TITLE: Self-Reflections on an Anthropology Essay
("The Cultivation of Inferiority Complexes" and Me)

original essay attached at bottom

Hi, I'm LJ, a fourth-year honours student in sociocultural anthropology. Thanks. On that note, thank you for letting me present to you today.

To preface, I'll give a bit of context for this paper. I wrote it during a third-year public issues anthropology class taught by Dr. Warren Clarke last year, who's since become a great friend. The course was an opportunity to discuss a lot of topics and problems that I had never really talked about before. It was a wonderful experience, and it was also one of the first times I'd felt engaged with the work I did. The intro to my paper is as follows:

> *There is something inside of me that I have been trying to find a way to remove for a long time. Not an emotion or a thought, but something so deeply engrained that it encroaches on a physical sensation. I desire to remove it, but I do not know what it is. And, because I cannot see it in others or guess to their internal states, the presence of this thing and my awareness of it makes me feel "less-than."*

Evidently, very engaged. To put it gently, I'm a little wordy. I re-read the paper recently while going over old files on my computer and physically and mentally cringed reading most of it.

The final assignment that I submitted for it involved discussing a social issue that we, as students, had encountered in our individual lives while drawing on the theoretical frameworks and literature introduced during the course. I wanted

to talk about how it felt going to school predominantly-filled with white students as an immigrant.

In full, the original's title was *The Cultivation of Inferiority Complexes: A Historical Account of the Filipino Colonial Period and Filipino Colonial Mentalities* ("wordy"). Now, to clarify, the issue I'm raising isn't against my instructor or the course. The problem I'm facing is that I think my paper could be better, and part of the reason why I think that is because I also think anthropology could be too.

Before we tear either apart, I'll unpack a bit. The concept of an "inferiority complex" is drawn from Franz Fanon's *Black Skins, White Masks* (1952/1986). For Fanon, the "inferiority complex" is a form of internalized oppression based on a dialectical relationship between oppressed and oppressor that hierarchically categorizes the oppressor as "superior" in comparison. By contextualizing a proposed colonial mentality of inferiority against historical colonial subjugation, "superiority," Fanon's concept of the colonized/colonizer dichotomy is not inherent or natural; it connects to the meticulous reconstruction of social worlds wherein marginalized groups become represented without their consent.

Specifically, I used this lens to connect Spanish and American colonialism to contemporary Filipino attitudes outlined by Filipino scholar and psychologist E.J.R Nadal that privilege Western/American norms and proficiency in English over ancestral/local practices as examples of the internalization of oppressive coloniality.

Firstly, there are a lot of things to be said about Fanon. This paper specifically draws on the relationship he's outlining in *Black Skins/White Masks*, based on a sense of otherness experienced after one recognizes that their body and self fails to conform to standards outlined by given societal values. This is something that other theorists have pointed out: Du Bois' concept of the "double consciousness" describes this otherness as a "two-ness" composed of *how one ought to be* against *how one is* (1897). Judith Butler's conception of gender as the accumulation of experience differentiates norms as informed, continuous negotiations rather than as naturally given. This literature would have been deeply informative to the way I wrote my original essay, but a-lack, *hindsight*.

Paulo Freire, the Brazilian scholar and critical educator, also points to this idea in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). While I do use some Freire in the paper, I really wish I had focused more of my paper on his discussion or the discussion of similar theorists like Du Bois or Butler than Fanon's thinking, especially as it concerns the submersion of reality caused by the oppressed/oppressor dichotomy (pp. 51, 62).

I think both Fanon and Freire's ideas address the problem of dehumanization in oppressive relationships. While *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952/1986) describes dehumanization and how it manifests from a psychiatric perspective, it's mainly concerned with the identification of the problem in the contexts one facing those harms would be in. The problem is that both oppressed and oppressor are dehumanized. Liberation, then, is a humanizing act.

Freire sees praxis, reflection and action on the world, as a way of reconciling oppression towards humanization. The praxis of liberation describes it as dialogue, as teaching. Ultimately, these ideas tied back around to my thesis on diasporic Filipino attitudes; in relation to an oppressive ideology of colonial domination and the constant representation of their identities as lesser, indigenous Filipino ethnic groups internalized the harms of three centuries of abuse, under colonial, religious, and academic institutions.

My critique of this paper would probably begin with "why?" or maybe "how?" How do these internalized norms manifest in the lives of contemporary Filipino immigrants? My paper greatly homogenizes the ethno-linguistic groups in the Philippines as one homogenous indigeneity. There are nearly 200! Isn't such a prescriptive oversight a continued example of that past, harmful representation that colonial institutions categorized and separated the peoples on the islands with?

Tagalog is the Filipino *lingua franca,* and its my family's main language, but most of my elders draw their ancestry to Bicol, not mga Tagalog. Although the oppressed/oppressor dialectic might be identified historically, to say that it still holds without considering the nuances of being alive would be ignoring so many stories. How is this humanizing?

These are not universal experiences. They're mine. They're personal and I can't not involve myself. Understanding my own identity is hit-or-miss at best so I often think that I'm being misleading when I say that an anthropologist "studies" humans. Because we can't, really, and we too often have not even tried. And what does humanization mean, when our assumptions of what a

human being is in this space so often becomes tied to Western paradigms of understanding?

Discussing neoliberalism and colonialism and internal oppression helped put words to the harms that my ancestors faced. Maybe we can connect it to harm in general; but that's not what I want to do for my family. This paper has discussed personal grief. Levied with my lived experiences, my original paper had ended up only discussing the inferiority complex in a way that objectified my life and Filipino oppression. Not humanized, of experiencing humanity, like I want to do now.

It's ironic that I never discuss self-deprecation in my paper at length, considering it's pointed out in the original article on Filipino colonial attitudes I look at. What I've done is ascribe an inferiority complex unto myself using really big words and literature. To some extent, I'd only contributed to a canon of work about Filipinos, not with or for us: this, too, happens far too often in anthropology. Furthermore, I came here today with the expectation of having to defend myself, of needing to prove myself. My major isn't the only reason I prepared for that. "You write what you know," y'know?

This is where my fault with anthropology lies. Literature and theory and self-reflection are not enough to try and understand these human pains in consideration of past objectification. Can a sense of humanity be understood? I'm not sure. But it can be shared, and when I can share in it, this academic imaginary does not feel so bad. I can't share this without *trying*, and part of trying is also to listen.

I could never start to understand care, love, and belonging without the people that I care for, love, and find belonging with. I think, to that end, this isn't a self-deprecation anymore; it means that I want to continue learning those things, and that I hope I can do it with those who are part of my life. I also hope this can be carried into anthropological work, but it's not like it necessarily has to be defended or saved. it's a discipline. if it goes, it goes.

Ultimately, I don't actually find anything seriously morally grotesquely *wrong* with the paper. It was only incomplete, and that is not inherently wrong. This presentation could only happen *after* that paper's submission to that course, having continued to live with the people around me. Its incompleteness made this reflection possible.

These experiences and the knowledge I find in them could not only represent harm. Sometimes it's having your favourite drink from a new cafe and talking about eating a fruit a day, or chatting with someone in the present about things that happened a long while ago and how things have been since. It's not a cut-and-dry solution (not that it should be regarded as a solution, in the first place).

Sorry. I'm starting to ramble. I guess I found that those experiences, of heartwarming moments with people we grow fond of, also belong in me. Of course, that's just my take on it for now. That both the issues of remembrance and the representation of harms have been focal to my recent coursework has led me to review my own paper, *The Cultivation of Inferiority Complexes.* It's not solely about a colonial oppression, and to present it as only that would be to hide the human-ness I've been

struggling to address. As an anthropologist, and as me. It would be to fall into this storm cloud of just talking and talking and never listening.

Thank you!

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The Cultivation of Inferiority Complexes:

A Historical Account of the Filipino Colonial Period and Filipino Colonial Mentalities

There is something inside of me that I have been trying to find a way to remove for a long time. Not an emotion or a thought, but something so deeply engrained that it encroaches on a physical sensation. I desire to remove it, but I do not know what it is. And, because I cannot see it in others or guess to their internal states, the presence of this thing and my awareness of it makes me feel "less-than." In complete honesty I am unsure if it is the same thing that Fanon (1952/1986) speaks of, but the words and the anguish that he writes made me think that the framework he has constructed is something that could help me describe what this "something inside of me" is (pp. 10–12). "I hope," Fanon says, "by analyzing it I will destroy it." (p. 14). The issues and concepts the following discussion describes are not personal, but my wish to be free from them is. I want to be able to say I am what I am without having to feel apologetic for it. Perhaps my justification is emotional. I am me, and within that "me," I am Filipino. This fact has indeed contributed to the existence of the thing I describe above. As this thing lived within me and interacted with the world, it became shameful. I felt this to be a personal inferiority, attached to the thing I wished to be removed. But within the sources this paper reviews, I found that this personal thing was not personal. Although the dimensions that this paper inhabits are academic and theoretical, I will not lie: I have found that its writing has drew on my soul, and I will attempt to draw on yours as well.

A quote by Fanon opens this paper, and in using their work as a primary analytic, I begin by examining the arguments in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952/1986) in conjunction with the work of Gordon (2015) in order to articulate the theoretical approach which this paper will take (pp. 19–46). Fanon (1952/1986) engages in a sociogenic approach that stresses the lived experience of an individual in relation to their social worlds (p. 13; Gordon, 2015, 22–23). With this, the following discussion provides a historical account on the Filipino colonial context in relation to the Spanish colonial campaign and the Philippine-American War in order to display the construction of dialectic inferiority/superiority complexes in the social worlds of Filipinos during this time (Fanon, 1952/1986, pp. 82–83). The oppressive practices exacted on indigenous Filipino groups, particularly by the Spanish Roman Catholic church and American military units, reveal the hierarchical representation of Filipinos as inferior in relation to their oppressors (David, 2015, pp. 16–17). The section on the Philippine-American war also draws on the work on discursive constructionist representation presented by Stuart Hall (1997/2003) as well as Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/2014) in order to articulate this hierarchical status as it appeared in its contemporary discourse (pp. 43–44, 46; pp. 72–73).

The discussion will connect the historical account of the Filipino colonial context to the psychological development of a Filipino colonial mentality (David & Okazaki, 2006, as cited in David & Nabal, 2013, p. 299). A brief description on the characteristics of this mentality will allow us to relate the constant inferiorization of Filipinos and their culture over the course of their colonial oppression, as outlined in the historical account provided, to the psychological attitudes that are part of the colonial mentality (pp. 299-300). It will be argued that the Filipino inferiority complex is a result of historical inferiorization by colonial forces, who coupled their ideologies with oppressive practices. Over the course of the Filipino's colonial and post-colonial

history, the relationship of the oppressor/oppressed therefore becomes internalized and personal as the colonial mentality: a psychological attitude of inferiority and shame (p. 299).

Literature Review: Fanon

In using the work of Fanon (1952/1986) as the primary analytic with which we examine the Filipino colonial context, we must critically examine the arguments he presents regarding the relationship between the "White master" and "Black slave" (pp. 216–219). This section outlines what Fanonian theory has to offer towards the case of Filipino colonial mentalities. Firstly, one must address the question: why Fanon? Per Gordon (2015), what Fanon reveals to us is the white construction of "the black" (p. 24). The word "construction" here is key; the representations and complexes that become ascribed to colonized groups are not based on in-born characteristics, but rather structured in correlation to the colonizer's complex (Fanon, 1952/1986, p. 93). The narratives of the "white master" and "black slave" point towards the superiority and inferiority complexes of the colonized and colonizer (pp. 60, 202, 230–231). Having identified this dialectic structure, one must then inquire as to how it becomes constructed in the first place. As they are not biological, there must be investigation into the economic and social conditions that lead to the colonized's inferiority complex (pp. 13, 93).

Fanon's psychoanalytical examination of blackness and colonial complexes uses the sociogenic approach, which emphasizes the social world in order to go beyond the ontogenic (individual) and phylogenic (species-level, structural) approaches (p. 13; Gordon, 2015, p. 22). Fanon's questions cannot be answered only through the individual, nor can they be answered through the structure that denies his answers; it is within the social world that human beings experience and influence the intersubjective structures—the inherited cultures, social-relational categories, economic conditions—present within their lives (pp. 22–23). In this world, "white"

and “black” are contrasted and thus where the complex outlined above is created; the existence of these complexes in a dialectic between superiority/inferiority means that they are constructed in relation to one another (Fanon, 1952/1986, p. 14a, 84–85).

The sociogenic approach also points towards the need to understand the subjective, lived experiences of the colonized in order to address the superiority and inferiority complexes which become structured within the social world of colonialism (p. 14b; Gordon, 2015, pp. 23–24). One can apply Fanon’s sociogenic framework to the examination of the complexes described above within the colonial Filipino context, wherein the structures faced by Filipinos within their social worlds may also become objects of analysis. The sociogenic framework allows for critical engagement with the relationship between the colonized and colonizer and the structuring of the social world (Fanon, 1952/1986, p. 97). By trying to understand the subjective experience of the individual and accepting it as reality, one goes beyond colonial exploitation’s treatment of certain humans as “objects” and instead recognizes their humanity (pp. 88–89).

To speak of subjective experience is to implicate the ideas of phenomenological anthropology; just as Fanon’s sociogenic approach allows us to examine the social world, a phenomenological approach emphasises understanding culture as “life-worlds” which inform the interpretation of meanings within lived experience (Gordon, 2015, pp. 22–23; Knibbe & Versteeg, 2008, p. 49). Both the social world of Fanon (1952/1986) and the life-world of phenomenological anthropology speak to the recognition of an individual’s subjective experience (pp. 216–217) In doing so, one can analyze the particular contextual aspects and relationships (of history, culture, society, economy, *etc.*) that become embodied within the social reality of the individuals who live within them (Knibe & Versteeg, 2008, p. 59). This approach will serve towards examining the colonial Filipino mentality by allowing for the investigation of the social

realities wherein the psychological attitudes of the inferiority complex become structured (Fanon 1952/1986, p. 14; Gordon, 2015, pp. 23–24).

Spanish Colonialism in the Filipino Context

The Spanish colonial campaign began in 1521, when Ferdinand Magellan completed his two-year voyage across the Pacific Ocean by landing on the Philippine Archipelago (Ciurea et al., 2022, pp. 593–594). While the editorial Ciurea et al. provides does enlighten us on the specifics of Magellan's voyage, I believe it takes too much of a congratulatory tone in focusing on how the voyage played a role in early globalization and in how it ranks Magellan as a "father of globalization," respectively (p. 594). To elaborate on Magellan beyond the global context is to see how his voyage marked the beginning of an era of colonialism that almost completely obliterated the indigenous ways of life that had been developed and practiced by pre-colonial Filipino groups (David, 2013, pp. 13–20).

I use the term "colonial campaign" because, prior to the establishment of the walled city of Intramuros (now a district within Manila, the capital city of the Philippines) by Miguel Lopez de Legazpi in 1571, Spanish attempts at laying claim over the archipelago were met with violent resistance by indigenous Filipino groups (p. 15). Intramuros was less "established" and moreso "forcibly taken," as indigenous groups already made use of the location (called Maynila) to engage in early commerce with other groups as well as with other contemporary South Asian cultures; however, the particular economic advantages the region benefited from were also of interest to the colonial campaign (Halili, 2004 and Legarda, 2001 in David, 2013, p. 15). Thus, the term "colonial campaign" illustrates the fact that the indigenous Filipino groups resisted against the Spanish colonial attempt to establish a presence on the archipelago (p. 16). The resistance displayed by indigenous Filipino groups is crucial; recalling Fanon (1952/1986),

resistance can be interpreted as one's pursuit of recognition from another (pp. 217–218). Thus, while the dialectic of complexes had been at play between the Filipinos and the Spanish since their contact, the extent to which the former went in order to protect their social world during the initial colonial campaign reveals that the psychological attitude of the Filipino was not inherently inferior (p. 93, 218; David, 2013, pp. 15–16). The fifty-year colonial campaign shows that Filipino indigenous groups fought to protect themselves and their ways of life from Spanish colonial ideology, rather than passively accepting Spanish administration (p. 21). However, after the conquest of Maynila and the establishment of the Intramuros, the Spanish colonial regime played a crucial role in structuring the social worlds of the indigenous Filipinos for the next three centuries (p. 22).

The Spanish colonization of the Philippines involved the influx of religious, administrative, and military presences (p. 16). Filipino indigenous groups engaged in diverse spiritual practices that were ultimately replaced by the institutionalization of the Catholic Church, which vilified the indigenous ways of life as "uncivilized" in contrast to the dignified, honourable, and truly divine Catholic (and therefore, Spanish) lifestyle (pp. 17–21). It was not merely the juxtaposition of the Filipino social world and the Spanish social world that led to the Filipino's complex of inferiority; as Fanon (1952/1986) states plainly, the problem of blackness is the exploitation, oppression, and demonization of the black man within a white society, not just the encounter between white and black bodies (p. 202). In the Filipino context, the same can be said of the indigenous Filipinos and the influx of Spanish institutions after the establishment of Intramuros, which served to subjugate (David, 2013, p. 15).

One of the revolutionary figures who stood against Spanish colonialism as it neared its conclusion was the author Dr. José Protasio Rizal Mercado y Alonso Realonda, or Jose Rizal; his

defining works (*Noli Me Tangere* (1887), *El Filibusterismo* (1891) are a salient literary source in not only understanding *Indios* (what the Spanish called the indigenous Filipino groups)-Spanish relations during the final years of the Spanish colonial regime, but also the author's own life within that context (DeStephano, 2015, p. 113). One can examine the case of Rizal's subjective experience as a Filipino under late Spanish colonialism as a corollary towards the sociogenic analysis of Filipino social worlds and the development of the inferiority complex therein (pp. 126–28; Fanon, 1952/1986, p. 97). Rizal was born in 1861 and experienced a wealthy, Roman Catholic upbringing, but this positioned him to see the injustice of the Spanish Jesuits (who facilitated the education system) from an early age (DeStephano, 2015, p. 114). Despite being raised in an appropriately "Spanish" manner (*ie*, religious and educated), Rizal continued to experience racism at the hands of his Catholic professors; they recognized Rizal and his fellow classmates as *Indios* regardless of their achievements and justified the mistreatment exacted against them by using the Catholic faith and the word of God (p. 115). These were not the only oppressions Rizal faced. During his post-secondary years at the Universidad de Santo Tomás, Rizal was beaten for failing to salute a lieutenant and the rent his father paid on land for his business was doubled by the Dominican estate that oversaw it (pp. 115–116). In demonizing indigenous Filipino norms and promoting Catholicism and Spanish colonialism, Spanish colonization against the Philippines also engaged heavily in harsh oppressive practices against the *Indios* over the course of its three hundred-year occupation in order to assert the world of Spanish colonialism over that of the indigenous Filipino groups' (David, 2013, pp. 17, 22)

Rizal drew from these experiences in order to write *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo,* two historical-fictional accounts describing the life of Crisóstomo Ibarra, a *mestizo* (mixed) noble who returns to the Philippines after studying in Europe, and the people he

encounters in Spanish Maynila (Rizal, 1887/2011; Rizal, 1891/2011). Ibarra is Rizal's fictional mouthpiece to discuss his own nationalistic beliefs and the injustice he faced under Spanish colonialism (DeStephano, 2015, pp. 124–126). Rizal portrays the Roman Catholic priesthood as one of the primary antagonists behind Spanish corruption and, by the end of the year following *Noli Me Tangere's* publication, the controversy incited by *Noli Me Tangere* simultaneously ignited Filipino nationalism against the Spanish colonial administration and required Rizal to leave the Philippines for the safety of him and his family (pp. 118–119).

While the works produced by Rizal speak to his subjective reality under Spanish colonialism, the corruption of the Catholic Church and colonial administration described within can be approached as prominent phenomenological aspects of Filipino social worlds as they appeared under the Spanish administration (pp. 114–115). The discussion on Fanon (1952/1986) above has shown that the inferiority complex that occurs in colonized groups is not based on in-born characteristics; it is a complex made in correlation to the colonizer complex of superiority and bolstered by the oppression exacted against the colonized (p. 93, 197). The case of Rizal's life and works outlined above can thus be used to relate Spanish colonialism against the *Indios* Filipino groups, the Catholic Church, and the inferiorization of Filipinos. For Rizal, the world of literature provided a site where he could negotiate the oppression of his lived experience; in the world that his body lived in, however, his resistance meant his expulsion from the country he loved (DeStephano, 2015, pp. 118–119).

As a further corollary to the work of Fanon, one can also look at the first chapter of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire (1970/2014, pp. 43–70). Within, Freire provides direction on the framework they propose, which seeks to grant those who have been oppressed the right to participate in the development of a pedagogy that goes beyond the ego of the

oppressor in order to pursue liberation (pp. 54–55). In the social world created by Spanish colonialism, the subjective experience of the indigenous Filipinos was hierarchically placed below that of the Spanish; to not ascribe to the values of the Catholic Church was to be semi-human, yet the education of the Spanish priesthood did not provide the oppressed Filipinos the liberation they sought (pp. 51, 66–67; David, 2013, pp. 16–17). The resistance displayed by Rizal through the authorship of his novels, as well as its content and the aggressive reaction of the colonial administration, also reveals that the Spanish complex of superiority was dependent on the dehumanization of the indigenous Filipinos as inferior in comparison, a theme that will be elaborated upon in the following section (Fanon, 1952/1986, p. 93; DeStephano, 2015, pp. 114–115).

American Colonialism in the Filipino Context

This section of the discussion examines aspects of the American campaign against Filipinos in the period during and after the Philippine-American War in order to show that, despite achieving a praxis of liberation that led to the expulsion of Spanish colonial forces, the representations ascribed to Filipinos during the American campaign allowed for their continued dehumanization in a hierarchical complex that placed Filipinos below Americans (Freire, 1970/2014, p. 51). The concepts of "representation" and "discourse" must first be examined critically here; this paper uses the theory of discursive constructionist representation presented by Stuart Hall (1997/2003), in which the definition of a particular representation is not naturally embodied but instead structured by the system of representation in which it is shared (pp. 19, 21–22). The constructionist aspect of Hall's approach to representation stresses the shared nature of systems of representation; it is not the material world that attaches meaning to a representation, but the symbolic world in which individuals use these shared systems in order to

construct a meaning. (pp. 24–25). Hall draws on Foucaldian discourse to inform the shared system of representation (p. 43). Discourse provides a representational framework deeply connected to particular historical moments in order to produce meaning within a regulated space, and thus serves as the shared "language" through which meaning is connected to the material world (pp. 44, 46). The notion of a "regulated space" recalls the Foucauldian link between power and knowledge, and from the brief theoretical review above, one can examine the constructed representations within historically-situated discourse in order to tie it to contemporary relations of power (pp. 48–49).

By 1898, radical critique (influenced in part by Rizal's execution two years prior) had sparked several successful revolutions that ousted the Spanish administration in favour of an independent, Filipino government that was centered on Luzon (David, 2013, pp. 18, 22). However, the Treaty of Paris (1898) saw Spain hand over the Philippines, alongside other colonies, to America after their defeat in the Spanish-American War (David, 2013, p. 25). Despite the ratification of the Philippine Declaration of Independence (1898) earlier that year and its accompanying constitution (1899), the Treaty of Paris (1898) did not recognize its authority and continued to treat the Philippines as colonial property within its articles. Fighting broke out during the Philippine-American War on February 4, 1899, preceded by Filipino forces mustering around Manila before being pushed back by the deployed American military, under the command of General Elwell Stephen Otis (Aune, 2021, pp. 426–427). During this time, Manila was yet to be captured by the Filipino revolutionary forces (p. 426). Otis was the lead military figure for the American side, but another significant American leader in the Philippine-American War was General Henry Ware Lawton (pp. 420–421). Lawton led an unofficial group of soldiers called "Young's Scouts," which operated as an anti-insurgency and

scouting unit based in Luzon (pp. 420, 434). While the methods employed by Otis and Lawton's forces did involve violent confrontation, a major aspect of the Philippine-American War was the articulation of discourse against Filipinos and the idea of an independent Filipino state within media, politics, and military rhetoric; this discourse allowed the United States' government to justify the oppression exacted upon Filipinos (pp. 420–421).

What particular discursive representations were attached to Filipinos during this time? As outlined above, one major aspect of Filipino representation during the Philippine-American War was conducted via American military forces (pp. 420). The "Young's Scouts" operation as a counterinsurgency movement dialectically positioned Filipino soldiers as insurgents (pp. 423–424). In positioning them as such, the Filipino population were claimed to be subjects who fell under the jurisdiction of the United States, rather than as an independent state fighting for their freedom (p. 424). Furthermore, labelling Filipinos as insurgent justified the looting of Filipino property; the progress of the "Young's Scouts" was measured in the seizure and destruction of supplies and weaponry, but the violence often extended to noncombatants through the burning of rice crops and stores which fed both Filipino militia and civilians (pp. 434–435). This was not the only representation ascribed to Filipinos during the Philippine-American War; one of the most crucial justifications for the actions taken by the American military was the portrayal of the Philippine-American War as an "Indian War." (pp. 421–422). Lawton and many of the soldiers who served as part of "Young's Scouts" had accrued their military experience by fighting against American Indigenous groups, and it was this experience that was used to endorse their presence in Pacific Asia (p. 423). Thus, in situating the Philippine-American War as an "Indian War," the American military in the Philippines was able to appeal to longstanding domestic settler-colonial discourse; they recognized Filipinos as "savage" in comparison to their

own ways of life and determined that they needed to be civilized, even if violence was necessary (pp. 446–47). The war's end in 1902 saw the United States consolidate its transnational presence in the establishment of a public school system whose curriculum was in line with American cultural and political values (David, 2015, pp. 32–33). American discourse justified this through the representation of the "savage" Filipino again, and capitalized on the "responsibility" to educate them (p. 32). The rhetoric used here echoes the words of the Roman Catholic priesthood during the Spanish colonial period, and served to complete a similar purpose: the hierarchical positioning of Filipinos below the colonial forces they faced (pp. 16–17; Freire, 1970/2014, p. 51).

Despite the end of American colonialism in 1946, America maintained military bases until 1992 and used them to train Filipino troops (David & Nabal, 2013, p. 299a). Furthermore, the education system structured under American colonialism created a new class of English-speaking, American-educated male Filipinos who had been granted scholarships to visit the United States called *pensionados* (David, 2013, p. 33). Upon their return, *pensionados* brought the political forms, ideals, and models that they had encountered in America back to the Philippines (p. 34). The experience described by *pensionados* of their time in the United States juxtaposed the harsh, violent reality faced by Filipinos in the Philippines and served to concretize the perception of America, and by virtue Americans, as "better" (Aune, 2019, pp. 420–421; David & Nabal, 2013, p. 299b). Here, Freire as a theoretical corollary can reveal how education is used as an instrument of oppression; in conjunction with the sociogenic approach, it allows one to explicate the discursive representations of Filipinos and Americans during and after the Philippine-American war into the inferiority/superiority complexes of the colonized/colonizer, as well as with the banking model of education's student-teacher relationship (Freire, 1970/2014,

pp. 72–73; Fanon 1952/1986, p. 14). The historical review of the Philippine-American War above is meant to reveal that the representations of Filipinos in American discourse were not constructed in isolation; they were deeply connected to concepts entangled by the structures and representations of superiority and inferiority inherent in the discourse of colonial complexes (Fanon, 1952/1986, p. 93).

The Filipino Colonial Mentality and Internalized Oppression

The account of the Spanish and American colonial periods described above provides a strong historical basis with which this discussion can examine the Filipino colonial mentality. From a sociogenic and phenomenological perspective, we know that history plays a role in the construction of an individual's social reality (Gordon, 2015, pp. 22–23; Knibbe & Versteeg, 2008, p. 49). What has been described is nearly four centuries of oppression and inferiorization. This paper has articulated the history of colonialism in the Philippines cleanly into Spanish (1521–1898) and American (1898–1946) eras, but the structures of oppression and the complexes made therein that have inferiorized and dehumanized indigenous Filipinos do not fit into bounded histories as the effects of colonialism become internalized (Fanon, 1952/1986, p. 13). Now turning to David & Nadal (2013), our definition of the Filipino colonial mentality encompasses both the internalization of historical oppression as well as the particular psychological states that characterize it (p. 299a). They provide the following (pp. 299–300):

- A feeling of inferiority for being Filipino.
- A feeling of shame or embarrassment regarding Filipino ethnicity and culture.
- The perception of Filipino physical features as less desirable than Euro-American features.
- The discrimination of Filipinos who are perceived to be less or non-Westernized.

- The tolerance of contemporary oppressions.

I use the history of the Filipino colonial period in this discussion as evidence towards the argument that these contemporary attitudes, felt as personal inferiorities and internalized shame regarding Filipino identity, are based on the long past of oppression Filipinos experienced under Spanish and American colonial authorities. Injustice and corruption in the Spanish Roman Catholic priesthood, the representation of Filipinos as "savage" during the Philippine-American War, and the creation of the *pensionado* class were some examples outlined in the above discussion. This argument does not hinge solely on these oppressions as direct methods of subjugating Filipinos; the crux that links the historical account and the contemporary psychological attitudes of the Filipino colonial mentality is the internalization of oppression (Friere, 1970/2014, pp. 62–63). To be treated as objects, to see the inferiorization of who you are by virtue of education and discourse, and to be wholly dehumanized; the creation of a history of oppression is the link that binds both the colonized and the colonizer in the dialectic complexes of superiority/inferiority (pp. 44–47, 56; Fanon, 1952/1986, pp. 82–83, 93).

The first four of the five psychological attitudes described by David & Nadal (2013) can be attributed to the construction of the dialectic complexes of superiority/inferiority; in positioning Filipinos as inferior and engaging in oppressive practices against their resistance and education, a crisis of identity appears (pp. 299–300). As the belief of their inferiorization becomes embodied, the praxis of Filipino liberation becomes warped by the complex of superiority embodied by their oppressors; per Fanon (1952/1986), for the colonized, the inferiority complex is born in its encounter with the colonizer and the dehumanization of their original ways of life (p. 18). The historical oppressions of the Filipino colonial context resulted in the reconstruction of social worlds, in which Filipinos and their indigenous ways of life were

inferiorized (David, 201, 5pp. 16–17; Freire, 1970/2014, p. 51). The inferiority complex that is created within this social world, structured in relation to the superiority complex of the colonizer, is expressed contemporarily as the psychological attitudes indicative of the Filipino colonial mentality (Fanon 1952/1986, p. 14; Gordon, 2015, pp. 23–24).

The continuation of the colonial mentality through the internalization of cultivated inferiority complexes must also be examined, and it is here that the fifth psychological state of the Filipino colonial mentality can be brought into discussion. One can use *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970/2014) to assist in framing this question within the context of the inferiority/superiority complex; Freire states that oppression is domesticating in the sense that it submerges the oppressed's reality (p. 51). What does this mean? In this submersion, the oppressed reproduce the conditions of oppression and fail to liberate themselves (p. 62). The first four psychological attitudes of the Filipino colonial mentality described by David & Nadal (2013) are elements of this submersion, and the fifth reveals the continuation of internalized inferiority through the tolerance of contemporary oppression (pp. 299-300). This point also reveals why further analyses on the psychological effects of internalized oppression is crucial; in situating it within the Filipino context, this discussion has been able to connect particular examples of historical oppression to the contemporary attitudes of the colonial mentality described by David & Nadal (2013, pp. 299–300). Cases of colonial oppression must be examined in this way in order to recognize the social world of the oppressed, who has faced this oppression first hand, in the pursuit of true liberation beyond ego or complex (Freire, 1970/2014, pp. 65–66). Ultimately, what I believe to be the most crucial aspect of this discussion that ought to be carried forward in further research is the ceaseless desire to respond to questions whose answers do not provide the liberation sought by those who ask them (Fanon, 1952/1986, pp.

255–256). This analysis creates more questions upon which to self-reflect. These questions are not proof of inherent inferiority, but of a constant struggle to be recognized as human that, in and of itself, grants those who undertake it the humanity they seek (pp. 13–14, Freire, 1952/1986, p. 68).

Conclusion and Reflection

The above discussion has centered on the construction of dialectic inferiority/superiority complexes between the colonized and colonizer within the context of the Filipino colonial periods under Spanish and American administrations (Fanon, 1952/1986, pp. 82–83; David, 2015, pp. 16–17). A historical account of the dehumanization and inferiorization faced by indigenous Filipino groups is used to account for the particular constructions of Filipino social worlds which hierarchically-positioned them as "lesser-than" the prevailing colonial governments (Fanon, 1952/1986, pp. 13–14; DeStephano, 2015, pp. 114–115). This involved the corruption of the Spanish Roman Catholic priesthood (examined through the subjective experience of Filipino national hero Dr. Jose Rizal) and the discursive representations of Filipinos as "savage" and "insurgent" employed by the American military during the Philippine-American War (David, 2015, pp. 16–17, 32–33; Aune, 2015, pp. 420–421).

The representation of colonized Filipinos as inferior is crucial to the representation of the colonizer as superior, and therefore necessary to justify the modes of oppression exacted against indigenous Filipinos (Fanon, 1952/1986, pp. 82–83). From a sociogenic perspective, the construction of the dialectic superiority/inferiority complexes and the internalization of the oppressions that structured it has led to the development of a contemporary Filipino colonial mentality (p. 14b; Gordon, 2015, pp. 23–24). Characterized by psychological attitudes of shame and guilt, the colonial mentality is therefore a continuation of the historical oppressions faced by

Filipinos in which Filipinos engage in the acts of oppression that served to inferiorize them (David & Nadal, 2013, pp. 299–300; Freire, 1970/2014, pp. 51, 62).

This paper began with a self-reflection in which I describe an internal sensation of "less-than" in comparison to others around me. I believe this paper has allowed me to understand that part of this feeling is the Filipino colonial mentality described above, but I know it is not all of it. I feel inferior and shameful in comparison to others around me, but where did I learn to feel these things? I was not born in this country, and in the Philippines I was raised only in English; the very reason for our immigration to Canada was based on the pursuit of a better life, but why was "a better life" only achievable in the West and not in the Philippines? This paper is a reflection, but its self-critique produces more questions that the thing inside of me yearns to answer. In these questions, I realize that the thing I wished to destroy and remove was not an abstract thing inside of my brain nor a mere artifact of historical oppression: it is me, and I am it. Like my predecessors, my representation of "Filipino" continues to define my social world and me, the one who lives within it. The desire to destroy is an oppression unto myself, and in doing so, I am still submerged (Freire, 1970/2014, p. 45). Yet in my reification of Fanon and Freire I must also ask: did they breach the water? Did they defeat the submersion?

I do not know. But in my not-knowing, I am not less-than. In my pursuit of answers to the questions that appear before me, I am no longer merely "submerged." I am struggling in the present for freedom in the future (Fanon, 1952/1986, p. 230). Freedom beyond freedom from myself, from personal shame, from internalized oppression; the freedom to be a human not "less-than." My desire for freedom in this way is not the mark of an object seeking liberation, but the foundation of what makes me a human. (Freire, 1970/2014, p. 68).

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