
for the women to come in [from the fields and the ili]. Two of the women, Gen-
ao and Unawa, they were breastfeeding and they joined. They were pressing their
breasts [expressing breastmilk] in front of the soldiers.

When I asked why the breastfeeding women chose to do this, Bula-at replied,

It was out of their own anger. Everybody had their own way of expressing their
anger... there was no instruction. It was not planned that women would do these
things, it was just planned that it would be women. All the actions were
happening simultaneously.

In one confrontation with the NAPOCOR militia, Bula-at stated that some women
removed their tapis, in an act she described both as lusay, in Kalinga, and with the transitive verb
maglabos (in Ilokano, “to undress”). (Tapis is a widely-used generic term for the traditional
woven skirt worn by women throughout the Cordillera, which has specific designations within
each Cordillera language.137)

137 The tapis is mostly worn now on ceremonial occasions in urban areas, but is still commonly
worn by rural women when working in the rice paddies or kaingin fields. The tapis is traditional
attire even for Ibaloi women, who have no tradition of weaving and historically traded for their
cloth. Historically, tapis designs are highly distinctive to particular peoples and areas in the
Cordillera; however, the generation of a mass commercial market for “Cordillera weaving” since
the 1980s, and the rationalization of its production, has radically dehistoricized, de-localized, and
genericized tapis design.
MC: Mother, why did the women remove their tapis?
LB: I did not, but other women did. [In this confrontation,] I was one of the women who were supposed to grab onto the soldiers. It was the old women. Only the women elders removed their tapis. It wasn’t really planned, it was very instant that they resolved to do that. So even though it wasn’t planned, when one woman did it, others followed. The only reason is for the soldiers to be moved, to be driven away.
MC: How did you know the soldiers would be driven away if the women did this?
LB: Because they will become shy, shy [abain-da-a, bain-da-a]. They will not look.
MC: Is there any other time when women will remove their tapis?
LB: Only when they are very angry. This creates a commotion, a distraction. It is just anger that pushes them to do this.
MC: When the soldiers saw what women were doing, squeezing their breasts, removing their tapis, what was their reaction?
LB: Some soldiers were laughing, the soldiers who are not from here. Some of the Kalinga soldiers asked themselves what they are doing, fighting against the women. The women scolded the soldiers who were from Kalinga. One kabudong\(^\text{138}\) from Balenciagao [an ili that would have been unaffected by Chico IV], his name was Buyugan, I was telling him to go home. So there were soldiers who were Kalinga and from the lowlands. Soldiers from Kalinga reacted differently from soldiers who were not Kalinga. The women had control over the soldiers from Kalinga, once they know. They were scolding the soldiers: “Why are you here? Why do you want us to leave our place? Are we monkeys that you would drive us away from our home?” And the soldiers said, “we were sent to do our job.” There were no soldiers from affected parts of the Chico line, but soldiers from other parts of Kalinga – Lubo, Magnao, Suyang, lower Tabuk, Balenciagao. Kalinga soldiers did not laugh at us, because they know we have a budong with them.

Although I ask for a causal explanation for the perpetration of lusay, it is notable that Bula-at’s response focuses more on the act’s effects. Through this metalepsis Bula-at demonstrates that the confrontation between women and soldiers is fundamentally an encounter between competing regimes of recognition. Mapping the modes of power in this confrontation requires more than acknowledging asymmetrical relations of force. Women’s tactical corporealization aestheticizes the ethical. The confrontation incites dialogue (“scolding”) and self-reflexiveness

\(^{138}\) Member of an ili with whom Duppag, Bula-at’s ili, has a budong, or bilateral peace agreement.
among Kalinga soldiers by forcing unanticipated engagement with the feminine body. The perpetration of lusay – the exhibition of sexed feminine body parts for masculine view under conditions of confrontation – is predicated on an imperiling, rather than fetishing, visuality. For Kalinga men, looking becomes dangerous, the men become shy. For Ilokano men, by contrast, Kalinga and Bontok women’s mode of embodiment is unintelligible, misrecognized. Their laughter flows from the habit of majoritarian, rather than an indigenous, ethico-visual regime. Within these majoritarian visual regimes, the exhibition of feminine sexed organs is coterminous with sex acts and reproduction – not rage, an injunction that diverts masculinized looking, or the de-occupation of militarized space.

V. Bontok and Kalinga ethico-visual regimes in the zone of confrontation

Pawid’s account above posits that the efficacy of Mainit women’s corporealized confrontation tactic was due not to the male mine workers’ fear of the women or their exposed bodies, per se, but because the conditions of such an exposure imposed an ethico-visual regime – recognized at least by Bontok men – that instantiated a prohibition (*paniyaw*) on male visuality. Pawid’s remark, “they thought you were going to rape them!” acknowledges that women’s exposure of sexed organs is subject to misrecognition due to competing visual regimes. Other accounts affirm and elaborate on the visual prohibition Pawid’s account introduces, and its potential instability due to competing regimes of visuality and codings of women’s exposure of sexed organs.

In the CPA account below, Mainit women’s choice of tactics and its efficacy are attributed to an ethico-visual regime that strictly disciplines male looking which takes as its
object the unclothed bodies of older generations of female kin. In this account, violations of the visual prohibition trigger unmitigated, unspecifiable misfortune:

Behind this action is the traditional Bontoc belief that it is taboo for men to see their mothers and grandmothers unclothed, and if they do, they will incur an endless round of bad luck. This drastic measure worked, and immediately, the [Benguet Corporation] mining camp was dismantled and the engineers left their village, and have not returned to this day. (*Hapit* Vol. XVII, No. 3, July-September 2009, CPA, no author, p.5-6)

Petra Macli-ing echoes this explanation for Mainit women’s mode of embodiment. She also situates its efficacy, and its potential destruction by competing visual regimes:

Being naked as a way to show protest... in my own experience, some were laughing at us when we did this. But in our culture, to look at women’s sex organs, to look at where you came from, as well as the breast, which feeds people, will bring *bwisit* or extreme misfortune to anyone. It’s a bad omen; something bad will happen to you when you look at the female sex organ. So [with] some men it worked because you can tell that when they saw us naked, they looked too embarrassed and didn’t pursue. One thing destroying this is what we see now on TV, with people proudly showing their private parts... It has to do with a strong belief, before. If a woman sees a man urinating, she will look away, she will not look at an unclothed body. But now it is different. Now, instead of looking away at people bathing in the river, people – especially the *burguese* [non-Cordillera people] – they enjoy to look.

For Leticia Bula-at, in the context of the Chico IV opposition, the act of lusay effects “shyness” in men; for Macli-ing, being naked effects “embarrassment.” The distance between these two affects, in these contexts, is not so great. It is not difficult to imagine many different situations in which the exposure of sexed feminine body parts might produce reservation, nervousness, and timidity or awkwardness, self-consciousness, and shame among men observers. Debates regarding the policing of public breast-feeding in the U.S., for example, mobilize similar sorts of anxieties about the inability to visually demarcate reproductively from scopophilically sexed feminine bodies.
As Macli-ing, Bula-at, and others point out, however, within Bontok and Kalinga ethics and regimes of visuality, the conditions under which sexed feminine body parts are exhibited for masculine view – and the significance of such exhibition – are distinct. Women subject their vulvas, specifically, to visuality under conditions of confrontation. The vulva and the vagina become “a bad omen.” For Macli-ing, this orchestration of visuality is intended to elicit *bwisit*, extreme misfortune, upon the one who looks. To be subject to *bwisit* is affectively disruptive because one cannot know what form misfortune will take or when it will occur (among those I interviewed, commonly mentioned forms of misfortune ranged from varieties of illness and all manner of injurious accidents to death\(^1\)). Notably, Macli-ing contrasts feminine nakedness within a Bontok regime of visuality and corporealized ethics with an ascendant, scopophilic, televisual regime in which people “proudly show their private parts."

The orchestration of visuality in the perpetration of lusay or enlafos does not de-sexualize the feminine body, though its intent is clearly not scopophilic. Lusay or enlafos actively mobilize sexed feminine body parts and their reproductive capacities against masculinized expropriation of space, resources, and the destruction of Cordillera forms of life. Judith Banga-an, a Bauko, Bontok woman who translated many of my interviews with Bontok women, translated one Bontok women elder’s explanation of the act this way: “Enlafos kills the men out.” Lusay and enlafos are space-clearing, man-scattering orchestrations of visuality that tauntingly invites the male look in order to endanger the spectator, and enervate masculinity – not through an incitement to sex acts, but by mobilizing a reproductive symbolic economy.

While interviewing villagers in other Bontok ili known for staunch opposition to commercial mining, I encountered additional accounts of women’s tactical use of bodily display

\(^1\) See Macli-ing interviews, Carino, Carino, Sgayaam, Lawagan, et al
in other confrontations. For example, women elders in the ili of Betwagan, a barangay of Sadanga municipality, who were teenagers in the 1950s and ‘60s and are now in their 60s and 70s, recounted a confrontation with prospectors working for a mining company identified as Austral Mining. According to Tumrangi Luisa Kanisi and Toy-a Francisca Polon (both pseudonyms), approximately 40 women from Betwagan – including their mothers – and Sadanga ili confronted a group of perhaps two dozen prospectors and support staff in a loosely-planned action. The men of these villages observed from a higher vantage on the mountain, “guarding” the women.

Speaking in Bontok and Ilokano and translated by Joann Panay, Kanisi and Polon stated that women approached the miners where they had begun digging in Sadanga ili. According to Kanisi, the women “removed their tapis” while Polon added they “used their tapis’ to hit the miners” Lola Luisa/Tumrangi Kanisi et al., “Group interview with Betwagan Women Elders, Ernesto Gayyaman,” trans. Panay, Joanne, January 23, 2010.. The women demonstrated this movement by lifting both their arms above their shoulders, their hands positioned as if holding the edge of a tapis, and then jerking their arms quickly up and down as if waving or shaking the cloth. Kanisi stated, “there were no pants before and no underwear, so the women’s pubic hair and private part was exposed” Ibid.. Polon and Kanisi added that while the women were striking members of the mining team with their tapis’, they taunted the miners, shouting, “Come mine us! If you don’t want to stop mining the land, come mine us!” Kanisi, Polon and other villagers assert this action successfully drove away the Austral Mining prospecting team without violent incident. Kanisi and Polon also noted that in this confrontation, the women who removed their tapis’ were strictly women elders of their mothers’ and grandmothers’ generation, well past child-bearing age. Polon explained this was because younger women could potentially be
subjected to violence more easily than older women in such a confrontation. Limiting participation in this mode of confrontation specifically to women elders contrasts with the perpetration of lusay described by Leticia Bula-at in Tomiangan, Kalinga during the anti-Chico IV confrontations, in which primarily women elders, but also some lactating women participated.

Julia “Inay Julia” Bete, who was born and raised in Bontoc ili and is now in her 70s, shared similar stories of this feminine form of embodiment enacted in other contexts. In some cases these incidents well pre-date those memorialized in activist accounts published within the last three decades. For example, Bete recounts an event related by her grandmother, occurring sometime in the 1930s, in which two women from Bontoc ili confronted miners “not from Bontoc.” Bete states, in English:

In Tay-ok [an ato of Bontoc ili], below the road going to Guina-ang [an adjacent Bontok ili], near the [former Philippine Constabulary] barracks, they were mining and two women from the ili told them to get out! But they would not leave. So the women removed their tapis and did like this to them [gestures]. So the miners ran away.

Bete demonstrates the women’s movement of their tapis’ by performing essentially the same gestures used by Tumrangi Luisa Kanisi and Toy-a Francisca Polon when describing Betwagan and Sadanga women’s confrontation with Austral Mining prospectors. Bete lifts her arms to her shoulders, hands positioned as if holding the edge of a tapis, and then jerks them swiftly up and down. Below is an excerpt of my interview with Bete, in which she describes this act in greater detail. Bete identifies the act with the curse that is uttered as the tapis is removed and jerked up and down to strike the opponent. Bete asserts that, according to “the old women,” the embodied enactment of the Mainit women is one women historically also use in self-defense, in situations in which their lives are threatened:

MC [Melisa Casumbal]: When the women remove their tapis to make the miners leave, is it only the women elders who do this? It’s never younger women?
JB [Julia Bete]: Yes. Even us [our generation], we know because the old women says that when somebody is following you or attempting to kill you, or what, you remove your skirt so that you will be naked and do this to them [repeats movements described above]. But if it’s like that, if you will be attacked, you defend yourself like that. Then it does not matter the age of the woman.
MC: What is that gesture, Mother?
JB: So that they will not continue to [approach]. They will be blinded.
MC: Really?
JB: Yeah, that is [what] the old folks say!
MC: And women used this against the people who came to do mining?
JB: The mining, they did that in the [Chico] dam, even in making the road.
MC: Really?
JB: Yes, they removed their tapis [chuckles] and they went there lying down.
MC: Wow!
JB: Yes, that one, the road going to Chalique [also known as Dallican or Darlican, to the west of Bontoc ili].
MC: So they removed their tapis and they lay down in the road?
JB: Yes!
MC: Is there a word in Bontok language for this, parang—when your remove your tapis and try to...
JB: There is! We say, “Makulap ka!” Because “kulap” is [to] blind.
MCS: And it’s as if to say “you will go blind?”
JB: Wen [Yes, in Ilokano. Chuckles.] So that you will not see, what you are working [on], you will not see what you are doing…

VI. Interlude: Ikallakallay-abna

(170) Behold now! kanu [it is said],
the gentleman, [Dulliyaw,]
he leaves the houseyard.
As he looks-and-looks all around,
there is, kanu, Tumbaga,
a man ready to kill.

(175) With one sweep [Dulliyaw]
cuts off the head, exclaiming:
"Crocodile has broken thee!"
from a true warrior [Tumbaga].

Thereupon, all are excited,
(all) the folks, the people of Kagayan:
(180) nothing can be heard-and-heard,
when they emerge [from their houses].

Behold now! Allimbawa [Tumbaga's wife],
Ullálim are epic chants that detail sites and recount events – including journeys, battles, head-taking raids, and romances – featuring southern Kalinga gods and ancestors. Ullálim are performed during feasts, particularly those celebrating the successful negotiation or reaffirmation (‘warming’) of a bodong (bilateral trade and peace agreement between Kalinga and occasionally Bontok ili). Ullálim chants are the specialized knowledge of individuals trained since youth in their performance. The most celebrated ullálim hero is Banna, but many also feature, Dulliyaw, Banna's father.  

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![Image](image-url)
version of the narrative of Banna’s birth and features the exploits of Dulliyaw. In this excerpt, Dulliyaw has just wooed the beautiful Dulaw away from her betrothed, Ya-u. When Dulliyaw and Dulaw attempt to flee her village of Kagayan in the middle of the night, a crowing cock awakens her village-mates, who emerge from their houses to prevent the couple’s escape to Dulliyaw’s home village of Dulawon. Dulliyaw is first beset by Tumbaga, whose head he takes easily. But then Dulliyaw must confront Allimbawa, Tumbaga’s wife, who is a mandadawak (also called manganito, or manga-alisig in northern Kalinga). The mandadawak, often inadequately translated as shaman, priestess, or medium, is “the only religious functionary who has the power to communicate with the various spirits” or pinading (also anito) – ancestor-spirits and nature-spirits – that populate the Kalinga cosmography.¹⁴³

¹⁴³ See Sumeg-ang 2005: 133, DeRaedt 1977, Barton 1949. Barton posits “[t]he priesthood is almost entirely in the hands of women. Entry into it is always in answer to a ‘call’ and is, in a sense, compulsory: the woman begins to sleep badly, has many dreams, grows thin, lacks appetite, believes that her soul has married an anitu [spirit] and that she can extricate herself from the condition only by becoming a priestess (manga-alisig). Or she may become conscious of the call from getting a stomach upset after she has eaten foods that are taboo to priestesses: eel, dog, certain fish, meat of the cow (but not carabao). She is said to be taught the rituals by the gods themselves, not by the older priestesses. But, of course, she has been watching and hearing these since she was a little girl and wondering whether fate would call her to be a priestess when she grew older. Priestesses begin their office at from about thirty-five years of age onward. About one out of fifty old women are priestesses. For their officiations they receive the lower jaw and jowls of the pig and half of the liver, or if they have plenty of meat at home already, fifteen bundles of rice, a ganta of mangos, or a peso or two. They never ask for a fee. Men are much more rarely priests, but there are a few, and some of them have great renown. Priests formerly concerned themselves mainly with head-hunting rites, but, now that there is little or no use for these, there is little use for priests, except the few exceptional ones who undertake to cure sickness. (Barton 1949, The Kalingas, 24)
In the act of ikallakallay-abna, Allimbawa confronts Dulliyaw by removing her tapis (woven skirt) and then “waving and swinging it” in the air while uttering a curse that invokes Kagayan and Manila village spirits to subject Dullilyaw to their malevolence. According to Billiet and Lambrecht, the text’s translators,

[Allimbawa’s] curse is a call to the pinading spirits whom she, as a shaman, can bid to harass and trouble Dulliyaw's mind, so that he may always walk or run in the wrong direction – certainly a terrible alawag or curse. Her call is reinforced by the waving and swinging of her skirt. Why does she call the pinading of Manila and Kagayan? Because, like all the Kalinga, she believes that the pinading who live in the stones, boulders, trees, and springs of her own village (Kagayan) and the village(s) of friendly neighbors (Manila) are friendly to the inhabitants of her village, but unfriendly to those of other villages. Since the pinading protect the persons friendly to them, participating in their griefs and misfortunes, … they can easily be engaged to harm the enemies of their human friends. The enemy in this ullálim episode is Dulliyaw, who comes from Dulawon, the village which is represented, in many ullálim, as being at odds with Kagayan and Manila.144

In this well-known ullálim, ikallakallay-abna – Allimbawa’s waving and swinging of the tapis or woven skirt, along with her utterance of a curse invoking spirits to help avenge the killing of kin, is successful. Dulliyaw and Dulaw are unable to escape Kagayan ili and are forced to languish in confinement for three years. Billiet observes that the practice of ikallakallay-abna does not appear exclusively in ullálim, but is a common practice in situations in which a Kalinga villagemate has been killed and vengeance is required. According to Billiet, “[i]n such instances, many women of the village go to the house of the person who was killed and from the window wave and swing their skirt in the direction of the killer's village, while they utter [various] cursing formulas.”145

Notable about this ullálim narrative is not simply Allimbawa’s ability, as mandadawak, to successfully mobilize the powers of the village’s spiritual protectors to help avenge her slain

144 Billiet and Lambrecht 1970, 113 Note 184.
145 Ibid.
husband. It is also striking that within the narrative language, the *exposure* of sexed body parts, thus the sexed body parts themselves, do not merit mention or figuration. These are rendered incidental to the act of ikallakallay-abna. Indeed, the narration of ikallakallay-abna fails even to register that a revealing of the (sexed) body must occur for Allimbawa to “wave and swing [her tapis] in the air.” My lack of expertise in Kalinga language, particularly the formal Kalinga of the ullálim genre, limits my ability to develop this argument further. Hopefully, future field research will yield opportunities for appropriate consultation with Kalinga language and literature specialists. Here, I will simply draw attention to what the narrative foregrounds – Allimbawa’s feminized power as a mandadawak; her instantiation of this power via incensed utterance of the alawag (curse) and her movement of the tapis; the context of confrontation of an enemy who has taken the head of her husband and ili mate. That these aspects of the event draw narrative attention, while sexed feminine body parts recede from the frame, contrasts sharply with the ways in which the act of ‘disrobing’ or ‘breast-baring’ is mediated in the accounts of opposition to the Chico IV project in Kalinga or to commercial mining in Bontok.

My analysis of ikallakalay-abna is not meant to draw a sharp link or direct comparison to the feminine modes of embodiment I discuss elsewhere in this chapter. Ikallakalay-abna is neither identical to nor co-terminous with other acts of bodily display I examine. Neither do I seek to trace a clear historical line establishing ikallakalay-abna as precedent for these more contemporary, corporealized feminine enactments. Rather, my point is to discuss, to the extent possible, some resonances and divergences in the acts themselves as well as their enabling conditions and mediations. This discussion should be viewed as a heuristic attempt to relate these acts to one another, and to the conceptual, aesthetic, and ethical terrain that constitute their conditions of possibility.
VII. Revivifying a Cordillera feminist history of the present

In 1994, as part of the mobilization against the San Roque Dam that would eventually be built in Benguet Province, a group of Cordillera NGOs staged a reenactment of the Tomiangan confrontation at its original site in Kalinga. The reenactment was part of the Cordillera Day festivities organized annually by the Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA) to commemorate Macli-ing Dulag, the Kalinga elder whose leadership in the Chico IV opposition led to his assassination in 1982. Leticia Bula-at shared the photo of the reenactment below.

At this event, Tauli-Corpuz took the occasion to ask women participants if the tactic of lusay or enlafos could still be effective.
Asked if the women would still [in 1994] bear themselves naked, they think that this weapon is not enough in the present day struggle and believe that they must also carry a gun.\textsuperscript{146}

Tauli-Corpuz’s observation regarding the restricted conditions under which Bontok and Kalinga women’s corporealized forms of confrontation can be efficacious is an important one. This point was reiterated by many of the Bontok and Kalinga villagers with whom I spoke, all of whom noted that women’s position as ‘frontliners’ in barricades, and in attempts to re-occupy space taken over by dam and mining workers or soldiers, could not be maintained once extractive project sites became heavily militarized (see interviews with Bula-at, Macli-ing, Carino, Carino, Yocogan-Diano, Ngayaan, Sanga, Panay and Merrer, Bauer, et al). Some recalled PANAMIN’s Elizalde distributing guns to villagers who agreed to support the Chico IV project. While such heavy militarization did occur in the context of that struggle, the various confrontations between Bontok villagers and corporate mining interests are characterized by the absence of heavy military presence.

\textbf{VIII. Defamiliarizing democracy}

On January 19, 1988, at the climax of a hotly-contested gubernatorial race in Mountain Province, Bontok women occupy the provincial capital offices in Bontoc poblacion to stop the tallying of what they believe to be fraudulent ballots.\textsuperscript{147} The women allege candidate Victor Dominguez has tampered with votes from the barangays of Sabangan, Bauko, and Tadian. They demand the Commission on Elections render these votes spoiled. \textit{The Philippine Inquirer} reports that 50 Bontok women comprise this “Women Power Protest.”\textsuperscript{148} The \textit{Manila Times}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[146] Tauli-Corpuz, \textit{The Cordillera Women in the Struggle for Self-Determination}, 11.
\item[147] Throughout the dissertation, following Sumeg-ang, ‘Bontok’ will be used as an adjective, and ‘Bontoc’ will be used to refer to the location of Bontoc poblacion.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
estimates the number of participants to be 500, while Agnes Panay, a participant, states that approximately 300 women took part.\textsuperscript{149} The \textit{Inquirer} article bears the headline “Tribal Women Maul Official” and asserts, “mountain tribeswomen, clad in traditional handwoven clothes, barged into the town hall” and confronted an election official attempting to count the disputed ballots. When the election official, an alleged Dominguez crony, refused to stop counting, the women “attacked… beating him up with their fists and pulling his hair” (ibid). The \textit{Inquirer} article is accompanied by an illustration of three thick women wearing attire meant to approximate the \textit{tapis}, or traditional woven skirt worn by women throughout the Cordillera. Unlike an actual tapis, however, the caricature ‘tapis’ covers the breasts. In this illustration, the three, thick, raging, ‘tribal’ women wearing ‘tapis’ stomp on a thin, flattened, barely conscious man in western dress, who exclaims in pain while a loinclothed man in the background wonders, “Mga asawa kaya nya yan?” (So that’s the [their] husband?\textsuperscript{150}). Bearing the headline “Igorotas threaten to strip over poll issue,” the \textit{Manila Times}’ mediation provokes further still, stating that the Bontok women “undressed [in front of] the board of canvassers before they mauled” the election official.

\textsuperscript{149} \textit{Manila Times}, March 9, 1988, A15; Agnes Panay interview, January 25, 2010.  
\textsuperscript{150} I translate \textit{asawa} as ‘husband’ here because I believe this comes closest to capturing the imaginary of the illustrator. I should note that \textit{asawa} is a gender-neutral word on its own, akin to ‘partner’ or ‘companion,’ but also suggesting a legal relationship inasmuch as it designates a partner or companion to whom one is married (its most common contemporary usage). In this sense, the sedimented, ‘common-sense’ meaning of asawa becomes incorporated into discourses and practices of heteronormativity.
The “Women Power” protest forces vote-counting to cease. The election results are in limbo. The Commission on Elections (COE) proposes to recount the votes – but not in Bontoc poblacion, as required by law. In an attempt to evade protesters, the COE announces the recount will occur in Baguio City, the provincial capital of Benguet and the urban hub of the Cordillera region, six hours’ drive south of Mountain Province. The Mountain Province police commander threatens to resign if vote-counting is relocated. Weeks later, the *Manila Times* reports, “[t]he threat of… Bontok women to strip and resort to violence has prompted the Commission on Elections to withdraw its order transferring the site of canvassing of votes from Bontoc to Baguio City” (ibid). An election commissioner states the COE decision is due in part to “the insistence of the provincial [police] commander that if he had to obey the order he could not guarantee that he could pacify the Igorot women,” whose “unusual display of defiance” was not orchestrated by opposition candidates, but was “based on the cultural norms and beliefs ingrained in the Bontok culture” (ibid).
These dramatic mediations of the Bontok “Women Power” protest express a political virtuality in which the inability to disentangle autological and genealogical discourses and practices generates curiosity, confusion, and anxiety (Povinelli 2006). In seeking to secure the legitimacy of an election, the Bontok women are not merely autological subjects exercising their liberal right to vote. They become defenders of an autological political order predicated on constitutional democracy’s (impossible) promise to fulfill the contract between demos and state. However, it is the Bontok women’s mode of defense of this autological political order, their “unusual display of defiance,” that draws the attention and concern of commentators, expressed through civilizational discourses. What makes this defiant display unusual, this performance of democracy uncanny? There is the sartorial, of course – but the women’s tapis (as distinct from the ‘tapis’), alone, could merely mark a difference assimilable into sameness that is liberal multiculturalism’s logic of equivalence. Rather, it is the tapis and the violence, the violence and the undressing, the undressing and the un-pacifiability – a concatenation of Bontok indigeneity, bared feminine bodies, and, most importantly, the threat of uncontrollable aggression, brought together within the visual and conceptual space-time of postcolonial, post-authoritarian democracy.

Then there is the essentialist causal explanation that “Bontok cultural norms and beliefs” compel Bontok women to enact democracy as undressing and violence. Bontok women’s distinctive actions are rendered intelligible through an anxious metaracism, expressed in registers both cautionary (an “inability to guarantee the women’s pacification”) and ‘humorous’ (an

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151 “By the autological subject, I am referring to discourses, practices, and fantasies about self-making, self-sovereignty, and the value of individual freedom associated with the Enlightenment project of contractual constitutional democracy and capitalism. By genealogical society, I am referring to discourses, practices, and fantasies about social constraints placed on the autological subject by various kinds of inheritances” (Povinelli 2006, 4).
illustration emphasizing Bontok women’s emasculating savagery). This anxious, postcolonial
metaracism conceptually and affectively echoes colonial modes of racialization and gendering,
particularly through the discourse of pacification.

Below are excerpts of my 2009 interview with Agnes Panay, a woman in her 40s from
Bontok ili (village) and an organizer with the Cordillera Peoples Alliance in Bontoc poblacion.
Panay was a participant in the 1988 Bontok “Women Power” protest.

A Panay: I was involved...because of the fraudulent results of the election. We tried to stop the counting of the ballots. We barricaded the canvassing room. We pushed the policeman [out of our way] so we can enter the canvassing room. That’s what we have done.

MC [Melisa Casumbal]: How many women were you? The news reports I read said mga forty?
A. Panay: No! Much more! We were 300. And the men... were just watching. [Candidate] Dominguez, he was not able to move out and they brought a ladder to let him and Mrs. Dominguez get out of the building, the capitol building. They took a ladder to escape.

MC: So there were 300 of you, you stormed the entrance. You opened the door and all 300 of you rushed into the building?
A. Panay: Yeah, and then we [confronted] the canvassing officer. The canvassing officer was from the lowlands, and I think he was a little tipsy. Because he was afraid. When we entered the canvassing room, he ran away! He tumbled down the stairs. He was hospitalized in Baguio.

MC: But you didn’t hurt him? You didn’t throw him down the stairs? He just slipped? The news reports say that you attacked the canvassing officer, punching him, pulling him, scratching him…
A. Panay: [Laughs uproariously] That is an exaggerated story! When you see his wounds, it’s really from him stumbling down the stairs.

MC: So you didn’t really physically attack him?
A. Panay: No we did not! It is the ballot box that we were after.

MC: Did you remove your clothes?
A. Panay: [Laughter] No we did not. And we did not maul him. [Laughter] Because we were just after the ballot box. Because we were trying to stop the [counting] of the SABATA, the Sabangan-Bauko-Tadian box, wherein we know that it is fraudulent. That is, we know where the fraud is. We are trying to stop that canvassing.
The details of Panay’s account were repeated by other Bontok women with whom I spoke who participated in this protest. In sharp contrast with Agnes Panay’s account, news mediations of Bontok “Women Power” effectuate Bontok women’s deviance from normalized, democratic political participation. This deviance is corporealized, and marked by nakedness, the threat of nakedness, violence, and the threat of violence. Given its distance from the rational, disciplined physical comportment of the normalized participant in democratic electoral politics, such corporealization renders Bontok women’s purported mode of political action unintelligible within liberal regimes of recognition. This distanciation occurs at a moment in the immediate post-Martial Law era, during active public debate regarding the viability of new forms of political autonomy for Cordillera peoples, such as the creation of a Cordillera Autonomous Region (homologous to the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao).

While news mediations of Bontok “Women Power” fictionalize women’s bodily exposure, this fictionalization is, as should be apparent, derived from actual incidents in which Bontok and Kalinga women expose sexed body parts under conditions of confrontation. Several aspects of this event and its mediation are striking – the corporealized way in which Bontok women demand transparency and accountability in liberal democratic protocol through creation of a feminine barricade; the way in which this act was recoded as undressing and physical assault; the way in which this fictionalized undressing and physical assault became a threatening sign of Bontok women’s unpacifiability; and ultimately, how some combination of factors including Bontok women’s organizing and anxieties about their unpacifiability resulted in their desired political outcome. Perhaps most striking, however, is the irony that, in this instance, it is Bontok women’s distinct forms of indigenous political subjectivity (e.g., women assuming front-

152 See interviews with Mering Merrero (January 2010) and Winnie Ananayo (January 2010).
line positions in face-to-face confrontation with adversaries) that compelled liberal democracy’s improvement.

The author with Mering Merero (center) and Agnes Panay (right) in Bontoc poblacion
The author with translator Ruel Bimuyag (center) and Inay Petra Tannaw Macli-ing (right), Bontoc poblacion

Tumrangi Luisa Kanisi and Toy-a Francisca Polon in foreground, Betwagan ili, Sadanga, Bontok
Inay Petra Tannaw Macli-ing
Dr. June Prill-Brett, University of the Philippines-Baguio, Baguio City, Benguet
Inay Leticia Bula-at (left) with the author in her home in Duppag ili, Kalinga

The author with Tony Ngaya-an (2nd from left), Sagyam Ngaya-an (2nd from right), and “Cesar” (right), office of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance, Tabuk, Kalinga
Chapter Four
The Ethico-Visual Regime of Lusay, Enlafos, Kulap, or the Vulval Curse, Part II

I. Contesting origins of the vulval curse

Even during intervillage warfare, women from the enemy village were never sexually violated (see Prill-Brett 1975). Women who are caught in the rice fields can defend themselves by baring their sexual organs and cursing the men to “go back to where you came from.” This is considered “bad luck” for the enemy, since it is believed in the forgotten past when the men pursued their revenge [by killing women who had exposed their sexual organs], they were cursed and literally lost their heads. Thus, during intervillage warfare, warriors made sure that the women of the enemy village who are found in the rice fields should not be warned [of the warriors’ approach] to prevent the women from cursing the men by exposing their sexual organs. The lesson has been handed down to Bontok warriors who sometimes took women’s heads in revenge, but did not commit rape, which they considered lawa or inayan (taboo).153

-- June Prill-Brett, Gender Relations and Gender Issues on Resource Management in the Central Cordillera, Northern Philippines, 2004, 17–18.

Bontok anthropologist June Prill-Brett is widely recognized as the preeminent scholar working in the field of Cordillera Studies today. Prill-Brett has published widely on Bontok warfare, peace pacts, and ritual; traditional political institutions, modes of governance, tenurial law, and resource management practices throughout the Cordillera; and on Bontok gender relations. Her ethnography Bontok Warfare (1985) is one of a handful of studies of war as it was practiced throughout central Bontoc until the effective prohibition of head-taking in the mid- to late-20th century.154 Based on nearly three years of fieldwork in Tukukan, and supplemented by archival research, Prill-Brett documents accounts of armed conflict from the 1870s through the

153 Prill-Brett, Gender Relations and Gender Issues on Resource Management in the Central Cordillera, Northern Philippines, 17–18.

In the epigraph above, June Prill-Brett describes a practice associated with intervillage warfare that resonates with that previously described by Julia Bete. Prill-Brett posits that historically, within customary law governing the conduct of war among the Bontok, the lives of women and men were equally valued as targets in armed conflict.\(^{155}\) If the cause of war was the spilling of blood, violent revenge was the only way to appease the spirit of the slain.\(^{156}\) If the kin of the deceased determined it appropriate, revenge could be achieved by taking the head of anyone – man, woman, or child – from the village of the killer. If the kin of the deceased were more particular, however, they might require the head of someone directly related to the killer, or someone from the killer’s village whose wealth or stature was commensurable to their slain kin.\(^{157}\) Many colonial and postcolonial ethnographies of the Bontok (and the Kalinga and Ifugao) thus document the killing of women as well as men in smaller, ambush-style head-taking raids as well as in larger, formal intervillage battles.\(^{158}\)

\(^{155}\) “Warfare, as commonly practiced throughout he Bontok culture area, is of 3 types: the faroknit (formal battle), the liplip (ambush by a single individual or a small group), and the opug (raid of a village by a relatively large force).” Prill-Brett, “Bontok Warfare,” 79.

\(^{156}\) “There are supernatural consequences if wrongs, particularly deaths, are not avenged. It is believed that the spirit (anito) of the unavenged victim causes illness, disasters, and even death among not only the victim's kin but also the entire village. Retaliation is in this sense considered necessary for the protection of the village. All aspects of the ceremony for a beheaded man are directed at a cursing of the murdered and his village, thus building up the feelings of hostility and aggression” Prill-Brett, “Bontok Warfare,” 77.

\(^{157}\) Prill-Brett, “Bontok Warfare,” 86.

According to Prill-Brett, however, Bontok women had one means of defense against such violent attack. This was to “bare their sexual organs” and “curse the men to go back to where [they] came from.”\(^{159}\) Warriors thus cursed would not kill the women who cursed them, for fear of being fatally imperiled in battle or otherwise subject to capricious misfortune. The potency and aleatory nature of this curse is why, according to Prill-Brett, warriors on head-taking raids took care to pass through rice fields surrounding enemy villages with great stealth. If they attracted the notice of women working in the rice fields surrounding the enemy village, they would be vulnerable to such a curse (Prill-Brett interview), an enactment I refer to as the *vulval curse*.\(^{160}\)

As these accounts indicate, Bontok women’s orchestration of such emasculating visual encounters is clearly not uniform or modular. There are key divergences across these four sets of accounts from Julia Bete (Bontoc ili), June Prill-Brett (Tukukan ili), Tumrangi Luisa Kanisi and Toy-a Francisca Polon (Betwagan ili), and Petra Macli-ing (Mainit ili). There is also, however, some striking resonance. In all four accounts, women’s enactment is described not as ‘breast-baring,’ but as an exposure of the vulva and vagina. For Bete and Prill-Brett, this exposure is accompanied by an utterance identified as a curse. Prill-Brett posits the vulval curse as strictly defensive: “Historically, women did this to protect their *lives*, not their bodies, or their land” (Prill-Brett 2009). For Bete, too, the vulval curse is used by women in self-defense (“if someone is following you or trying to kill you”). Neither Prill-Brett nor Bete specify that the tactic’s

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\(^{159}\) Prill-Brett, *Gender Relations and Gender Issues on Resource Management in the Central Cordillera, Northern Philippines*, 17.

\(^{160}\) As I discuss in the introduction (see pages …), I am profoundly uneasy with the imposition of a singular term to describe the heterogenous acts I am gathering under the sign ‘vulval curse.’ However, I have yet to work out another method by which to reference these heterogeneous acts collectively, that does not severely burden my reader.
efficacy as a mode of self-defense is contingent upon its enactment by women elders, specifically.

There is also variation in the content of the utterance. For Bete, the utterance is one that targets masculine visuality – “Makulap ka!” (“Be blinded!”), while Prill-Brett observes that the utterance is an injunction for men to retreat – “Go back to where you came from!” For Macli-ing, Kanisi, Polon, and Pawid, the utterance is a taunting exhortation that is not explicitly described as a curse – “Before you mine, mine me! Come see where you came from!” As previously discussed, this taunt synecdochally invokes the vagina as a sign of birth and the maternal relation. Further, in substituting women’s bodies for mineral resources to be mined, the taunt transposes the ethical relation to one’s mother with that to the land.

There is also variance in the kinesis associated with the vulval curse. Bete, Kanisi, and Polon assert that the tapis is removed, waved in the air, and used to strike those against whom the curse is directed. Prill-Brett and Macli-ing, however, only describe removing, not waving or striking with, the tapis. Prill-Brett situates the vulval curse within an era in which head-taking as a practice of intervillage armed conflict was common in Bontok, a time that predates the violence of U.S. ‘pacification’ of the Cordillera (a period roughly lasting from 1901 through the end of WWII). Bete does not situate her version of the vulval curse within any particular historical frame, though she does identify the source of her knowledge genealogically (“the old women,” “the old folks”).

II. Generationally-divergent ascriptions of the ethico-visual regime of the vulval curse

Winnifred Ananayo is a Bontok woman in her 40s who was born and raised in Bontoc poblacion, the provincial capital of Mountain Province and thus an urbanized, more ethnically heterogeneous site than Bontok ili. Ananayo attended college in Baguio City (Baguio Colleges
A former leader of the Mountain Province chapters of the Cordillera People’s Alliance in Bontoc poblacion, she is now the coordinator of the women’s group of the local Episcopal church. Ananayo helped to found the Bontoc Women Brigade, a community policing organization I discuss in greater detail below. Like all current and former activists associated with the CPA with whom I spoke during the twelve months of my field research, Ananayo could share some iteration of the story of Mainit women’s confrontation with the Benguet Corporation in the 1970s. While I was interviewing Ananayo, Julia Bete, Agnes Panay, and Antonina Manochon about the work of the Bontoc Women’s Brigade, Ananayo offered the following account of Mainit women’s mode of embodiment. Our interview was conducted in English, which Ananayo speaks fluently.

Winnie Ananayo [WA]: The men [of Mainit] only helped in carrying out the equipment but it was the women who forced the miners to get out of Mainit. When they did enlafos, when they bared themselves, you know, because in our culture it is an insult. That was the only way these people from the outside would listen. Because no amount of talking to them will get them out of the area, no amount of petitions and documents – will they listen to us? They will not. To them the highest form of insult is baring because they do not just do that anywhere. You do not just bare yourself in public. It was a protest, it was actually an expression of their deepest contempt for people who were coming to take what was not theirs… It was done in defense of the land.

MC: So this was able to catch the attention of the mine workers, even though none of them were from the area?
WA: No, they were all from the lowlands.

Ananayo’s causal explanation posits the act of baring or enlafos both as an insult – an expression of deepest contempt for thieving outsiders – and a protest, primarily because it instantiates a deviant public corporeal comportment. As such, it is a tactic with greater rhetorical potency to compel outsiders ‘to listen’ than bureaucratized modes of politics typified by endless ‘petitions and documents.’ Yet Ananayo’s characterization of the confrontation as an unproblematic
opposition between insiders and outsiders, Bontoks and lowlanders, complicates the conditions of reception and intelligibility that others described as important for the tactic’s effectiveness.

Comparing the accounts of Petra Macli-ing of Mainit, Bontoc and Leticia Bula-at of Duppag, Kalinga regarding men’s responses to women’s corporealized opposition allows us to trace considerable resonance. Both highlight the diverging visual and ethical regimes immanent in the encounter between women villagers and male soldiers. Bula-at and Macli-ing observe that in each context, the soldiers were not a homogeneously-positioned group of outsiders – “all lowlanders,” as younger-generation activists Winnie Ananayo in Bontoc, Mountain Province and Terresita Lammawin in Tabuk, Kalinga claim – but a heterogeneous group comprised of Ilokanos from provinces adjacent to the Cordillera, and those from Bontok and Kalinga ili. Younger generations’ ascription enables a mapping of positions and alignments in these confrontations that is expedient because it reduces the ethical terrain of encounter to moralized, identitarian friend-enemy distinctions that hinge on an indigenous and non-indigenous dualism. Yet what Macli-ing and Bula-at make clear is that the efficacy of lusay and enlafos is predicated upon their intelligibility. Intelligibility was only possible because some of the soldiers comprised an interpretive community with a shared onto-theological frame, a shared ethics of sexual and generational difference, and shared genealogical connections to Bontok and Kalinga ili.

Because Ananayo’s account asserts that women’s act is the highest expression of disdain, but her account assumes the terms of the conflict are between insiders and outsiders, her account elides questions regarding the conditions of intelligibility of Mainit women’s exhibition of sexed body parts. If all the mine workers were outsiders, how would they understand that women’s
bodily display is “the highest form of disdain and contempt for those who want to destroy the source of life”? How could the act have any efficacy?

III. Contesting ascriptions of the ethico-visual regime of the vulval curse

The *lu-fid* [woven bark-fiber skirt] is both short and narrow. It opens on the side, and is frequently so scant and narrow that one leg is exposed as the person walks, the only part of the body covered on that side being under the girdle, or *wa-kis*.

The *lu-fid* and the *wa-kis* [woven band worn to hold up the skirt] are the extent of woman’s ordinary clothing...During the last few weeks of pregnancy the woman may leave off her skirt entirely, wearing simply her blanket over one shoulder and about her body. Women wear breechcloths during the three or four days of menstruation.

During the period when the water-soaked soil of the sementera [irrigated rice fields] is turned for transplanting palay [rice] the women engaged in such labor generally lay aside their skirts. Sometimes they return a girdle and tuck an apron of camote [sweet potato] leaves or of weeds under it before and behind. I have frequently come upon women entirely naked climbing up and down the steep, stone dikes of their sementeras while weeding them... In May, 1903, it rained hard every afternoon for two or three hours in Bontoc pueblo, and at such times the women out of doors uniformly removed their clothing. They worked in the fields and went from the fields to their dwellings nude, wearing on their head a covering of camote vines, under which reposed their skirts in an effort to keep them dry...

The women remove their skirts, they say, because they usually possess only one at a time, and they prefer to go naked in the rain and while working in the wet sementeras rather than sit in a wet skirt when they reach home.

Few women in the Bontoc area wear jackets or waists.

The ethnographic documentation of nakedness as a common feature of Cordillera and other Philippine peoples’ corporeality was, of course, central to the U.S. project of pacification in the region. As Nerissa Balce observes of imperialist scopophilia, “the bare brown bosoms of indigenous women were markers of savagery, colonial desire, and a justification for Western imperial rule” in the Philippines, as elsewhere (Balce, *Savage Breast*). U.S. colonial ethnographies of the Bontok and Kalinga, such as Jenks’, typically contain detailed descriptions

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161 Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather*, on the “erotics of ravishment” in the “porno-tropics”
of women’s ‘scanty’ attire and frequent nakedness – a nakedness “that seemed not to trouble them in the least” (Jenks 114). The famous photographs taken by Dean Conant Worcester as head of the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes in the first decade of U.S. colonial rule comprise the most widely-circulated images constituting the porno-tropical visual archive of Cordillera peoples at the turn of the twentieth century. These photographs feature multiple images of bare-breasted Bontoc, Kankana-ey, Kalinga, and Ifugao ‘belles.’

The gendered civilizing project in the Cordillera meant the cessation of head-taking for men and sartorial transformation for women. According to Bontok scholars Prill-Brett and Zenaida Pawid, the disciplining of Bontok and Kalinga women’s nakedness was achieved primarily through the establishment of elementary and secondary schools throughout Bontok and Kalinga by Anglican, Franciscan, Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (CICM), and Jesuit missionaries from the United States, the Netherlands, Belgium, and occasionally lowland Luzon. The presence of these schools was enabled by multiple uneven processes, which included U.S. military pacification campaigns as well as systematic, village-by-village negotiations on the part of the U.S. Philippine Commission and the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes (Fry). Schools established by the religious orders included dormitories for their female students which gradually replaced the gender-segregated sleeping houses for unmarried women (called ulog) and men (called ato) that were common in Bontok ili (Pawid interview, Prill-Brett interview). At these mission schools, uniforms were mandatory. Bontok scholar and indigenous legal advocate Zenaida Pawid attended Catholic elementary school in Bontoc ili in the 1950s and remembers these uniforms well. “We called the blouse the MRB – the missionary regulation blouse. The nuns would give you just the right amount of cloth to sew it. It was white, fitted at
the waist, and had a Peter Pan collar. We would iron them on Sunday nights along with my uncle’s civil service uniform” (Pawid interview).

There is considerable variance among Bontok and Kalinga ili as to when widespread adoption of upper garments for women occurs (Prill-Brett interview). One scholar approximates that after World War II, men and women in most Bontok ili “added the shirt, the coat, and the blouse to their wardrobes” (Cawed 11). In his 1949 ethnography *The Kalingas: Their Institutions and Custom Law*, Roy Barton laments that “these days, the grace of movement and beautiful bodies [of Kalinga men and women] are concealed under baggy, slovenly khaki trousers and coat or shapeless mother-hubbards” (Barton 1949, 11). Full of tender imperialist nostalgia, Barton exclaims wistfully, “Would, oh, would that the Kalingas change back to their own colorful and sanitary garb!” (ibid). Writing in the mid-1960s, Bontok anthropologist Carmencita Cawed observed that “[until recently] Bontok women did not wear anything from the waist up; instead of clothing, the breast, neck, and arms had tattoos.”

Bontok anthropologist June Prill-Brett argues that the discourse of ‘disrobing,’ ‘unclothing,’ or ‘breast-baring’ utilized by activists is problematic primarily because it is ahistorical and decontextualizing. For Prill-Brett, this discourse fails to situate women’s tactic of confrontation within ili-based sartorial, corporeal, and labor practices in which unconcealment of women’s breasts and other body parts is completely normalized. Of Mainit women’s corporealized tactic of confrontation, Prill-Brett argues,

> It is not disrobing! It’s very misleading to [describe this act as] as disrobing, because women have always been disrobed, especially when they work! And men cannot help but see the bodies of their women, their children, any kind of womenfolk. [Those who argue] that it is inayan or taboo to look at your mother’s or grandmother’s body, this is misleading. Because when women cross the river – and indeed, you have to cross rivers whether you are in Kalinga or Bontoc –

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they remove all their clothes so they don’t get them wet. And I’ve seen when we are going or coming from the fields, during a harvest, and it’s so hot, when we pass by a waterfall or a spring, the men are there carrying the baskets full of the harvest, and the women will just go and start washing, washing their [vaginas]!

Prill-Brett thus takes exception to activist accounts of the vulval curse that locate its power in a prohibitive visuality, that is, “the traditional Bontok belief that it is taboo for men to see their mothers and grandmothers unclothed.” For Prill-Brett, there is no generalized prohibition on looking at women’s exposed bodies, but on looking at women’s vulva and vagina, specifically, when these are exposed under conditions of confrontation. For Prill-Brett, as for Pawid and Ananayo, lascivious looking is prohibited as a general rule – and not just for women kin.

According to Pawid,

So if you go through Guina-ang ili even now, you can see those women who never went to school, there in their birthday suits, working in the fields especially during planting season. And you’re not supposed to stare and you’re not even supposed to look. And if you can, you can see provided you don’t stare with some kind of leering smile or making them feel like you saw something you shouldn’t see. They will tell you—somebody will tell you, “You don’t stare at your mom. You don’t stare at your dad!” So you don’t look at the body in that way. But to see a body, to see a naked body, is not something you’re supposed to be shocked about either. So the body is sacred in that sense because it’s not something that you put up for a beauty pageant or a beauty contest. So it doesn’t really matter whether you’re short and fat and squat or thin and tall, the thing is, it’s a body and you respect it (Pawid interview).

Pawid makes the distinction between seeing and looking, between an ethico-visual regime in which unconcealed feminine bodies are normalized and a scopophilic visuality that desacralizes the body by rendering it an eroticized object of the look.

Prill-Brett also takes exception to activists, like Winnie Ananayo, who claim that Bontok women’s corporealized confrontation tactic is primarily a ‘defense of the land.’ “That is not the

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163 *Hapit* Vol. XVII, No. 3, July-September 2009, CPA, no author, p.5-6
origin of this act. Women did not do this to defend the land, but to defend themselves. And I wouldn’t say they did this to defend their bodies, but rather, their lives,” she states emphatically (Prill-Brett interview). Prill-Brett asserts that the originary conditions under which women display their vaginas as a curse are precisely circumscribed. These conditions include a context of confrontation in which women’s lives are threatened, but not their land. This is because inter-village armed conflict in the Cordillera, from pre-colonial times to the current moment, has never been waged in order to appropriate the land or resources of other villages. According to Prill-Brett, “annexation of the territory of the vanquished is not practiced, nor is unnecessary destruction of property…There is no taking of prisoners during warfare, since there is no form of slavery or human sacrifice…[and] there is no raping of women; this is considered taboo and degrading for a warrior.”

Prill-Brett’s distinction between an originary context of the act and contemporary attributions of its significance critiques activists’ polemicizations of the vulval curse. The effect is to situate the act spatio-temporally. Prill-Brett’s assertion of the importance of origins, a

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164 “Bontok warfare requires a demonstration of physical strength and agility in both offensive and defensive tactics as typified in the faroknit type [formal battle]. Its purpose is to fight well, defeat the enemy, take revenge, gain honor, and take heads. It is not used as a means of subjugation; nor is it recalled by informants that in any case a battle has increased or decreased the territories of conflicting villages, although in disputes over water rights an element of territoriality may be involved. Territorial boundaries are now mutually acknowledged; it is, however, possible that warfare was instrumental in originally establishing them. At most, warfare has served, as far as informants recall, to validate existing claims to land use or water rights, and assert a village’s capacity to protect itself against slander or physical harm to its members. Neither has warfare been allowed, in the faroknit and liplip [ambush by a single individual or a small group] form, to continue for long periods that would result in serious decimation of numbers on either side. Both the peace-pact and the mediation of the pinakarsu [individual with natal ties and marriage ties to both warring villages] are mechanisms which stop continued warfare and excessive bloodshed. The opug [raid of a village by a relatively large force often comprised of two or more allied villages] is the single instance among the three forms of armed conflict in which excessive damage and loss of life have been incurred, particularly in its use by the Spanish and American colonizers in their attempts to ‘pacify’ the ‘uncooperative’ villages” Prill-Brett, “Bontok Warfare,” 79–80, 83–4.
policing of origins, if you will, in the face of constant, uneven socio-cultural transformation might seem rigidly traditionalist or nostalgic in its problematization of culture or history. But clearly there is more than ideological difference with Maoist, nationalist Cordillera NGOs at stake for her. In Prill-Brett’s view, contemporary appropriations of the vulval curse by some activists elide the place-based specificity of the act and therefore its non-modularity. She argues that the ways in which the vulval curse has been attempted in contexts outside of Bontok – for example, in Benguet province – does violence to the singularity of the act and the differing legal, onto-theological, and ethico-visual regimes of the places from which it originates and in which it is, for Prill-Brett, inappropriately deployed.

To illustrate her point, Prill-Brett shared a story about a woman from Sadanga, Bontoc, who had squatted on land in Baguio City, Benguet, and built a house. When her house was about to be demolished, she undressed in front of the bulldozer. This was a story that two CPA workers had also shared anecdotally because of the nature of my research and because the incident had occurred relatively recently (sometime in 2009). I was unable to find any published accounts of this incident; however, all the key details were consistent across the three accounts shared in interviews. Prill-Brett’s discussion of this incident is excerpted below.

How did [the act] start, and how did it move from there? Now there is a cause for it! So some women are thinking, we have cause to do that. Because as I mentioned, it happened here in Baguio. This woman from Sadanga [a Bontok municipality north of Bontoc poblacion] built a house on someone else’s land. And she did this because, she said, how come they have so much land, and that’s the land she wants to own, so she built her house. And when the rightful owners removed her, she was removing her clothes, and it didn’t make any difference!

She was with a group of younger woman who…well, they probably have not been educated, but that doesn’t matter. But these young women heard from a group of militant women, you know, women’s power, et cetera, and so she thought, we’re supposed to do this because we’re women. She was told that she should disrobe by natives [from Benguet] who got this idea from outside [from

165 See interviews with Agnes Panay (2010) and Padi Solang (2010).
Bontok and Kalinga women], and now they appropriated this. So when I was asked, as usual, [for my analysis,] I said, number one, it won’t work because you [committed] a violation. You only do that within your territory, because it has a meaning in that territory. If you do this outside of your territory, it doesn’t mean anything. In other words, you are the one at fault, because you tried to appropriate other peoples’ property. So I put it in her terms. I said to this young woman, what if someone starts working your rice field and keeps you from using it? She said, of course we’ll do something about it, you cannot do that, that’s ours, that’s been handed down from generation to generation.

I said, exactly. You did the same thing! You come over here to Baguio, you took this land. And especially with titled properties here… Some people don’t give a damn, you know, they just come and think they can use might and say “we’re this and that” – it’s the use and abuse of ethnicity. In other words, they do this without even realizing that within your own culture, you’re violating rules. And the basic rule is that you do not go and occupy other people’s property. I said that’s why [this tactic] will be useless. If there are spirits there, they will even damn you for it. So, in other words, sometimes, they don’t even know. If you hear it from them, sometimes they reinvent certain things for their purposes, which I understand. But most of these terms or concepts or symbols that are used today did not have the same meaning historically. [What is kept] is the custom, but not the function – what it was, what it meant. It is torn out of its context (Prill-Brett interview).

IV. Gendered discourses of unpacifiability

To my knowledge, there are only three published accounts of Bontok women’s corporealized confrontation against foreign miners that are not written by contemporary activists. One appears in Howard Fry’s *A History of the Mountain Province* (2006). Fry’s mediation cites the other two accounts as primary sources. These are a *Manila Bulletin* article dated April 2, 1937, entitled “Igorots Make ‘Last Stand’ on Mining Claims,” and a *Philippine Graphic* article dated April 8, 1937, entitled “Treat Igorots with Tact, Says Quirino.”

Fry details a 1937 confrontation between Bontoks and the Fidelisan Mining Company. During the 1930s, “the decade of the gold rush” in the Cordillera, eleven mines were producing gold in Benguet, and another eleven companies or associations were prospecting in Kalinga. Fry does not mention how Kalinga peoples responded to mining interests in their territory, but he
describes sustained opposition by Bontok peoples to the presence of commercial mining in their ili. According to Fry, “the arrival of the Fidelisan Mining Company caused a revival of former unrest in [various Bontok ili]. This new crisis persuaded some local warriors to go on a rampage in the area which had been staked out by prospectors” (Fry 186). In the Philippine Graphic’s mediation of this confrontation, and of Interior Secretary Elpidio Quirino’s narration of it, civilizational temporality and colonial rhetorics of development as techne are mobilized by a Filipino official in an arrivant colonialist fantasy to render Bontok resistance as futile and concluding – in 1937. Such indistinctions between civilizing and ruling, the colonial and neocolonial, violence and benevolence, as Mbembe has observed, typify forms of entanglement in the postcolony. The Graphic article’s demonstration of this is worth quoting at length:

Tales of a people uselessly struggling to keep and defend what they honestly believe to be their heritage were told by Quirino after his return from a flying trip to the Mountain Province. The Luzon pagan, the secretary told reporters, is literally on his “last stand” against the persistent march of industry as the forerunner of a new civilization. “The Igorots,” said he, “through the teachings of some of the former [American] governors of the province, have been made to believe that the mountains and hills are their exclusive property. “They did not mind portions of the lower lands being prospected for minerals, but when the seekers of mineral wealth pushed forward to the hills and mountains of Baguio, riding over terraced rice paddies, cutting down communal forests and despoiling the irrigation systems, the native mountaineers felt that the lowlanders were bent on injustice” … In view of his observations, Secretary Quirino advises mining prospectors to deal with the Igorots with tact and understanding. Unless such an attitude is adopted, he fears Igorot hostility would retard the development of mining.

Fry writes that the end of the world gold boom and the “fierce resistance of the Bontoc Igorots” kept miners out of Bontoc territory during this decade Howard Tyrrell Fry, A History of the Mountain Province, revised ed. (New Day Publishers, Quezon City, 2006), 187.

Of Bontok women’s mode of embodiment in the confrontation with Fidelisan Mining prospectors, the Manila Bulletin reports:
Anticipating retaliation, the warriors placed scores of their women naked within the clearings of the mining claims. The women were instructed to stay there and to refuse to move even if they were to lose their lives by staying… Armed warriors, in the meanwhile, were concealed in trees on a higher mound commanding the clearings ready to go into action and defend their homes if their women were harmed or if the authorities showed determination in driving them away. Presence of mind of the constabulary officers prevented a wholesale killing, [Interior] Secretary Elpidio Quirino said. Instead of firing upon the outraged natives, the constabulary withdrew.166

In its mediation of the event, this account gives Bontok women diegesis without poiesis. Unlike contemporary accounts of Kalinga women’s opposition to NAPOCOR or Mainit women’s opposition to Benguet Corporation, in which women foreground their own decision-making power, rationality, and generative engagements in worlding their world, women are figured as battle bait, mere receptacles of male warriors’ ‘instruction.’ But in the stories handed down to June Prill-Brett of this particular confrontation, “the women who removed their clothes cursed the men they confronted. They said, ‘Curse you! Go back to where you came from!’ And it was only the old women who did this, women who have stopped child-bearing” (Prill-Brett interview). Below, I consider the significance of “the old women’s” perpetration of this act, and other, contemporary modes of power deployed by women elders.

V. Old women, the colonial project, and the Bontoc Women’s Brigade

Male and female [Bontok] elders are given the highest prestige due to their closeness to the ancestors, and their rich experiences in life. Old women, particularly, are known for their ability to communicate with the spirits of the dead as medians (mensip-ok) during public rituals.

-- Prill-Brett, Gender Relations and Gender Issues on Resource Management in the Central Cordillera, Northern Philippines, 17.

Mr. Worcester, as we rode off, expressed the liveliest satisfaction with the meeting. These people, returning to their rancherias, he said, would talk for a year of their treatment at the hands of the Americans, of the gift of palay (rice) to four hundred people, for two days, to say nothing of two vacas (cows) and of

166 Philippine Graphic, April 8, 1937, “Treat Igorots with Tact, Says Quirino”
other gifts. Next year, he hoped, half of them would come in; besides, the start made was good; the presence of so many women and children was a good sign, and equally good was the total absence of old women. For these are a source of trouble and mischief with their complaints of the degeneracy of the times. They address themselves particularly to the young men, accusing them of a lack of courage and of other parts, taunting them with the fact that the young women will have none of them, that in their day their young men brought in heads, etc. Thus it has happened, especially when any native drink was going about, that trouble has followed. It is the practice, therefore, of our Government, when arranging these meetings to suggest that the old women be left at home, and if so left, it is a good indication.


As Secretary of the Interior of the Philippine Islands in 1910, Dean C. Worcester was responsible for conducting “annual tours of inspection” through the Cordillera. U.S. Army Lieutenant-Colonel Cornelis De Witt Willcox, a professor of modern languages at West Point and founder of the *Journal of the United States Artillery*, accompanied Worcester on this tour and recorded his observations in a travelogue. In his preface to *The Head Hunters of Northern Luzon: From Ifugao to Kalinga: A Ride Through the Mountains of Northern Luzon*, Willcox gently frames the function of the road trip: “to note the progress of the trails and roads, to listen to complaints, to hear reports, devise ways and means of betterment and in general to see how the hillmen [were] getting on” (Willcox 1912: 21). But the appendix to Willcox’s text explicitly legitimizes the project of violent political dispossession of which he was a part by asserting American success in civilizing the ‘wild men’ of the Cordillera and protecting them from repressive, rebellion-prone lowlanders. In Willcox’s contemplation of lowlanders and

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highlanders eligibility for political independence, we see again the figure of the Indian as a transit of empire (Byrd 2011):

With our own treatment of the American Indian in mind, our people should be the last to consent to any change in the relations or administration of the wild men of the Philippine Islands not fully justified by the amplest necessity, not warranted by well-grounded hopes of greater improvement. These men, for the first time in their history, are having a chance. That chance is fair to-day, and will continue fair so long as its administration lies in American hands, competent, trained, and experienced.

In taking over the Philippines, we have incidentally become responsible for a large number of wild men. Their fate is bound up in that of the Islands. Now, these islands may remain under our control, or they may not...But whether or not, in granting independence to the Philippines, we shall be signing the death-warrant of the highlander. Let us repeat that, this people form one-tenth of the population of Luzon: save as we are helping him, he can not as yet assert himself beyond the reach of his spear. Shall we be the ones to mark this as the limit beyond which he shall never go? Let us not deceive ourselves: a grant of independence means the abandonment of hundreds of thousands of people to perpetual barbarism. (Willcox 1912: Chapter XXV)

The ‘wild men’s’ colonial improvement was not only threatened by the prospect of Philippine self-rule by lowlanders, however – as the epigraph introducing this section indicates, the old wild women proved a formidable obstacle as well. The epigraph excerpts Willcox’s narrative of the annual visit to Ilongot territory, then included within the colonial cartography of Mountain Province. We could remark on many aspects of Willcox’s account – the excitement Willcox attributes to Worcester regarding the meeting’s success, for example, or the effects Worcester anticipates of US beneficence. Our focus, however, lies not on the significance of expressions of white love Vicente L. Rafael, White Love and Other Events in Filipino History (Duke University Press Books, 2000), but the additional explanation Worcester offers for the meeting’s success – the absence of “the old women,” and thus the “trouble and mischief” their presence presents for the colonial project in the Cordillera. Worcester’s relief regarding the absence of Ilongot women elders at this 1910 spectacle of imperialist benevolence appears “a
good indication” of the hazard old women presented to U.S. interests in the Cordillera. In a contrapuntal, retroactive reading of omens, Worcester’s relief can be read as a different sort of fortuitous sign – not of “lively satisfaction” with the progress of the U.S. civilizing mission, but an indicator of the efficacy of Cordillera women elders to mobilize gender and gendering forms of power in order to resist foreign incursion. Ilongot women elders’ exhortations to young Ilongot men to perform a warrior masculinity constitute both a gendered generational critique and an injunction to maintain a politically autonomous form of life. Continuity of this form of life requires appropriate gendered enactments – “bringing in heads.” This continuity is threatened by the inauguration of a new, degenerate time of Ilongot masculinity, precipitated by the U.S. introduction of superior military technology, coupled with U.S. participation in a symbolic and material economy whose perceived nomos is reciprocity. For Ilongot women elders, of a generation whose men “brought in heads,” the colonial project is a temporalized crisis of masculinity. The potency of old women’s response to this crisis – taunting, rhetorical emasculation as provocation for war – suggests the modes of power and subjection that women elders bring into relation due to their locus of enunciation.

In the 1980s and 1990s, several Bontoc ili and municipalities, including Besao, Sabangan, Bauko, and Bontoc poblacion instituted policies regulating the sale and consumption of alcohol. It was women who lobbied for adoption of these regulations, complaining of the rapid increase in public drunkenness, gambling, family violence, thefts, and other crimes that coincided with the widespread availability of commercial alcohol for the first time in the 1980s. These ‘liquor bans’ generally prohibit the commercial sale of alcohol in stores after 9 p.m. and in bars after 10 p.m. In 2006, in Bontoc poblacion, a voluntary organization of women was organized to assist local police with implementation of the ordinance. This ‘community
policing’ organization, the Bontoc Women Brigade or Brigada, initially drew the participation of over 60 women, nearly all of whom were farmers and in their 60s or older. Though the number of women volunteering for the Brigada has fallen over the years, there are still over a dozen lolas (grandmothers) who take turns patrolling the streets of Bontoc poblacion every night at 10 pm in groups of 5 or 6. Wearing bright blue jackets emblazoned with ‘Bontoc Women Brigade’ on the back, carrying flashlights and walking sticks, they make the rounds walking from bar to bar, occasionally accompanied by a local police officer who is called for when circumstances demand.

![The lolas of the Bontoc Women Brigade, January 22, 2010, on patrol in Bontoc poblacion. Inay Julia Bete is fourth from the left.](image)

In January 2010 I accompanied the Bontoc Women Brigade on patrol. Being neither favorably nor unfavorably disposed to the liquor ordinance, I was nonetheless acutely curious as to how the Brigada would be engaged by drunk bar patrons disgruntled about being sent home at 10 p.m. At bar after bar, I followed the lolas as they filed in behind Julia “Inay Julia” Bete, their unofficial crier. If there were stairs, Bete would rap on the walls with her walking stick as she
ascended, calling out, “Knock, knock! [in English] Time to go home, time to stop drinking [in Ilokano]!” Once we had all filed into the bar, the patrons, who appeared to range in age from their 20s to 40s, would, as a rule, collectively groan. Some would rush to finish their beers, others would drain their glasses slowly, often deferentially responding to Bete with, “Opo Nanay, last beer na po, ubusin lang ako…” or its equivalent in Ilokano [“Yes, Mother, I’m just finishing my last beer…”] Rarely did any of the other women besides Bete feel compelled to say a word. Their collective physical presence was extremely effective in producing its intended effect.

Then we walk into Churya-a, a bar infamous for regular violations of the alcohol ordinance. It is dark, packed, and twice the size of any of the other bars in Bontoc poblacion. Populated by patrons who look to be primarily in their 30s and 40s, the crowd seems impervious to Bete’s requests to go home. Brigada members split off and begin circulating among the tables, announcing “It’s 10 pm, time to go home, time to stop drinking.” A police officer arrives and makes his presence known. The combination is effective, even in this large, full bar whose patrons easily outnumber the Brigada by 5 to 1.

I am slightly awed. The contemporary Bontok lola, as enforcer of the alcohol ordinance, and the turn-of-the-20th century Ilongot lola, as enforcer of anti-colonial masculinity, are clearly engaged in different political projects – though one could certainly argue for the colonizing power of alcohol. But their privileged locus of enunciation within their societies, and their ability to effectively, collectively, mobilize the deference accorded them due to both their age and femininity, link these figures across temporal and social divides.
VI. Embodied sovereignty, geontological relationality, and the vengeful vulva’s repartitioning of the sensible

[Aesthetics] is a delimitation of spaces and times, of the visible and the invisible, of speech and noise, that simultaneously determines the place and the stakes of politics as a form of experience.

– Jacques Ranciere, Politics of Aesthetics, 13

The ways in which Bontok and Kalinga women’s embodiment continues to be narrated within activist accounts of women’s opposition to extractive development in the Philippines and the diaspora speaks to its significance as an emancipatory mode of feminine embodiment. As with any social text, a definitive reading of this social practice is neither possible nor desirable. My interest in the multiple, conflicting readings of an overwhelmingly celebrated Bontok and Kalinga women’s corporeal politics lies in the desires such readings make possible – the desire to disrupt the feminine body’s overcoding by capital and the state as a productive, national laboring body; the desire to disrupt the developmentalist telos of postcolonial modernity requiring rural peoples to nation-build via entry into circuits of capital; and the desire to unmoor bodies from the strictures of a Catholic, burgis femininity. Kalinga and Bontok women’s corporealized confrontations compel us to think an indigenous feminist politics in the Philippines.

From this examination of Bontok and Kalinga women’s corporealization of confrontation with extractive sovereign power, it should be clear that these corporealizations, these confrontations, are haeccties; they treat bodies not as static material, but as movement. These enactments are singular, contingent, and indeterminate. They resist facile naming. Bontok and Kalinga women’s mode of embodiment in the events I examine is a multiplicity – it is not one, clearly-delimited social practice enacted in the same way every time. There are contours that may repeat from event to event – an exposing of the vulva, an utterance, conditions of
confrontation – but other aspects of the enactment are mutable. There may be a waving of or striking with the tapis, the utterance may be a curse, the perpetrators may be only women elders, the perpetrators may include lactating women, there may be testicle-crushing involved. Bontok and Kalinga women’s embodied enactments are also multiplicities because they are comprised not of a singular act, but a series of multiple acts, bringing heterogenous rationalities and temporalities into relation. Popular, activist, and scholarly discourses describe Bontok and Kalinga women’s embodied enactments as “disrobing,” “breast-baring,” or “stipping naked,” but they have also been described using a heterogeneous nomenclature: enlafos (Ilokano for undressing), lusay (Kalinga for the condition of nakedness), makulap (in Bontok, to be blinded). Multiple ascriptions were provided of the effects of these enactments – to frighten, to divert attention, to threaten impending violence, to shame, to neutralize danger, to show protest, to insult and express disdain, to curse, to bring misfortune.

Although Julia Bete, like June Prill-Brett, acknowledges the vulval curse as a mode of women’s self-defense, she also posits its historic deployment by women initiating confrontation with non-residents of the ili – miners, road-construction crews, hydropower engineers – who violate Bontok customary law regarding land use and access, and collective Bontok modes of “village participatory decision-making” that are emblematic of Bontok governance. Indeed,

168 “During the ma-amongan nan umili (villagers’ gathering), community members are present to participate. Depending on the weight of the occasion for gathering, a te-er (compulsory village confinement period) is imposed, and no one can leave the village under the risk of being fined. It is during this occasion that the problem or proposal confronting the community is referred to the villagers in general, with the elders being the officials most concerned. The barrio captain and the six elected councilmen (recruited from the elders) are a convenient addition to the traditional communication structure. However, the barrio captain has no power to enforce any activity without the official approval of the villagers, which is arrived at by traditional village participation in decision-making. The real power and authority are the community elders when they “sit in council” as a body, to coordinate, hear, and decide cases. These elders are automatically recruited by virtue of age from the upper and lower strata of the community social
these are also the conditions under which Betwagan and Sadanga women elders confront Austral Mining workers, and Mainit women confront Benguet Corporation engineers. In such confrontations, the vulval curse might be viewed as an assertion of what Aileen Moreton-Robinson, Philip Morrissey, and Tracy Bunda conceive as embodied sovereignty. Embodied sovereignty is an open-ended or molecular assemblage\textsuperscript{169} “carried by the body” that connects land, humans, and ancestors as continuous with one another, even as the forms of power, relationality, and temporality immanent to each are multiple, overlapping, and divergent.

For Mortetton-Robinson, embodied sovereignty is “ontological and epistemological” in that it is asserts modes of being and knowing predicated on “everyday actualities” of indigenous relationality, in particular, the “complex relations derived from the intersubstantiation of ancestral beings, humans and land” (Moreton-Robinson, 2). Elizabeth Povinelli conceptualizes these beings, knowings, and modes of relationality as geontological. She writes, “Though ancestrally oriented, local geontologies are not mimetic to the genealogical imaginary of customary law. Instead, people I know treat the ancestral past as the geological material of the present, the flesh as it is now arranged” (Povinelli, Empire of Love, 38). Geontologies are thus

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\textsuperscript{169} Deleuze, Gilles and Felix Guattari, Mille Plateau, 4, 399, 504, etc.
\end{flushright}
enfleshed temporal multiplicities. Because of the things brought into relation – different orders of being, time, place, power, knowledge – the geontological assemblage is inseparable from its deontological dimensions. In other words, geontological relationality is necessarily ethical relationality. While law, expert knowledge, custom – in effect, a whole range of practices and institutions – may circumscribe ethical action, an element of indeterminacy remains, due in part to the surplus forms of power that constitute geontologies themselves. (Povinelli illustrates this point in her discussion of the dangers associated with the Belyuen geontological site of Maliya.) Embodied sovereignty does not presume to contain these surplus forms of power, the lines of flight constitutive of geontologies themselves, nor to dominate them.

 Debates regarding the pragmatics and utility of ‘sovereignty’ as an organizing concept for indigenous projects of political autonomy, self-fashioning, and control of resources are too varied, complex, and contingent to discuss fully here. In thinking through the potentialities and constraints of a notion of embodied sovereignty, however, it is perhaps helpful to use as a point of departure the distinction Philip Morrissey makes, in the context of contemporary Australia, between aboriginal sovereignty “manifested as a corporeal fact – that is, as embodied by Aboriginals” – and as an “enunciated political strategy [which] reflects the interests of diverse… collectivities in Aboriginal society” (Morrissey, 73). Examples of aboriginal sovereignty as enunciated political strategy include those with which we are well familiar – “the ‘thin’ form of sovereignty manifested in a treaty; a welfare model envisaged within a United Nations framework of indigenous rights” – while embodied forms of sovereignty are not wedded to such statist models. Aboriginal scholar Tracy Bunda asserts, “Our sovereignty is embodied and is tied to particular tracts of country, thus our bodies signify ownership and we perform

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170 See Alfred, Spender, Bruyneel, Tully, Moreton-Robinson.
sovereign acts in our everyday living” (Bunda, 75). For Bunda, embodied sovereignty is immanent in the geontological relation which ‘ties’ bodies’ everyday existence to ‘particular tracts of country’ as owners. For Moreton-Robinson, embodied sovereignty is performed through resistant local histories and corporeal practices such as the “public display of the Aboriginal flag and colours on indigenous bodies” (Moreton-Robinson 2003:127). In this sense, Moreton-Robinson argues, aboriginal embodied sovereignty can be sharply contrasted to the dominant paradigm of statist sovereignty that animates the liberal political claim-making of autological subjects. But the question remains, if the alterity represented by embodied sovereignty is so dramatically divergent from sovereign power predicated on the social contract, the absolute juridical authority of the state, individual rights, territoriality, and relations of violence effected through demarcations such as inside/outside, norm/exception, zoe and bios – if indigenous embodied sovereignty is so different, why associate it with sovereign power at all? Taiaiake Alfred, for one, rejects the grammar of sovereignty altogether for the articulation of indigenous political projects. Perhaps we can view the notion of embodied sovereignty as articulated by Moreton-Robinson, Bunda, and others as a pragmatic appropriation of the discourse of sovereignty, rather than the logic of sovereignty (Connolly), in order to render an indigenous conceptualization of political authority intelligible within a colonial political grammar.

If by embodied sovereignty we mean the ontopolitical assertion of authority and ownership of places constituted in geontological relation with beings, and thus a repudiation of the ‘graduated’ forms of extractive sovereignty characteristic of postcolonial techniques of governmentality, then perhaps Kalinga and Bontok women’s vulval curse can be understood as a mode of embodied sovereignty. It is in this spirit that Tauli-Corpuz codes the act as an
expression of Cordillera people’s self-determination. This coding is one reason the act is celebrated in Cordillera activist historiography. But if we reject the grammar of sovereignty in favor of an analysis of heterogenous forms of sovereign power, and reject the coherence of the state as a totalized or unitary formation in favor of analysis of techniques of governmentality, new possibilities may open up for a thinking of indigenous corporeal politics as an intervention in, or disruption of, these other modalities of power.

I find it just as capacious to conceptualize the flows of power and modes of relation instantiated in the ethico-visual regime of the vulval curse as a kind of vulval visuality. Vulval visuality is a way of theorizing relationality that troubles the subject-object, viewer-viewed model of looking. Laura Marks’ conceptualization of haptic visuality posits a dynamic subjectivity, a bodily relationship, between looker and image, rather than understanding the image as the object of a look (Marks, Touch, 3). Vulval visuality instantiates just such a dynamic, embodied relation between the vengeful vulva and those who would be cursed. The vulva is not a mere object to be looked at; the vulva acts. The exposed vulva scatters men, clears them from territory, and, in geontological relation with others, enacts vengeance. In zones of confrontation, the vengeful, cursing vulva is an organ without body in a similar sense as the flying ma`i (vagina) of Hawaiian goddess Kapo'ulakīna'u, an organ whose powers and capacities could easily be separated from the body.¹⁷¹ In exposing sexed body parts under conditions of confrontation, women simultaneously sexualize and desexualize the vulva and breasts, coding these organs such that their reproductive capacities are strictly demarcated from their erotogenic capacities. This coding occurs through orchestration of a visual encounter that instantiates an ethico-visual regime in which the masculine look is imperiling, and whose object is

emasculaton, injury, or unremitting, unspecifiable misfortune. As perpetrated by women elders, as a curse, and as an assertion of political autonomy, vulval visuality is powerfully anti-signifying or a-signifying. The exposed, vengeful vulva and vagina are birthing organs that can no longer give birth, sexed organs that have nothing to do with sex. In unstable relation to everything associated with heteronormative vulva-ness, the vulva can do anything. The vulva chooses struggle. The vulva becomes a weapon.

If the body without organs is, as Eric Alliez argues, “about making conceptual operations physical ones, about the physicality of thought,” (Alliez 98-9), then the organ without body, the vengeful vulva, materializes a concept of the political. Let us banish forever the clichéd model of gendered thought-body relation instantiated in the phrase “to think with the cock” and instead imagine what it means to think as a vengeful vulva, to enact vengeful vulva-ness, to refuse fetishization and intelligibility within a heteronormative, phallogocentric, colonial, neoliberal sexual economy.
PART TWO:
NECROPOWER
Chapter Five
Trauma, Time, and Mediated Massacre: 2009, Maguindanao

Trauma…is never unproblematically 'subjective;' neither 'inside' nor 'outside,' it is always lived and negotiated at an intersection.
-- Jill Bennett, *Empathic Vision: Affect, Trauma, and Contemporary Art* 172

The massacre in Maguindanao may stand out for a long time for its brazenness and heinousness, but the forces that shaped it are by no means isolated or peculiar to Muslim Mindanao. They lurk in many regions of our country, providing support to various activities political and economic, legal and illegal and feeding from the institutional structures of modern society.

What History grasps of the event is its effectuation in states of affairs or in lived experience, but the event in its becoming, in its specific consistency, in its self-positing as concept, escapes History.

I. Embodied-time, event-time

A woman’s body is found in a bed, on a hill, in a dumpster. Contusions disfigure her face, blacken her shoulders or back. Dried blood mats her hair, forms a crust between her nose and upper lip. Maybe clothing lies near her, maybe some still clings to her body. Her forearms or windpipe are bruised, abraded. The skin of her pelvis is swollen. Maybe she has been stabbed. Perhaps her vagina has been cut, or there are bullet holes in her breasts. Maybe this body will be mediated as the symptom of a social problem, mourned as a victim of massacre, invoked in an act of vengeance. What this body does, or causes, is contingent upon how her condition is rendered intelligible.

This imprecise yet recognizable figure of the violated woman is most frequently constituted as an epistemological, moral, and spectatorial object. Her mediation as a mournable

172 Bennett, *Empathic Vision*, 12.
body, a grievable life, is never assured. Here, I consider this figure’s appearance in Ampatuan town, Maguindanao province, Mindanao, Philippines in November 2009. I examine the significance of temporality as part of the frame of intelligibility through which she is constituted as an object of outrage and pathos. I consider the gendered expressions of trauma she generates. I reject her facile, moralizing mediation as a figure whose mournability is predicated upon either a logic of temporal aberration, or a logic of temporal continuity. According to the former, the feminine victim of horrific violence is mournable due to her persistence within a postcolonial modernity from which she should have been abjected. According to the latter, she is grievable because she is evidence that nothing has changed, nothing ever changes, in the perpetration of state violence.

My analysis highlights how, in the wake of the 2009 mass killings in Ampatuan, the violated bodies of Genalyn Tiamzon-Mangudadatu, Eden Mangudadatu, Farida Sabdula, Connie Brizuela, and Cynthia Oquendo, among others, were rendered incomprehensible. First, and most predictably, because the violence disfiguring their bodies targeted physiognomic indicators of their humanity – faces and, in at least one instance, genitalia. The nature of this violence, moreover, does not only call into question the humanity of the disfigured form, but the humanity of the perpetrator. My focus here, however, is primarily on how the raped, genitally-mutilated, executed woman victim of electoral violence in Ampatuan, Maguindanao is rendered incomprehensible due to her temporal multiplicity and dislocation. If she is incomprehensible, I


argue, it is in part because she cannot be firmly situated in time. She is variously interpreted as an aberration from, and illustration of, national and Muslim temporalities. In my analysis, she is an irretrievable measure of embodied-time, and an overburdened figure of massacre event-time.

In the first, I analyze the gendered dimensions of the mass killing in Ampatuan, Maguindanao and the ways in which temporality was foregrounded in the event’s effectuation. My discursive analysis draws upon news articles from national and international outlets; academic sources; and NGO and state reports. In addition, I draw upon scholarship on gendered violence as an aspect of collective violence, genocide, and other forms of political violence, from contemporary political, feminist, and cultural studies scholars. I highlight how the violence was discursively constituted through images and attributions as a source of national, Muslim, feminine, and masculine trauma.

I argue that the violated, Muslim, feminine body’s coding as a nationally grievable life mobilizes civilizational and political discourses in which the problem of temporality is foregrounded. Invoking a culturalist discourse of feminine immunity from violence, Philippine Muslims mourned the event as a transgression of tradition. By contrast, non-Muslim, feminist public figures such as Philippine House representative Liza Maza designated the gendered violence pedagogic, a warning to women who participate in politics and deviate from ‘traditional gender roles.’ Gendered violence in this incident is made know-able, in part, as an anomaly in the movement of both theological (Muslim traditional) and secular (modern liberal), national times. The raped, Muslim woman victim of political violence emerges as a figure of temporal indeterminacy – a body whose precarity is attributed both to her ‘non-traditional’ participation in politics, and the erosion of traditional Muslim respect for women in the modern present. Thus the raped, genitally-mutilated, executed Muslim woman participant in electoral politics is an
‘untimely figure’ – she is a figure of temporal multiplicity who cannot be firmly situated in time, and is rendered ineligible for juridical claim-making based on her subjection to gendered violence.

I also consider the more general significance of temporal indeterminacy in discourses of the incident and, in particular, the anxieties this temporal indeterminacy indicates regarding conceptions of political modernity in the postcolonial Philippines. This incident was viewed as an eruption of primordial conflicts, an anomalous event in liberal modernity. Yet the victims were engaged in a modern bureaucratic protocol (filing forms), the perpetrators included members of a national security apparatus created by the U.S., and both victims and perpetrators were officials with patronage networks funded in part by ‘modern’ forms of illegal gambling. Interpretations of the violence thus recode liberal modernity by abjecting its malignant aspects and conditions of possibility.

II. Massacre as concept and event

We can speak of events only in the context of the problem whose conditions they determine. -- Deleuze, *Logic of Sense*, 56

The concept *massacre* can be understood as one example of a Deleuzian ‘pure event.’ Deleuze conceives of the event as a kind of frontier that brings things, bodies, facts, and the material into relation with propositions, language, speech, and mediation.\textsuperscript{175} An event thus “subsists in language, but… happens to things.”\textsuperscript{176} For Delueze, effectuation refers to the ‘immaterial’ identification and specification of events, as events, through visual, discursive and

\textsuperscript{175} A ‘frontier’ in this sense indicates not what mingles or combines bodies and language, but that which articulates their difference (ibid).
other interpretive practices. Event attributions, therefore, do not merely report, but help actualize events and are predicated upon particular modes of intelligibility. The pure event, moreover, is an ‘ideational singularity’ – a concept that is actualized in material bodies and states of affairs (ibid). Every event is singularly actualized; its spatio-temporal realization in a state of affairs is irreducible and unique. But the conceptual ‘pure event’ designates in each singular event that which recurs, as difference and repetition – it organizes multiple, singular incidents across space and time through a logic of resemblance.

In spite of the complexity indicated by its etymology, the concept ‘massacre’ can be considered a pure event in that it designates a particular configuration of bodies, their condition, their modes of acting and being acted upon, and the states of affairs into which they are incorporated. Whether understood as a noun: “the indiscriminate and brutal slaughter of people or (less commonly) animals; carnage, butchery, slaughter in numbers; an instance of this,” or a verb: “to kill (people or, less commonly, animals) in numbers, esp. brutally and indiscriminately; to make a general slaughter or carnage of” (OED) – the contours of the massacre recur. The killing associated with a massacre is brutal, indiscriminate, and occurs in numbers. In its association with carnage and butchery, and in the substitutability of its object (people or animals), the massacre, as an event-attribution, necessarily calls into question the humanity of its perpetrators. As a concept, the massacre derives its rhetorical power by simultaneously invoking and obscuring the unstable border between human and animal, modern and primitive, civilized

177 From the Oxford English Dictionary online: massacre, noun. Etymology: Middle French, French massacre massacre, butchery (mid 16th cent.) Old French maçacre, macecre, macecle, maçacle slaughterhouse, butcher's shop (both late 11th cent; compare Anglo-Norman maçacre and MACEGREFF n., with unexplained second element), slaughter of many people (c1150; > post-classical Latin mazacrium, masacrium slaughter (1218, 1222), Portuguese massacre (1596), Spanish masacre); further etymology uncertain.
178 Oxford English dictionary online.
and barbarous. The concept massacre moralizes. The politics of its contemporary deployment and non-deployment, therefore, are intimately connected with colonial rationalities, particularly racializing logics.

Consider, for example, the uneven application of the discourse of massacre. On 22 July 2011, Anders Behring Breivik killed 77 people in Oslo and Utoeya, Norway. No one disputed the brutality of these killings. While the sites of his attacks were carefully chosen, Breivik’s methods of killing – car bomb and shooting – were not. “Indiscriminate shooting” was, in fact, exactly how BBC reports and eyewitnesses described Breivik’s attack on teenagers attending the Labor Party youth camp in Utoeya. Yet the most common attribution of Breivik’s killings by the BBC, for example, utilizes the discourse of ‘attacks,’ ‘terror attacks,’ or ‘bombing and shootings.’ The discourse of ‘massacre’ barely makes an appearance in the BBC’s mediation of the event. Contrast this with the mass killings to which we now turn, an event whose attribution as a massacre by international media (including the BBC), as well as local press, was immediate and enduring.

Discourses of the 2009 mass killings in Ampatuan, Maguindanao congealed and intensified in the period immediately following the incident, as news media and bloggers proliferated details of the crime scene, witness accounts, police reports, and interviews with victims’ families. Mediation ‘effectuated’ the mass killings by specifying not merely “what kind of event is this?” – a massacre – but also by affectively orienting media publics in the Philippines and internationally. It was not the general contours of the event as an incident of election-related violence that accounted for the affective responses it generated. Rather, the event’s traumatizing effects lay in several key details regarding quantitative and qualitative aspects of the violence.

A chronology of the incident emerged in fits and starts, without much contestation of basic facts. On 23 November 2009, 58 unarmed people were abducted at a routine, election-season police check point in rural Sitio Malating, a sparsely-populated area of Barangay Salman, located in Ampatuan town, Maguindanao province, Mindanao. According to law enforcement and witness accounts, the convoy of eight vehicles of civilians was commandeered by more than 100 armed men, and driven to a nearby hillside, where three mass graves had already been dug. The hostages were bound, some were beaten, and some were raped, before being executed at close range using M16s, M14s, and an AK47. As Army units approached the scene, they heard the rumbling of an excavator, saw clouds of exhaust. But by the time the Army arrived at that hillside, the excavator operator was gone. Soldiers first on the scene found 22 corpses, some still in their vehicles, and some lying on the ground near freshly-turned earth. Remaining at the scene was the excavator, upon which was emblazoned: “Property of the province of Maguindanao – Gov. Datu Andal Ampatuan Sr.”

Datu Andal Ampatuan Sr., then-governor of Maguindanao province, is alleged by the Philippine Department of Justice (DOJ) to have orchestrated this incident of violence. In the weeks and months after the incident, the image of the excavator became an iconic expression of ongoing appeals for justice on behalf of the victims and their families (see Appendix A).

Over a period of three days following the initial discovery of the bodies, three vehicles and 35 more bodies would be extracted from the shallow mass graves. All told, fifty-seven bodies were recovered; a fifty-eighth was not. Debate quickly ensued regarding how to designate this atrocity – while ‘Maguindanao Massacre’ was immediately deployed by the British and U.S. press, Philippine news outlets were more circumspect. GMA News editors, for

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example, pointed out the unprecedented identification of a single incident of political violence with an entire province. Since the violence was isolated to Ampatuan town, they reasoned, the designation ‘Ampatuan Massacre’ was more appropriate. Critics of the state aligned with the Maoist National Democratic Front also embraced this logic, adopting the appellation Ampatuan Massacre in all references to the incident.

Thirty-three men and twenty-four women were killed, including four men and five women who had no business with the Mangudadatus, but tragically happened to be traveling the same stretch of highway at the same time. In the wake of the incident, Arroyo imposed martial law for eight days in Maguindanao, triggering acrimonious Congressional debates that furiously mobilized traumatic memories of the Marcos dictatorship. Maguindanao’s entire 1,092-member police force was relieved and replaced by personnel from other regions “to ensure an impartial investigation of the killings,” Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno stated.\footnote{Manila Bulletin, 12/1/2009, “25 counts of murder filed vs. Ampatuan Jr.” accessed 11/16/10 via LexisNexis Academic} The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) took steps to ‘disband’ a 350-strong counter-insurgency paramilitary force in Maguindanao, or CAFGU (Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit), while investigating allegations that its members were among the perpetrators of the mass killings. After six months, the Department of Justice charged 196 people for multiple counts of murder, abduction, property damage and theft. Notably, rape and sexual assault are not among these charges.\footnote{Sixty-three Maguindanao police officers, including those of the highest rank, are named among the defendants. Six Ampatuan politicians have been charged and detained, including the alleged organizer of the massacre, Datu Unsay Mayor Andal Ampatuan Jr., whose trial is in progress in Quezon City, Manila. Of the 196 people charged, eighty-one are in custody and 17 are being tried. Law enforcement officials state 37 Ampatuan militia members remain at large (“Witness: Ampatuans brought gunmen for slays,” Philippine Daily Inquirer, 10/1/2010. He said Ampatuan paid him P15,000 (about US$350) for the job, adding that he saw at least three other} As of this writing, the trials of the accused have yet to result in a single conviction.
Two witnesses scheduled to testify against the Ampatuans have been killed. Potential witnesses, their family members, and prosecutors continue to receive death threats. (Mangudadatu threatened, you want to be next?” Philippine Daily Inquirer, 10/8/2010)
III. The anomalous event-time of massacre: 23 November 2009, Ampatuan, Maguindanao

Embodied time is the temporality of bodily rhythms and their disruption, of bodies in various states of affairs. It is the corporealized temporality of the present in which each act of violence is experienced and perpetrated. Embodied-time is the materialized time lived by bodies paralyzed by fear, bodies dragging other bodies out of vehicles, bodies injured and dying. It is also the temporality of the present in which one confronts an image of horroristic violence which disrupts or halts thought, forcing an embodied, ‘in the gut’ response of nausea, disgust, or non-recognition, among other possible affects. Embodied-time is the ‘now time’ in which bodies act and are acted upon, and it is irreducibly singular.

Within this Deleuzian frame, it is sensation that mediates between the embodied experience of the present and its attribution, through various interpretive practices, as a past or future event. Sensation is therefore that which does not “merely illustrate or embody a proposition, but engenders a manner of thinking” (Bennet 2005: 8). Within this conceptual frame, bodies experience and measure the present, rhetoric and concepts mediate past and

183 Corporeal temporality is the living present, which exists exclusively for bodies and states of affairs (4). What Deleuze calls Chronos, or what I call embodied-time, is “the living present in which bodies act and are acted upon” (ibid). Chronos is an embodied temporality because it is always ‘now time,’ the now of acting bodies, the spatio-temporality in which the ideal or pure event is realized in a singular, irreducible state of affairs (53). The embodied temporality of the present is a metric that ‘delimits’ or ‘measures out’ the action of bodies and causes (162). Future and past are mere remnants of passion in a body (ibid). Within this temporal mode, only the present ‘fills time,’ ‘absorbing’ or ‘encasing’ future and past, which remain epiphenomenal to the present. By contrast, Aion is Deleuze’s chronotope for a temporality “infinitely divisible into past and future, and into the incorporeal effects which result from bodies, their actions and their passions” (5). This incorporeal temporality I refer to as event-time. Event-time is the time of the event as ‘effectuation’ or expression in language, image, in thought, in discourse: “The event subsists in language, but it happens to things” (24). Event-time is the time of mediation; the event is mediation. Within Deleuze’s anti-Hegelian empirical frame, language and things exist in non-binary relation, and their ‘frontier’ or juncture is sense, sensation: “this frontier (sense) does not mingle or reunite” speech and bodies, but articulates their difference (24). “Sense is that which is expressed” (20). Unlike embodied-time, in which only the present exists,
future, and sensation is the juncture between bodies and concepts. Embodied-time and event-time are ways of thinking the relation of thing to idea, cause to effect, material to immaterial, lived experience to sign. Embodied-time and event-time do not only theorize space-time, but conjugate other forms of relation – of subjectivity to temporality, or the singular experience to the conceptual abstraction by which it is named. As such, embodied-time and event-time offer productive ways to think about political and gendered violence and their effects, or ‘effectuation.’

Event-time is ‘incorporeal’ in that expresses the significance and meanings of events in language, image, and thought. In media coverage of events, we can observe how embodied-time evacuates the present by constantly dividing it into past and future. It is a temporality that transforms the lived present into an event of the past, or an event yet to come.

The 2009 mass killings in Ampatuan are mediated through an event-time which marks this event as exceptional. News coverage emphasized details that distinguished this event from other incidents of election-season violence in the Philippines. The traumatizing effects of the killings lie in these details – the perpetration of such large-scale violence in broad daylight; the escalating body count as corpses continued to be unearthed over a three-day period; and the close ties of the alleged perpetrators with then-president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Overwhelming evidence indicated that the violence was methodically planned by members of the most well-

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the temporality of the incorporeal event is one in which only future and past ‘subsist’ and ‘inhere’ in time. Future and past continuously divide the present, which moves endlessly in both directions (164). This Deleuzian conception of time is capacious in its conjugation of disparate elements. Thus, aspects of embodied-time and event-time may resonate with or diverge from other theorizations of time, including disjoint, singular, ‘other times’ (Shapiro 2000), depending on their specification. For example, Kristeva’s ‘women’s time’ of reproduction and genealogy (Kristeva ) is both embodied-time and event-time. The temporality Mbembe theorizes as the postcolony (Mbembe 2000) launches a Deleuzian pluralization of time explicitly into that realm of difference and repetition, rationalities and materialities, that is postcolonial Africa.
entrenched political clan in Maguindanao, the Ampatuans.\footnote{The Ampatuan clan is the namesake of Ampatuan town, Maguindanao, Mindanao.} The Ampatuan family is ethnically Magindanaoan and Muslim, and known for delivering Macapagal-Arroyo uncontested electoral success within their districts during the 2006 presidential election. The DOJ criminal complaint alleges that members of the Ampatuan clan perpetrated the mass killings with a militia comprised of Philippine military personnel (AFP), armed civilian auxiliary units of the military (or CAFGUs), local police, and sundry mercenaries.

Chroniclers of the incident fixated upon two other details that inflected its significance and traumatic character. The victims were primarily media workers – 32, altogether – and, the closest women family members of Esmael “Toto” Mangudadatu, a political rival of the Ampatuans. The Mangudadatus are ethnically Taussug, and comprise another powerful Muslim political clan whose members hold various elected offices in both Maguindanao and Sultan Kudarat provinces. Esmael Mangudadatu intended to run for governor of Maguindanao in the May 2010 elections,\footnote{A race which, in the aftermath of the killings, he won.} contesting then-incumbent Andal Ampatuan Sr. Mangudadatu’s decision to enter the gubernatorial contest ended the two clans’ nearly 20-years of mostly amicable accommodation.\footnote{Such accommodation includes, among other alleged extralegal activities, the Ampatuans’ distribution of P50 million to potential political rivals in the run-up to the 2004 elections, to ensure their continuity in office. Even after the Massacre, twelve of the fifteen Ampatuans who ran for office in Mindanao in the 2010 elections won (Patricio Abinales lecture, UHM, 10/22/2010).}

Mangudadatu reported receiving death threats as soon as his decision to run was publicly announced. In order to begin campaigning officially, however, it was necessary to file a certificate of candidacy in Shariff Aguak, the provincial capital of Maguindanao. This bureaucratic protocol required a two-hour drive from Buluan through districts controlled by the
Ampatuans. Fearing for Mangudadatu’s life, his family – by most accounts, Mangudadatu’s mother, specifically – determined the safest method for filing his certificate of candidacy would be to send a delegation of women. This delegation was comprised of Mangudadatu’s wife, Genalyn, and his two sisters – Farina, who was four months pregnant, and Eden, who was then vice mayor of Mangudadatu municipality. Joining them were Connie Brizuela and Cynthia Oquendo, public interest lawyers and members of the Union of People’s Lawyers in Mindanao (UPLM). Esmael Mangudadatu also requested this delegation be accompanied by about a dozen other relatives, both men and women, and several dozen journalists, primarily men. At a press conference sending off the delegation, Mangudadatu invoked a culturalist discourse of feminine immunity from violence, stating, “Under our tradition, Muslim women are respected. They should not be harmed just like innocent children and elders.”

Esmael Mangudadatu’s father, former Sultan Kudarat governor Pakung ‘Pax’ Mangudadatu, repeated this explanation for the delegation’s gendered composition during the family’s first press conference after the murders were reported.

Several aspects of the violence featured prominently in its effectuation as exceptional, anomalous. These included the unparalleled body-count; the gender and occupation of the victims; the gendered nature of the violence committed; the banality of the electoral protocol in which the victims were engaged; the large-scale mobilization required by the perpetrators; and the apparent lack of effort to conceal perpetration by elected officials, military personnel, and law enforcement. Observers quickly nominated the massacre “the bloodiest election-related violence in Philippine history.”

The *Philippine Daily Inquirer* described the event as “so

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monstrous…that it cannot be hidden [or] forgotten by the nation and the world.”189 An international coalition of 47 journalist advocacy groups, the International Freedom of Expression Exchange Network, condemned the massacre for its “incomparable…scale and horror.”190 Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo called the massacre “a supreme act of inhumanity that is a blight on our nation.”191

A superlative incident of political violence, a monstrosity of global proportions, a bestial contamination of the nation – each of these event attributions indicates vicarious traumatization, due in part to an ascription of the event as exceptional, a historical anomaly. The vicarious trauma is constituted as national and transnational. In her opinion column for the Philippine Daily Inquirer, journalist Rina Jimenez-David articulated the traumatic implications for the nation by quoting two scholars from the Ateneo School of Government, Tony La Vina and Joy Aceron:

With this massacre, we are seeing a scale of brutality and evil that we have not seen before. We have seen political and media assassinations and we have experienced massacres of farmers and workers, but not with these targets – women, lawyers, journalists, bystanders and passers-by – and not in these numbers. Lines were crossed in Maguindanao and we must all work together, and work very hard, to pull the country back from those lines. Otherwise, the consequences are unimaginable with political clans all over the country possibly believing that they too can act with impunity.192

E. Ann Kaplan’s observation that trauma is productive of new subjectivities and publics,193 and Veena Das’ insight regarding the new worlding practices required in the

191 Manila Times, 11/26/2009
aftermath of collective violence,\textsuperscript{194} were borne out by this event. As is typical in the aftermath of horroristic violence, commentators expressed expected raw affects – shock, horror, incomprehension. Facile assignations of blame abounded. Ambivalent, imbricated, and competing discourses of attribution and causality emerged. Some codings of the event, such as those mentioned above, expressed peculiarly postcolonial anxieties regarding the implications of such violence – particularly in its gendered dimensions – for Philippine modernity.

In the event mediascape, the rendering of event-related trauma as masculine often individuated the experience of that trauma; however, the mass killings were also clearly constituted as a traumatic event for collective subjects – Muslims, Muslim women advocates, journalists, and for the nation as a whole. On the one hand, it became important to identify the event as an aberration – from electoral violence-as-usual, from the treatment of women participants in the electoral process, and from the treatment of Muslim women ‘in conflict situations.’ The discourse of historical anomaly utilized to describe the violence constitutes the event as exceptional due to ‘quantitative’ and ‘qualitative’ criteria. Observers continually note the superlative number of victims and alleged perpetrators. This superlativity, of course, is not merely incorporeal in its effects (though these are significant; for example, the effects of a designation such as “most dangerous place in the world for journalists”\textsuperscript{195}). The unprecedented number of people killed has implications for the police investigation of the crime, while the large number of alleged perpetrators (196) has implications for the prosecution of the Department of Justice’s legal complaint against suspects. The event was also coded as exceptional, however, due to what commentators identified as the qualitatively transgressive nature of the violence

committed. While physical violence is commonly understood to transgress the perceived integrity of bodies, it was the ostensibly new, gendered ways in which bodies were violated, in addition to the targeting of bodies purported to be historically immune from such violence -- “women, lawyers, journalists, bystanders and passers-by,” “Muslim women,” “women involved in politics” -- that made this event exceptionally horrific.

As is characteristic, in describing the perpetrators of the violence, immediate recourse was made to civilizational discourses invoking the bestiary. *Philippine Daily Inquirer* editors questioned whether the violence was committed “by animals or monsters.” As noted earlier, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo designated the massacre “a supreme act of inhumanity that is a blight on our nation.” The Mindanao Commission on Women and Mothers for Peace condemned the “new low in bestiality perpetrated by men on civilians but most especially on women.”

Esmael Mangudadatu claimed the perpetrators were worse than animals, stating, “We can’t call [Ampatuan] an animal because I have pets and they are tame. No, he is a monster. [The perpetrators] are monsters.” This ascription of animality can be read as a corollary of the discourse of the event as historic anomaly. The rhetoric here aspires to abject the massacre from the historical time of the modernizing nation, and jettison its perpetrators not only from the sphere of liberal citizenship circumscribed by the postcolonial state, but from the human

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altogether. Such rhetoric also invokes evolutionary narratives that dehistoricize the precise ways in which contemporary electoral violence in the Philippines has been shaped by the necropolitics characteristic of ‘democratic consolidation’ during the U.S. colonial period. Eva Lotta-Hedman and John Sidel, for instance, have documented how US colonial state formation in the Philippines linked the creation of local electoral processes and institutions to heavily militarized, anti-Communist counter-insurgency campaigns beginning in the 1950s.201

These event attributions demonstrate an anxiety about the fragility of Philippine modernity, coded as democracy and respect for human rights, that was ostensibly laid bare by the massacre. Moralizing attributions of the event as massacre, as monstrous, as inhuman, as unparalleled in brutality – all raise, in the postcolonial present, the specter of a barbarism that belongs in the past. Its presence in the now-time of the nation, a nation that prides itself on its liberal democratic state apparatuses and vibrant civil society, indicates a national failure. Event-time splits the present into a past that must remain past, and a future of unimaginable consequences. Moralizing expressions of national trauma do not historicize the violence or make it comprehensible and thus preventable. Rather, moralizing discourses lend themselves to essentialist explanations of irremediable primitivism, thus reproducing colonial rationality as postcolonial reason.

Other observers chose to adopt a more Mindanao-oriented, rather than geopolitical, spatio-temporal imaginary in interpreting the violence. Scholars such as Randy David and Michael Tan debated the application of rido, or Moro (Muslim) clan war, to the event, arguing that warlordism and violent conflict are hardly unique to the political clans of Mindanao.

201 For an extended discussion of violence under Philippine ‘colonial democracy’ as antecedent to contemporary extrajudicial killing, see John Sidel and Eva-Lotta Hedman, “Morbid Symptoms and Political Violence in the Philippines.”
Echoing a refrain long repeated by Mindanao historian Patricio Abinales, they argued for greater attention to the long genealogy of economic and political peripheralization of Mindanao within metropolitan postcolonial state policy, and the complex negotiation of local and national elites regarding control of extractive resources, infrastructure development, agricultural land, and flows of investment capital, products, settlers, and workers within the southern Philippines. Abinales’ work, in particular, situates these dynamics within the context of the Maoist and Muslim secessionist armed conflicts, providing a textured analysis of the complexities of postcolonial regimes of power and violence in Mindanao. It is with these sorts of ‘counter-effectuations’ in mind that we can situate the phenomena of violence in Mindanao, violence that constitutes a condition of permanent crisis exacerbated by over a decade of U.S. war in Iraq and Afghanistan (since the Philippines was named “the second front” of the US War on Terror).

IV. Trauma, gender, time

An imagery of trauma might not readily conform to the logic of representation.

-- Jill Bennet, *Empathic Visions*, p.3

If horror is banalized, it is not because we see too many images of it. We do not see too many suffering bodies on the screen. But we do see too many nameless bodies, too many bodies incapable of returning the gaze that we direct at them, too many bodies that are an object of speech without themselves having a chance to speak. The system of information does not operate through an excess of images, but by selecting the speaking and reasoning beings who are capable of ‘deciphering’ the flow of information about anonymous multitudes.

-- Jacques Ranciere, *Emancipated Spectator*, 96

During the slow process of evolution leading up to civilization, the Moros must be kept in check by the actual application of force or by the moral effect of its presence.

On masculine trauma

The event-time of the 2009 mass killings in Ampatuan, Maguindanao encompasses multiple modalities of trauma. Among these are the trauma of victims, their relations and supporters, those who directly experienced the crime scene, and spectators of the event mediascape who are vicariously traumatized by its intolerable images (Ranciere 2009). The most obvious forms of trauma are those experienced directly by the victims, whose phenomenology of abduction, beating, rape, and execution in embodied-time are unapproachable. Any attempt to render victims’ experience of trauma as epistemological object – for example, through forensics\textsuperscript{202} or witness accounts – are even more extensively mediated than a survivor’s testimonial would be, if, indeed, there had been survivors. While forensics evidence did become significant in shaping a discourse of collective trauma regarding the misogynist forms of violence committed, trauma was primarily constituted as *gendered, national, and Muslim* through statements by victims’ family, activists, public officials, academics, and journalists.

Within the event mediascape, the most apparent forms of trauma received the most sustained attention. Philippine and international press circulated photographs and video of corpses taken by an Army videographer at the police-taped crime scene. In many of these photographs, the faces of the victims are obscured by jackets or shirts placed there by soldiers.

\textsuperscript{202} A fact-finding team comprised of five media organizations concluded the military and police failed to gather and preserve extensive evidence from the Massacre site, compromised the site and physical remains in their excavation of the bodies, and demonstrated a clear preference for testimonial rather than physical evidence. A police case referral report containing a summary of the evidence and findings of the police investigation has yet to be released. See Report of the Humanitarian and Fact-Finding Mission to Maguindanao 25-30 November 2009, published jointly by the Freedom Fund for Filipino Journalists, the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility, MindaNews, and the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. See http://www.docstoc.com/docs/55448857/Report-of-the-Humanitarian-and-Fact-Finding-Mission-to-Maguindanao
Though these images were never broadcast without disclaimers warning of their potential to disturb, the most brutal images were deliberately blurred. This was not merely to maintain confidentiality, but to obfuscate the most graphic of the corporeally inscribed violence and sanitize the images for television audiences. These censored images of bruised and bloody corpses were the initial and primary means by which the trauma of the victims was given visual form. These mediated images, along with those of weeping family members, somber police, agitated elected officials, and outraged civil society representatives, comprised a paradigmatic post-horrorism montage indicating the wide – even cosmopolitan – vicarious trauma publics constituted by the event.

As bodies were still being unearthed from the crime scene, images of the trauma experienced by victims’ family members populated the news and Internet. Most prominent among these was the anguished visage of Esmael Mangudadatu, choking back tears, as he described the violence to which his wife’s body was subjected. "My wife's private parts were slashed four times, after which they fired a bullet into it," Mangudadatu told reporters. "They speared both of her eyes, shot both her breasts, cut off her feet, fired into her mouth. I could not begin to describe the manner in which they treated her," Mangudadatu added. In another interview, he stated, “It hurts so much… I don't cry, but I'm showing the people of the nation [taong bayan] that I'm hurting.” Mangudadatu’s, however, was not the only significant example of masculine trauma that drew the media’s attention.

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For obvious reasons, trauma experienced by perpetrators of collective violence generally remains unrendered, and thus, unattended to. Thus it was striking when, within a few days of the killings, Al Jazeera broadcast an interview with a member of Andal Ampatuan, Jr.’s private army, identifying himself only as ‘Boy,’ who claimed to have been a witness to the killings. Clad in a black ski mask, Boy stated he was to have been an active participant in the violence, but could not bring himself to kill anyone. Fearing he would be shot if he tried to intervene in the executions, he described his paralysis thus: “We don’t ask why, we just follow orders… I was just standing there… all alone. I could only leave it to my conscience.” Boy’s ostensible attempt to abreact the affects plaguing his conscience took on the mode of a public confession.

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205 ‘Boy,’ or its derivative, ‘Bong,’ is among the most ubiquitous of masculine nicknames in the Philippines.

206 “Witness: 'We just followed orders', Witness to Philippines massacre tells Al Jazeera local mayor ordered killings,” 27 Nov 2009, AlJazeera.net

207 Definition of ‘abreact’ from Laplance, Dictionary of Psychoanalysis (1967: London, The Hogarth Press, p.1): “Emotional discharge whereby the subject liberates himself from the affect attached to the memory of a traumatic event in such a way that this affect is not able to become (or to remain) pathogenic. Abreaction may be provoked in the course of psychotherapy,
in which he referred to Andal Ampatuan, Jr. as “the last of the barbarians.” In notable contrast to the palpable anguish expressed by Mangudadatu, Boy spoke in hushed, impassive tones as he enumerated the following alleged details of the violence: “Datu Andal himself” ordered all the Mangudadatus, including women, children, and journalists killed, and all evidence concealed. But the perpetrators were unable to finish burying all the bodies because, Boy disclosed, “[s]omeone called and said the soldiers were on their way. I feel [the perpetrators] have connections among the soldiers.” He also stated “all the women in the group had been raped before being killed.” Given the nature of his admissions, it is unsurprising that he expressed fear for his life and, according to Al Jazeera correspondent Marga Ortigas, went immediately into hiding.

especially under hypnosis, and produce a cathartic* effect. It may also come about spontaneously, either a short or a long interval after the original trauma.***

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209 AlJazeera.net, op cit
210 Ibid
While the event-time mediascape certainly included many scenes of (generally unspecified) women expressing shock, mourning, and rage, it was images of masculine trauma – in particular, images of uncontrollable expressions of masculine trauma – that pulled public focus in the aftermath of the violence. Of many more possible examples, I choose two to illustrate. The first is a story that appeared on ABS-CBN News network nearly two months after the incident, whose subject is Harry Roque, a lawyer representing the families of the slain journalists. The story is about Roque vomiting. Apparently he was overcome while watching, for the first time, the Army’s raw video footage of the crime scene. Unable to make it to the men’s lavatory outside the hearing room at Camp Crame, headquarters of the Philippine National Police, he ran into the more conveniently located women’s room to relieve himself. When asked by ABS-CBN’s Patricia Evangelista why he’d vomited, Roque replied the images were "karumal-dumal (heinous)."

A final illustration of the constitution of trauma as masculine within the event mediascape is less trivial, and involves a dramatic exchange between Esmael Mangudadatu and the prime suspect in the killings, Andal Ampatuan, Jr., as the eagerly-anticipated and much-delayed trial of the latter began in October 2010. According to a Philippine Daily Inquirer report, during the proceedings, Mangudadatu addressed Ampatuan directly, asking, “Baki mo nagawa iyon sa mga baba? (Why did you do that to the women?)” Ampatuan’s response was apparently to gesture with his hand as if he were pointing a gun at Mangudadatu, and the statement: “Baka gusto mo isunod kita. (Maybe you want to be next.)” Prison guards immediately isolated Ampatuan while an enraged Mangudadatu was shepherded out of the courtroom by his lawyer.

211 http://www.abs-cbnnews.com/nation/01/20/10/lawyer-throws-after-watching-maguindanao-massacre-video
In the massacre’s event-time, masculine trauma was staged and mediated to narrate a national morality tale. This narrative was inscribed onto the bodies, and through the affects, of men. Suffering, righteous heroes were pitted against pathological monsters. The political candidate husband of a woman who has been raped, murdered, and mutilated for supporting his candidacy appears on national television, recounts the violence inscribed on his wife’s body. To avert any misreading of his own body’s signs, he clarifies his affects as a poignant message to the nation: “I don’t cry, but I show my country women and men that I’m hurting…” An anonymous, self-professed witness and would-be perpetrator of the killings appears on international television. He simultaneously exculpates himself from committing the violence, while confessing the guilty affects of one who was passively and fearfully complicit with its perpetration. He provides an account of the violence that puts himself and his family at serious risk of retaliation, and will likely never be offered as testimony in a legal proceeding, yet was probably viewed by hundreds of thousands in the Philippines and beyond. A male lawyer for the victims of the mass killings watches video footage of the crime scene. His sensorium is overwhelmed. A news crew is present to document his body’s involuntary response to the images. A man who is husband and brother to women who were raped, murdered, and mutilated confronts his political rival and alleged architect of the violence in court, demanding an explanation for the misogynist violence. His demand is met with a threat of more violence. The dramatic exchange is covered widely by Philippine media. The exchange illustrates an observation long made by feminist analysts of sexual violence as a tactic of genocide, communal

212 The number of youtube views of the 26 November 2009 Al Jazeera English interview with “Boy,” as of 12 September 2011, is 584,436. See http://youtu.be/rHdE_zXV-u0.
conflict, and war. Misogynist (and often racialized) violence is an abjection that invigorates and purifies the collective (whether clan, ethnic group, race, or nation) by asserting phallic dominance over the enemy’s women. This is an act that, in dishonoring women, dishonors their men.

Absent from this morality tale is consideration of how more than one hundred fifty men who were not members of the Ampatuan clan – soldiers, police, employees of the Ampatuans, ordinary men who also have families and presumably love their wives – came to participate in this monstrous, anomalous massacre. Their exclusion from this national narrative of masculine trauma means the full complexity of their stories will not be thought. Indeed, what is excised from this moralizing mediation of the event is analysis of the historical, structural, institutional, and social processes that comprise the massacre’s conditions of possibility. These range from processes of gendering, to decades of counter-insurgency militarization of the region, to the complex local-national exchanges and allocations that have typified Philippine electoral politics since the U.S. colonial period, to the century-long economic peripheralization of Mindanao from the rest of the country, to the embedding of violent state and civil apparatuses within democratic processes that was characteristic of the U.S. colonial period.

**On feminine trauma**

Rape violates the integrity of the body – whether of the individual or the community – to such an extent that it becomes unspeakable or, rather, speakable only in euphemistic or indirect terms.


The forms of violence perpetrated during the mass killings in Ampatuan, Maguindanao, as well as their effectuation in event-time, implicate particular modes of aesthetic

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213 See, for instance, the work of scholars Veena Das, Jean Franco, Urvashi Butalia, and Andrea Smith.
comprehension. These aesthetic regimes partition the sensible such that certain practices and bodies become audible and visible. Aesthetic regimes are also ethical regimes in that they determine who emerges as an object of pathos, or what constitutes a justiciable crime. In this sense, aesthetic regimes condition the emergence of the thinkable and the knowable.\textsuperscript{214} The analysis above highlights the ways in which masculine trauma was problematized in the massacre’s mediation. Here, I consider the ways in which feminine trauma was mediated, particularly in activist, media, and juridical spaces.

All of the news reports that addressed gendered aspects of the violence were brief and provided few details, though it was widely reported that at least some of the women had been raped, and that two of the victims were pregnant. Esmael Mangudadatu’s description of the condition of his wife’s corpse when he identified her body was also widely reported. More detailed, follow-up coverage regarding the forensics investigation of the rapes was limited to a handful of reports.\textsuperscript{215} Nearly two weeks after the Massacre, \textit{The Manila Standard Today} published an article providing the most extensive treatment of the forensics investigation into the rapes. Here is the entirety of that treatment:

\begin{quote}
“Results of police laboratory tests, released Thursday in Manila, found traces of semen in five of the 21 slain women, said Cacdac, the lab chief. He called it “presumptive evidence [that] they were raped.” Cacdac said two of the women were married, and their husbands will be asked to submit their DNA samples to rule out the possibility it was their semen found in the tests. The bodies of all five women had bruises or injuries on their genitals, said Ruby Grace Diangson, head of the police medico-legal office. Investigation of 15 other bodies revealed no sign of rape. Test results on the remaining female body have not been concluded. Four of the five women who tested positive for semen were journalists. The body of the fifth, a passenger of the Toyota Vios that was not part of the convoy, was
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{214} See Judith Butler, \textit{Frames of War} and \textit{Precarious Lives}, and Jacques Ranciere, \textit{Aesthetic Politics, Emancipated Spectator}, et al.
\end{flushright}
found with her pants pulled down and showed bruising that indicated resistance during rape. Chief Insp. Dean Cabrera said the evidence showed that her killer stuck the barrel of a gun inside her mouth and fired. Cacda said it was up to the prosecutors to use the evidence gathered from the autopsies to file cases against the suspects.\(^\text{216}\)

A few days later, a handful of media outlets reported forensics investigators had conclusively determined that all five women had, indeed, been raped. Then, there was a startling absence of coverage regarding the rapes – in particular, an absence of reporting on whether or not prosecutors would be including rape among the charges brought against the alleged perpetrators. Eventually, feminist legal advocates who’d been following the case discovered that the alleged perpetrators would not be prosecuted for rape. After six months, as previously mentioned, the Department of Justice charged 196 people for multiple counts of murder, abduction, property damage and theft – but not rape.

Attorney Evalyn Ursua,\(^\text{217}\) well-known feminist advocate and co-author of national legislation to address rape and domestic violence, expressed deep criticism of the prosecution’s handling of the case. In a January 2010 interviewed, she stated:

I have not heard about any charges of prosecution of rape, only murder… During the first days [after the killings], they were reporting how all the women were raped before being murdered. Then it became all about murder, murder, murder. There is a different importance, a different gravity we place on these crimes. The community considers murder graver, because it is about taking a life, the ultimate crime. That doesn’t justify considering rape any less grave a violation.

Would things have been different if the group murdered had been composed of all men? Would the military have agreed to providing escorts [to the Mangudadatu family]? How did gender factor into the official response to the request for security? Is it because the crimes committed were so gruesome, that multiple murders are so gruesome, that we don’t want to talk about rape? Will it make our jobs as attorneys more difficult, more messy? Is that why they are not prosecuting the rapes? Is it


\(^{217}\) Attorney Evalyn Ursua is a Filipina feminist anti-violence against women advocate and attorney for "Nicole," plaintiff in Subic Rape Case of 2005 in which American soldiers were tried for raping the plaintiff.
about, let’s keep it simple? Or do we not want the world to know how gruesome it really was? It shows how cruel the legal approach is, in downplaying what happened to the women.

There has been no serious investigation, no gathering of evidence, no building of a case – the state and the family are not interested in pursuing the cases of rape. [After all the media attention they received,] what happened to the rapes? There is a lot of talk about a bungled investigation and shoddy handling of forensic evidence.

There was an interview with one of the perpetrators, shown anonymously, that aired on Al-Jazeera. He mentioned he received instructions to rape all the women. Objects were inserted into their vaginas. That is rape. I don’t think you can say it was to perpetrate the murder. Clearly it was done to sexually violate the women.

Notable in Ursua’s analysis is a painful irony. As analysis of the masculine trauma experienced by Mangudadatu and Bong demonstrates, misogynist aspects of the violence were central to the victims’ mediation as grievable lives. And yet, as Ursua points out, while there was initially intense media interest in the raped women victims, this interest quickly waned and ultimately disappeared altogether. Further, the DOJ complaint did not include rape among the crimes to be prosecuted. So while misogynist aspects of the mass violence were mobilized to intensify national outrage and index the barbarity of the perpetrators, none of this outrage resulted in attempts to seek juridical recognition of the ways in which the women were sexually violated. In this juridical partition of the sensible, as Ursua observes, the rapes were rendered invisible.

Another striking aspect of the mediation of feminine trauma in response to the violence can be seen in two divergent analyses of its misogynist aspects. These analyses highlight the significance of temporality as part of the interpretive frame through which the women victims are constituted as objects of national, feminist, and Muslim outrage and pathos. The first analysis is from Liza Maza, party list member of the Philippine House of Representatives representing GABRIELA, the Philippines’ largest coalition of women’s organizations throughout

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218 Personal communication, 20 January 2010, Manila.
the country. (The ‘party list’ system, a 1990s-era political reform, allows sectoral interests to be represented within the Philippine Congress.) Liza Maza argues:


The murder committed was double. If we look at the manner in which [the women] were killed, they were shot in the [genitals], [and] the breasts. There were those who were raped, and then there was a pregnant woman. There is a message in that, intended for women. The message here is, women should not participate in politics. Women involved in politics will also experience the same violence. What is being said is, women, return to your homes, and to your traditional role in society.  

Here, Maza argues that the misogynist aspects of the violence bear pedagogic significance. She attributes Muslim women’s vulnerability to their deviation from ‘traditional’ gender roles.

This contrasts sharply with the analysis of the Maguindanao-based women’s peace organization, the Philippine Women's Network for Peace and Security (PWNPS):

[Mangudadatu's] mother and religious leaders believed that an all-women delegation accompanied by media people and women lawyers would be respected. Islam strongly enjoins believers to respect women and children even during times of war.

We were all wrong. Even in ‘peace time,’ women are not given dignity. In Islam where women and children are supposedly not to be harmed even in war, the massacre showed us that the murderers had no heart, no soul to follow this revered moral and religious tradition.

While Maza argues that it is Muslim women’s deviation from traditional gender roles and entry into the liberal political sphere that precipitates their targeting for violence, the Philippine Women's Network for Peace and Security contends just the opposite – that it is an erosion of

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traditional Islamic values and ‘respect for women’ that has rendered women vulnerable to such historically anomalous forms of violence. Muslim women’s precarity, in other words, is a consequence of modernity and the abjection of the traditional.

Gendered violence is thus made know-able, in part, as an anomaly in the movement of both theological (Muslim traditional) and secular (modern neoliberal), national times. The raped, Muslim woman victim of political violence emerges as a figure of temporal indeterminacy – a body whose precarity is attributed both to her ‘non-traditional’ participation in politics, and the erosion of traditional Muslim respect for women in the modern present. Based on these contradictory temporal narratives, I argue that the raped, genitally-mutilated, executed Muslim woman participant in electoral politics is an ‘untimely figure’ – she is a temporally contradictory figure because she represents both the dangers of tradition and the dangers of a break from tradition. She is a figure of temporal multiplicity who cannot be firmly situated in time, and is rendered ineligible for juridical claim-making based on her subjection to gendered violence.

To my knowledge, no ethnography or historiography of *rido* (Muslim clan or Muslim-Christian clan warfare), in Maguindanao or Mindanao more generally, documents the gendered prohibition against violence to which Mangudadatu and the Philippine Women's Network for Peace and Security refer. Given the notable dearth of scholarship regarding Philippine Muslim societies that attends specifically to women and gendering as a focus of inquiry, this research gap is unsurprising; perhaps, too, it is even understandable, given the ongoing history of militarization of the region, with Muslim armed secessionist movements as alibi, in addition to local population displacement and political subordination by Christian settlers from Luzon and Vizayas. In 2000, the last year such data were collected, the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) identified five provinces in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao
(ARMM) as among the top ten poorest in the Philippines. Included among these were Maguindanao and Sultan Kudarat provinces.\textsuperscript{221}

If, however, we were to engage as a truth claim Mangudadatu’s assertion regarding Muslim respect for women, indicated specifically by their traditional immunity from violence, we could seek out other sources for corroboration. We could pursue local research, anecdotal and other evidence gathered from local communities and women’s organizations, and conduct an analysis of gendering in the 1977 Code of Muslim Personal Laws and/or the mid-18\textsuperscript{th} century Maguindanaoan legal code known as the \textit{Luwaran} (Selections), which is based on customary and Shafi’i law introduced in the mid-17\textsuperscript{th} century. Further, we could analyze gendering in the relevant oral literature of the region. Such research would provide some sense of gendering practices, gender norms and ideals, and the ways in which women are situated within complex relations of power, in southern Philippine contexts. Unfortunately, such research has yet to be done.

\textsuperscript{221} See \url{http://www.nscb.gov.ph/poverty/2000/44_poorestprov.asp}. Other ARMM provinces identified among the poorest in the country include Sulu, Lanao del Sur, and Tawi-Tawi.
Appendix A
Appendix B

Map of Central Mindanao
Appendix C

Excavator Iconography
Ampatuan Massacre
November 23, 2009
NEVER FORGET
58 persons killed, 32 of them members of media
Chapter Six
De-banalizing Misogyny: Kinatay (Butchered), Necropower, and Classed Masculine Crisis in Neoliberal Manila

Some realities need to be fictionalized before they can be apprehended.
-- Veena Das, “Transactions in the Construction of Pain,” p. 69

The real must be fictionalized in order to be thought.
Jacques Ranciere, Politics of Aesthetics, p. 38

The rupture and transformation that art’s forcework occasions describes the specific artistic force with which art ‘acts’ in historical and cultural context. And the ‘occasion’ of such a change constitute’s art’s event.

In this chapter, I interarticulate a reading of the Brillante Mendoza film Kinatay/Butchered (2009) with an analysis of intertwined regimes of violence and accumulation in the Philippines. My hope is that such an analysis can help to ‘counter-effectuate’ problematizations of gendered violence such as those that emerged in the wake of the 2009 mass killings in Ampatuan. While juridical, media, and some activist discourses render the misogynist violence perpetrated in that event as incomprehensible, illegible, anomalous, and an index of state failure, Kinatay invites us to imagine how an ordinary, earnest, hard-working, loving, young husband and father can find himself complicit in the brutalization of women. By situating the perpetration of misogynist brutality within regimes of policing and economic insecurity, the film constitutes this brutality as a contemporary crisis of masculinity. Generative of a visual regime in which misogynist violence is spectacularized – however non-scopophically – the film’s point of departure is its rendering of the banalization of violence against women as a process that is violent to men, violently classed, and whose conditions of possibility include a nexus of policing, misogyny, informal economic exchange, and neoliberal regimes of accumulation with a colonial patrimony. My discussion of the dispositifs of Philippine
necropower is intended to vitalize and enrich my analysis of how gendered aspects of the 2009 mass killings in Ampatuan, Maguindanao have been mediated, and how the film Kinatay posits misogynist violence as a classed crisis of masculinity. To this end, I proceed by highlighting some of the conditions and techniques of violence – in particular, its visual spectacularization as well as its concealment – that were common under Martial Law, though they resonate historically with techniques of violence common under colonial rule and have in fact intensified in the era of ‘post-democratic transition.’

Kinatay is not a documentary; it is a narrative film. My ‘cutting’ of the entangled genealogies of coercive apparatuses and electoral politics into an analysis of the film is not intended to provide empirical demonstration of the accuracy or realism of the film’s representations. I examine the film’s haptic visuality, its deformation of genre, its temporalizations, and its registration of sensation to illustrate how the film intervenes in the thinking of gender, violence, and nation. I do not read Kinatay to be communicative, “a vehicle for the interpersonal transmission of experience” (Bennet, 6). Rather, Kinatay’s ‘forcework’ – the rupture and transformation occasioned by the film’s thinking of misogynist violence – lies precisely in its ability to incite thought by operating at the level of affect and sensation (Ziarek, 7). In addition to its temporalizations, Kinatay “acts in historical and cultural context” by referencing a well-known genre of violence in the Philippines – salvaging – and re-deploying it in a de-familiarizing way. As I discuss further below, salvaging is a form of extrajudicial killing in which the victim is abducted, killed, and her or his body either ‘disappeared’ or spectacularly displayed in a public space. This de-familiarization of a familiar genre of contemporary violence is central to Kinatay’s forcework as well.
Kinatay posits the perpetration of misogynist violence as a masculine, pedagogic project linking livelihood, labor, and professional advancement; the reproduction of the family; and the rearing of sons. In staging the misogynist violence as perpetrated by off-duty policemen, Kinatay effectively undermines the conceptual separation of state from society, licit from illicit policing, and formal from informal economic exchange in ways that provoke more complex possibilities for conceptualizing and addressing the multiple regimes of violence to which Filipinas – and Filipino men – are subjected.

I. The dispositifs of necropower in the contemporary Philippines

...Colonies are similar to frontiers. They are inhabited by “savages.” The colonies are not organized in a state form and have not created a human world. Their armies do not form a distinct entity, and their wars are not wars between regular armies. They do not imply the mobilization of sovereign subjects (citizens) who respect each other as enemies. They do not establish a distinction between combatants and noncombatants, or again between an “enemy” and a “criminal”... It is thus impossible to conclude peace with them. In sum, colonies are zones in which war and disorder, internal and external figures of the political, stand side by side or alternate with each other. As such, the colonies are the location par excellence where the controls and guarantees of judicial order can be suspended—the zone where the violence of the state of exception is deemed to operate in the service of “civilization.”

-- Achille Mbembe, Necropolitics, 24

The research of Eva-Lotta Hedman and John Sidel effectively disrupts academic and popular discourses pathologizing Philippine society, culture, and political institutions for “constantly failing in [the] quest for modernity, prosperity, and security” (Hedman and Sidel 6). Hedman and Sidel achieve this disruption by imbricating two analytical trajectories. The first trajectory foregrounds the ways in which 20th century regimes of coercion and violence in Philippine politics have been decisively shaped and re-shaped by U.S. colonial and neocolonial political rationalities, technologies of violence, and geo-strategic imperatives. The second analytical trajectory highlights the ways in which the Philippines’ entry and exclusion from
particular circuits of capital has transformed social relations, for example, through modes of urbanization and industrialization that give rise to “new circuitries of production and consumption, new social forces, new forms of popular mobilization, and new patterns of political contestation and containment” (ibid). The emphasis Hedman and Sidel place on change and the new counters essentialist claims that stress “the endurance of oligarchy and the persistence of patrimonialism… [and] bemoan Filipinos’ failure to transform their country into [one] with a rapidly growing economy, a thriving democracy, and a vibrant society” (ibid).

The emphasis Hedman and Sidel place on “the peculiarly American nature of the Philippine state” also complicates ahistoricizing culturalist assertions that the Philippines is typified by “a traditional ‘political culture’ revolving around notions of personal indebtedness (utang na loob), shame (hiya), pity (awa), and congeniality (pakikisama), as well as a putative proclivity for forming instrumental dyadic (patron-client) relationships” (ibid 7). The interruptive effect of this analysis is to undermine rigid conceptual distinctions not only between Philippine ‘state’ and ‘society’ but also between colonial and postcolonial techniques of governmentality and regimes of violence. To conceptualize Philippine politics through such distinctive indistinctions derails arguments regarding the ostensible inevitability of political and economic crisis due to the persistence of ‘retrograde political values,’ and can animate analytical approaches that examine how, when, and to what effects Philippine ‘political values’ are constituted as ‘traditional’ or ‘modern’ in order to think beyond this dyad as a principle of intelligibility of Philippine politics.

In Policing America’s Empire, an extraordinary study of American refinement of colonial dispositifs of pacification, security, and surveillance in the Philippines and their redeployment in the U.S., Alfred McCoy echoes and extends the arguments of Hedman and Sidel. McCoy posits
that through close historical examination of crime, police, and political crisis in the archipelago, one can conceptualize “the Philippine polity as a union of center and periphery, formal and informal, licit and illicit” (McCoy 49). In assembling a genealogy of regimes of coercion, repression, and accumulation in the U.S. colonial and post-independence eras, McCoy observes, “arbitrary separations between colonizer and colonized, home and abroad, gritty crime scene details and abstract constitutional principles, dissolve” (McCoy 11). What emerges is a critical intervention in contemporary “overly formal” understandings of the modern state, through revision of national narratives in the Philippines and the U.S. that attend to the mutual transformation of both through a biopolitics of colonial security.

In what follows, I attempt to thread together strands of Hedman’s and Sidel’s analysis of Philippine electoral politics as a regime of accumulation, and McCoy’s analysis of U.S. and Philippine regimes of coercion and policing. Both analyses foreground the legacies of U.S. colonial democracy that have shaped, and persist in, the contemporary Philippines. By problematizing the distinction between ‘state’ and ‘non-state’ actors and regimes of violence, and between ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ regimes of capital accumulation, these analyses highlight the aporetic relation between law and justice, and colonialism and democracy, as well as the conditions of possibility for events such as the mass killings in Ampatuan, Maguindanao and the salvaging fictionalized in *Kinatay*.

These analyses supplement each other and serve as a departure point for analysis of the dispositifs of necropower in the Philippines. Achille Mbembe theorizes necropower as “the power and capacity to dictate who may live and who must die” (Mbembe 2003:11). As a mode of sovereign power, necropower’s “central project is not the struggle for autonomy but the generalized instrumentalization of human existence and the material destruction of human bodies
and populations” (ibid 14). Mbembe concatenates Foucault’s conceptualization of biopower with Agamben’s and Schmitt’s theorizations of the state of exception and the state of siege, in order to address the ways in which “war, resistance, and the fight against terror, [make] the murder of the enemy its primary and absolute objective” (2003:12). Mbembe argues that the state of exception and the relation of enmity (the friend-enemy distinction) have become the normative basis of the right to kill, particularly in the trajectories of late-modern colonial occupation, such as the Israeli occupation of Palestine, but also in the context of contemporary global wars. Contemporary armed conflict in the Philippines between the state and the Maoist New Peoples Army certainly illustrates the instrumentalization Mbembe describes, but other modalities of violence do as well, particularly since a key feature of necropower is its dispersed nature:

An important feature of the age of global mobility is that military operations and the exercise of the right to kill are no longer the sole monopoly of states, and the “regular army” is no longer the unique modality of carrying out these functions. The claim to ultimate or final authority in a particular political space is not easily made. Instead, a patchwork of overlapping and incomplete rights to rule emerges, inextricably superimposed and tangled, in which different de facto juridical instances are geographically interwoven and plural allegiances, asymmetrical suzerainties, and enclaves abound (ibid 31).

Necropower continuously produces, refers, and appeals to exception, emergency, and a fictionalized notion of the enemy (ibid). In the contemporary Philippines, this mode of sovereign power is not monopolized by a state utilizing clearly delimited security apparatuses. Necropower is exercised by heads of local patronage networks, their private armies, mercenaries, and prominent figures in the illegal economy – any of whom may also be employed or formerly employed as law enforcement or military, or members of civilian counterinsurgency militias. Contemporary Philippine necropolitics takes the form of electoral violence, violence that enforces law enforcement racketeering, salvaging, or any combination of these. My modest
intervention in the extant scholarship on the politics of violence in the Philippines is to
foreground gender in my analysis, for gender is the point of departure in both the historical event
I discuss in the previous chapter and the cinematic event I analyze in this one.

II. Kinatay

Brilliante Mendoza received the Best Director award at the 2009 Cannes Film Festival
for Kinatay, beating out Quentin Tarantino and Inglourious Basterds. Despite this, Kinatay has
not been theatrically released in the Philippines. (I was able to view the film in September 2009
at a screening in Makati, Metro Manila, organized by Adobo Magazine.) In fact, while Mendoza
has been the focus of significant critical attention outside of the country, none of his seven
remarkable, independently-produced films has received wide distribution or a national theatrical
release within the Philippines.
In Tagalog, the word *kinatay* is translated as butchered, dissected, sliced, or cut apart.\(^{222}\) *Kinatay* is derived from the noun *katay* and the verb *katayin* or *magkatay*. *Katay* is most commonly translated as a slice of meat. *Katayin* or *magkatay* is action whose object is “animals, plants, etc.” [italics mine].\(^{223}\) An exemplary usage of the verb may be found in Leo English’s Tagalog-English dictionary (the Philippine university standard since the mid-1980s): “*Nagkatay sila ng [kinatay nila ang] baboy*: They butchered (dissected) a pig.”\(^{224}\) Brilliante Mendoza’s 2009 film, *Kinatay* (Butchered), is a film that stages the abduction, rape, murder, and dismemberment of the body of an indebted mother, prostitute, stripper, and drug addict named Gina (stage name, Madonna). The perpetrators of these acts of violence are off-duty policemen. The title of the film, *Kinatay*, provokes, in part, through irony. This irony is indicated by a promotional poster for the film, which features the prone body of a woman, lying on her side, swathed in a bloody white sheet. The irony of the film’s title is obvious in that the sign *kinatay* compels us to consider the fittingness of placing ‘woman’ where ‘animal’ (as food or meat) would be. More subtly, the film’s title surfaces what is obscured in conventional usage of the word *kinatay* – an ethical relation between that which is butchered, and the one who butchers. In this sense, the irony of the film’s title lies not only in the uneasy slippage between woman and animal, but also that between police officer and butcher, criminal and cop. The title of Mendoza’s film ‘misuses’ *kinatay*, to spectacularizing effect, to suggest the contiguity of woman and animal, instrumentalized as objects of violence and commodities.

The ways in which acts of violence are staged in the film, however, provoke more complex thought regarding the relation of masculinity, misogyny, class mobility, pedagogy,

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\(^{223}\) Ibid.

\(^{224}\) Ibid.
policing, violence, and spectatorship than the facile irony allowed by the film’s title. “Kinatay” mobilizes genre – specifically, the family melodrama and film noir – in order to stage the conditions of possibility for the banalization of misogynist violence in the contemporary Philippines. The film’s ‘crystalline regime’ renders time visible in ways that emphasize the banalization of violence as process and potentiality, while leaving any ‘eventuality’ indeterminate. Sound, home, automobile, and city-scape function as characters, emphasizing asymmetrical power relations between on- and off-screen bodies, the spheres of legitimate and shadowy police work, and the multiple sites and forms of violence, alienation, and connection possible for different cultures of class in Manila. Hand-held camera, indeterminate point-of-view shots, and repeated close-up render the micropolitics of misogynist violence as a disorienting, pedagogic project whose trauma is experienced through the bodies and affects of men.

As we saw in the preceding chapter, media, legal, and activist discourses of the 2009 mass killings in Ampatuan generally treat the misogynist dimensions of the violence as non-renderable, unintelligible, or pedagogic. Kinatay stages misogynist violence as a chilling, pedagogic spectacle of a different order. The young male protagonist of the film, Peping, is a first-time spectator to rape-murder-mutilation. In staging Peping’s spectatorship of this spectacular misogynist violence, Mendoza’s filmmaking renders the trauma – and its

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225 Deleuze contrasts the crystalline regime of filmmaking to the organic regime. If the organic regime makes cinematic time contingent upon the movement of a lead character, whose actions structure the narrative and temporality of the film, the crystalline regime is not similarly character-driven. Rather, the crystalline regime renders time itself visible through the use of techniques which produce non-linear movement in space-time, for example, through flash-backs, flash-forwards, or scenes in which characters are caught in a reverie, daydream, or contemplation – scenes in which a linear, progressive movement of time is disrupted. The crystalline regime can slow down, speed up, or stop time in ways that are not character-contingent. See Deleuze, Cinema 1: The Time Image and Cinema 2: The Movement-Image.
implications for a practice of ethics – as primarily masculine. Rather than read Mendoza’s film as either reproducing or critiquing patriarchy, however, I argue that the film provokes us to consider the conditions of possibility for the banalization of misogyny, as well as the gendered effects and colonial specters of postcolonial necropower in the Philippines. *Kinatay* stages power relations micropolitically, as scenes of pedagogic contestation among gendered cultures of class, while conjuring the macropolitics of economic and policing regimes of violence. What is at stake in these contestations is the family, masculinity, and a vision of futurity for the Philippine boy citizen as urban *masa* (of the masses). In this sense, the film diagnoses a national crisis – ‘racket’ or police corruption – as a crisis of masculinity.

III. Temporally entangled regimes of police, governmentality, and accumulation: colonial democracy in the Philippines

Ongoing U.S. military occupation of the Philippines after the Philippine-American War (1899-1902) involved the establishment of what McCoy calls an “imperial panopticon.” This dispositif was comprised of the most technologically sophisticated police and intelligence units existing “anywhere under the U.S. flag,” with Americans in leadership and Filipinos in subordinate positions (McCoy 27). McCoy writes,

> Inside the colonial capital [of Manila] five separate secret services – Army, Constabulary, Police, Customs, and Internal Revenue – deployed spies and agents in a ceaseless surveillance of Filipino leaders and their private lives. The paramilitary Philippines Constabulary was a particularly supple force, combining long-arm patrols in the countryside and secret-service operations in the capital. Within five years of its founding in 1901, the Constabulary had developed a covert capacity that included media monitoring, psychological profiling, surveillance, disinformation, penetration [of households], manipulation, and, when required, assassination… Regular [Army] regiments stood ready near the

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226 According to Abinales and Amorso, “the Philippine Constabulary, established in 1901, [was] an insular police force that replaced the irredeemable [Spanish] Guardia Civil. Led by
capital to quell any disturbance, Constabulary companies crisscrossed remote hinterlands, and municipal police guarded town plazas and city streets. Armed resistance was met with mass slaughter as artillery and repeating rifles covered the ground with corpses. Nationalist agitation was contained through a suffocating surveillance. Labor agitation was crushed by arbitrary arrests and agent provocateur operations. Within a decade this total information regime had pacified the Philippines (McCoy 29).

This emergent security assemblage developed in concert with other colonial techniques of governmentality during the tutelary Insular Government (1902-1935) and Commonwealth periods (1935-1946). Hedman and Sidel argue that the entangling of formal democratic institutions and processes with the discretionary application of police and military force, in particular, created a recurring pattern of sub-contracted political violence whose legacy is apparent today.

The “timing, phasing, and structural design” of colonial democracy in the Philippines

Americans, with some junior Filipino officers, the Constabulary recruited among Christians, Muslims, and northern Philippine “non-Christian groups.” The constabulary had the power to regulate the use of firearms, take the lead in health emergencies (typically cholera epidemics), and expand the telegraph and postal systems throughout the archipelago. Regarded as ‘peace officers,’ constabulary units were also charged to ‘prevent and suppress brigandage, insurrection, unlawful assemblies, and breaches of the peace” (Abinales and Amorso, 122).

Consequently, during its occupation of Manila from 1898 to 1901, the army combined military intelligence and modern data management to lay the institutional foundations for a modern metropolitan police force. When foot patrols and archival analysis failed to destroy the revolution's urban underground, the U.S. Provost Guard Special Brigade developed covert techniques of surveillance and penetration to fight a counterguerrilla war in Manila's maze of bricks and bamboo. After the capital was transferred to American civil officials in 1901, the army bestowed its innovative military procedures on the new civilian police, notably, typed reports, numbered files, specialized intelligence units, and sophisticated clandestine methods. To these systems, Manila's new police force added, between 1901 and 1906, advanced American crime-control technologies, including a centralized phone network, Gamewell's police and fire alarms, Bertillon's photo identification system, and fingerprinting. Within twenty years the Metropolitan Police would amass an extraordinary "all embracing index" of alphabetized file cards for two hundred thousand Filipinos-the equivalent of 70 percent of Manila's entire population." In an age when most U.S. police still relied on foot patrols and practiced what New York City's commissioner called "systematic and organized blackmail," Manila's Metropolitans had, by 1906, a cadre of clerks trained in data management and photographic identification, bilingual patrolmen who circulated the city with clockwork regularity, and detectives skilled in undercover operations” (McCoy 29).
involved

…the elaboration of a multi-tiered system of elected executive and legislative posts, the staging of first municipal then provincial elections before the national legislative and presidential contests of later years, and the gradual expansion of what was originally a very limited franchise, prefiguring a pattern of political competition in which local, particularistic, patronage-based concerns and networks would serve as the building blocks of electoral competition. (Hedman and Sidel, 8).

By facilitating the acquisition of large landholdings and establishing a pattern of private accumulation among Filipino estate holders, U.S. rule also encouraged the political ascendance of a propertied native elite to populate this multi-tiered electoral system. The U.S. purchased 165,000 hectares of former encomienda land owned by the Catholic Church, which was then resold or leased to Filipino hacenderos and U.S. capital (Abinales and Amorso 122). Through the Insular and Commonwealth periods, wealthy plantation families expanded their haciendas in Negros Occidental, Batangas and Tarlac in Luzon, and Bukidnon in northern Mindanao to the unprecedented size of several thousand hectares apiece. During the 1920s and ‘30s a majority of Philippine central mills for sugar processing were constructed, a key step in the transition from plantation holder to industrial magnate in subsequent decades (Hedman and Sidel, 73). Hedman and Sidel indicate the ways in which estate ownership was an enabling condition for both “clientelist coercion” and electoral success:

Land has provided not only a virtually independent economic base for private capital accumulation, but also a crucial social and political base, as ownership of large rural landholdings has been accompanied by control over tenant farmers, landless laborers, and other dependents who can be mobilized to deliver votes for large landowners and their favoured candidates for office on election day. Over the course of the 20th century, this control over local blocs of voters has facilitated large landowners’ easy access – and ascendancy – to elective office: to municipal mayorships, provincial governorships, and even seats in the national legislature, guaranteeing a privileged position from which to exercise influence over the appointment of government personnel, the dispensing of state patronage, and the nature and direction of public policy formulation and implementation (Hedman and Sidel, 69).
Rather than establish a “centralized, insulated colonial bureaucracy,” U.S. colonial power was characterized by a highly decentralized and privatized administration of law enforcement “wherein Police and Constabulary appointments, promotions, renumerations, and reassignments became the prerogative of municipal and provincial politicians” (Sidel, 39). Local politicians’ discretionary powers over Police and Constabulary forces enabled them to use these forces as coercive apparatuses to “staff their private election campaigns and criminal rackets,” in addition to repressing rebellion (ibid 40). This dispersed form of colonial rule mirrored the structure of U.S. state-formation at the turn of the 20th century. As it had proven brutally effective in the 19th-century U.S. wars of genocide against indigenous nations in North America, so it proved also for the pacification of insurrectos in the insular empire (Sidel, 39). According to Sidel, even as ‘pacification’ campaigns continued in many parts of the archipelago,

…elections for municipal mayors (1901), provincial governors (1902), representatives to the national Philippine Assembly (1907), an American-style bicameral legislature (1916), and the Commonwealth presidency were elected… These elected local officials, in turn, were granted extensive powers over Police and Constabulary forces at both municipal and provincial levels of government… Congressmen, moreover, enjoyed significant formal as well as informal influence over the appointments and rotation of Constabulary officers. Finally, at the national level, Nationalista Senate President (1917-1935) and Philippine Commonwealth President (1935-41) Manuel Quezon also exercised considerable, at times decisive, discretion over the Philippine Constabulary (PC) [through] skillful manipulation of the government bureaucracy and the constitution, as well as his long-standing intervention in provincial politics (Sidel 39).

The organization of authority was one in which military and police were placed under the control of elected elites at every level – local, municipal, provincial, and national – except in the “special provinces” at the archipelago’s ostensible civilizational and geographic peripheries. Populations in Moro Province in the south (Mindanao and Sulu) and Mountain Province in northern Luzon (the Cordilleras) were subject to direct US military rule until 1913, and thus no
elections were held, “as assimilation was predicted to be at least two generations away” (Abinales and Amorso 124).

The regimes of securitization developed under U.S. benevolent assimilation were later deployed to repress anti-colonial, pro-communist militancy. Hegemony of estate-holding politicians wielding discretionary police and military power, aligned with U.S. Cold War geo-strategic interests, prevented rural and urban communists who advocated for broad land and wealth redistribution from participation in the political institutions of colonial democracy. After the Communists’ victory in China in 1949, counter-insurgency against peasant movements such as the Hukbalahap intensified with generous U.S. military assistance and under the leadership of U.S. military officers. In the 1940s and ‘50s, candidates closely identified with “peasant organizations and Huk guerilla networks in the rice-bowl and high-tenancy region of Central Luzon and enjoying the support of the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP) and the Civil Liberties Union” experienced violent repression (Sidel 42). State officials authorized police, constabulary forces, and civilian guards on the payrolls of landlords and politicians to raid Democratic Alliance and PKP offices, violently disperse political rallies, and assault peasant leaders. The anti-Huk ‘psywar’ involved the mobilization of volunteer civilian militias into ‘hunter-killer’ units called the Scout Rangers, an approach reproduced from the U.S. Indian wars (ibid). Some of these Scout Ranger squads engaged in “‘savage war’ tactics such as the vampire-like bloodletting of victims” while the regular troops recruited among “all the law-enforcement capability in the area, including municipal police and… the so-called civil guard,” comprised of rag-tag local civilian militias (Sidel 45). This armed assemblage largely crushed the Huk resistance by the early- to mid-1950s. Such paramilitary groups presaged the anti-communist vigilantism that emerged later under Ferdinand Marcos and then Corazon Aquino in
the 1980s.

Thus while revolutionary, nationalist leaders ascended to positions of political power elsewhere in Southeast Asia during the post-WWII period of decolonization, the same could not be said in the Philippine context.\(^{228}\) One contemporary legacy of the entrenchment of conservative nationalism during this period is the persistence of the Maoist New Peoples Army (NPA), despite endless state counter-insurgency campaigns whose enabling condition is billions of dollars of U.S. military and technical assistance.\(^{229}\)

From Hedman and Sidel’s analysis of capitalist development and ‘bossism’ in the archipelago emerges a conceptualization of the Philippine state as a "complex set of predatory mechanisms for private exploitation and accumulation of the [Philippines’] human, natural, and monetary resources," mediated by constant electoral competition (Sidel 114). The galvanization of voters every two years feeds “a system of bossism” that rests on an "electorate susceptible to clientelist, coercive, and monetary inducements and pressures" (Sidel 115). Local authorities are granted a series of “informal immunities” by national authorities who rely on local machines for their electoral success nationally. This system of immunities fosters “localized systems of social

\(^{228}\) According to Sidel, a pattern of “conservative electoral rather than radical nationalist mobilization” was established through a process of “neo-colonial linkage rather than anti-colonial struggle.” This process included a negotiated independence and ongoing US military presence provided for by the Tydings-McDuffie Act. Sidel writes, “With independence… provided for in the 1935 Commonwealth constitution, and with USAFFE guerilla veterans filling dozens of seats in the 1946 Congress, the Philippines presented a stark contrast to the war-time emergence of nationalist armies mobilized against colonial troops in other parts of the region” (Sidel 41).

control” organized through intimate involvement between ‘state’ actors and an array of ‘nonstate’ actors including “elected officials, warlords, militia chiefs, and crime bosses” (ibid). This point is well illustrated by the “Hello Garci” scandal which plagued Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo during her presidency, as well as the fraud investigation to which the Arroyo family is subject today (an investigation fueled in part by furor over the 2009 mass killings in Maguindanao).

The structural conditions which have rendered elections critical mechanisms for the asymmetrical accumulation and allocation of myriad resources – jobs, commodities, cash, votes, immunities, forms of access, etc. – and the vast stakes of electoral competition for formal and informal economies locally means that analysis of Philippine politics also requires unraveling the distinction between formal and informal policing. According to McCoy, this analysis must be historical, and it must include the shadowy realm of vice, syndicates, and extralegal and paramilitary violence traditionally excluded from analyses of formal political institutions. He writes,

At the high tide of empire, the U.S. colonial police shaped the Philippine polity, creating an interlocking regime of vice prohibition and paramilitary policing whose effect is still evident more than a half century after independence. Since police were central to the colonial regime, the succeeding Philippine Republic inherited a state apparatus reliant on formal and informal police powers. Above all, the American colonial regime, by creating the constabulary as a political and paramilitary force, embedded a powerful security apparatus within the Philippine executive that has been employed by almost every Filipino president from Manuel Quezon in 1936 to Arroyo in 2006. Moreover, the covert doctrines developed under U.S. rule persisted inside the Philippines Constabulary and its successor, the Philippine National Police, allowing state control over a volatile society through clandestine methods such as surveillance, infiltration, disinformation, and assassination (McCoy 36).

McCoy posits that the U.S. colonial government simultaneously set in motion contradictory forces – powerful security and syndicated vice – by establishing secret police services designed
to serve political power, then prohibiting vice in ways that encouraged political corruption (McCoy 13). I discuss the post-independence legacies of these contradictory forces further below.

IV. Haptic visuality and disjunctive national times

Aesthetic experience has a political effect to the extent that the loss of destination it presupposes disrupts the way in which bodies fit their destinations and functions. What it produces is not rhetorical persuasion about what must be done. Nor is it the framing of a collective body. It is a multiplication of connections and disconnections that reframe the relation between bodies, the world they live in and the way in which they are ‘equipped’ to adapt to it. It is a multiplicity of folds and gaps in the fabric of common experience that change the cartography of the perceptible, the thinkable and the feasible. As such, it allows for new modes of political construction of common objects and new possibilities of collective enunciation. However, this political effect occurs under the condition of an original disjunction, an original effect, which is the suspension of any direct relationship between cause and effect.

-- Jacques Ranciere, The Emancipated Spectator, 72-3

*Kinatay* begins with a montage that expresses what I will call *barangay time*. Barangay, as a sign, is a temporal multiplicity – it is translated as “village,” “a group of families,” and “a community of people” (L.English). *Barangay* is derived from the Malay *balangay*, also signifying a precolonial Philippine sailboat requiring 12 to 16 rowers, used by migrating families, traders, and pirates. Owing in part to the kind of sociality it indicates, ‘barangay’ was officially codified as the smallest political administrative unit in the Local Government Code of the Philippines in 1991, but its common usage speaks to a genealogy that traverses hundreds of years, and is documented in Spanish colonial ethnographies.

By *barangay time* I mean this old-new, official-informal time-space, constituted by the sociality, flows, and re/productive activities of the intimate public street space of the barangay. In *Kinatay*, the barangay is an urban one, located in Parañaque City, a municipality of Metro Manila. This streetscape of women doing laundry, vending *taho* (fresh, warm bean curd covered
in sweet syrup), playing basketball, hauling bags of plastic bottles, kissing babies, grooming roosters, and butchering chickens is clearly Philippine, urban working-class – but given the street action, soundscape, and flow of bodies within the cityscape’s built environment, this could just as easily be a street scene in almost any global city neighborhood in Southeast Asia.

In this opening montage and throughout the film, *Kinatay*’s neo-realist, verité aesthetic is characterized by the use of hand-held camera and close- and medium-range, indeterminate point-of-view shots that navigate space more haptically than optically. In Laura Marks gloss on Deleuze’s elaboration of smooth versus striated space, haptic visuality is a corporealized, multisensory mode of vision. By drawing upon other senses, particularly touch and kinesthetics, rather than optical vision alone, haptic visuality emphasizes a mode of perception that combines “tactile, kinesthetic, and proprioceptive functions, the way we experience touch both on the surface of and inside our bodies” (Marks, *Touch*, 2). With haptic visuality, “the eyes themselves function like organs of touch” (Marks, *Touch*, 2).

Haptic visuality is distinguished from optical visuality, which sees things from enough distance to perceive them as distinct forms in deep space: in other words, how we usually conceive of vision. Optical visuality depends on a separation between the viewing subject and the object. Haptic looking tends to move over the surface of its object rather than to plunge into illusionistic depth, not to distinguish form so much as to discern texture. It is more inclined to move than to focus, more inclined to graze than to gaze (Marks, *Skin of the Film*, 31).

The Paranaque morning of *Kinatay* is marked by constant movement and multiple rhythms – of bodies (animal and human), of vehicles, of formal and informal economic transactions. Any demarcation between public or private, interior or exterior spaces and activities is porous. The film ‘grazes’ this constant movement, these multiple rhythms and spaces, as a body would moving through the street, encountering images that do not come into immediate focus. There is no master shot of the street, which would employ an optic visuality.
One distinctive, visually haptic technique used repeatedly in this sequence and elsewhere in the film is the ‘squat shot,’ akin to the ‘tatami shot’ notable in the ‘Golden Age’ Japanese cinema of Ozu and Mizoguchi. The squat shot places the camera at the eye-level of someone squatting on the ground, emphasizing the physical comportment of bodies in intimate proximity with the surface of the street. The street soundscape accompanying this opening montage is, as the shots themselves are, spatially indeterminate, coming from everywhere and nowhere in particular, producing what Deleuze calls perception-images. One effect is both to localize and nationalize the cinematic time-space, rendering these moments both singular and any-time, anywhere. In this sense, *Kinatay* establishes what emerges as a refrain throughout the film – its ability to, as Kracauer observes, “provide a critique of the sovereign subject” whose will to perception can always only be partial, as Michael Shapiro has observed in his readings of Bergson and Deleuze.

*Kinatay*’s diegesis begins by mobilizing conventions of a working-class family melodrama, a genre typically understood as “specializing in heterosexual and family relations” that “materializes bourgeois ideology…in spheres conventionally assigned to women – the home, the family, domestic trivia, consumption, fantasy and romance, sentiment.” In mapping the diegesis through a masculine figure, however, the film disrupts the gendered codes of the genre. Peping is a 20-year-old student at the Manuel Quezon University School of Criminal Justice, a police academy. He and his 19-year-old fiancé, Cecille, have an infant son whose nickname is Popoy. It is their wedding day. They are getting married with borrowed money, because they cannot afford the cost of their marriage license.

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230 Deleuze, *Cinema I*, 81.
Peping and Cecille share a tender moment on the jeepney ride to the municipio where their simple, civil wedding ceremony will take place. Overwhelmed with happiness, Cecille begins to cry. But all is not well in this mise-en-scene, this time of the family. On the way to the municipio, in the jeep, Peping and Cecille encounter an odd scene outside the jeepney windows (a scene reported on by a news broadcaster, whose voice we hear on the jeep radio). A young man has climbed onto the ledge of a Caltex company billboard. Caltex, of course, is the U.S. transnational petrol giant and owner of the subsidiary Chevron. Caltex built the Philippines’ first petroleum refinery in 1954, and rapidly expanded its operations in the country in the 1980s by purchasing Mobil Oil Philippines, after the energy industry was deregulated.

The radio broadcast announces that the young man on the ledge of the Caltex billboard intends to commit suicide. His mother, surrounded by reporters, stands at the foot of the billboard supports with a bullhorn, imploring him to come down: “Your child is looking for you! I left her with her mother. Please, child, come down! It’s embarrassing, everyone can see you on TV!” The young man paces, sits on the billboard ledge, and, nonplussed, observes the media circus below. The insertion of this nationally-televised family melodrama (brought to us by Caltex) within the family melodrama of Peping and Cecille, introduces a masculine crisis whose cause is unexplained (indeed, his mother tells reporters that “he’s a good kid, all he does all day is watch TV”). Rather, the emphasis for the reporters mediating this event is the potentialities and consequences of this masculine crisis. Will he or won’t he jump? Will he or won’t he bring shame upon his family for all the nation to witness? Will he or won’t he abnegate his paternal responsibilities by abandoning his child? This last question effects an interesting gendered reversal of the ongoing debate about the social costs of Philippine OFWs’ ‘absent mothering.’
It is the exigencies surrounding Peping and Cecille’s wedding that introduce the official, historical time of the nation into the film. In a remarkable sequence demonstrating the saturation of public space with expressions of official nationalism and its affective investments, Peping’s lola (grandmother) and siblings get lost on the way to the municipio for the wedding ceremony. (Neither Peping’s nor Cecille’s parents attend the wedding and their absence is not attended to in any way.) In this visually haptic sequence, they end up wandering through a streetscape full of scenes of nationalist pedagogy. They walk past a ceremony commemorating the town’s founding, featuring elected officials and children adorned in ‘national costume,’ singing about peace. Elementary school students rehearse a choreographed dance with streamers for the annual performance that will commemorate the founding of their school. Peping’s siblings and lola even accidentally end up walking into the wrong wedding – a mass wedding officiated by the mayor, an instantiation of rationalized, neoliberal, Catholic family time. Every shot in this sequence includes images of security guards and police, in the center or the margins of the frame. Courteous, respectful police officers direct Peping’s family to the municipio. The official origins of Peping’s juridically sanctified family are bound up in the memorialization of the official origins of the pedagogic spaces of school, city, and country – all under the constant, benevolent, daytime surveillance of the security apparatus.

After Peping and Cecille’s wedding ceremony, the whole family piles into a van to head to lunch at a family restaurant, a treat provided by Peping’s wealthy ninong (godfather). Much of the film occurs in vehicles, a commentary on the vehicularization of urban life in Manila. The van, jeep, or taxi becomes a mechanism for constituting and mediating, at different speeds and intensities, the gaze trained externally. However, in two important van rides that serve as each other’s Manichean doubles, the emphasis is on the pedagogical scene occurring inside the
vehicle. In this first pedagogical van ride, Peping is situated in visually striated space towards the back of the van, in intimate physical proximity to his family, but also in subordinate relation to his patron, his ninong, who sits in the front passenger’s seat beside his driver. Although it is the interior of a vehicle that is framed, the shot is just wide enough to view all eight people in the van and observe Peping’s relation to each of them. Peping’s ninong owns the van in which they are riding; Peping comments on how beautiful it is. His ninong jokes it will take him 10 years to pay off the van, a length of time in which his godfather predicts Peping will have 10 children already. During this van ride, Peping receives instruction regarding the pleasures of upward mobility, the forms of indebtedness these produce, and the horizons of patron generosity. The state-recognized founding moment of Peping’s new family is thus also bound up in relations of patronage and extreme wealth and income disparity. After the post-wedding banquet, Peping heads to class. Students, including Peping, receive instruction not only in the investigation of a crime scene, but in bribe-taking. Their teacher offers a P100 bill to the student who answers his questions correctly.

At sunset, family melodrama flows seamlessly into film noir. The historical link between film noir and melodrama in Hollywood is well known by film scholars. Only as recently as the 1970s did Hollywood begin marketing films previously labeled “melodramas” or “thrillers” as films noir. Edward Dimendberg observes that U.S. films noir express anxieties about Fordist capitalist transformations that result in the homogenization of public space and architecture, typified by the growth of suburbs and shopping malls. Dimendberg writes, “Invoking the past while anxiously imagining the future, films noir reveal multiple spatialities, no less than multiple temporalities” (Dimendberg, 3). This is indeed the case with *Kinatay*, which, in its second act,

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233 See Edward Dimendberg, *Film Noir and the Spaces of Modernity*, 5.
demonstrates the formal and narrative conventions of film noir – shadowy lighting, violent characters, a femme fatale – as well as film noir’s “preoccupation with unrecoverable time and space, the inability to dwell comfortably in either the present or the past” (Dimendberg 1).

The film noir begins with a scene of Peping, still donning his police school uniform shirt, collecting racket money – the police’s share of the profits from jueteng, an illegal ‘penny-ante’ numbers game – from street vendors on a boulevard by Manila Bay. Peping’s supervisor is a junior officer, Abyong, who invites him to come along on an unofficial, highly lucrative, “operation.” Peping assents, and climbs into an unmarked van. Once inside, he sees the Police Seargent (“Sarge”) sitting in the front passenger’s seat beside his driver. Also waiting in the van are Vic, the Police Captain (“Cap”), and a junior officer named Chico. All are non-uniformed.

V. Governmentality and necropower under Martial Law and beyond: spectacularity, counter-insurgency, racket

During the post-WWII period of U.S.-structured import-substitution industrialization, the formidable ‘Sugar Bloc’ representing plantation capital in Congress obtained Philippine National Bank loans, import licenses, franchises, tax and tariff deals, and regulatory breaks enabling their transformation into a nascent industrial bourgeoisie with interests in transportation, shipping, banking, publishing, energy, and the extractive industries (Hedman and Sidel, 73). In contrast to the ascendance of ‘sugar baron’ landed capital, the emergence of ‘crony capital’ during this period illustrates a different nexus of accumulation and political access. The growth of the tobacco sector, upon which Ferdinand Marcos’ early political career was built, is exemplary in this regard. In parts of the Philippines where small landholdings predominated, as in much of the Ilocos, local ‘bosses’ controlling tobacco production and distribution amassed wealth and
political positions not through exploitation of concentrated landholdings and plantation labor, but through preferential access to state resources – loans, land, monopoly franchises, public works contracts, concessions – provided by elected officials (Hedman and Sidel, 74). Hedman and Sidel argue that “[w]ith Marcos’ unprecedented reelection in 1969 and rule by decree from 1972-1986, the Philippines saw a reversal of the previous pattern of sugar baron hegemony…Tobacco trumped sugar, cronies trumped oligarchs, gangster-politicians trumped plantation owners, and state power trumped private capital” (ibid 75). The Marcos regime ushered in significant expansion and innovation in state agencies’ role in the economy and in the scale of presidential cronyism: behest loans, huge construction contracts, vast logging concessions, and quasi-governmental monopolies/monopsonies in the coconut and sugar industries. Marcos availed public resources “to build and maintain a political machine without assuming any proprietary or productive role in the economy” (ibid).

Changes in the organization of capital-electoral relations occurred simultaneously with transformations in “civil-military” relations under the Martial Law president. Marcos gradually asserted more centralized authority over dispersed, locally-controlled police and military functions, beginning in Manila, where organized civilian opposition was most visible and extensive. He increased Manila's police while leaving authority in the hands of his executive antiriot force, the constabulary's Metropolitan Command (Metrocom) (McCoy 399). In March 1974 he issued Presidential Decree (PD) 421, merging all police in the thirteen municipalities and four cities of Metro Manila into a new Metropolitan Police Force (Metropol) under Metrocom's commander (ibid). Marcos then consolidated the Philippines 1,673 autonomous local police forces into the Integrated National Police (INP). In August 1975, under PD 765, Marcos proceeded to place the INP under the Philippines Constabulary (PC), thereby creating a
centralized, militarized national police force, the PC-INP (ibid).

Support from the U.S. Office of Public Safety (OPS) was instrumental in shaping the nature of Martial Law repression. Established in 1962 by John F. Kennedy to improve security among third world allies, OPS grew into a global counterinsurgency initiative with an annual budget of $35 million and a staff of over four hundred American advisers (McCoy 386). Though housed in the US State Department’s USAID, Byron Engle, OPS chief, was a career CIA employee. To fulfill the covert anticommunist mission of the OPS, Engle recruited CIA personnel to improve police counterinsurgency capabilities with extralegal methods. In support of Marcos’ police reforms, “from 1969 to 1973 OPS would spend $5 million to install fifty-five provincial communications networks; send 284 Filipino officers to the United States for advanced training; establish ten regional centers to train 23,902 police, about 60 percent of the nation's total; and build an integrated communications grid and an antiriot squad of two thousand well-trained PC troopers ready for instantaneous dispatch to quell any demonstration or protest in Manila” (McCoy 386–7).

Marcos’ creation of the INP effectively expanded the authority of the PC and AFP, both national forces, to the level of municipal police. Over time, this new hierarchy constrained governors’ and mayors’ abilities to influence the loyalties and career paths of men policing their

234 McCoy asserts that OPS may have recruited some of these Filipino officers as CIA assets or trained them in torture; more will be known after the eventual release of classified documents. Elsewhere in Asia and Latin America the CIA used OPS to insert its agents in key cities and recruit local police for training at a clandestine center in Washington, DC. Congressional investigators later found, by reading theses of the academy's graduates, clear evidence of torture training. Between 1962 and 1972 OPS trained an estimated eighty-five senior Filipino officers in interrogation techniques in Washington, D.C. (Lobe, 56–57,60–61,67; as quoted in McCoy). In the last years of Marcos's dictatorship, elite military units would employ psychological methods strikingly similar to those found in CIA training manuals to torture an estimated thirty-five thousand political dissidents. Thus it is possible that OPS transmitted CIA torture techniques later used by Marcos's martial law interrogators (ibid).
jurisdictions (Sidel 46). These transformations did not only disrupt the well-established arrangements by which local officials had controlled local police and military units. Military officers now found themselves well positioned to access new forms of income and accrue wealth. Because of the subordination of local police forces to PC and AFP control, military officers could now skim revenue available through syndicated gambling, prostitution, smuggling and other informal economic sectors previously controlled by local politicians. Further, “top AFP brass also gained new economic powers, most notably through high-ranking officers’ supervisory roles in a few strategic private enterprises and public utilities” (Sidel 46) -- particularly in extractive industries and energy projects.

The well-documented Martial Law record of systematic human rights violations and extralegal violence need not be reiterated extensively here. In indicating the structural arrangements by which electoral processes and institutions, regimes of accumulation, modes of access to formal political power, and regimes of violence are imbricated, there is much my analysis excludes. However, it is well-established that in the weeks following Marcos’ Proclamation 1081, thousands of the 50,000 people arrested without warrant and indefinitely detained for alleged subversion were confined in extralegal “safe houses” for “tactical interrogations” and tortured (McCoy 25).\textsuperscript{235} It is estimated that over the Martial Law period, 3,257 were killed, 35,000 were tortured, and 70,000 were arrested (McCoy 398). McCoy writes of the dispositifs of torture established at this time:

Recent graduates of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA) who joined the

\textsuperscript{235} Proclamation 1081 was Marcos’ September 1972 declaration of Martial Law. Marcos had invoked Article VII of the 1935 Constitution providing that the president “in case of invasion, insurrection, or rebellion…may suspend the privileges of the write of habeas corpus, or place the Philippines…under martial law.” In his next paragraph, Marcos issued a sweeping order that all suspects arrested for crimes against public order “be kept under detention until otherwise ordered released by me” (McCoy 25).
[Philippine Constabulary] were socialized into a permissive ethos of torture, corruption, and impunity. With unchecked legal authority, limitless funds, and immersion in both psychological and physical torture, a cohort of privileged police commanders formed in the upper ranks of the elite PC antisubversion squads, the Metrocom Intelligence Service Group (MISG) and Fifth Constabulary Security Unit (CSU) (McCoy 405).

Notably, techniques of torture were classed – all units appeared to reserve psychological methods for educated suspects and applied predominantly physical torture on peasants or workers (McCoy 406).

Of the 3,257 documented extrajudicial killings of labor leaders, student activists, and ordinary citizens by antisubversion squads such as MISG and CSU, 77 percent (or 2,520) were salvagings (McCoy 403). This Filipino neologism, likely derived from the Tagalog salbahe and the Spanish salvaje (“savage, wild, undomesticated,” [English, 1156]), reportedly originated with the military under the Marcos dictatorship to refer to the “elimination,” or summary execution, of detainees after torture, rather than their re-routing to detention centers (Task Force Detainees, 41-43, as quoted in McCoy, 617). Salvaging is the public display of the mutilated corpse of a body that has been tortured to death, or executed after torture. The Spanish and U.S. colonial antecedents of salvaging include public garroting, display of dismembered and beheaded bodies and body parts, firing squad execution, display of bodies after mass killings, and display of the bodies of those tortured then executed for subversion or criminality. The intended effect of salvaging, as with these other forms of horroristic violence, is to terrorize and pacify.

Antisubversion units operated at night (McCoy 405), so salvaged bodies would become spectacularly visible as morning broke. McCoy observes,

...Filipino interrogators carried the CIA'S psychological paradigm into its ultimate dimension, combining an expansive theatricality with lurid physical brutality to induce terror not just among their many victims but in the entire society. If, as often happened, ...interrogations ended with a victim's death, the perpetrators discarded the mangled corpse in a public place, a roadside or busy
intersection, to be seen by passersby. Every road or plaza – indeed, all public space – thus became a proscenium of psychological terror. Seeing the stigmata on the victim's body, or simply hearing of them, Filipinos could read in an instant the entire transcript of torture inside the regime's safe house (McCoy 407).

Marcos also proliferated local counter-insurgency paramilitary forces such as the Barrio Self-Defense Units and Civilian Home Defense Forces (CHDF), placing them under the direct command of the PC (Philippine Constabulary) in 1976 (Sidel 46). The extent to which the Marcos regime (and subsequent presidents, such as Aquino and Arroyo) encouraged civilian anti-communist vigilantism is well-known by scholars and Philippine human rights advocates.236 McCoy writes, “[i]n the countryside, the constabulary tried to check communist insurgency by arming 110,000 local militia as of 1982, flooding Mindanao with Civilian Home Defense Forces that soon degenerated into what their chief later called ‘private armies . . . for the personal aggrandizement of the local warlords’” (McCoy 405).

While the Marcos regime’s record on torture, extrajudicial killings, salvaging, and support of civilian counter-insurgency militias is popularly known, it is less well-known that in the final years of Martial Law, police torture and spectacular displays of its evidence became standard procedure against petty criminals as well as political dissidents (McCoy 403). According to McCoy, in Manila, “with only four thousand police for six million residents, the metro government deputized hundreds of ‘secret marshals’ to shoot petty criminals on sight, producing over thirty fatalities during the program's first month, May 1985” (McCoy 405). In addition, antisubversion units became increasingly engaged in syndicated gambling, drugs, or smuggling (McCoy 403). McCoy asserts,

> Just as the first family monopolized high-roller casino gambling, so their police commanders syndicated the illegal, penny-ante jueteng lottery that thrived in the country's slums. With the relentless centralization of police power, senior

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236 See Hedman and Sidel, film *Ora Pro Nobis*. 
constabulary officers protected regional vice syndicates that soon superseded the long-established local crime bosses. Instead of a few bribes to the town mayor and his police chief, the new syndicates made substantial payments to [the many military and police intelligence units] which proliferated… Moreover, the balance between police and syndicates shifted, with PC commanders rising from mere protectors to principals and the once powerful vice lords reduced to bagmen for the military… Clearly, a decade of martial rule had not eradicated the vice rackets but instead fostered a more sophisticated syndication complete with national police protection (McCoy 403).

In the period of ‘democratic transition’ following Marcos, the entanglement of police, military, counter-insurgency, syndicated crime, and formal politics became more, rather than less entrenched. Marcos’ successors expanded upon his pervasive system of policing. After a brief period of attempted ‘national reconciliation’ between the state and the CPP-NPA-NDF, negotiations broke down, and armed conflict was resumed, with Corazon Aquino adopting a ‘total war’ policy to eradicate the NPA. Violent counter-insurgency actually intensified under ‘restored democracy,’ compared with the period of ‘civilian dictatorship.’ Aquino’s six-year term produced 2,696 dead from salvaging, military massacre, or disappearance, compared to the 3,257 killed during Marcos’ fourteen-year rule (McCoy 443). Reduced U.S. military assistance and the closing of Subic and Clark Air Bases during the terms of Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada encouraged renewed negotiations with the NPA, but the post-9/11 U.S. ‘War on Terror’ enabled Arroyo to reinvigorate counter-insurgency efforts Patricio Abinales and Nathan Gilbert, *The US and the War on Terror in the Philippines* (Anvil Manila, 2008). Under Arroyo, the military mobilized approximately fifty vigilante groups nationwide in an effort to reduce NPA guerrilla zones by half (McCoy 516). Perpetrated by both police and military, extrajudicial killings under Arroyo rivaled the extreme violence of the Marcos regime, with estimates ranging from the military’s figure of 115 to 724 by the human rights group Karapatan (ibid). Although President Arroyo condemned these assassinations in her July 2006 state of the nation address,
she also praised the efforts of General Jovito Palparan – nicknamed “The Butcher” by human rights workers for his torture methods under Marcos – to eradicate NPA strongholds. Arroyo appointed Palparan to her national security council (McCoy 516). In a profound historical irony, Palparan was elected to Congress in 2007 under the aegis of party-list electoral reforms designed to expand electoral participation among underrepresented sectors of Philippine civil society.

In the immediate post-Marcos period, centralized, presidential cronyism was dismantled. Hedman and Sidel write,

Quasi-governmental monopolies/monopsonies for sugar and coconut were abolished, ‘crony’ companies were sequestered or returned to original owners, state bank loans, contracts and concessions terminated or rescinded. With the return to competitive electoral democracy, the restoration of Congress, and acceptance of IMF programs mandating privatization and liberalization, the late 1980s saw a drastic reduction in the role of the state in the economy. Government financial institutions were privatized and behest loans curtailed, state support for monopolies and cartels in various sectors was withdrawn, and various forms of protection, subsidy, and restrictions on foreign investment and competition were significantly scaled down (Hedman and Sidel, 77-8).

Into this breach in liquidity entered a surge in syndicated criminality that was not only protected, but now increasingly initiated by, the police and military. Under Aquino and her successors, for example, the military proliferated not only counterinsurgency militias and vigilante groups, but a number of ostensibly ‘covert intelligence projects’ “whose cohorts quickly degenerated into criminals gangs” (McCoy 443):

The Kuratong Baleleng Group began as an anticommunist militia in northern Mindanao but soon morphed into Manila's most lethal bank robbery crew. Similarly, the notorious Red Scorpion Group started as a military operation intended to penetrate the NPA's urban terror groups but quickly became the country's top kidnapping gang. Above all the Abu Sayyaf militia was launched as a Muslim counterforce but grew into a kidnapping gang that would be hunted by Filipino forces and U.S. military advisers on Basilan Island after September 2001. In each case military handlers tolerated this devolution into criminality in exchange for a share of the income from robbery and ransom that totaled well over P200 million for all three groups (ibid).
Senior constabulary officers also sanctioned criminal enterprises in new ways. Across Luzon, *jueteng* syndicates operated with police and political protection, growing to an unprecedented size (McCoy 445). McCoy writes,

Through four successive administrations from 1987 to 2007, *jueteng*’s grip on the country's political system tightened. Confronted with a succession of military coups after taking office, the Aquino administration (1986-92), desperate for cash to build a private army and a bloc of loyal legislators, forged the first explicit alliance between the national executive and provincial *jueteng* bosses... In the back alleys of the nation's slums, hidden from public scrutiny and academic analysis, this illegal lottery has become one of the Philippines' largest industries, generating much of the cash that sustains the country's costly machine politics and lavish election campaigns. President Marcos, for example, emptied the national treasury to spend an unprecedented $50 million on his 1969 reelection campaign, far more than the $34 million Richard Nixon needed to capture the U.S. presidency in 1968. A 1999 survey found that 28 percent of all adult Filipinos bet on *jueteng*. A few months later the Philippine legislature estimated the annual gross from gambling syndicates on the main island of Luzon at nearly a billion U.S. dollars. This illegal lottery was also one of the country's largest employers, with an estimated 400,000 workers – far more than the 280,000 then employed in the country's largest export industry, silicon chip manufacturing. If we add this $1 billion in illegal gambling to the $5 billion in illicit drug sales, the Philippine vice economy is a vast underground industry with gross revenues equivalent to nearly half the government's annual budget and a commensurate power to corrupt. "It's the drug lords and the gambling lords... who finance the candidates," said House Speaker Jose de Venecia with disarming frankness in October 2007 (McCoy 475).

VI. A repeating sequence: co-presence of misogynist violence and neoliberal economy

If art is akin to the sensory impression here, then it might be understood, nor merely as illustrating or embodying a proposition, but as engendering a manner of thinking. On this account, art is not conceptual in itself but rather an embodiment of sensation that stimulates thought; the 'intelligence,' as Deleuze puts it, 'comes after,' not before. Art is thus not driven by or enslaved by any particular understanding; it is always productive of ideas.

— Jill Bennet, *Empathic Visions*, 8

Sayang, e... [It would be a shame/waste...]

--Chico, the rapist, in *Kinatay*
The unmarked van carrying the police and the stops at a strip club in Malate, where Madonna gets in. She begins explaining why she doesn’t have the money she owes to the police. Her body is at ease, but she speaks excitedly. While she is still talking, the Captain begins violently beating her. She cries out, and Chico and the Captain quickly cover her mouth with duct tape. Astounded, Peping sits in the back of the van, observing the beating with horror. The hand-held, moving camera is not trained on the beating of Madonna; rather, it is tightly focused on Peping’s face. This is a very different kind of instructional van ride, the nightmare mirror of the post-wedding family van ride earlier, with one glaring commonality – Peping’s condition of constraint and relative powerlessness in both situations. The tight shots from the rear of the van, where Peping sits, emphasize the ways in which Peping is constrained in this violent fraternal hierarchy. Close-ups of Peping’s face register the affects produced by this constraint, and Peping’s inability to escape them, accompanied by a soundtrack of the brutal violence. When it seems Madonna has been beaten to death, the Sergeant turns around in his seat and impassively observes Madonna’s body. As the camera lingers on Madonna’s bruised and bloody face, mouth gagged, Chico says to Sarge, “Sarge, sit back, someone might see you.” Peping looks at Abyong, who looks back at him. The camera lingers on Peping’s face as he registers a new understanding of his buddy Abyong. Peping then leans forward to look at the body of Madonna, but what the camera stages is his gaze at the blood on Chico’s white sneaker. The camera moves up the body of Chico, who sits next to Madonna, from his shoe to his face, as the Sergeant asks, off camera, [“So, what’s up… (asking if she’s still alive)] and Chico responds, nonchalantly, “Patay yata” (“Looks like she’s dead.”) Chico’s body is at ease. Peping leans forward, looks at the lifeless body of Madonna, then crosses himself.
The van heads out of the city, passing billboard after billboard advertising foreign brands – Gingersnap, GNC, Nokia. It is momentarily slowed by Manila’s ubiquitous traffic. The first dialogue we hear after Madonna’s brutal beating is a conversation between the Seargent and the Captain, Vic. The Seargent points out the call center where his son Kiko has just been hired at a starting monthly salary of P25,000 (about $589.00 at the current exchange) – a solidly professional income.

Seargent: To work at the call center they need to speak good English – no Tagalog allowed.
Vic: Then my son Louie would definitely fail. All he does is work on girls. I saw him at Eastwood with a few different pussies.
Seargent: Well, who does he take after? At least he’s not sucking dicks.
Vic: If he dared! I’d put a gun in his mouth.

As it turns out, Madonna is still alive. She is brought to a “safe house” outside of MetroManila, dragged into the basement, and gagged. Vic chastises her for being a junkie and a whore. She begs for her life, says she has a son. Telling her “business is business,” Vic leaves the room, as the Seargent begins violently beating her. Peping follows Vic outside, dazed, and the camera follows Peping as he climbs the stairs outside the basement. He overhears Chico’s off-screen voice: “Wait, Sarge, I wanna do something.” The Seargent attempts to discourage him, but Chico responds, “Sayang, e…” (It would be a shame/waste not to…)

While Madonna is raped, Peping sits outside with Vic. They small-talk about their sons. Peping attempts feebly to intervene on Madonna’s behalf. Vic is not moved. The violence occurring within the ‘safe house’-as-torture-site is filmed primarily through windows. Madonna’s body is dismembered and packed into a plastic rubbish bag. Peping is sent into the house to assist with clean-up. When he and Abyong exit the house carrying Madonna’s torso wrapped in a sheet, the Sergeant and Vic are covering. The Sergeant says, “I’d like a second-hand phone, but with a camera.” Vic responds, “I know some dealers in Greenhills.” The men
then get into the van and drive back into MetroManila. Madonna’s body parts are thrown one at a time out the van window at different locations.

Throughout these scenes of violence, the film utilizes close-ups of Peping’s face to register his profound trauma; these long, lingering shots, or Deleuzian affection-images, produce the sensation of an agonizing, prolonged suspension. While Peping attempts at several points to escape the situation, his efforts are ultimately thwarted – not only by other figures, but by his own inability to flee. Horrified by the misogynist violence with which he is complicit, but unable to disavow, in-the-moment, the fraternal hierarchy as path to upward mobility, Peping no longer knows himself, or controls his actions – his indeterminacy and loss of ‘sovereign subjectivity’ is visible in his terror, fatigue, disgust, forced indifference, and, ultimately, nausea and vomiting.

*Kinatay* renders the school, the automobile, and the home as both technologies of violence and pedagogical sites. Although *Kinatay* could be read as primarily concerned with representing a rupture in the psychological subjectivity of its protagonist, Peping, a more capacious reading is possible if we consider Peping an aesthetic subject, an attendant, whose movements, relations, and encounters make visible the micropolitical effects of the multiple regimes of violence to which bodies are subjected in the neoliberalizing Philippines. These multiple forms of violence include the structural violence of what Walden Bello calls the anti-development state, which, over the last 30 years, has been gutted of a capacity to invest and grow the Philippine economy due to the prioritization of debt repayment and the loss of revenues resulting from trade liberalization. As noted above, this structural violence is staged in *Kinatay* in a notable way. After every scene of extreme misogynist violence, the *burgis* men at the top of the fraternal hierarchy casually converse about markers of neoliberalism in the Philippines, such
as call centers and electronics. It is not that the film establishes a causal relationship between misogyny and the forms of upward mobility neoliberalism make possible for the culture of class of the burgis; rather, the two exist in constant co-presence, in close proximity. The juxtaposition of the modes of violence is arresting because call center jobs and used cell phones with cameras become the indicators of misogyny’s banalization.

VII. The salvaging that is not salvaging

It would be inadequate to read Kinatay as primarily a characterological portrait of masculine, classed constraint. The violence in Kinatay is disjunctive temporally, and with respect to genre. That is, the violence is imbued with a disjunctive familiarity; it is uncanny because it is something we have ‘never seen’ in Philippine cinema, and yet, there is something eerily familiar about the technologies and regimes of violence rendered here. Mendoza achieves this effect through displacements and substitutions that, during the course of the film, deform and destabilize the genre codes he initially establishes.

Most remarkable about the film is the way in which every detail of the perpetration of violence accords with regimes of policing and political repression that emerge under Martial Law and continue today. Indeed, Kinatay renders completely indistinct the technologies of violence utilized for policing and for political repression. This is clearly not a film ‘about’ political repression, but in another sense, it cannot help but conjure the specter of political repression through the technologies and regimes of violence that it indexes. Every detail – the abduction of the victim, the abduction vehicle, the ‘safe house,’ the perpetration by police, police control over syndicated vice, the torture of the victim before her execution, the spectacular exhibition of her dismembered body in daylight – every aspect of this genre of violence is
resonant with extralegal forms of killing that were sources of national and international trauma under Martial Law. The victim is a prostitute, not a political dissident, yet the same regime of violence is utilized for her torture and execution. For any viewer familiar with Philippine history, the film highlights the entwined regimes of economic and police violence ascendant since the advent of neoliberalism in the Philippines in the 1980s. The forms of violence in Kinatay provoke disorientation, dis-memory – what time is this now-time of the nation, this time of Martial Law violence without Martial Law? In this sense, Kinatay’s aesthetic political engagement with violence is its mobilization of ‘involuntary memory.’ In Michael Shapiro’s gloss on Henri Bergson’s elaboration, “the past is perpetually available and alterable because of the way [involuntary memory] can surface, changing its significance as it insinuates itself in the present” Michael J. Shapiro, Cinematic Geopolitics, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2008), 84.

This disjunction forces consideration of the nature of the film’s substitutions and displacements (prostitute for dissident, police for torturer, the past in the present). The approach is a provocation to reflect on the regime of violence itself, not only its instrumentality and phallicism, but its history, and the conditions of its persistence today. Madonna’s death is and is not a political killing. By staging the violence within what appears to be a family melodrama and film noir, rather than through an explicit narrative about political repression, such as Lino Brocka’s Oro Pro Nobis/Fight for Us (1989), Mendoza undermines a common-sense in which political repression and the murder of an indebted prostitute are unproblematically discrete. In this sense, Mendoza allows us to read the rape, torture, murder, and salvaging of a prostitute as an explicitly political, if not politicized, violation. The film also forces contemplation of this now-time of national violence as one which cannot escape the hold of previous regimes of
violence. The regimes of urban violence persist, with no significant technological renovation; it is the target and the perpetrator that change, that are substitutable.

One could argue that *Kinatay* offers viewers clear indicators of a temporal break that structures the film, dividing it, with a sunset, into two films – the family melodrama occurring in the light of day, and its Manichean other, the film noir, occurring under cover of night. I would argue, however, that the film does not work to oppose these two temporalities, or genres, nor to resolve them into one, unified, national time. The film’s last shot is of Cecille cooking breakfast, holding her crying infant son. *Kinatay* posits postcolonial national temporalities as rhythmic, multiple, folding into one another – as august as a founding ceremony, banal as the speeds of the barangay, as cordial as a judge who officiates a wedding, and as ferociously misogynist as a gangster cop. As Jojo Abinales argues in *Making Mindanao*, there is no clear distinction in this micropolitical web between state and society, state and nation.

**VIII. A politics of visualizing misogyny**

What is remarkably absent from the substantial literature documenting Martial Law violence, and in the Philippine human rights literature since Martial Law, are accounts of the torture and sexual violation of women. This lacuna is all the more glaring because of the relative abundance of anecdotal evidence, particularly among Filipina feminist organizers with whom I have spoken, regarding the use of sexual violence as a technique of political repression or as a form of police brutality against women incarcerated or arrested for other crimes. My experience as a U.S.-based political organizer and cultural worker prior to graduate school was profoundly shaped by many long conversations with Martial Law expatriates and survivors. In one such
conversation with Liddy Nakpil-Alejandro\textsuperscript{237} in my early twenties, she mentioned accounts of the sexual violation of women in detention. In my mid-twenties, I interviewed Nelia Sancho for a New York city public radio program called Radio Bandung regarding her advocacy for so-called ‘comfort women,’ Filipinas who were confined as sex slaves by Japanese troops during the WWII occupation.\textsuperscript{238} Sancho related her own experience of repeated sexual violence while detained under Martial Law. Ninotchka Rosca has spoken publicly and privately about the experiences of women survivors of sexual violence with whom she worked as a student organizer.\textsuperscript{239}

Yet the published literature on women’s gendered experience of political repression during Martial Law is virtually non-existent. McCoy cites a 1975 Amnesty International report that states women in detention were threatened with sexual assault, and that one woman, Mrs. Jean Cacayorin-Tayag was "kept sleepless for eight days and nights, made to stand naked for several hours before a full-blast air conditioner and was slapped hard" (McCoy 404). But McCoy’s accounts are certainly not representative of the scope of the problem, historically, or today. When I complained recently to Ninotchka Rosca about the dearth of contemporary human rights literature on the Philippines which documents rape and sexual violence perpetrated for purposes of political repression or against women who are illegally detained, she concurred it is a serious problem. “Human rights organizations like KARAPATAN have really good data regarding incidents of extrajudicial killings, enforced disappearance, torture, abduction, but the

\textsuperscript{237} Nakpil-Alejandro currently works with Jubilee South advocating for global south debt cancellation. She was a student activist during Martial Law and her husband, a human rights lawyer, was assassinated.

\textsuperscript{238} Nelia Sancho is a long-time organizer with GABRIELA Philippines, a national coalition of women’s organizations throughout the archipelago.

\textsuperscript{239} Ninotchka Rosca is a novelist and a founder of GABNet, the U.S.-based formation of GABRIELA.
do not track incidents of sexual violence. And the reporting of some organizations fails even to
disaggregate data regarding these types of violations by gender,” I expressed with frustration.
“But you know,” she replied, “groups like KARAPATAN began disaggregating the data on
women only recently because GABRIELA kept demanding it” (Rosca interview December
2010).

In 1997, after years of lobbying by Filipina feminists, Republic Act 8353, popularly
known as the Anti-Rape Law, was passed. Among other provisions, RA 8353 finally designated
rape a crime not against chastity, but against persons. The criminal complaint against the alleged
perpetrators of the 2009 mass killings in Maguindanao includes charges of property damage and
theft, but not rape. Of the volumes of documentation of Martial Law violence, almost no
research documents the gendered dimensions of this violence. Contemporary human rights
literature in the Philippines documents numbers of women killed, abducted, and tortured, but
does not track sexual violence as an aspect of their violation (or men’s, for that matter). What I
am cobbling together here is a condition of erasure, violence that disappears as it “approaches the
sexual differential into the field of what…happens [primarily] to woman” Mahāśvetā Devī,
forcwork is to counter-effectuate this condition of erasure – not by ‘depicting violence
truthfully,’ but by *restoring the visibility of misogynist violence*; by indexing, through
involuntary memory, its past and its persistence; and by staging its de-banalization by
perpetrators who cannot be easily, affectively abjected as monstrous.
Squat shot

Peping suspended – affection-image
Madonna – affection image
Conclusion

The two earliest, formative influences on my political imaginary and thinking of dissent are forever entangled – Martial Law in the Philippines, and my family’s role in the racial ‘integration’ of our northern Virginia suburban neighborhood. As a child of the ‘70s, my experience of the simultaneity of these two processes was messy, inchoate. The first would provide an anchor for narratives about the exile and migration of family and friends, a rageful interest in Cold War geopolitics and U.S. imperialism, and the aesthetics of vulgarity and emancipation in Philippine politics. The second forced an intersectional or entangled analysis of modes of power, violence, and immunity; germinated reflection on the aesthetic and cultural politics of alliance with other others; and incited persistent historical curiosity about notions of difference and belonging.

I entered graduate school a disillusioned political organizer. Allergic to the protocols of bureaucratic policy cultures in Washington, D.C., I’d chosen to ‘make change’ primarily through music and art scenes, non-profits, and ‘community-based’ organizations: the Church Coalition for Human Rights in the Philippines, Youth for Philippine Action, Filipino Civil Rights Advocates, Filipinas Against Violence, the Committee Against Anti-Asian Violence, Kilawin Kolektibo, Pinayrte Women Artists Collective, the Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador, Anti-Apartheid Jam, D.C. Women’s Festival, PFLAG, the National Youth Advocacy Coalition. Some of these provided employment. Some immersed me in the cultures of organizing of the National Democratic Front, the ‘legal left’ coalition of sectoral organizations associated with the Maoist Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its New Peoples Army (NPA). Repulsed by the orthodoxy of some of these groups but compelled by an absence of any other avowedly revolutionary formations, I entered their spheres with caution and curiosity. I
was 21. While organizing an action to protest police brutality against Filipinos in Jersey City with one of these NDF-aligned groups in 1991, my best friend in the organization was raped by another group member, also a close friend.

Elders in the organization sought to intervene, CPP-NPA style, through a dialogue process that sought reconciliation by invoking discourses of family, interpersonal conflict, and the preeminence of the larger political cause. My friend and I, on the other hand, invoked feminist discourses of women’s rights and sovereignty over her body. The unanticipated incommensurability of these frames resulted in incendiary, sometimes asinine, accusations of betrayal and inauthenticity on all sides. Filipina feminists previously involved in the group publicly condemned the organization. The affair ended up in a New York court. What disturbed me most about this incident was, I must confess, not the sexual violation my friend experienced -- which is not to say that I was not vicariously traumatized, and profoundly affected by her rage and sadness. But the facticity of the ubiquity of sexual violence, and constant exposure to it, forces a certain kind of resilience; this affective response is well-known by anyone who works in service provision for survivors. What was most disturbing was the utter failure of dialogue, the incommensurability of the concepts of freedom and responsibility that were mobilized in the reduction of revolution to patriarchy, feminism to white, bourgeois practice. It was a rejection of the possibility of thinking what Delia Aguilar identified in 1988 as ‘the feminist challenge’ in the Philippines.²⁴⁰ I suppose this experience, as much as any other, has shaped my academic interest in gender, feminisms, and the cultural politics of social movements in the Philippines. It has

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certainly animated my desire to seek other models than those offered by the Philippine Left for images of women’s political and sexual autonomy.

My interest in indigenous modalities of gendering and in indigenous politics also emerges from this and other experiences. These experiences include work with North American indigenous feminist and queer organizers while a program director at the National Youth Advocacy Coalition in Washington, D.C. Time spent in Banaue, Ifugao and Sagada, Mountain Province as a tourist in the late 1990s reoriented my Manila-centric affective map of the Philippines, forcing me to think about the effects of payew (irrigated rice field) tourism and the persistence, flourishing, and precarity of Cordillera lifeworlds. The eleven years I have been fortunate enough to live in Hawai‘i have also been critical. My thinking about indigeneity and the idioms of indigenous decolonial projects has been profoundly shaped by the encounters, conversations, and conflicts I have observed and participated in as an indigenous politics student in and out of the university.

A 2007 image from a protest opposing the development of luxury homes and a golf course on Moloka‘i’s Lau‘au Point became provocation for repeated reflection on temporality in the rhetorics of indigenous autonomy. The image is of a young Moloka‘i man, holding a sign that reads, “We want to be left behind.” This rejection of the discourse of modernity as an inauguration of new time is a refreshing refusal of the relentless invocation of development as a reason of state in the displacement of indigenous peoples in the Philippines. While Native peoples in disparate locations are clearly engaged in similar battles against land and resource grabbing, militarization, desecration of bones and remains, cultural appropriation, gendered hate violence, and various forms of erasure, the concept of ‘indigenous peoples’ does not travel

easily. The conceptual instability of indigeneity in the Philippines demands more systematic examination, and I hope to do so in future research.

This is a dissertation of beginnings. Each chapter of this project contains theoretical and empirical threads that could easily be spun out further, woven more densely, to comprise a substantial work on its own. Each chapter feels as though it is itself a kind of introduction – to the dispositifs of post/colonial democracy, affective economies of misogynist violence, vulval visuality as indigenous dissensus, and the conceptual instability of indigeneity. Thus there are many trajectories for future research towards which the dissertation can launch me.

Clearly, more primary research regarding gendering in the Cordillera and in Muslim Mindanao constitutes one possible trajectory of future research. Another would be to examine how violence against women is addressed in the customary law of Cordillera indigenous peoples, as well as in the Philippine Muslim shari’a legal order. Indeed, there is an utter lack of research regarding the social conditions of Philippine Muslim women that I would like to help rectify. In particular, I am interested in examining the historical claims regarding Muslim women’s traditional immunity from violence. An analysis of gendering in the 1977 Code of Muslim Personal Laws and/or the mid-18th century Maguindanaoan legal code known as the *Luwaran* (Selections), which is based on customary and Shafi’i law introduced in the mid-17th century, would be a fascinating study, as would an analysis of gender in the relevant oral literature, such as the Maranao epic *Darangen*. Such research would provide some sense of gendering practices, gender norms and ideals, and the ways in which women are situated within complex relations of power, in southern Philippine contexts.

I am also interested in addressing more directly the fascinating conjunction which brings together indigenous peoples and Muslims, as populations similarly and differently peripheralized
in the Philippines. Why is the Moro peripheralized in similar ways as the indigenous, yet not considered indigenous? How does the practice of Islam preclude an indigenous identity?

I hope to have demonstrated in this study the generative potential of an analytic method that puts the gendered body, time, and the political into relation to examine political subjectivity and subjection to violence in the Philippine context. My thinking of the gendered body and temporality brings into focus several political projects. One is the memorialized mobilization of the corporealized enactments of Bontok and Kalinga woman elders in order to vitalize contemporary Cordillera women’s organizing to protect ancestral lands from ongoing extractive development. Another is the pluralization of modes of political subjectivity in the contemporary Philippines, particularly those that are not ready legible within a liberal political frame. Yet another is the varied mobilizations of the violated body of the thwarted Muslim woman voter as a figure who is unprotected by either ‘tradition’ or ‘modernity.’ Finally, I posit how the body of the salvaged prostitute is mobilized to demonstrate that the perpetration of misogynist violence requires its banalization through a reiterative production of masculinity that traumatizes men as well as women.

The ways in which Bontok and Kalinga women’s embodiment continues to be narrated within activist accounts of women’s opposition to extractive development in the Philippines and the diaspora speaks to its celebration as an emancipatory mode of feminine embodiment. As with any social text, a definitive reading of this social practice is neither possible nor desirable. My interest in the multiple, conflicting readings of an overwhelmingly celebrated Bontok and Kalinga women’s corporeal politics lies in the desires such readings make possible – the desire to disrupt the feminine body’s overcoding by capital and the state as a productive, national laboring body; the desire to disrupt the developmentalist telos of postcolonial modernity.
requiring rural peoples to nation-build via entry into circuits of capital; and the desire to unmoor bodies from the strictures of a Catholic, \textit{burgis} femininity. Kalinga and Bontok women’s corporealized confrontations compel us to think an indigenous feminist politics in the Philippines.
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