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**TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES: FILIPINA NURSES IN RURAL MANITOBA,
1965-1970**

by

James Bejar
BA, University of British Columbia, 2002

A Major Research Paper
Presented to Ryerson University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

In the Program of
Immigration and Settlement Studies

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2006

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**TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITIES: FILIPINA NURSES IN RURAL MANITOBA,
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Master of Arts
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ABSTRACT

This major research paper examines a unique group of Filipina nurses of the 1960s in Canada's immigration history. First, the conditions that encouraged the migration of Filipino professionals from the Philippines after World War Two are discussed. Second, the public and private sector maneuverings that facilitated the nurses' transportation to Canada are revealed. Third, the factors and experiences that resulted in the women's successful integration into mainstream rural Canada are explored. The achievement of Filipina nurses is indicative of a model example of social and professional integration into Canadian society.

Key words:

Nurses; women; immigrant integration; Philippines; Manitoba; rural areas

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Preface

Notes on terms

The geographical focus of this study is in the Parkland Region of Manitoba. This region borders Saskatchewan, the Interlake region, the North region and Riding Mountain National Park (with the highest point in the Canadian prairies – Mount Baldy). The area's largest community is Dauphin with a population of 8,085 persons.¹ This region is known for its sizeable Ukrainian community that celebrates yearly folk festivals. Other important towns that will be considered for this study are Russell, Roblin, Grandview, Swan River and St-Rose-Du-Lac with populations of approximately 1000 persons each.

For the sake of clarity and brevity, non-English language conventions are borrowed and employed in this paper. In contrast to English which designates all Filipinos, male or female, with the final 'o', in Tagalog (one of the main languages indigenous to the Philippines) the suffix of a personal noun, whether 'a' or 'o,' signifies a women or man, respectively. Thus, Maria is a *Filipina*, and Mario is a *Filipino*. For further complication, the masculine-plural form *Filipinos* is used to express both male and female Filipinos, unless specified as strictly male.

¹ *Statistics [online document]* (Dauphin, MB, Dauphin Economic Development, 2005, accessed 14 July); Available from http://dauphin.ca/bus_prof_stats.php; Internet.

Transnational Communities: Filipina Nurses in Rural Manitoba, 1965-1970

Social historian Anne Doré classifies transnational communities as “geographically concentrated, solidaristic communities in the host country that maintain bonds with their places of origin.”² The group of Filipina nurses in rural communities of Manitoba succeeded in conforming to this definition. They managed to conserve aspects of their lives prior to settlement in Canada despite their isolation and changes in geography, culture and climate.

This study is incomparable to others because it explores the factors that resulted in an extraordinary settlement experience of women in Canadian history. First, they were permitted to practice their profession almost instantly upon arrival in Canada. Nurses recruited from the Caribbean in the late 1950s and 1960s under an executive order selecting “women of ‘exceptional merit’,”³ in contrast, were unfairly employed as nurses aids, despite their superior training and education. Another distinguishing factor of these nurses was their resilience to remain for several years (or permanently) in their initial communities of the Parkland Region without major difficulties in adaptation or conflict with fellow residents and colleagues.

There are two reasons why this area of Manitoba was initially chosen for this research. First, a sizeable group of the graduating class of 1965 from the Central Philippine University’s nursing school was recruited to hospitals in this region. Results of this research found four

² A. Doré, "Transnational Communities: Japanese Canadians of the Fraser Valley, 1904-1942," *BC Studies*, no. 134 (2002): 38. Doré paraphrases the definition in William Alonso, "Citizenship, Nationality and Other Identities," *Journal of International Affairs* 48, no. 2 (Winter 1995): 595.

³ A. Calliste, "Women of 'Exceptional Merit': Immigration of Caribbean Nurses to Canada," *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law* 6, no. 22 (1993): 85-102.

nurses of this school who were scattered in the town hospitals of Dauphin, Roblin, Gilbert Plains, and Benito, Manitoba. They, in turn, suggested other potential interview participants for this study. Second, this area is a manageable case study area. In other words, it is a compact area with a concentrated population of Filipino nurses with easily accessible depositories of primary sources (i.e. municipal archives, town halls, libraries and local newspapers).

The era chosen for this study also warrants discussion. From 1965 to 1970, there were three significant historical events that had a profound effect on Philippine migration to Canada. A study of this period will reflect major developments in the liberalization of Canadian immigration policies. The 1962 regulation changes under immigration minister Ellen Fairclough, the 1966 White Paper (which shifted the immigration focus away from ethnicity to market objectives), and the implementation of the point system in 1967 all contribute to the political backdrop of this study. Without enacting new immigration legislation, these executive orders and bureaucratic changes essentially opened the country's door to immigrants previously excluded by racial requirements.⁴ This paper attempts to assess the impact immigration policy had on the movement of Filipina nurses to the country.

Second, this period coincides with political, economic, and military instability in Southeast Asia associated with American involvement in Indochina. Despite formal independence shortly after World War Two, a neo-colonial relationship with the United States continued. A myriad of asymmetrical trade agreements stifled the economic security of the country. The *Bell Trade Act* (1946), for example, placed barriers on Philippine exports to the

⁴ N. Kelley and M. Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy*, ed. M. J. Trebilcock (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 456.

United States but allowed unrestricted American imports to the Philippines.⁵ In addition, the economic disparity between the two countries was exacerbated by the opulence displayed at the American naval and air force bases. The military personnel's manicured lawns and modern home appliances were a stark contrast to the modest facilities surrounding the bases. The displayed opulence subsequently awakened Filipinos to the material possibilities of life outside the Philippines.⁶ Furthermore, on December 1965 Ferdinand Marcos' presidency began in the Philippines. The increased volume of Philippine migrant workers during and after his presidency attests to the president's pro-labour migration policies.

Third, during this period, major social developments in Canada in the 1960s produced deficiencies in the labour market of health professionals in certain areas of the country. In this time, a large rural exodus occurred that enlarged Canadian cities, but consequently depopulated small agrarian communities of needed professionals.⁷ Furthermore, after 1945, provincial governments were constructing hospitals at a pace that the labour market could not match. Generally, these two conditions influenced national immigration patterns by compelling policy makers to focus on rural and smaller urban centres as immigrant catchments. Specifically, unprecedented urbanization and increased funding for health care infrastructure catalyzed the recruitment of alternative sources of health professionals. Instead of relying on Anglo-Saxon sources, Canada entered the global market for female nurses. The following section will discuss

⁵ Julian Madison, "American Military Bases in the Philippines, 1945-1965: Neo-Colonialism and its Demise," in *Trans-Pacific Relations: America, Europe, and Asia in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Richard Jensen, Jon Davidann and Yoneyuki Sugita (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 127.

⁶ Ibid., 134-5.

⁷ E. R. Laquian, *A Study of Filipino Immigration to Canada, 1962-1972*, (Ottawa: United Council of Filipino Associations in Canada, 1973, 1973), 4.

related literature that address issues of world labour migration, the global trade of nurses, and Canada's interests and participation in these activities.

This paper is divided in four main sections. A selection of related literature will be surveyed. Second, the Philippine labour migration issues will be discussed. Although the main focus of the paper is on the Canadian settlement of Filipina nurses, it is imperative to investigate the foreign interests, policies, and conditions that facilitated their departure from the Philippines. Third, this paper will highlight the Canadian factors of this immigration wave. The paper reveals both overt and covert actions from various levels of Canadian society that assisted the recruitment from the Philippines. The last section will focus on both archival and testimonial evidence that will attempt to illustrate the experiences of Filipina nurses in their initial years in Canada. These women contributed substantially to the professional and cultural life of Manitoba's Parkland Region. The study challenges reports opposing a dispersal of newcomers outside the large urban areas of Canada.⁸ The personal and occupational achievements of these nurses from the Philippines deserve recognition and promotion as a model example of integration into the Canadian society.

Current trends in the international movement of workers have provided an abundant supply of commentary in the form of analyses, criticisms and support. Literature that specifically discusses issues of global labour inequalities are Immanuel Wallerstein's *Historical Capitalism* (1983) and S. Sassen-Koob's "The Internationalization of Foreign Labour" (1980). They argue that the world migration of workers is indicative of the capitalist *world-system*,

⁸ R. Omidvar and T. Richmond, *Immigrant Settlement and Social Inclusion in Canada*, ed. Ted Richmond and Laidlaw Foundation. (Toronto: Laidlaw Foundation, 2003), 16. [database on-line].

whose binary structure forces *periphery* countries with under-developed economies to transfer excess members of their labour market to industrialized *centre* countries. For instance, Sassen-Koob (1980), employing post-WWII Western Europe and the United States as historical case studies, associates large-scale labour organization with the scarcity of inexpensive labour. As a result, the demand and acquisition of cheap, foreign labour increased, reflecting the national elite's desire to maximize their accumulation of wealth. This model has proven to be outdated due to *outsourcing*, whereby large corporations relocate operations from industrialized to developing countries. At the same time, the opportunistic character of those procuring cheap labour from economically poor countries, regardless of location, is still evident and a point of contention.

At the heart of this unequal division of world economies and international labour migration is the role of *labour-exporting* states. D.S. Massy's "International Migration at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century" (1999), "Labour Migration, Remittances and Household Income: a Comparison Between Filipino and Filipina Overseas Workers" (2004) by M. Semyonov and A. Gorodzeisky, and "State Migrant Exporting Schemes and Their Implications for the Rise of Illicit Migration: a Comparison of Spain and the Philippines" (2004) by C. Siracusa and K. Acacio offer insight into the role of states and the interests of groups economically and politically able to wield power and influence over foreign labour patterns. These authors discuss how groups illicitly benefit from exporting their labour force through consequential remittances and gifts of the migrant workers themselves, and government regulation and preferential foreign trade or aid agreements between partner states.

R. S. Parreñas' *Children of Global Migration: Transnational Families and Gendered Woes* (2005), J. A. Tyner's "Migrant Labour and the Politics of Scale: Gendering the Philippine State" (2000), and his earlier "The Gendering of Philippine International Labour Migration" (1996) tackle the human issues of international labour migration and the effects it has on families, children, and women. Tyner's analysis (2000) of government and partner export agencies' promotional material and documents uniquely delves into the cultural and state machinations that facilitate the export of large numbers of women from the Philippines. The overriding argument that these authors make is that the reliance developing countries have on labour export effectively benefits the state and the upper class associated with it and marginalizes the majority. By alleviating the surplus in the national labour market, the ruling classes are relinquished of duties to train, educate, and provide viable employment for their population.

The paradox is that as more migrant labour is exported in a manageable quantity, existing state coffers increasingly rely on this form of revenue. Unless an alternative source of revenue can replace the benefits of exported labour, this exploitative cycle may continue. Across two countries and time periods, Siracusa and Acacio (2004) compare the labour exporting structures of the Spanish and Philippine governments. The authors argue that Spain succeeded in eliminating its labour exporting apparatus with a strong centralized authority within a couple of decades. The Philippines, with a mixed state and private business partnership, demonstrated a growing dependence on government agencies and regulation to protect its citizens from human smuggling schemes and international labour exploitation.

The home country factors that promote international labour movement are also reinforced by conditions from labour-receiving countries. Many researchers have highlighted the link between native-born members of the working class and discriminatory practices toward imported labour because of cultural, linguistic and visible assumptions.⁹ Labour unions, merchant associations and agricultural cooperatives have been the focus of several studies linking occupational protection and racial discrimination. Bonilla-Silvas (2002) argues that the world movement of labourers is as racialized as the black-white social dichotomy existing in the United States. He concludes that international labourers represent mostly non-White peoples (whom he categorizes simply as "black") from the Third World and associates White privilege with Wallerstein's (1983) notion of global capitalism. Although this perspective ties two main theories in one succinct concept, the prognosis is simplistically pessimistic. Essentially, Bonilla-Silva's theoretical perspective connecting issues of race and class allows limited flexibility in truly understanding the subjects' cultural and contextual complexities.

A notable synthesis of the global political economy, racial discrimination, and cultural complexities is Anne Doré's historical analysis "*Transnational Communities: Japanese of the [British Columbia] Fraser Valley*" (2002). She argues that this geographically specific

⁹ K. Adachi, *The Enemy that Never Was: A History of the Japanese Canadians*, (Toronto, Ont.: McClelland and Stewart, 1976). G. L. Creese, "Working Class Politics, Racism and Sexism: The Making of a Politically Divided Working Class in Vancouver, 1900-1939" (Ph.D. diss., Carleton University, 1986). G. L. Creese and L. Peterson, "Making the News: The Racialization of Chinese Canadians," *Studies in Political Economy* 51, no. Fall (1996): 137. T. Makabe, "The Theory of the Split Labor Market: A Comparison of the Japanese Experience in Brazil and Canada," *Social Forces* 59, no. 3 (March 1981): 786-809. P. A. Phillips, *no Power Greater: A Century of Labour in British Columbia*, ed. Boag Foundation (Vancouver, B.C.: Federation of Labour and Boag Foundation, 1967). W. P. Ward, *White Canada Forever: Popular Attitudes and Public Policy Toward Orientals in British Columbia*, 3rd ed. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002). E. Bonilla-Silva, "This is White Country: The Racial Ideology of the Western Nationals of the World-System," *Sociological Review* 70, no. 2 (2000): 188-214.

immigrant group economically benefited under overt institutional racism from the host society. Maintaining a fine balance between respecting Euro-Canadian norms and implementing the traditional Japanese work ethic, they established the provincial fruit industry and most importantly earned the respect and cooperation of the host community. For Doré, the subjects of her analysis are not tied down in dogmatic notions of class and race. On the contrary, the author focuses on this community's sense of ethnic superiority, distinct social institutions, language, and willingness to associate with more established neighbours. In contrast to previously discussed literature, Doré argues that racial difference enhanced, rather than hindered, their integration into the adopted community.

In fact, this holistic approach to transnational diasporas is gaining new ground and establishing a new stream of research.¹⁰ The notion of *transnational communities* refers to groups who reside outside of their country of birth and who maintain and develop ties to their ancestral home country. This burgeoning body of research attempts to capture the fluidity and complexity of international labour movement, weaving issues of race, class, global economic policies *and* culture. Some studies of this approach rely on politicized paradigms to explain internal divisions of race and class within countries. Other examples are based in the realities of

¹⁰ A. B. Chen, *From Sunbelt to Snowbelt: Filipinos in Canada*, (Calgary: Canadian Ethnic Studies Association, 1998), 206 pp. Creese and Peterson, *Making the News: The Racialization of Chinese Canadians*. P. Kelly and S. D'Addario. *Understanding Labour Market Segmentation: Filipina Healthcare Workers in Transnational Toronto [online document]* (Halifax, NS, Atlantic Metropolis Conference, 2004, accessed 02/06). Internet. R. S. Parreñas, *Children of Global Migration: Transnational Families and Gendered Woes*, (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2005), 212, Makabe, *The Theory of the Split Labor Market: A Comparison of the Japanese Experience in Brazil and Canada*. A. Portes, L. E. Guarnizo, and P. Landolt, "The Study of Transnationalism: Pitfalls and Promise of an Emergent Field," *Ethnic and Race Studies* 22, no. 2 (March 1999): 217-237.

globalization in which “labour is local and capital is global.”¹¹ The boss for whom one works may not necessarily speak the same language or live in the same country. Nor can we assume that the company is owned by one person, but rather by a faceless multinational conglomerate.

Portes et al.’s (1999) literature review analyzed recent scholarship into various categories assessing their contribution to transnational studies. These authors optimistically predict that *grassroots transnationalism* (everyday human movement and the popular reluctance to adhere to national boundaries) would become a formidable force against the inequity of global capitalism. Transnationalism paints labour migrants as human, responding to basic human needs (i.e. economic status, family, religion...) that previous theoretical perspectives fail to recognize. It is important to take into account that not all labour migrants are victims, but active individuals acting upon complex, unquantifiable circumstances.

The limited number of studies on Filipino immigration during the 1960s and 1970s is indicative of their short history in Canada. The most opportune study available is Eleanor Laquian’s *Study of Filipino Immigration to Canada, 1962 -1972* (1973). Based on results from mailed-in surveys and personal interviews, her study provides a timely snap shot of highly trained, spatially mobile, adequately employed professionals who were the vanguard of Filipino immigration to this country. Although this study intended to provide a comprehensive illustration of Canadian Filipinos during that period, the method of data collection (mailed-in surveys and interviews) furnish mostly educated respondents, influencing the type of responses to her study. Another limitation is that a large number of potential respondents felt dissuaded from participating in her research in light of the social and political instability in the Philippines

¹¹ A. Portes, 45.

at that time.¹² Laquian revealed that the majority of Filipinos did not leave because of political opposition. Rather, the repressive socio-political environment and pro-export, labour policies under president Ferdinand Marcos' rule complicated any possibility of viable employment in the country.

Although the gamut of historical research on Canadian nurses focuses on their involvement in world wars and their struggle against patriarchy, the literature provides specific insights on the challenges and successes of professionals in Canada.¹³ These works highlight the achievements of nurses throughout the twentieth century, from cities to isolated rural communities. However, these historical accounts fail to acknowledge the experiences and contributions of foreign labour in this profession. The dearth of studies on foreign labour in North American nursing is indicative of the Western feminist refusal to link their movement with issues of women of colour.¹⁴

The limited amount of other studies available is from the United States where the challenges and contributions of migrant female nurses from the Third World are widely

¹² On 22 September 1972, then-president Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law and severely suppressed civil liberties (e.g. freedom of speech) in the country. Since Laquian's study was endorsed and sponsored by the Philippine embassy in Ottawa, potential respondents were uncertain about the anonymity of their responses (Laquian, 8).

¹³ Canadian Museum of Civilization, *On all Frontiers: Four Centuries of Canadian Nursing*, ed. Christina Bates, D. E. Dodd and N. Rousseau (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2005), Canadian Nurses' Association, *Countdown: Canadian Nursing Statistics*. ed. Canadian Nurses' Association. (Ottawa: Canadian Nurses' Association., 1967 -). D. J. Mansell, *Forging the Future: A History of Nursing in Canada*, 1st. ed. (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Thomas Press, 2004), K. M. McPherson, *Bedside Matters: The Transformation of Canadian Nursing, 1900-1990*, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1996). F. M. Melchior, "Nursing Student Labour, Education, and Patient Care at the Medicine Hat General Hospital, Alberta, 1890-1930" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Calgary, 2004).

¹⁴ P. H. Collins, *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*, (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990).

acknowledged. For a deeper understanding of the movement of Philippine nursing professionals, R. E. Ball's "Divergent Development, Racialised Rights: Globalised Labour Markets and the Trade of Nurses -- The Case of the Philippines" (2004) and C. C. Choy's *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History* (2003) present both statistical and archival evidence of governmental and private sector involvement in the world market for cheap skilled labour. C. C. Choy's weaves presidential speeches, Philippine nursing college statistics, and American hospital annual reports and anecdotal accounts of nurses in presenting this aspect of American immigration history. Choy's research significantly influenced this major research project.

In Canada, there are a handful of sources citing the incorporation of foreign labour in nursing.¹⁵ Of these racialized women, the most documented and cited are the experiences of black female nurses. Calliste's (1993) socio-historical analysis "Women of 'Exceptional Merit': Immigration of Caribbean Nurses to Canada," combines archival material from government sources and nursing associations. The author argues that special categories were created for Caribbean (black) nurses within Canada's discriminatory immigration policy in the late 1950s as a *de facto* solution for the severe, national shortage of nurses. Her study of this cohort of nurses slightly pre-dates subsequent analysis of the immigration of Filipina nurses' in the late 1960s.

¹⁵ M. Q. Arañas, *The Dynamics of Filipino Immigrants in Canada*, (Edmonton, AB: Coles Printing Company, 1983), 159. Calliste, "Women of 'Exceptional Merit'; Immigration of Caribbean nurses to Canada." Chen, *From Sunbelt to Snowbelt: Filipinos in Canada*. Kelley and Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: a History of Canadian Immigration Policy*. and Kelly and D'Addario, *Understanding Labour Market Segmentation: Filipina Healthcare Workers in Transnational Toronto*.

The methodology Calliste selected is an approach that will be emulated here as it manages to balance the views of official state policy, nursing associations, and other hospital employees regarding non-white female professional labour. Unfortunately, Calliste's case study is spread out too thinly across several provinces (British Columbia, Manitoba, Quebec and Ontario), diluting the complex nature of these women's professional experiences. Also, she appears to have pre-established conclusions about Canadian immigration policy providing no counter-arguments and selectively citing examples which adequately support her overtly politicized framework. A more objective treatment of the historical data she so diligently collected would have added greater credibility to this scholarly research on migrant nurses to Canada.

Theresa Wallace's *The Role of Transportation in Canadian Immigration, 1900-2000* (2001) provides light reading on Canadian rail, air, and shipping influences on Canadian immigration history and policies. Her work blends a variety of archival photos and secondary material. Because of Citizenship and Immigration Canada's (CIC) explicit support of this work, however, the presentation of material is more promotional of *Canadian Pacific* and *Canadian National* humanitarian contributions to Canada rather than a subjective study of these actors. *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy* (1998) by Nanette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock is recommendable as a more balanced discussion of *CP* and *CN*'s impact on Canadian immigration. The role transportation companies have played (and continue to play) in the country's acquisition of new citizens is crucial and often inadequately studied.

Despite the limited quantity of historical studies on the immigration experiences of Filipina nurses, researchers are increasingly noticing the labour market concentration of Filipinos in nursing in particular, and healthcare in general.¹⁶ Also, other studies sponsored by private sector and government *think tanks* express the urgent need for these workers to practice outside the large urban centres of Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver.¹⁷

Over the last forty years, Filipina nurses have provided an indispensable service caring for the nation's elderly in both cities and small communities. Canada's increasingly aging population is adversely affecting the country's ability to successfully manage the present state of public health care.¹⁸ As a result, a greater understanding is needed to explain why immigrants are funneled into certain occupations and not others. Both qualitative and quantitative evidence is required to persuade policy makers and private employers in Canada to promote rural dispersal of immigrant professionals, namely female nurses from the Philippines. An historical account of the professional and pioneering achievements of women from the Philippines in rural communities of Manitoba can be a showcase of a possible plan for this endeavor.

¹⁶ Arañas, *The Dynamics of Filipino Immigrants in Canada*. Chen, *From Sunbelt to Snowbelt: Filipinos in Canada*, Kelly and D'Addario. *Understanding Labour Market Segmentation: Filipina Healthcare Workers in Transnational Toronto*. Statistics Canada, *Profiles Philippines: Immigrants from the Philippines in Canada*, (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1996), 11.

¹⁷ Allan G. Green, "What is the Role of Immigration in Canada's Future?" in *Canadian Immigration Policy for the 21st Century* (Kingston, Ont.: John Deutsch Institute for the Study of Economic Policy, 2003), 33-45. Vien Huynh, *Closer to Home: Provincial Immigration Policy in Western Canada*, (Calgary, AB: Canada West Foundation, 2004), British Columbia. *An Overview of Skills Shortages Issues in British Columbia* [online document] (Victoria, 2005, accessed 11 Nov 2005). J. J. Azmier, *Increasing Western Canadian Immigration*, ed. V. Huynh and K. Molin (Calgary, AB: Canada West Foundation, 2004), C. Blouin, H. Gibb, M. McAdams and A. Weston. *Engendering Canadian Trade Policy: A Case Study of Labour Mobility in Trade Agreements* [online document] (Ottawa, ON, Government of Canada, 2004, Internet).

¹⁸ Canada. Parliament. House of Commons., *Competing for Immigrants: Report of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration*, ed. J. Fontana (Ottawa: Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration, 2002) and R. P. Beaujot, *Population Change in Canada*, ed. D. Kerr, 2nd edition. (Don Mills, Ont.: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Before immigration is considered to meet Canada's labour needs, foreign migration issues should be explored. Although difficult to accept, the trade of migrant labour is a commodity that certain nation-states consider as precious, and as seriously as electronics, grain, or fossil fuels. The Philippines is a clear example of a country whose labour force is managed to benefit the economic well being of individual migrants and the national economy.

In recent years, the Philippines has been a world and regional leader in the world labour export market. The case of Philippine migration represents an unparalleled model of state-sponsored migrant exporting schemes. The country's gross domestic product (GNP) relies largely on the benefits of this scheme (i.e. remittances, user fees). The 7.4 million Filipinos presently abroad send back nearly \$8 billion USD a year, equivalent to 10 percent of the Philippines' gross domestic product (GDP). To illustrate the significance of this figure, agriculture, fishery, and forestry combined produce the same revenue, which together employ about 12 million Filipinos.¹⁹ Reasons behind this migration flow stem from government corruption, a feudal system of landownership, and unfavorable international economic policies.

A disconnect is apparent when comparing official state migration policy and actual migration practices. The *Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995* purports that the Philippine government "does not actively promote overseas employment as a means to sustain

¹⁹ P. Martin, M. Abella, and E. Midgley, "Best Practices to Manage Migration: The Philippines," *The International Migration Review* 38, no. 4 (Winter 2004): 1544.

economic growth and economic development.”²⁰ However, the following data provides contrary findings. First, the remittances sent back to the country by overseas workers serve as large sources of foreign currency. In 2004 alone, the national economy benefited from \$8.5 billion US in the form of international remittances.²¹ With the devaluation of its exported goods (i.e. sugar), currency and economic comparative advantage in the region, the Philippines has sought ways to finance its foreign debt as a result of failed import substitution industrialization (ISI) initiatives in the decades following the Second World War.²²

The human characteristic of Philippine migration is unique among other migrant countries in the world. On one hand, a sizeable percentage of Filipino migrant workers are men working in the Middle Eastern petroleum industry and as seafarers for international shipping companies. On the other hand, an overwhelming majority of migrants have historically been women, mostly working in the fields of domestic servants, caregivers, nurses, and *entertainers*.²³ Philippine governments over the last four decades actively encouraged the marketing of Filipina workers. Due to the highly competitive market of labour export, where the supply is higher than the demand, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) actively marketed Filipinas as unique and desirable workers for overseas *niche* markets.²⁴ Ferdinand Marcos,

²⁰ Philippine Consulate of Los Angeles. *Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995* [online document] 2001, accessed 5 Dec 05); Available from http://www.philcongenla.org/content.asp?FileName=%5Coverseas%5Cmigrant_act.ini; Internet.

²¹ Philippine Government. *"Overseas Filipino Workers Remittances"* [online document] 2005, Available from <http://www.bsp.gov.ph/statistics/spei/tab11.htm>; Internet.

²² C.C. Choy, 114-15; R.S. Parreñas, 100; P. Martin, 1546.

²³ "Entertainers" is an occupational designation that refers to singers, dancers and other performers. Although some Filipino men do migrate to work in this field, the overwhelming majority are Filipinas who are illicitly siphoned into the host country's sex trade.

²⁴ J. A. Tyner, "Constructions of Filipina Migrant Entertainers," *Gender, Place & Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 3, no. 1 (March 1996): 406.

whose presidency and martial law spanned three decades, was the first to promote Philippine migration. Faced with a lucrative export of Filipina nurses in the 1960s, he announced:

*"...We encourage this migration, I repeat, we will now encourage the training of all nurses...this is a market that we should take advantage of. Instead of stopping them from going abroad, why don't we produce more nurses?"*²⁵

Like sugarcane, bananas, and pineapple, the nation's medical professionals were mere commodities sold off to the highest international bidder. The newly trained nurses, assuming roles of tradable goods of the nation-state, drained out of the Philippines.

In other words, students were educated internally. However, in reality, the government's intention was for graduates to serve externally. During this initial period of exporting Filipina nurses of the late 1960s, the availability of nurses amongst the general population of countries with advanced economies was on average 50 nurses to 10,000 citizens. The Philippine ratio of nurses, as result of heavy out-migration, scarcely reached eight nurses to 10,000 citizens.²⁶ Considering this figure, Filipino people would have benefited more from nurses practicing at home rather than by exporting them to richer countries.

Another reason why Philippine labour exportation is encouraged is that it complies with structural adjustment policies. Pressuring developing countries to adopt neo-liberal policies that open up their economy to the free market, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank initiated the global "race to the bottom, [where] women take on more waged work, juggle multiple jobs and do more unpaid caring."²⁷ Whatever neo-liberalism neglects in the quest for

²⁵ C.C. Choy, 115-6.

²⁶ Ibid, 112-3.

²⁷ A. Miles, "Global Feminisms," in *Feminist Issues. Race, Class and Sexuality* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001), 11.

Third World development, women increasingly fill in the gaps with increased under-valued labour. Aside from a 'labour intensive and export-oriented national economy,' the world lending organizations encouraged Philippine governments to actively export their labour pool.²⁸ Instead of promoting a stable, national economy, the adjustment policies were meant to propel the country into an export-oriented economy based on the export of its raw materials and human resources.

The magnitude of labour flows would be impossible without the highly institutionalized system of the Philippine labour migration industry. A mixture of government bodies, private agencies, and recruiters in the receiving states administers the process that facilitates the export of Philippine labour. Created in 1974, the *Philippine Employment Development Board* (later changed to the *Philippine Overseas Employment Administration*, or POEA) was created to administer all contractual employment of Filipinos overseas.²⁹ Although other private agencies were allowed to participate in this enterprise, the POEA was responsible for signing bilateral agreements with migrant receiving countries and to ensure that the quality of migrant labour met employer requirements. The private sector was in charge of all recruiting activity. At the same time, this sector was subject to governmental regulation and surveillance, especially pertaining to illicit migration.³⁰

Under this state-private structure, the magnitude of labour export increased tenfold. Between the years of 1975-1982, for instance, the total amount of overseas workers deployed

²⁸ C. Siracusa and K. Acacio, "State Migrant Exporting Schemes and their Implications for the Rise of Illicit Migration: A Comparison of Spain and the Philippines," *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 5, no. 3 (2004): 333.

²⁹ C. Siracusa and K. Acacio, 333.

³⁰ Ibid, 334.

under this partnership rose by more than 700%.³¹ During this period, the majority of the *Overseas Contract Workers* (OCW) were men employed in construction in the rapidly industrializing states of West Asia and the Persian Gulf. The Philippine government, concerned about the safety of overseas nationals in danger of ensuing regional conflicts (the early 1990s *Gulf War*), decided to disperse the population to other regions in the world. The conveniently located industrializing economies of Singapore, South Korea, and Hong Kong opportunely substituted for the Middle East as a major market for Philippine migrant labour.

The migrant receiving countries, according to bilateral agreements, offer contracts to private recruitment agencies in the Philippines, which, in turn, supplies the countries with necessary labour. The principal demand of migrant receiving countries is a *temporary* and diligent workforce. The temporal character of their contracts affords Filipinos a comparative advantage over other migrants. This permits receiving nations the flexibility in refusing migrant workers state-funded support services for workers and the advantages of permanent resident status.³² As a result, the costs of hosting Filipino migrant workers are kept at a minimum. Considering the demand-driven characteristic of the international labour market,³³ the Philippine state in concert with private recruiting agencies market and train Filipinas as hardworking, docile nurses, domestics, and *entertainers* in the Gulf States, East Asia, Europe and North America.

Many external factors have encouraged the migration of Filipina nurses for postings overseas. Through the American *Exchange Visitor Program* (EVP) in 1948, which officially

³¹ J. A. Tyner, "Migrant Labour and the Politics of Scale: Gendering the Philippine State," *Asia Pacific Viewpoint* 41, no. 2 (2000): 137.

³² S. Sassen-Koob, "The Internationalization of the Labor Force," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 15, no. 4 (1980): 10.

³³ For more explanation, consult J.A. Tyner (2000), 132.

intended to promote the understanding of the U.S. internationally,³⁴ graduate nurses from around the world worked in American hospitals for a maximum period of two years. Although the program was open to all nurses, by the late 1960s, Filipino nurses represented 80 percent of all participants of this exchange.³⁵ This program translated into a boon for graduate nurses in the Philippines who were beginning their professional careers. Various factors including better pay, adventure, family obligations,³⁶ and enhancement of professional experience internationally tempted these nurses in large numbers. Choy reports that from 1952 to 1965, roughly fifty percent of graduates of the prestigious University of the Philippines College of Nursing worked abroad.³⁷

Although a detailed description of the *Exchange Visitor Program* falls outside the reach of this paper, it is worth noting that this program initiated the subsequent out-migration of educated professionals from the Philippines. The nurses' desire to return to their homeland weakened after their exposure to the opulence, opportunities, and conditions of professional life in North America. Once these nurses completed their contracted period under the EVP in the United States, many applied for permanent residence in the United States.³⁸ EVP participants with unsuccessful applications, however, either returned to the Philippines, or moved to the country north of the border eager to receive them.

³⁴ Through senate reports, C.C. Choy demonstrates that the EVP was a result of Cold War politics, countering "...hostile propaganda campaigns...spearheaded by the Soviet Union and Communist countries throughout the world." (64)

³⁵ Ibid, 65.

³⁶ E.R. Laquian, 18-9 and P. Kelly, 2004. The two authors discuss a common Philippine expectation for the eldest daughter to support the parents and siblings upon completion of studies.

³⁷ C.C. Choy, 74.

³⁸ Ibid, 65.; E.R. Laquian, 14.

It would be a mistake to believe that Canadian government initiatives and incentives exclusively spearheaded the immigration of nurses from the Philippines or the United States. On one hand, one study reports that British Columbia, Ontario, and Manitoba had contributed most to encourage the immigration of Filipino professionals from 1967 to 1971.³⁹ On the other hand, no sources are readily available to indicate official recruitment campaigns of Filipino professionals. Furthermore, a key interview participant who had recruited Filipina nurses to his hospital in the late 1960s does not recall any federal or provincial labour nomination program that assisted his efforts.⁴⁰ A symbiotic relationship of national, corporate, and personal interests facilitated the Filipina nurses' passage "*from the tropics to the freezer*."⁴¹

Getting nurses to Canada was a task eagerly undertaken by Canadian business. After World War Two, Canadian transportation companies played an increasingly substantial role in immigration. Large rail companies, shipping, and nascent airline companies worked in concert with the federal government. This cooperation facilitated the movement of peoples of developing countries to Canada. In the months leading up to the implementation of the 1952 Immigration Act, only a small selection of national organizations was invited to attend House of Commons Committees. According to Donald Avery's research on Canadian immigration policies and foreign labour, Ottawa invited CPR, CNR, Trans-Canada Airlines, and Cunard Steamship Lines to participate in the dialogue, ignoring the interests of ethnic, religious and

³⁹ E.R. Laquian, 4.

⁴⁰ John Lysak, Dauphin General Hospital Administrator. Interviewed by author, 12 June 2006, Dauphin, MB, Phone interview.

⁴¹ T. J. Fay, "From the Tropics to the Freezer: Filipino Catholics Acclimatize to Canada, 1972-2002," *Historical Studies* 71 (Annual 2005): 29-33. Canadian Periodicals.

labour organizations.⁴² The latter, representing the country's voice for civil rights and social welfare, in the committees was essentially stifled. The exclusive presence of Canada's big four transportation corporations illustrates the economic inclination of federal immigration policy decisions. The objective was to increase the number to immigrants with needed skills in the country. Therefore, Ottawa subcontracted this service to the companies most capable to undertake, and profit from, this endeavor. This is indicative of the symbiotic relationship between big business and public policy not unknown throughout Canadian history.

Moreover, European countries (primarily the United Kingdom) uniquely benefited from the federal *Assisted Passage Loan Scheme* (APLS) since its inception in 1951. Through this program, Ottawa subsidized the difference between the lower fare offered to immigrants and the higher fare charged by the Canada's airlines. Immigrants promised to repay these loans within two years, working at least one year in their selected employment class.⁴³ The purpose of this initiative was to help Europeans with sought after skills who would not independently be able to afford *en-route* costs of immigrating to Canada.

Relating to efforts in eliminating preferential immigration policies based on race and country of origin, the Canadian government initiated the extension of the APLS to developing countries. In 1966, the passage assistance scheme was extended to immigrants from the Caribbean.⁴⁴ Furthermore, on 1 April 1970, the Department of Manpower and Immigration

⁴² Donald Avery, *Reluctant Host: Canada's Response to Immigrant Workers, 1896-1994*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1995), 172-3.

⁴³ Theresa Wallace, 56-7.

⁴⁴ *Report of the Department of Manpower and Immigration, Annual Departmental Report* (Ottawa: Manpower and Immigration, 1969-70), 69-70.

announced that loans were made available to people of all nationalities.⁴⁵ Although formerly excluded nationals were now able to benefit from the assistance, Ottawa's willingness to offer transportation assistance to all potential immigrants with "skills in strong demand in Canada" appeared to wane. To illustrate, between 1951 and 1967, the loans were offered to immigrants, their families, and dependents at zero per cent interest.⁴⁶ Also, during the last year the country preferentially assisted European immigrants' passage, Canada supported 58,163 applicants in the first quarter alone of 1966.⁴⁷ In contrast, for the entire 1970 fiscal year (1 April 1970 -- 30 March 1971), the number of beneficiaries dramatically reduced to 1,155, each of which were charged an annual six percent interest rate on the government loan.⁴⁸ A greater pool of immigrants was made accessible to the country. However, highly demanded, qualified immigrants no longer benefited from the interest-free loan package available to previous cohorts of beneficiaries.

References to the federal *Assisted Passage Loan Scheme* do not explicitly discuss the extension of these loans to Filipinos during this period of this paper. Despite the lack of mention in federal departmental reports, it is evident that medical professionals, particularly nurses, were in great demand in this period. The decades following World War Two bore witness to an unprecedented increase in demand for health services. The federal and provincial governments raced to subsidize health care, despite inappropriate human resource planning. An earlier editorial in the *Winnipeg Tribune* noted, "The expansion of hospitals and health services must be

⁴⁵ *Report of the Department of Manpower and Immigration, Annual Departmental Report* (Ottawa: Manpower and Immigration, 1970-71), 15.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Report of the Department of Manpower and Immigration, Annual Departmental Report* (Ottawa: Manpower and Immigration, 1966-67), 23.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

halted until the nursing shortage is solved.”⁴⁹ The author referred to the lack of a centralized and standardized training system for nurses in the province of Manitoba. In fact, hospitals were being built throughout the country without the necessary staff to operate them.

The problem was not that there was a shortage of Canadian students entering nursing programs in the province. It was essentially a problem of distribution and human resource efficiency. According to various sources, twenty-five to thirty per cent of Canadian-born secondary school graduates, most of which were young women, pursued nurses training.⁵⁰ However, even after completion, many never practiced because of marriage, relocation to other provinces, or movement to other hospital areas irrelevant to their skills and training.⁵¹ By the late 1950s and well into the 1960s, Canadian-born sources were not alleviating the shortage of nurses in the provincial labour market. An administrative initiative to recruit nurses overseas was undertaken.

Recent graduates from the Philippines were deemed ideal candidates to meet Manitoba's growing need for nursing professionals. In an effort to promote alternative sources of staffing, The *Winnipeg Tribune* reported the successful sponsoring and integration of Filipina nurses to the Toronto area by the middle of 1959.⁵² Soon after that year, the Manitoba legislature announced that qualified foreign nurses waiting for provincial certification would be able to

⁴⁹ "Nurses Association Points Way to Help Solve Problem of Nurses," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 12 November 1949, sec. 6, pg(s). 17.

⁵⁰ "Canadian Nursing Shortage Denied," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 28 May 1954, sec. 34, pg(s). 4.

⁵¹ "Speaker Suggests some Ways to Alleviate Shortage of Nurses," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 27 April 1950, sec. 5, pg(s). 15.

⁵² "The Need for Nurses," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 1 May 1959, sec. V, pg(s). 14.

practice during the waiting period.⁵³ The wheels were set in motion that turned government and administrative efforts temporarily away from training local populations into the profession. The demand for personnel simply outpaced supply. Rather, it was more logical from a management perspective to recruit qualified nurses from outside the country whose training and expertise resembled that of Canadian nurses.

From a human resource perspective, the recruitment of Filipina nurses to Manitoba hospitals was rational. Manitoban (and Canadian) recruitment agents for hospitals considered the curricula and teaching personnel of Philippine nursing programs very adequate in producing nurses that could easily adapt to the organization of Canadian hospital standards and practices. Based on the 1966 Dauphin General Hospital annual report, an active campaign was initiated to combat the nursing shortage through immigration.⁵⁴ John Lysak, an influential member of the Dauphin Hospital Board of Directors in that era, commented that:

*"I researched with assistance from the MARN (Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses) to see which nurses would be best prepared, educated and trained for nursing in Manitoba. The MARN assured me that the Filipino [nursing] schools closely follow [MARN's] requirements and that these graduates would easily transfer their skills to Manitoban hospitals."*⁵⁵

Individuals in the Philippines assisted Mr. Lysak. Dr. Albano, director of the St. Rita School for Nursing in Manila, had consulted Mr. Lysak in this campaign. In 1967, he personally selected nine graduate nurses and facilitated their immigration procedures.⁵⁶ Mr. Lysak recalls that the Philippine doctor also made a follow-up visit to Dauphin Hospital, and attests to Dr. Albano's positive impression of the treatment his alumna received in Dauphin.

⁵³ "No More Waiting Time for Foreign Nurses," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 18 June 1959, sec. 7, pg(s). 23.

⁵⁴ John Lysak, *Dauphin General Hospital: Administrator's Annual Report* 1966), 4.

⁵⁵ Lysak, Dauphin General Hospital Administrator, telephone interview.

⁵⁶ John Lysak, *Dauphin General Hospital: Administrator's Annual Report* 1967), 3.

C.C. Choy's study *Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History* affirms this assessment of the abilities of Philippine nursing colleges. She finds that the majority of institutions were in fact established and staffed by Christian missionaries from the United States whose standards and practices followed those of Anglo-North American models.⁵⁷ All Filipina nurses interviewed for this study also noted that their training was adequate or more than adequate for their employment. Their ease in adapting to the North American work environment was universal. In an American study of foreign nurses and standardized U.S. examinations during the early 1970s, only Oceania and Korean-trained nurses possessed a higher rate of success (71 and 66 percent, respectively) than Philippine nurses (64 percent), who succeeded more frequently than British and Canadian-trained nurses (45 and 24 percent).⁵⁸ The rates reflect those of graduate nurses Mr. Lysak recruited from the Philippines, as most recruits were certified with the MARN as registered nurses (RN) within one year of their arrival.⁵⁹

Philippine nurses were not the only recruits to fill nursing personnel shortages in Manitoban hospitals during the period from 1965 to 1970. Briefly mentioned in the previous paragraph, a host of nationalities represented the corps of foreign-trained nurses in the province. Of the 285 foreign trained-nurses registered to practice in the province in 1969, Filipinos represented the largest cohort (168), followed by nurses from the United Kingdom (60), the

⁵⁷ C.C. Choy, 42-57.

⁵⁸ United States, *Survey of Foreign Nurse Graduates*, ed. Health Resources Administration. Division of Nursing (Bethesda, Md.: U.S. Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare, Public Health Service, Health Resources Administration, Bureau of Health Manpower, Division of Nursing, 1976), 34.

⁵⁹ Mr. John Lysak exclusively sought nurses from the Philippines. He was not aware of any other countries' nurses deemed suitable for this recruitment campaign.

United States (16), Australia (10), and Korea (6).⁶⁰ Despite the variety of nationalities, Filipinos represented a significant majority. They accounted for nearly sixty percent of all foreign-trained nurses in provincial hospitals. Their overwhelming number and visibility as the largest non-European cohort made an indelible mark on the profession.

It would be misleading, however, to portray the provincial administrative efforts as an open-door policy recruiting large numbers of Philippine nurses. It is true that hospital hiring departments in the province were eager to bring in foreign nurses. From 1 January to 31 December 1966, Dauphin General Hospital proudly reported a seven percent increase in registered nurses from the previous year because of an "active immigration program."⁶¹ Previously, the staff had been decreasing by one to three percent per annum.⁶² At the same time, the hospital expressed its apprehension in exclusively relying on foreign pools of labour: "I do not believe, though, that immigration should be looked upon as a solution to the longer term supply of nurses for Manitoba."⁶³

During the 1960s, the provincial nursing programs were being re-organized which further complicated nurses training in Manitoba. In the past, nursing programs were run by regional hospitals whose mandate was to exclusively supply their own personnel. In the 1950s and 1960s, the regional nursing schools were forced to close down as instruction was transferred and agglomerated into occupational schools and universities in Brandon and Winnipeg. During this

⁶⁰ *Countdown: Canadian Nursing Statistics*, ed. Canadian Nurses' Association (Ottawa: Canadian Nurses' Association, 1970), 62. Various other countries sending between one to four nurses are also included in this statistic.

⁶¹ John Lysak, Dauphin General Hospital: Administrator's Annual Report, 1967.

⁶² John Lysak, Dauphin General Hospital: Administrator's Annual Report 1964, 3.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

period of organizational flux and staffing difficulties, hospital administrations sought other avenues to recruit nurses.

Area hospitals relied on their own resources to undertake this foreign recruitment. For Dauphin General Hospital, for example, “no [federal or provincial] government support” was available for the women’s transport. Money was borrowed from hospital coffers to pay for the Philippine nurses’ airfare and land transportation.⁶⁴ No mention of charged interest on travel loans was evident in hospital reports, although other sources report more exploitative practices.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, the assistance was expected to be repaid within one or two years.⁶⁶ In fact, no nurse interviewed for this study mentions any government assistance scheme, except for the *fly-now-pay-later* plan that ensured their flight passage to Manitoba. Many nurses interviewed for this study echo this comment in their testimonies: “The arrangements for our way to Canada were completely done for us. It was all very quick. We were selected, informed and flown in a short period.”⁶⁷

Important developments in the world airline industry made their travel and immigration logistics easier. The airline business in the region was undergoing a period of stiff competition. The 1960s witnessed airport construction booms in large hubs in all of Canada’s large cities. As well, aircraft purchases and regional route expansions were responses to the rise in national air travel. At this time, the Vancouver-based Canadian Pacific Airlines (CP Air) was lured to the region by a promising tourist boom. The company eagerly tried to establish a foothold on major

⁶⁴ Lysak, Dauphin General Hospital Administrator, telephone interview.

⁶⁵ C.C. Choy, 76. Choy found one Philippine agency that advertised a twelve percent annual interest rate for the balance of the airfare.

⁶⁶ Lysak, Dauphin General Hospital Administrator, telephone interview.

⁶⁷ “Felicity”, R.N. Interviewed by author, 10 June 2006, Vancouver, BC, Minidisk recorder.

routes between the Far East and Canada. At that time, direct flights connected Honolulu (1959), Beijing (1960), and Tokyo (1961) to Vancouver and to points thereafter in Canada.⁶⁸ There was a need to fill the seats on these routes. However, tourist dollars were not reliable sources of revenue for airline companies.

The industry diversified their clientele. By 1965, the Manila offices of United, Philippine and Northwest Airlines actively encouraged Philippine university graduates to leave their country in response to more favorable U.S. immigration laws and professional exchange programs. These carriers offered no-interest *fly-now-pay-later* plans and targeted doctors and nurses.⁶⁹ During the first three months of April 1965, CP Air initiated a recruitment campaign. According to newspaper reports, the airline discovered a surplus of qualified nurses in the Philippines from which hospitals in Vancouver and Winnipeg could benefit.⁷⁰ Despite the bureaucratic "red tape" involved with applications for immigrant workers, the airline collaborated closely with hospital directors and trustees to support Philippine nurses whom they brought in as landed immigrants. The MARN and hospitals waived their probationary period before formal certification. Thus, they were able to work as graduate nurses pending registration in their host province. The airline promoted the nurses' formidable fluency in English. As well, industry reports highlighted the Filipina nurses' ease in adapting to Canadian hospital practices.⁷¹

⁶⁸ "First Non-Stop Jet to Tokyo," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 1 December 1961, sec. 8, pg(s). 8, "CPA Pressing for Rights for Canada-Peking Route," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 17 April 1969, sec. 5, pg(s). 17, "City to Link Up with Air Network," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 2 May 1959, sec. 2, pg(s). 4.

⁶⁹ Choy, C.C., 76.

⁷⁰ "Philippine Nurses Aid Wanted here," *Tribune*, 2 April 1965, sec. 5. "Philippine Nurses May Work Here," *Tribune*, 20 March 1965, sec. 5.

⁷¹ Ibid.

Another factor in this recruitment was the participation of Philippine travel agencies. The recruited nurses arranged to have travel plans prepared for them in a timely and efficient manner. Either nurses themselves or their sponsoring hospitals employed private travel agents to assist with this task. These agents, in addition, enjoyed closer ties to formal procedures of the immigration process because Canadian immigration bureaus were available in Tokyo and Hong Kong.⁷² They served the nursing graduates in an expedient manner by delivering them necessary documents for their arrival in Canada. All nurses interviewed in this study unanimously confirmed the efficiency of the immigration process.⁷³

Reflecting the collaborative relationship between airline carriers and Manitoba hospital administrators, travel agencies contributed to this triad that expedited the nurse's migration. For example, *North American Placement and Visa Services*, a Manila travel and recruitment agency, reported negotiations with a nurse representing an American hospital in the recruitment of Filipina nurses.⁷⁴ Although none of the interview participants for this study admits to the use of dubious agencies, it is safe to assume that one was consulted and used to prepare their travel logistics.⁷⁵ In Canada, a concerted effort connecting Canada's largest corporations, hospital executives, and Philippine travel agencies expedited their movement. All actors in this immigration scheme, including Canadian hospitals, travel agencies, airlines and nurses' college instructors, contributed to the arrival of Filipina nurses throughout small community hospitals in Canada.

⁷² "Felicity."

⁷³ All nurses answered "very satisfied" in the portion of the survey regarding the processing of their immigration application.

⁷⁴ C.C. Choy, 76.

⁷⁵ C. Siracusa, 332-37. This section of the paper discusses the Philippine government's inability to regulate private recruiters and the proliferation of dubious service operators.

The early twentieth century experience of Japanese Canadians in British Columbia's fruit farms provides a limited comparative example of adaptation in rural communities. Anne Doré's socio-historical analysis, "Transnational Communities: Japanese Canadians of the Fraser Valley, 1904-1942," (2002) describes the settlement of Japanese Canadians in British Columbia's Fraser Valley. She argues that, in time, the Japanese community was able to earn mainstream respect and tolerance by way of their achievements in the province's berry and vegetable farming.⁷⁶ This was in contrast to the racial antagonism that their compatriots experienced in Vancouver at the hands of the *Asian Exclusion League*.⁷⁷

Despite occupational and situational differences, the 1960s settlement of Filipina nurses in the rural communities of Manitoba's Parkland region share two key qualities with this cohort of Japanese Canadian farmers. To begin, both groups satisfied deficiencies in the labour market that established groups found difficult filling. Second, both the Japanese and Filipinas were more favorably received in their host rural communities than their counterparts in urban areas. However, key differences in culture, language, geography, and historical era accelerated the adaptation of Filipina nurses in Manitoba hospitals. The next section of this paper will illustrate and discuss some aspects of the social and occupational experiences of Filipina nurses in the Parkland region of Manitoba.

Despite humble beginnings, the Filipino community in the province progressed dramatically in the late 1960s and early 1970s. According to nurses interviewed for this study,

⁷⁶ A. Doré, 69.

⁷⁷ For a detailed discussion, refer to W.P. Ward's *White Canada Forever* (2002).

and members of Winnipeg's Philippine Community Centre, two Filipina nurses first arrived in Manitoba in the late 1950s.⁷⁸ Instead of working as nurse's aids, or other lower-status positions in the hospital, the Filipinas worked directly in their field as nurses, provided that they remained employed in their stated intended area of residence upon arrival. However, they had to pass the certification examination within a year of arrival.⁷⁹ They worked in hospitals in the provincial capital and were among the few non-Europeans in their profession.

A steady flow followed the small trickle of Filipino professionals in the initial stages of immigration. According to federal immigration records, Manitoba hosted only 6.7 percent of Canada's Filipino immigrants in 1967.⁸⁰ By 1971, the prairie province reported a 12.9 percent share of the country's Filipinos population, the sharpest increase of any province during the same period.⁸¹ A large number of garment workers recruited from the Philippines at this time inflate the numbers of this statistic. However, Eleanor Laquian's study (1973) proposes that the majority of Filipinos in Canada in the period of this study were indeed professionals, 24.3 percent of whom nurses.⁸² This would suggest that a large number of Filipino nursing graduates continued to be lured to the province in light of the relative success previous cohorts of nurses experienced.

⁷⁸ "Jackie", Retired Head Librarian (University of Manitoba). Interviewed by author, 15 June 2006, Winnipeg, MB, Minidisk recording., "Virginia", Retired elementary school teacher. Interviewed by author, 13 June 2006, Winnipeg, MB, Minidisk recording. One of these two nurses remains in Winnipeg, but was unreachable during my stay in June 2006. Refer to *notes on sources* following this paper explaining the citation of non-nurses in this section.

⁷⁹ John Lysak, telephone interview.

⁸⁰ E.R. Laquian, 4.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid., 10.

By early 1970s, however, the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses (MARN) increased the barriers for foreign-educated nurses to practice their profession in the province. By the early 1970s, the luck began to change for Filipina nurses as longer probationary periods and certification refusals became more common than in the past.⁸³ Filipina nurses were beginning to occupy a substantial percentage of nursing positions in Winnipeg hospitals. Instead of satisfying a gap, they were directly competing against an increasing cohort of Canadian-born nursing school graduates in the labour market.⁸⁴

The declassified board meeting minutes of Winnipeg's Civic Registered Nurses Association (CRNA) reveal the frustration felt by sympathetic colleagues. The CRNA director expressed his opposition to the unfairly long period to which Filipino-trained RN's were subject before provincial certification.⁸⁵ If Filipina nurses received preferential status in the 1950s and early 1960s, they were being snubbed by the MARN when the need for them waned. From the late 1960s, the nursing labour market in the cities became saturated. Therefore recruited Filipino nurses spread to smaller rural areas as large numbers of rural hospitals were being constructed in the 1960s.

Upon the arrival of Filipinos in the mid to late 1960s, people of the Parkland area were not unfamiliar with waves of diverse peoples. The most significant non-British groups that settled in the region were from the eastern frontier of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. These peoples came under the promotional initiatives of Clifford Sifton, Canadian Minister of

⁸³ "Enrolment of Foreign Nurses Opposed by MARN President " *Winnipeg Tribune*, 7 June 1968, sec. I, pg(s). 14.

⁸⁴ "Nurse Shortage in Province Ends," *Winnipeg Tribune*, 7 November 1968, sec. IV, pg(s). 1.

⁸⁵ Winnipeg Civic Registered Nurses Association, Board Meetings. Anonymous 24 April 1974, Winnipeg, MB, [Manitoba Archives].

the Interior (including immigration) between 1896 and 1905. According to Kelley and Trebilcock, immigrants from Austro-Hungarian territory of Galicia favored the familiar forested area of Manitoba's Parkland area north of the province's Riding Mountain National Park.⁸⁶ Consequently, the region's major towns of Dauphin, Swan River, Gilbert Plains, and Roblin all have a large percentage of residents with Eastern European, specifically Ukrainian last names.

Town residents of non-British ancestry were a significant factor in the Filipinas' adaptation to their new environment. According to the interviewed Filipina nurses, the most identifiable ethnic groups that they encountered, other than those of Anglo-Saxon heritage, were Ukrainians, Russians, Mennonites, German, Dutch, Polish, and First Nations. Although most of the activities involved other hospital staff, most Filipina nurses recall receiving invitations to various town activities such as curling, church services, picnics, and drives to the popular weekend get-away, Clear Lake. However, Ukrainian members of the community were the most welcoming and inclusive to these young women. One nurse recalls: "I went to a Ukrainian wedding. It was an excellent experience! They made me feel part of the family...I didn't feel like someone from another country."⁸⁷ Rachel, a nurse recruited to small village of Benito, claimed that Ukrainian and Russian colleagues in the hospital invited Filipinas for casual home visits more frequently than other white colleagues.

The Filipinas were able to identify with the close family relations and diet of Ukrainian Canadians. One interviewee recalls having learned useful Ukrainian phrases and how to prepare

⁸⁶ N. Kelley, 129. The forested area best suited their subsistence farming tradition that relied on firewood, rather than cash-crop wheat farming normally conducted in the south of the province.

⁸⁷ "Helen", R.N. Interviewed by author, 5 June 2006, Vancouver, BC, Minidisk recorder. She worked and lived in Roblin in 1967.

typical dishes, such as borsch.⁸⁸ “They ate rice [in their cabbage rolls] and ate sausages like we do in the Philippines,” comments “Jane” (RN) who worked and lived in Gilbert Plains.⁸⁹ Immigrants to Canada usually benefit from other fellow newcomers, helping each other adapt to the new surroundings, food and customs of the dominant society.⁹⁰ The young Filipina nurses lacked this ever-present network, as they were mostly placed in small groups of one to three people in isolated communities. Therefore, interactions with members of the host community were a key factor in their settlement process.

Despite their predicament, the nurses managed to establish ties with other isolated Filipinos and Filipinas in the region. As Winnipeg was several hours by car or train, the chance for same-country friendships in the provincial capital was slim. Rather, a couple of Filipina elementary school teachers in the small community of San Clara, north of Roblin, facilitated the get-togethers of willing Filipinos in the region. Being the only ones among them with an automobile, they kept the homesick nurses in contact with one another. The meetings were usually casual, with little planned activities. It provided a rare venue for nurses to socialize the way they did in the Philippines:

“...Once a month we met two teachers from [San] Clara town. [We didn’t see each other] much. We were distant [from one another]. Sometimes we met about twice a year. We cooked Filipino food...had sit-sessions...knitting. It was so cold in winter.”⁹¹

⁸⁸ “Felicity.”

⁸⁹ “Jane”, R.N. Interviewed by author, 3 June 2006, Vancouver, BC, Minidisk recording. She arrived in 1967.

⁹⁰ T.J. Fay, 31.

⁹¹ “Helen.”

Although almost all respondents⁹² expressed an initial enthusiasm for the exotic cuisine of cold cuts, berry preserves and rye bread, a few of the respondents considered these informal meetings essential in their initial adjustment period. The encounters were the only means of eating the foods they enjoyed in their home country. In their work placements, they usually relied on hospital cafeterias, geographically restricted food supplies, and limited cooking abilities. Four of the nurses admit to not having ever cooked before their arrival in Canada, and therefore being unable to prepare typical Filipino dishes. These women preferred eating the food made by compatriots, rather than “inventing” a dish in their dormitory kitchen. These meetings supported their adaptation to Canadian working life. Three out of eight nurses in this sample also recall an active involvement with members of Christian (primarily Catholic) churches in their community, such as singing in choirs. They had preferred to participate more, but were restricted by their full time work schedule.⁹³ This adaptation phenomenon is similar to the Japanese schools and farming cooperatives in B.C. that helped foment and perpetuate cultural traditions of the community.⁹⁴ Food socials, interactions, and religious affiliations were the vehicles through which isolated Filipinas dealt with the emotional, cultural, and environmental differences of life in rural western Canada.

Despite the drastic climate and demographic differences they encountered, the women faced minimal difficulty in adapting to their professional environment. The women claim that only slight differences in colloquialisms and an initial apprehension speaking in uniquely

⁹² One respondent says, in her nearly forty years in the country, she has never liked food prepared in Canada.

⁹³ T.J. Fay, 31.

⁹⁴ A. Doré, 69.

Anglophone setting strained communication with colleagues.⁹⁵ Otherwise their knowledge of medical terminology, practices, and pharmaceuticals were adequate for the position they acquired in Canada. All respondents claim that their training and education were either “sufficient” or “more than sufficient” for the tasks and roles they were assigned in their nursing positions in Canada. All women successfully wrote the MARN certification examination within the required one to two years.

Furthermore, two women underwent further training and education to achieve a higher pay rate. Initially, the nurses were all graduates of university-level nursing programs. The respondents’ relatively high education in their field reflects Laquian’s conclusions from her survey question-based research. The author found that 82.1 percent of her population sample obtained bachelor degrees or higher in the Philippines, of which 32.1 percent enrolled in further training upon arrival in Canada.⁹⁶ Most of the nurses attempted upper-level positions of nursing, where they would manage the staff and perform other administrative tasks.

Despite the higher salaries, most of the respondents who were promoted to the head nurse’s post chose to demote themselves to floor nurse for various reasons. Some nurses claim that their passion was serving and caring for people. Other nurses felt pressured to step down. In the only indication of racial discrimination in this study, a nurse expressed her unpleasant experience as a head nurse supervisor:⁹⁷

“The hospital administration normally gives job preferences to nursing graduates from Canada. When I was the head nurse, some of the staff became

⁹⁵ "Nora", R.N. Interviewed by author, 4 June 2006, Vancouver, BC, Minidisk recorder.

⁹⁶ E.R. Laquian, 10-11.

⁹⁷ The respondent’s request for complete anonymity requires me to omit any references to location and date of this event.

aggressive...and since I was so softhearted, I wasn't able to [control the situation]. So, I chose to work as a casual [part time] nurse."⁹⁸

After having spent almost ten years as head nurse, the nurse found it shameful to be forced to rescind her promotion. At the same time, however, the regressive action allowed her the flexibility and freedom to continue her profession for more than two decades after that event.

Although the majority of participants in this study had relocated since their original place of settlement in the 1960s, the two nurses who remained contributed substantially to their community. Upon marriage and sponsorship to Canada of partners from their home region of the Philippines, they subsequently had children. The majority of their children have entered the health care profession as medical doctors and chiropractors, as well as nurses. Many members of the community are cognizant of the achievements of the original Filipino nurses and their adult children.⁹⁹ The nurses have also made strides in the religious life of the community. The Catholic Church has been one aspect of the lives of Filipino Canadians that has helped preserve their identity, culture, and social relations.¹⁰⁰ Sunday and holiday services are well attended and close relations are maintained with the clergy. Through their participation in the Church, the Filipinas supported recently-arrived Filipino and non-Filipino members of the religious community in their adaptation process.

⁹⁸ "Helen."

⁹⁹ During the author's week-long tour of restaurants, town halls and libraries of the Parkland Region, established residents freely expressed their appreciation of Filipino-Canadian members of the community who have and continue to serve the health care needs of their community.

¹⁰⁰ No evidence in this research indicated the Filipina nurses' Roman Catholic faith served as a conduit that facilitated their acceptance by other residents of their rural community. However, the author concedes further qualitative research is needed to explore this probable hypothesis.

Outside hospital and religious settings, public cultural events also helped bridge the ethnic divide that existed between Filipinos and the mainstream White residents of the community. One nurse fondly recalls having taught Filipinos and other members of the community Philippine folk dances for a town event. The subsequent coverage in the town newspaper confirms the pan-community involvement and enjoyment of this cultural event.¹⁰¹ Furthermore, freshwater fishing, precision pistol shooting, and rugby have all been activities that facilitated cooperation, competition, camaraderie, and goodwill between ethnic groups. The small and isolated Filipino community, owing to the initial nurses' achievements, benefits from an inclusive network based on solidarity and compassion.

In conclusion, immigrant integration into mainstream Canadian society and the labour force is not instantaneous. Demands and concessions on behalf of both the immigrant and the host society are required to establish a social equilibrium of differences in language, culture and geography. In the 1960s, Filipina nurses harnessed this balance to establish their lives in their adoptive country. Their occupational and social integration in the Parkland Region of Manitoba is a case-specific example of their success. In the short run, the success of this arrangement can be measured by two significant outcomes. First, Manitoba hospitals filled hospital wards with foreign-educated personnel. Second, Filipina nurses earned incomes that reflected their education and training. In the long run, the overwhelming majority of Filipinas who remained and established family and professional networks in the studied region and throughout Canada have added to the country's social and economic fabric. Also, their knowledge, expertise, and dedication have left indelible marks on the Canadian nursing profession.

¹⁰¹ M. Simpson, "Performance of Bali Hai Enjoyed by Receptive Audience," *Dauphin Herald*, 27 October 1976, pg(s). 6. "Concert Featuring Costumes with the Talent," *Dauphin Herald*, 6 October 1976, pg(s). 2.

It would be naïve to believe contemporary groups of newcomers would emulate the path of these young women in the 1960s. Immigration in the 1960s was historically distinct considering the structural and geopolitical pressures that gripped the Philippines and compromised its economic and national security. However, these women were not, on the most part, seeking refuge from political or social instability in their country. Rather, they were young women of respected professions (within and outside their country) who were willing clients of a covert public-private partnership that expedited their departure under the pretense of travel, adventure and professional development. C.C. Choy observes,

*Labor-scarce economies do not merely create the opportunities for overseas labourers to which individual workers respond...The employer and the complex networks of recruitment agencies that link it with the migrant are remarkable in their absence in most accounts of international labor migration.*¹⁰²

In reality, many groups profit shared from this movement of labour, including the Philippine state, private agencies, North American hospitals and large airlines. The legacy of transportation companies influencing Canadian immigration stretches back to the late 19th century. The Canadian shipping companies played an active role in the recruiting and transporting of East and South Asians, as well as Europeans, for non-skilled positions in rail construction and maintenance.

This paper does not attempt to argue that Filipina nurses would have experienced a less stellar occupational adaptation to Canada in urban centres such as Winnipeg. Filipino contributions in those areas have proven equally laudable. Nonetheless, confronted with

¹⁰² C.C Choy, 96.

increasing competition in the nursing labour market with Canadian-born nurses and barriers to professional certification, smaller communities became the last resort for these nurses.

Fortunately, the unique rural setting of the nurses' settlement was fundamental to their achievements. Because of the lack of a large Filipino community, the nurses were required to assert their presence. As well as their knowledge of the English language, a correlation between Prairie qualities of *collective survival* and *individual perseverance* and Filipino principles of *bahala na* ("come what may") and *utang sa loob* ("reciprocity")¹⁰³ allowed the nurses to adapt more easily. The various difficulties that Filipina nurses confronted in Manitoba such as climate, food, and culture were treated as mere challenges to bear. Fortunately, with the network of colleagues, church, and social groups in the region, the nurses were supported in overcoming the tenuous initial period of adaptation. These nurses sacrificed by enduring distant family relations, culture shock and occasionally occupational demotion for self-centred and altruistic goals. The social and occupational challenges confronted were a small price to pay compared to the material advantages enjoyed by the women themselves, their families in the Philippines, and future generations in Canada.

The limited scope of this study hindered the development of equally important, but unexpected topics of discussion. First, further study is needed to discuss big business' role in the world displacement of Third World professionals and labourers. Specifically, an analysis of major world airlines (including *CP Air*) and its dealings with world immigration issues and policies should be undertaken. Furthermore, research on the relationship between Canadian

¹⁰³ F. Cannell, *Power and Intimacy in the Christian Philippines*, (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

hospitals and Philippine nursing institutions needs to be conducted. The question that deserves further inquiry is how these actors engineered a labour-oriented nomination program despite the absence of provincial or federal assistance.

Appendices

Notes on sources

This major research project is a result of historical research in the provinces of Manitoba and British Columbia. During the first three weeks of June 2006, testimonial and archival research was conducted in Vancouver, BC, and in Dauphin and Winnipeg, Manitoba. A disproportionate portion of this period was dedicated to searching, scheduling, and conducting interviews with subjects directly related to the topic. Concurrently, research was conducted at the Manitoba Archives and other depositories of primary historical data, such as community newspaper offices, museums, libraries, municipal halls, and hospital record vaults.

Unfortunately, the small community hospitals that originally housed and employed the majority of the nurses in this study had closed upon amalgamation with the regional health authority in Dauphin. Therefore, administrative records of these institutions are either inaccessible or untraceable. Documents accessed at the Dauphin General Hospital, however, include extensive annual employment records, plans, and administrative memoranda during the early to late 1960s. They prove invaluable in understanding the administrative decision-making behind the recruitment of Filipina nurses to community hospitals.

Moreover, this study draws upon screened newspapers articles from the now defunct *Winnipeg Tribune* and *Gilbert Plains Maple Leaf* between 1950 and 1970, as well as the Dauphin

Herald, and the *Roblin Review* that continue to publish. All are easily accessible, often in good condition or on microfiche. The *Tribune* was easily divided up into subjects (i.e. nurses and Philippines) and thus was invaluable for province-wide coverage. It also revealed unexpected evidence of the role *CP Air* played in the recruitment of foreign nurses. Regarding community publications, their surprising length and depth are indicative of their vital role as medium of communication at that time. They offer a glimpse of mainstream, small-town reactions to foreign nurses in these municipalities.

Attempts at accessing provincial nurses associations in Manitoba yielded mixed results. The College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba (CRNM), formerly the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses (MARN), was unable to locate annual records and reports of their members for the years of this study. However, board-meeting memos from the Winnipeg Civic Registered Nurses Association are available at the Manitoba Archives. In addition, statistics from the national Canadian Nurses Association (CNA) are conveniently accessible at the Ryerson University library. The former sheds light on the dealings Canadian nursing unions' had concerning the foreign recruitment of colleagues. The latter conveniently tables annual numbers of registered nurses by country of origin (1967-1975). Both sources provide timely evidence of the relations between nursing organizations and Filipina nurses.

A major source of primary material for this research is from oral testimonies and interviews. One key person in the study facilitated the search for other potential interview participants. Interviews were then conducted with consenting subjects. The majority of those interviewed now lives outside the province of Manitoba. Since some explicitly expressed not to

be identified in this report, pseudonyms are used for all nurses interviewed. The identity of the hospital administrator is not concealed. Among the eleven subjects interviewed, six were nurses who had immigrated to Canada during the period between 1965 and 1970, and two nurses arrived in the early 1970s. Apart from the nurses, who receive the most attention in this paper, an elementary school teacher who worked in the region, a university librarian, and a Parkland hospital administrator were also consulted. Even though the focus is on Filipina nurses in Manitoba's Parkland region during the period 1965-1970, the interviews of other participants who do not fit these criteria are used to better illustrate Canadian immigration during this particular time and place. All but the hospital administrator are of Philippine descent.

Author's Postscript

I surprised myself in conducting research on my original application proposal to Ryerson University's Immigration and Settlement Studies graduate program. I expected to deviate and examine other historical topics that have always interested me: such as Japanese internment, the Vancouver riots, and the *Komagata Maru* incident. In accordance with Drs. Myer Siemiatycki and Kathleen Kellet-Bestos' recommendations, I intently related my term paper research to my proposed study on Filipino nurses in Manitoba. My search for material started with ISS course professors and their connections, including Dr. Sedef Arat-Koc who has conducted substantial research on Filipino live-in caregivers. However, none had known of any research done on early waves of Filipino immigration, specifically of nurses.

The major research project that I have undertaken was a response to the lack of literature on Filipino professionals in Canadian immigration literature. Most of what was available touched upon the experiences and challenges of Canada's *Live-in Caregiver program*, in which significant numbers of Filipina women participate. I agree that this national program affects the immigration and settlement of many Filipino Canadians today. As an inquisitive individual, however, I saw the need for another perspective of the community from an era that preceded the current wave of Filipino immigrants. At a personal level, I recognized the need to explore the documented issues, conditions and causes of my parents' arrival in Canada, which did not reflect the themes explored in the selected literature of this program. My family's oral histories form my understanding of their experiences. At the same time, I lacked an academic understanding of this period.

Through the various themes of my exploratory term papers this past year, (regarding Manitoban nominee programs, Filipina labour migration, the pre-internment Japanese Canadian community, and the spatial settlement patterns of Filipinos in Toronto), I had managed to compile a hefty list of literature directly and indirectly related to this community. These works provided the necessary background for this topic and was included with the major findings of my own historical research. Although not exhaustive, this list of literature indicated the direction of this exploratory paper.

Initially, I believed my paper would be a heavily-weighted analysis of Canadian immigration policy. I expected to find literature in parliamentary statutes and regulations that would point me towards an intended campaign of labour recruitment in the Philippines. I managed to locate official mention of federal transportation schemes that assisted the passage of immigrants before and during the period of this study. I also consulted secondary sources of related legislation, such as Agnes Calliste's discussion on Caribbean nurses in the 1950s. Unfortunately, considering the time, travel and accessibility restraints of locating supplementary government documents, I changed my focus due to findings I unexpectedly stumbled upon during my survey of newspaper articles in Winnipeg's *Millennium Library*.

The re-structuring of the world's airline industry and Canadian Pacific Airlines' transporting of supposedly needed nurses and other professionals to Canada was a piece of the immigrant puzzle that was elusive to me. I concede that this paper would have been better supported by communication within CP Air itself that supports the assumption that internal

company decisions resulted in the *brain drain* of Filipino professionals from their country. However, deficiencies in supporting evidence were reinforced by personal histories of those directly involved in the nurses' recruitment and hospital annual reports. In short, what lacked in documentation, I filled with personal testimonies.

In fact, the oral testimonies were another addition to this study that I did not expect to undertake. My weariness of the ethics review process and my intention to base my study uniquely on documented sources blinded me to the benefits oral testimonies provide historical studies. Arne Kislenko's recommendation and the writings of University of Toronto's religious historian T.J. Fay encouraged me to humanize this inherently human story I proposed. Not only was the economic and political puzzle needed to be solved, the settlement experiences of these women also needed to be revealed and illustrated. The nurses' settlement experience and labour market integration in the Canadian Prairies demonstrate how immigrants could be successfully absorbed into Canadian mainstream society, without relinquishing cultural aspects that define them.

The research undertaken in archives, libraries and town halls were as moving to me as the personal interviews conducted on the kitchen tables and basement floors of houses around communities in Manitoba and Vancouver. The limited sample of interview participants for this study reflects the time and financial restrictions of this major research paper. However, each participant was scrupulously selected. The appropriateness of location, time of arrival in Canada, profession and connection to Filipino nurses were all considered in the interviewee selection process.

To conclude, this research paper is merely a modest stepping-stone for further research on this unique portion of Canada's Filipino community. A more comprehensive study would delve into topics that I outline in the last paragraphs of this paper.

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