

Capitalizing on Savage Acts: Rethinking Performance in Early 20th Century Igorot Shows

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this essay is to elucidate the networks in which non-Christian bodies moved through empire, from the Mountain Province, to Manila, into the imperial metropolises, and back home. It explores cultural performance as a form of labor and prestige, and the role of these networks of labor and exploitation in the production of Igorot images. Furthermore, it considers the tensions and ambiguities in these representations within the various sites of the American empire and the Philippine archipelago which resulted in the specific need for an additional clause in the 1913 Anti-Slavery Act that prohibited Igorot cultural performances.

Keywords: Cordilleran history, American empire, World's Fairs, Igorot cultural shows

Introduction

On 20 March 1914, the Philippine Commission included an amendment to Act Number 2300, also known as the Anti-Slavery Act enacted on 28 November 1913, and put in effect in "territory inhabited by Moros or other non-Christian tribes." The amendment prohibited the participation of non-Christian tribes in travelling shows as well as in any foreign exhibitions. It specified stiff penalties for anyone enlisting "any uncivilized person or member of any non-Christian tribe for the purpose of exploiting or exhibiting such person as a spectacle, and for other purposes" (Philippine Commission 1915, 792-93). The peculiarity of this addendum (Commission Bill No. 196) to the Anti-Slavery Act emerges when considered in its entirety:

Whoever shall take away any uncivilized person or member or any non-Christian tribe from his or her place of abode, or transport any such person within the Philippine Islands, or make any contract with any such person, or place any such person on board of any vessel, or attempt to do any of these things, or aid or abet in doing or attempt to do any of these things, in every instance for the purpose of exploiting or exhibiting such person as a spectacle either in the Philippine Islands or elsewhere, or making a profit from their exploitation or exhibition as such spectacle, shall be fined no more than ten thousand pesos and imprisoned for more than five years (Philippine Commission 1914, 286).

The bill centrally pertains to the exhibition of “uncivilized” or “non-Christian tribes,” the terms then in currency for groups historically able to resist Spanish colonial domination. These terms were continuously deployed in the ethnological surveys of such communities by American colonial officials. Shortly after the fall of the Philippine Republic in 1901 and the subsequent U.S. colonization of the Philippines, the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes was specifically established to conduct systematic investigations of “pagans” and “Mohammedans.” The research conducted by this bureau, deemed necessary to justify American imperialism, employed racialized ideology under the guise of “expertise” in ethnography (Rodriguez 2010, 2-3). Through this ideology, civilized groups were characterized by Euro-American ideals, Christianity, and modernity while “savage” groups were characterized as “uncivilized” and “non-Christian.”

In addition to the investigations of the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes, the 1903 census, which was the first undertaken by the American colonial government, classified the “wild peoples” of the Philippines into four groups: “savage and nomadic,” for example the “head-hunters of Luzon;” “peaceful and sedentary,” including many of the Igorots; “peaceful, nomadic, and timid” like the Negritos, Mangyans; and “pagans” of Mindanao. Furthermore, the description of non-Christian groups by surveyors described their culture (and history) as illustrating “the social conditions prevailing generally through a larger part of the Philippines when the islands were first colonized by the Spaniards” (United States Bureau of the Census 1903, 22-3). This description thus situated all non-Christian groups as underdeveloped, and as they did not presumably measure up to the civilizational markers of groups colonized and Catholicized by Spaniards, they were marked as “uncivilized.”

Apart from limiting the prohibition on exhibiting Filipinos specifically to “uncivilized” or “non-Christian tribes,” the bill limited the movement of “uncivilized” or “non-Christian” peoples themselves. The bill restricted the movement of indigenous individuals from their

“abode,” thereby fixing them in the peripheries of the Philippine archipelago to a specific territory under the administrative power of American colonial officials, and that of emergent political elites who did not recognize Igorots as fellow Filipinos. In doing so, the bill, aside from restricting the contractualization of Igorot performers for overseas acts, attempted to limit the movement of these performers and their interactions with the colonial metropole/s. By restricting their mobility, both overseas and in the archipelago, the bill also narrowed the meaning of cultural performance, from one of compensated activity to that of free (and forced) cultural expression. In turn, by limiting movement but allowing for free cultural performances (often free through coercive means) within the Mountain Province, the Philippine Commission codified into law the paternalistic racism associated with the desires of American colonial ethnologists to “preserve” Igorot culture (Finin 2005, 41-75).

The wording of this addendum and its attachment to the Anti-Slavery Act highlights the ways in which Igorot performances of savagery were specifically a form of labor during the proliferation of human zoos sponsored by colonial states and the mass entertainment spectacles like the immensely popular Buffalo Bill Wild West Show. Commission Bill No. 196 highlights a history that is little discussed in relation to the rise and popularity of Igorot shows and performances at the turn from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries. In the corpus of research on human zoos, World’s Fairs, and colonial exhibits, little work has been done, specifically, in understanding how Igorot performers perceived themselves in relation to the colonial hegemony and its exhibitionary complex/practices. This essay argues for a reframing of Colonial Expositions and World’s Fairs to understand the ways in which performers considered their participation in such colonial-cultural shows. In reframing cultural performances as sights/sites of labor, including their relationships to colonial hegemony, and their translation into popular discourses or problematic representations of otherness, colonial hegemony is centrally analyzed by Jose Fermin, Robert Rydell, Nancy Parezo, and Don Fowler; with this reframing, colonial hegemony is or can be decentered by the ways in which performers actively set the terms for their self-representations and redrew the claims of colonial ethnographies about them, and audience expectations (Fermin 2004; Rydell 1984; Parzeo and Fowler 2007). Certainly, exhibitionary events and spaces allowed participating countries to showcase their domestic and colonial products, and these largely Euro-American empire-states to engage in the competitive displays and projections of power between and among themselves. This line of understanding World’s Fairs and Colonial Expositions is instantiated in Robert Rydell’s work (1984) on American participation in, and organization of, various international expositions. With these

fairs, according to Rydell, the United States sought to normalize state power in cultural terms, and envisioned an ideal social order for itself through visualizing “the ideas and values of the country’s political, financial, corporate, and intellectual leaders,” and thereby asserting the moral authority of the United States, especially in the context of its expansionist policies (ibid., 2-3). These histories of the World’s Fairs (exemplified by Rydell 1984; Fermin 2004; Parezo and Fowler 2007) generally focused on the agendas and activities of fair organizers and political leaders, ignoring how such spaces shaped notions of race and culture in the colonies and, in the postcolonial period, national or cultural identity politics in the formerly-colonized nations.

In these works, there is very little (if any) attention paid to the movement of colonized peoples into the metropolises and how they viewed, observed, and consumed cultural performances/exhibitions themselves. In decentralizing colonial hegemony, this essay draws from Adria Imada’s and Linda Scarangella McNenly’s work on the commodification of cultural performances within the American empire and how indigenous subjects negotiated such spaces as cultural and political agents, producing “counter-colonial” scenarios and critiques that “were neither oppositional nor accommodating” (Imada 2012, 17-18). By centralizing performance as labor, this essay argues that Igorot participation in, and performances of, colonial discourses on race shaped and informed not just the colonial policies within the Philippine archipelago, but the process of commercializing and consuming “savage acts” within the United States. In addition to Imada’s and McNenly’s reframing of cultural performances in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as an inspiration, this research is also methodologically influenced by “new imperial histories” which have problematized long-prevailing notions of hegemony (as embodied by Robert Rydell’s treatment of American colonial expositions, for example). With the critical lens these new studies provide, our considerations of imperial power must move beyond binary oppositions, and we are cautioned against viewing colonial regimes as monolithic and omnipotent (Stoler and Cooper 1997, 6).

The first part of this essay explores the historical context of the development of Igorot shows, and looks at the beginnings of performances of Igorot “savagery” in the late Spanish colonial period and their further, if robust, elaborations under American colonial rule. In particular, this section considers the continuations in discourses of Igorot “savagery” between the Spanish and American colonial eras as mediated through colonial expositions. The next part discusses the popularization and profitability of Igorot shows during the American colonial era through sensationalized news stories on the performative displays of “head hunting” and “savage dog eaters.” In capturing the American public imagination, Igorot bodies entered into new

forms of cultural consumption (both for them and Americans) as seen in advertisements not only for Igorot shows organized by private American entrepreneurs but also for the marketing of American consumerist goods. The section that follows then turns, in particular, to issues relating to performance and labor, and considers the ways in which performers, predominantly Bontok men, developed consciousness of their popularity and used their status as “savages” to circulate through empires and in turn inserted themselves into new forms of economic exchange. We conclude with a discussion on the perceived dangers of performing savagery overseas and how the whole enterprise was interpreted by lowland Philippine communities, American colonial officials, as well as Bontok men and women who chose to stay in the *ili* (village-based community), returning to Commission Bill No. 196 and the Filipino members of the Philippine Commission who co-authored this bill. Such responses clearly shaped colonial policies, and ultimately led to the outright banning of Igorot shows overseas as well as the transformation of cultural shows from paid entertainment to “free” expressions of Cordilleran identity within the Philippines.

World’s Fairs and Colonial Expositions as Networks: A Historical Context

Igorot shows of savagery and primitivity for colonial consumption originated in the late attempts of the Spanish empire to modernize. The discourses of Igorot primitivity heavily deployed by American colonial proconsuls echoed those relating to the *Ranchería Igorrote* of the 1887 *Exposición General de las Islas Filipinas* in Madrid, and the language employed in Spanish newspapers to promote this colonial exposition. In the scholarship on the Philippine Exposition at the 1904 Saint Louis World’s Fair, there is little consideration of these discursive continuities between the late Spanish and early American dispensations. In keeping with narratives of American exceptionalism, this monumental World’s Fair is often analyzed in isolation from such precedents. This is even the case in Paul Kramer’s discussion of both the 1887 Madrid Exposition and the 1904 World’s Fair in his book *Blood of Government: Race, Empire, the United States, and the Philippines* (2006). In his consideration of both sites as the loci of racial discourses, there is no significant attempt to bridge, or provide a comparative framework of, the usage of visual and discursive tropes of primitivity associated with the Igorot bodies placed on display during these expositions. In considering World’s Fairs and Colonial Expositions as networks, rather than as separate, distinct sites of racial politics, a larger framework emerges for understanding the legacies of the Spanish empire which later informed American ethnographic

surveys, treatises, and displays of the “Igorot” whom the latter obsessively imagined and represented as “savages.”

While the objects produced by the labor of Cordillera peoples (such as textiles, wood carvings, and weaponry) were displayed at the 1876 Universal Exposition in Philadelphia and the 1883 Colonial Exposition of Amsterdam, the first display of Igorots in human zoos happened at the 1887 *Exposición General* located in the *Parque del Buen Retiro* (or Retiro Park),² organised by Víctor Balaguer i Cirera (1824-1901), a Catalan writer and politician (Morillo-Alicea, 2005, 30-32). The purpose of this exposition was to project Spain as a modern empire, on par with England and France despite losing their South American colonies in a series of revolutions from the mid- to the late-nineteenth century and with the contestations between Germany and Spain over ownership of the Caroline Islands in 1885. While smaller in scale than other late-nineteenth century colonial expositions, the 1887 Madrid Exposition was significant in its embedding of the physical bodies of non-Christian Filipinos within a more international context easier to “read” for the general population and the imperial gaze than the usual textual representations of them. The resulting deployment of visual and display languages at the Madrid Exposition indicates that the ideological purposes of colonial expositions were not lost on the Spanish Government. In this exposition, native participants were measured and observed extensively by “experts” and spectators in ways that predicate similar practices at the epic 1904 World’s Fair. For a typical example, the author of an anthropological article on the “Indonesian race” in the newspaper *El Globo*,³ identifies each Igorot participant and enumerates/describes their physical features:

Gumad-ang, guinaan, de Lepanto; la nariz aguileña, los labios finos y delgados; la expression es inteligente y el ojo europeo; pero el ademán y la actitud es avizor y alerta como la del toro bravo sorprendido en la dehesa. No lleva más tatuaje que una espiral en el dorso de la mano derecha, signo de su tribu (Antón 1887, 101).

[Gumad-ang, guinaan, aquiline nose, fine and thin lips; intelligent expression and European eye; but his gestures and attitude are watchful and alert like that of a wild bull surprised in the pasture. He does not wear any other tattoos than a spiral on the back of his right hand, a symbol of his tribe].⁴

This description of an individual outside the perceived boundaries of civility equates his expressions and actions with that of a wild animal, predictably zoosemiotic in its approach to the human behaviors on display. The direct contrast between the supposed “savagery” of “Indonesian races” and Hispano-Catholic civility is indicated in the

descriptions of the “Malaya races” whereby the author of *El Globo* associated Catholic influences with civilization and moral progress among the Tagalogs and Visayans (Antón 1887, 92-95). This language is echoed in the printed matter circulated to promote the later 1904 World’s Fair’s souvenir picture book for the Igorot Village:

They are barbarians. They have a kind of spirit worship and all tribes give ceremonial dances. As a rule they are headhunters. They are copper colored, have high cheek bones, flat noses and thick lips. Their hair is straight, black, and in many tribes worn long ... the men have strong chests, muscles well developed (*Souvenir: Igorot Village* 1904).

Similar to the colonial exposition almost twenty years before the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, printed matter describing the non-Christian tribes of northern Luzon focus specifically on their physical and phenotypical features so as to immediately connote a distinct divide between observer and the observed. If there was any key difference between the two expositions, it did not lay in the racial discourses surrounding and subtending them, but rather in their ideological intent and work. As the Spanish Empire headed for decline, the 1887 exposition served as a means of culturally bringing the Cordillera region and its refractory inhabitants under the *cultural* administration of the Spanish Empire, given that military and missionary actions had failed to completely subordinate the region.⁵ By contrast, the 1904 World’s Fair was a celebration of America’s new frontiers abroad and a spectacular projection of itself to the world as the New Empire, on the same footing with the British.

The Louisiana Purchase Exposition itself was a narrative, in the form of systematic exhibits, of the history of American expansionism, spanning the 1803-04 Louisiana Purchase on the continent and the 1898 overseas expansions heralded by the Philippines’ conquest. At this World’s Fair, ideologies of Manifest Destiny and Benevolent Assimilation collided and colluded. The “God-given” right for the United States to expand, and America’s moral duty to educate, and give to the world the gift of American institutions, were dioramically visualized in the exhibits and layout of the exposition (Kramer 1999, 84). The World’s Fair, in effect, claimed and proclaimed the success of United States expansionist policies and prospects. The fair organizers, and the American colonial officials in the Philippines, imported and exploited 2,000 indigenous peoples from around the world and displaced them in human zoos. In the planning and organizing stages of these displays, the United States’ colonial government, in collaboration with Filipino state officials, deliberated on and selected specific ethnolinguistic groups to be exhibited.

The subjects for the exhibitions were from the four classifications made by American ethnologists – Negritos, Indonesians, Malayans, and European Mestizos – to signify the multiple “tribes” inhabiting the Philippine archipelago (Louisiana Purchase Exposition Commission 1906, 44-45). Among those selected were 114 Bontok,⁶ Kankanaey, and Itneg individuals (*Report of the Philippine Exposition Board* 1904, 36). While the 1887 Madrid Exposition set the precedence for displaying Igorots at the World’s Fairs, and providing individuals symbolically placed at the Philippines’ peripheral regions with opportunities to interact with the empire’s citizens through performances, the 1904 Louisiana Exposition set the stage for the popularity of these cultural exhibitions: in 1905, an Igorot Village was organized for the Lewis and Clark Exposition in Portland; the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in 1909; and at the 1913 *Exposition universelle et internationale* in Ghent, Belgium.

Owing to the success of the Igorot Village at the 1904 exposition, two individuals associated with it, Truman K. Hunt and Richard Schneidewind, established competing private companies whose charge was to provide Igorot performers not only for the World’s Fairs and Expositions patronized by the American federal government and certain European nations, but also for state fairs, touring carnivals, and sideshow acts staged in public parks.⁷ As a consequence of his experience as the organizer of the Igorot Village and having previously served as the Lieutenant-Governor of Bontoc, Truman Hunt realized the economic potential of a travelling Igorot show and set up the Igorot Exhibit Company (IEC) in December 1904, and returned to Bontoc to begin recruiting performers for it. After a year, Richard Schneidewind, who worked for the cigar exhibit at the Philippine Exposition, created the Filipino Exhibition Company (FEC).

These two private companies frequently competed with each other, navigated colonial policies and ambivalence regarding the continued presence of the Igorots in the United States, and deployed various tactics to exploit Bontok performers by cheating them out of their salaries, compromising their health and well-being in the interest of satisfying popular demand, and exposing them to the discourses of savagery which proliferated in the wake of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. In addition to the continued display of Igorots at state-sponsored expositions, Igorot shows became fixtures of mass entertainment, circulating with travelling circuses, featured at state fairs throughout the Midwest, at Coney Island in New York and Chutes Park in Los Angeles, with stagings in England, and in Paris (Vaughan 1996, 219-233). These movements between state and private commercial spectacles, the competing Igorot travelling show companies which enabled them, and the ease of advertising “savage acts” for citizens of empire highlight the ways native bodies, in a post-1904 World’s Fair context, quickly populated the Western-colonial

and popular imaginary, following the generalized desires of imperial citizens to know, see, and gawk at “savage” bodies.

The Profitability of Savage Bodies

An iconic advertisement for Ivory soap appears in the June 1910 issue of *The Ladies’ Home Journal* (Figure 1). The illustration is of three Bontok men, wearing *bahag* (loincloths) and *soklong*, a basket hat made of rattan or bamboo, carrying *tofay* (lances), with *pinnang* (head axes) tucked into their *bahag*. While carrying and wearing symbols of savagery, each of these Bontok men is shown lugging a wooden box labelled “IVORY.” This illustration’s caption narrates that these Bontok



Figure 1. Ivory Soap Advertisement. *The Ladies’ Home Journal*, June 1910. Collection of the University of Michigan.



Figure 2. J. Campbell Cory, "The Cares of a Growing Family," *New York Bee*. 25 May 1898.

men have travelled one hundred miles to bring Ivory Soap back to their *ili* from Vigan, the central city of Ilocos Sur. This advertisement was circulated at the height of the popularity of travelling Igorot shows. The text and illustration work together in metaphorically converting presumably savage cultures into the standards of civilization, as subjects of the American empire could now be shown to practice consumerism. Brands of imperial goods such as Ivory Soap now promised forms of uplift as "Man the Savage" is civilized as "Man the Consumer" through the purchasing of American commodities (Takagi 2003, 306-307). Placed in such periodicals as *The Ladies' Home Journal*, this advertisement provides a space for the citizens of empire to interact with its projects in the colonies: in purchasing such household goods, they were now being hailed to invest these objects with the social, economic, and cultural power elaborated and exercised by the discourses of the American empire.⁸

This graphic deployment of Bontok bodies in an Ivory Soap ad keeps to a common visual language of civilizing (metaphorically cleansing) the new colonies of post-Spanish-American War United States (Figures 2 and 3). Such genealogical connections between soap as a cleansing agent and as a symbol of "Benevolent Assimilation" signifies not only the savagery of native bodies needing to be "cleansed" but also the ways in which American consumers could be reminded of the equation of hygienic practices with the civilizing project, and were encouraged to visualize the process of turning the objects of their representations into consumers themselves. This visualization

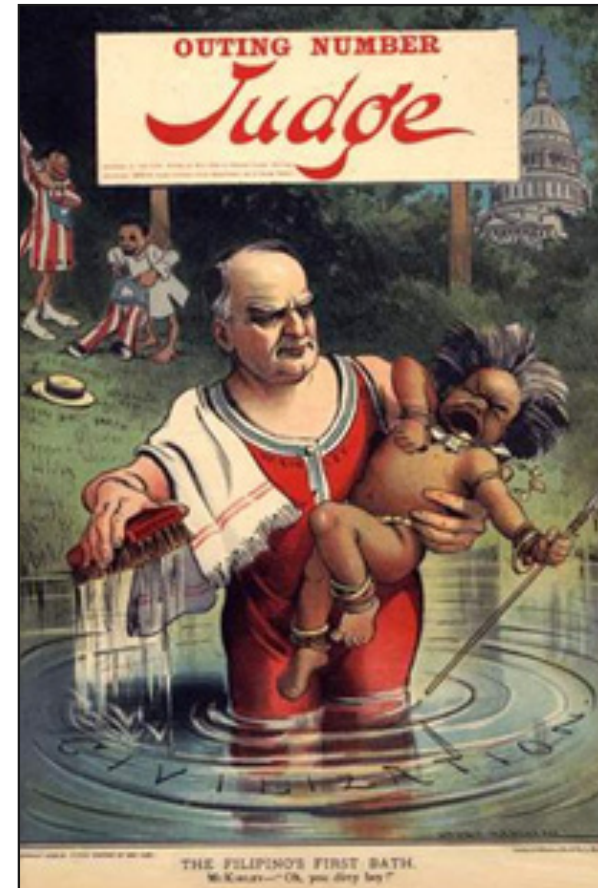


Figure 3. "The Filipino's First Bath," *Judge*. 10 June 1899.

is further reinforced in the cartoons published after the Spanish-American War which depicted the U.S.A.'s new self-imagining as the bearer of civilization to its new overseas colonies. The cartoon "Cares of a Growing Family" (Figure 2) shows President William McKinley seated on a box labelled "Soap: Have You Used It?," surrounded by racist caricatures of the colonies annexed after the Spanish-American War. In the cover illustration of *Judge* magazine titled *The Filipino's First Bath* (Figure 3), McKinley appears physically washing the savagery off a brown child, representative of the Philippines as a whole, in the waters of civilization.⁹ Such paternalist racism underwriting the policies of American proconsuls and Filipino colonial politicians

registered the visual and terminological shift which limited savagery as a characteristic to non-Christian groups, and worked to ensure the collaboration of Philippine political elites who resided in Manila and soon found themselves in an ambivalent relationship to the ensuing commodification and consumption of Philippine “savagery.”

The distribution and proliferation of such images to promote American consumerist goods raises various questions: Why and how did Igorot “savagery” become embedded in early twentieth-century consumerist culture? What purposes did the associations of consumer goods with native bodies (seemingly located outside of capitalist economic and political systems) serve? How did Bontok bodies become the conventional image of savagery, primitivity, and socio-cultural backwardness in popular American-colonial visual culture?

The continuous and complex interactions among consumerism, capitalism, and Bontok bodies may be attributed to the apparent success of the advertising and propaganda practices of American empire and business. This idea of advertising and capitalizing on the “savage acts” of non-Christian Filipinos before the general public stemmed from immediate imperatives and served a variety of imperial and business interests. First elaborated in the 1904 Saint Louis World’s Fair and the outbreak of sensationalized media reporting which it triggered, it fixated on the “savage nature” of the United States’ newly acquired colonies. To be specific, as news of the Igorot Village and the human exhibit of “real live head hunters”¹⁰ spread, public concerns were immediately expressed regarding the state of dress as well as the “strange” diet of the cultural performers.

Rydell’s work on American World’s Fairs (1876-1916) copiously cites Missouri newspapers, like the Saint Louis *Post-Dispatch*, and their sensationalized headlines, which reflected public concerns over the exhibitions of Filipino “savagery,” ranging from the perceived nudity of Bontok and Aeta men to dog eating and fears of stolen pets. A typical example is an article in the 10 May 1904 issue of *The St. Louis Republic* titled “Igorotes are to have Dog Feast Saturday: Canines Admitted Free to the Village and Governor Hunt Promises the Savages a Holiday” (Rydell 1984, 172-174). Such sensationalized news conjured visceral reactions from their readers, ranging from disgust to titillation in knowing and seeing these “savage” bodies, and spelled the success, from the standpoint of fair organizers and imperial pedagogues, of the Philippine exposition and, in particular, the Igorot Village. Sensationalized news articles remained current as well after the 1904 World’s Fair,¹¹ typified by a *Los Angeles Herald* article for an Igorot touring group’s performance at Chutes Park, Los Angeles in 1905, titled “Igorotes are Coming to Town; Lock Up Your Pet Bow Wows;” it appended the author’s imagined menu of recipes like “consume de Poodle” and “Short Ribs Dachshund with Green

Peas.” In picturing native “savagery” in these ways, the publicity of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition included contrasting descriptions of the orderliness and civility of the Philippine Scouts to sharpen the focus on such “savagery.”¹²

About the time the World’s Fair City is waking at early morning, one hundred bare-limbed Igorot often sacrifice and eat a dog on the Philippine reservation. At the same hour, scarcely two hundred yards away, a bugle sounds reveille, and four hundred well-trained soldiers in the blue of the United States Army hustle from their tents. These are the Philippine Scouts. The yells of the dog-dance have scarcely ceased before the blue line is formed for roll call, and the Philippine soldiers stand at attention beneath an American flag, while a Philippine band plays an American air. All of these people live on the same island in the Philippines. The Igorot represent the wildest race of savages, and scouts stand for the results of American rule – extremes of the social order in the islands (*Philippine Exhibition Souvenir Guide* 1904).

The popularity of the Igorot Village, to reiterate, clearly resulted from the widespread and sensationalized newspaper coverage and the active promotional campaigns of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition publicity department. Its phenomenal popularity is attested to by the collection of diaries and letters of St. Louis fairgoers published by Missouri Historical Society in 1996, which predominantly comment on the Igorot Village; there is little to no mention of the Visayan Village or the Moro Village in them (Clevenger 1996, 81, 112, 125, 133). Receipts from sales and admissions to the Igorot Village, as reported by the Philippine Commission, further testify to its immense success:

Table 1. Revenue from Admissions and Sales to the Igorot Village, Louisiana Purchase Exposition, 1904. Source: *Report of the Philippine Exposition Board to the Louisiana Purchase Exposition and Official List of Awards Granted by the Philippine International Jury at the Philippine Government Exposition* (1904, 48).

	May	June	July	August	Sept.	Total
Admission	4,702.75	25,809.40	25,013.06	33,115.50	47,235.46	135,876.17
Sales		603.70	241.14	244.65	193.25	1,271.75
Total	4,702.75	26,413.10	25,254.21	33,349.15	47,428.71	137,147.92

It is important to note that each village required separate admissions, allowing colonial officials to determine which “types” of human exhibitions would prove profitable. As seen in the tabulation, the Igorot Village raked in the most income compared to the other Philippine village exhibits in terms of ticket sales (fifty cents for adult admission and ten for children) and in terms of souvenirs bought. In fact, the Igorot Village, on the basis of ticket sales alone, was three

times more profitable than the second most popular village exhibit, the Moro Village, which displayed various Muslim ethnolinguistic groups from Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago (the Moro Village netted \$40,592.37 from June to September).

But noticeably, the Igorot Village performers were paid less than the rest (with the exception of the Aetas),¹³ averaging at about eleven cents per person daily, whereas other performers were paid an average of fourteen cents per person daily (*Report of the Philippine Exposition Board* 1904, 51). Revenues generated by the Igorot Village as well as the lower costs of mounting it led the Philippine Commission to report that the Igorot village exhibit “has been the greatest source of revenue to the Exposition Board” (*Report of the Philippine Exposition Board* 1904, 36). Additionally, the souvenir sales for this village amounted to \$1,271.75, in comparison to the net total for the Negrito and Moro Villages of \$50.95, by the end of the exposition.

Rethinking Labor through Performative Savagery

The souvenirs bought by fairgoers from the Igorot Village were the products of the craft and labor of the performers themselves. Patricia Afable’s “Journeys from Bontoc to the Western Fairs, 1904-1915,” based on oral histories from the descendants of these Fair participants, notes that American fairgoers purchased or collected these objects of “savage” labor from Fair performers and producers (2004, 462). Indeed, the Philippine Exposition Board report describes local forms of labor on display as well, such as “blacksmithing, weaving, metal working and copper and ore reduction, and also dancing every hour of the native dance of each of the three tribes” (*Report of the Philippine Exposition Board* 1904, 36). The production of souvenirs specifically for visitors to collect and own is recounted in an interview, for San Francisco’s *Manila Times*, with Inang Kinalang, a woman who performed at the 1904 World’s Fair and in subsequent tours with private entertainment companies. She emphasized that the performers created souvenirs to supplement their income (Borja-Mamaril and Lim 2000). Objects acquired by the University of Toronto and later donated to the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) indicate that such objects were for sale, and thus that the laboring to create these souvenirs was specifically pitched to the consumption and collecting activities of fair visitors (figure 4).¹⁴ These souvenirs ostensibly gave them a sense of vicarious and symbolic ownership of a piece of the U.S.A.’s new frontiers, apart from these being mementos of their experiences in observing and interacting with their colonial others.



Figure 4. Philippine Reservation Logo. 1904. Royal Ontario Museum.

What meanings did Igorot participants and producers accord to this form of labor and cultural performance, apart from the additional income it allowed them? All indications point to an active awareness on their part about the marketability of their culture and its objects. From the accounts collected by Afable from the descendants of these performers, it appears that their forbears perceived Americans (Bontok: *Malikanos*) to be “gullible” and willing to “buy anything offered [to] them for sale, like roughly-made spears and hastily-braided grass rings and bracelets that the makers learned to brand as ‘Igorot’ and hawk to their audiences” (Afable 2004, 462). Inang Kinalang, in her interview, reiterates and exemplifies this working perception and perspective: that the performers, like her, made extra money “by weaving bamboo rings. We fooled the Americans, telling them they were ethnic wedding rings. They bought a lot” (Borja-Mamaril and Lim 2000, 114). Inang Kinalang’s account (and those of the forbears of Afable’s respondents) highlight various processes at work with the cultural performances at the Fair. First, as performers becoming producers, the Igorot participants were actively seeking supplemental incomes, given how underpaid they were, and knew that, in this regard, their popularity could be turned into a comparative advantage. Second, these performers were proactively changing and shifting notions of “traditional Igorot culture” so as to be marketable, as performers and producers, to American observers and consumers, thus obviating their otherwise circumscribed circumstances. And finally, the Igorot performers were agentively negotiating with colonial representations and their own, to redraw the very terms for their participation in these cultural performances.

The precedent for paid performances of Philippine “savagery” was set by the 1887 colonial exposition in Madrid, in which payment depended upon the amount of civilization attained (measured through conversion to Christianity). Payment orders from the Archivo Histórico Nacional in Madrid show how performers from the Cordillera were compensated for their labor (Table 2).¹⁵

Table 2. Monthly salary of participants in the *Ranchería Igorrote* at the 1887 *Exposición General de las Islas Filipinas* in Madrid.

Participant (Name)	Ethnicity	Monthly Salary
Calibag	Tinguian	25 pesetas
De Manabo	From Abra	25 pesetas
Asang	From Abra	25 pesetas
Purganan	Tinguian from Abra	25 pesetas
Gumadang	Probably Bontok, from Lepanto	25 pesetas
Laolao	Bontok from Banao	25 pesetas
Oit Tavit	Bontok from Bontoc	25 pesetas
Sumaden	Bontok	25 pesetas
Ismael Alzate y Astudillo	Tinguian	60 pesetas

Annotations for these payment orders indicate that the participants were to be paid before, during, and after, their stay in Madrid, aside from provisions for food and health care. The compensation scheme comprehends these exposition performances as a form of waged labor.¹⁶ But similar to the visual and ideological differences between Christian and non-Christian Filipinos which operated throughout the exposition, the salaries paid to the participants depended on whether or not they were perceived as Christian, and thereby civilized. Hence, the female weavers and cigar rollers, as well as Ismael Alzate, were paid sixty pesetas whereas the Chamorros, Igorots, Negrito, Carolinians, and Moros were paid twenty-five pesetas. Wage distribution proceeded from the interstices of race and religion. Based on the payment orders for this colonial exposition, Christian Visayan women were paid more than twice that of the male participants in the *Ranchería Igorrote*. Ismael Alzate’s salary tells the same story. Although he could be considered as “savage” due to his ethnolinguistic background, his cooperation with Spanish officials, conversion to Catholicism, and his fluency in Spanish marked him, for the exhibit organizers, as civilized. The porous nature of these classificatory systems is evidenced in the photographs for the 1887 colonial exposition in which participants, such as Purganan (of the *Ranchería Igorrote*) could move back and forth



Figure 5. Portrait of Purganan, a participant of the *Ranchería Igorrote*. Fernando Debás Pujant. Madrid, 1887. Museo Nacional de Antropología.

between the categories of savage and civilized through dress and body language (Figures 5 and 6). Such performances of cultural cross-dressing and the “savage body” intermingling with the ephemera of the “modern” and “civilized” world would be further elaborated on, and sensationalized, in the Igorot shows of the American empire.

As we have seen, a compensation scheme for civilizational attainment also underwrote the participation of colonial subjects in the 1904 World’s Fair. Igorot performers received per diem in the amount of eleven cents whereas other performers deemed as semi-civilized (such as the participants of the Moro Villages) or fully-civilized (performers belonging to the Visayan Village) were paid fourteen cents (*Report of the Philippine Exposition Board* 1904, 51). Those



Figure 6. Portrait of Purganan in western clothing. Manuel Antón. 1887. Museo Nacional de Anthropología.

working as “educators,” such as the *pensionados*, were given per diem in the amount of twenty-two cents. These *pensionados*, young students (mostly from elite families) selected for formal education in the United States (with the requirement of returning to the Philippines after their studies), although not part of the human exhibits, were crucial to the Philippine exposition as they represented the peak of civilization that could be attained through American tutelary colonialism. These reward systems relating specifically to race and civilization were first developed during the Spanish colonial period and were later expanded, during the American empire, to include western education as a marker of civilization for object peoples. Apart from the hierarchical discrepancies in the compensation scheme/s predicated on race and civilizational attainments, larger questions regarding agency, exploitation, and the disruption of indigenous economies by the market economy loom large.

Igorot performers during and after the 1904 World’s Fair entered into contracts with the state and later with private companies that indicated their salaries and the responsibilities of their employers for their welfare. For example, a 1905 contract between Richard Schneidewind and two Bontoks named Ugaog and Felingao, stipulates for Schneidewind to pay Felingao “the sum of ten Pesos, Philippines Currency, or its equivalent in United States Currency, per month for each month rendered.”¹⁷ In addition, Schneidewind was to pay for the travel expenses from the Philippines to the U.S. and back, “and to furnish quarters and subsistence [for them] while in the United States.” Schneidewind included a non-compete clause which barred the Igorot performers from engaging “with any other firm or persons in the United States during the term of this contract,” a sign of the competitive nature of these newly established Igorot touring companies and of the desires for American entrepreneurs to undercut the FEC’s pricing and to exploit the rising popularity of Igorot shows.

While the entirety of each contract is printed, with blank spaces for filling in names and dates, these particular contracts bore a post-facto, handwritten stipulation for Schneidewind to remit half of Ugaog and Felingao’s salaries to their spouses back home (figures 7a and 7b). It is debatable whether or not these performers fully understood what they were signing, given the low literacy rates in Bontoc and the oral nature of indigenous knowledge systems, but these additions to the contract, in Schneidewind’s handwriting, suggest some sense of awareness on the contractuals’ part that they were to be compensated for their labor of cultural performance. That half of their wages were to be remitted back to the *ili* also indicate their negotiation of the terms of their participation and how these performers were interpreting their labor, not only within colonial market economies, but also in relation to local notions of prestige and betterment. To reiterate, scholarship pertaining to the World’s Fairs and Igorot cultural shows tend to focus specifically on the metropolitan agents of empire and ignore what meanings performers gave to their dis/placements in them, and how their local belief systems and traditions were accordingly refunctioned for these new contexts of situatedness.

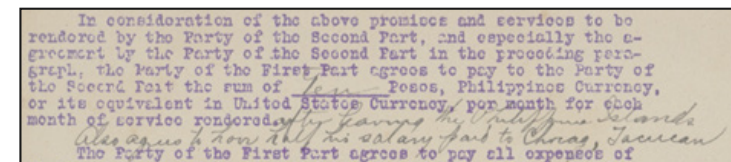


Figure 7a. Detail of Felingao’s contract with a handwritten addendum requesting to have half his pay sent home. University of Michigan, Bentley Historical Library.

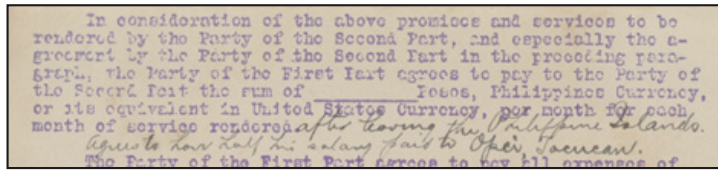


Figure 7b. Detail of Ugaog's contract with a handwritten addendum requesting to have half his pay sent home. University of Michigan, Bentley Historical Library.

A move must be made by new studies to consider indigenous perspectives and world-making processes to offset the dominance of outsider perspectives over the writing of Cordilleran histories. Methodologically, in the case of the cultural performances, and as seen in Afable's research on them, oral narratives as well as local myths and stories, and value systems may enable new studies to highlight the meanings and motivations by which the Igorot performers abided. In Bontok myths, for example, protagonists leave and travel to bring back forms of prestige as well as to better the conditions of their families and villages. The trope of travel in the Lumawig myth-cycle has Lumawig, a god, travelling throughout Mountain Province to improve the lives of the Bontok. In an archetypal flood story, Lumawig finds two human beings trapped on Mount Pokis due to the floods caused by his sons. Lumawig travels to Mount Kalawitan to bestow the gift of fire upon these two human beings, and to give them the gift of continuous life. In the same myth cycle, he then creates the peoples of various *ili* such as Bontoc, Mainit, and Samoki, and rewards them their crafts: for Mainit it is the selling of salt, Samoki is given the gift of pottery, and Bontoc plants and trades rice (Seidenadel 1907, 485-490). The association of specific crafts with specific *ili* suggests how Bontok peoples required continuous trade to ensure the stability of their home villages. Seen through the lens of attaining personal prestige as well as the betterment of their village homes, the willingness of Igorot cultural performers to travel across oceans and continents goes beyond the quest for adventure, an expansiveness of purpose reinforced by what these performers brought back home with them in addition to their earnings. Afable notes that these performers brought back "coins in small white canvas bags, beads which they divided among the female family members ... A few brought back photographs and medals from their adventures" (Afable 2004, 462). The beads, called *minalika* ("in the American way"), were easily translated into local forms of adornment that mark status for the individual, her family, and belonged to the *akon*, or family heirlooms that could never be sold" (Botengan 1967, 13).

By incorporating money as well as material objects into indigenous forms of prestige and social betterment, these performers

showed a working awareness of the stipulations of their contracts and their employers' requirements, including of the various networks of recourse for them for attaining justice, if and when aggrieved. To illustrate, in establishing the Igorot Exhibit Company, Hunt attempted to bypass government regulations regarding the display of Igorots in the United States, and to ignore demands to repatriate the Igorots back to the Philippines. To avoid government regulations, he moved his performers from place to place every couple of days. He began stealing the tips they earned from dancing, and selling souvenirs. To cut costs, he provided inadequate housing, and would even withhold their salaries. In response to their employer's exploitative practices, the Bontok performers filed complaints with the police in New Orleans, Tennessee, and Chicago, Illinois in 1906. In the Chicago case, Julio Balinag, Katonan, Dalasan, Minidol, Pomecda, Fomeloey, and Dengalan, won and were awarded compensation for Hunt's thievery (Afable 2004, 464-65).¹⁸ From a 5 September 1906 article in *The Paducah Evening Sun*, "Igorrotes say Hunt Robs Them," we learn that Dengay and Feloa won in their Tennessee suit against Hunt, resulting in his conviction for larceny, and his sentencing to eleven months in prison. For Schneidewind's performance troupe, as a consequence of their mistreatment during their time in Ghent for the 1913 Universal Exposition and, as Schneidewind turned a deaf ear to their pleas to be allowed to go back home, the performers and interpreters (Ellis Tongai and James Amok) wrote a letter to President Woodrow Wilson seeking his help on the matter of their repatriation. In this letter, Tongai and Amok reveal the problems performers faced, including the non-payment of their wages and the death of nine members due to exposure.

As with the complainants in the court cases against Hunt, Schneidewind's Igorot performers, in highlighting the non-payment of their salaries, were drawing a direct connection between their performances and rights as laborers. Their studied recourse to the law and government authorities and agencies in the United States and in Europe shows that these Igorot performers were strategizing to optimize whatever justice or amelioration could be attained from them. For instance, in the letter to President Wilson, the pleaders report the lack of help from the American Consul in Ghent in securing funds for their return home or in ensuring that they receive the payments owed them (Afable 2004, 465-66; "Aid for Starving Filipinos" 1913). With the embarrassments caused by the Hunt trials and the deaths in Ghent, which made national and international news, these Igorot performers were repatriated back home in December 1913. By March 1914, Bill No. 196 was passed to regulate the movement of Igorot performers, if not ban altogether their participation in travelling cultural exhibitions overseas.

Conclusion: Igorot Performance as Interstices of Global, National, and Regional Histories

Even as early as the 1887 Colonial Exposition in Madrid, emergent Filipino elites critiqued and protested the deployment of Igorot bodies to represent the Philippine archipelago's populace (Kalaw 1930, 222-225). Certain *ilustrados*, in both the Spanish and American colonial contexts, excluded the Igorot from the national community they were imagining into existence. The *pensionados* (Filipinos funded to study in the United States) were vehemently opposed to the Igorot as the iconic image for Filipinoness, and the nationalist newspaper *El Renacimiento* argued against the exhibition of Aetas, Igorots, and Moros as misrepresentations of the actual state of Filipino civility (Kramer 2006, 248-250). The movement and circulation of Igorot performers across imperial metropolises provoked mixed responses even among American colonial proconsuls. While some, like Dean Worcester, Secretary of the Interior in the Philippines, actively ensured the proliferation of images of Igorot "savagery" in popular media and entertainment such as travelling shows, articles in the *National Geographic*, documentary films, postcards, etc. to justify American colonization of the archipelago, others, like Lieutenant-Governor John Early, worked energetically within the Philippine colonial government to ban such shows and deter these popular representations. Both responses commonly silenced performers' voices, especially as they, aware of the risks involved, continued to enter contracts with Hunt and Scheidewind. Labelled by other Bontok people as "Nikimalika" for going to America (*Malika*) to participate in these travelling shows (Afable 2000, 20-21), and with their perceived savagery and exclusion from notions of Filipinoness being developed by emergent elites, these performers' sentiments were not considered in the process of writing and passing Philippine Commission Bill No. 196. This act was approved at a significant juncture of American colonial rule in the Philippines, under Governor-General Francis Burton Harrison's call to Filipinize the "White Man's Burden" in 1913, through to the push to incorporate western-educated, Christian, male, lowland Filipinos within American colonial governance (Rodriguez 2010, 20). In his advocacy for increased participation of Filipinos in the project and processes of tutelary colonialism, a discourse deployed by the American government to justify their continued colonial rule, Harrison envisioned that the "uncivilized" (non-Christian) tribes of the Philippines would look to these local Christian politicians and government functionaries as models for civility and would be thereby assimilated into American civilization.

In the Philippine Commission records, two Filipino politicians and members of the commission actively shaped the titling of the

bill and editing of its language. Vicente Ilustre, a member of the Commission from Quiapo, Manila, sought and succeeded to replace the designation "non-Christian" with the phrase "uncivilized person, or member of any non-Christian tribe" (Philippine Commission 1915, 792-93). Native Philippine Commission members ostensibly worked from the optics of civility operative within the colonial government, colluding in the marking of identities based on the parameters of civilized and uncivilized, to ensure their own identification as the former, and in turn be entitled to the prerogative to govern those categorized as the latter. Rafael Palma, another native Philippine Commission member from Manila, edited the title of the bill as follows:

An Act extending the provision of Act Numbered Twenty-three hundred to the territory inhabited by Moros or other non-Christian tribes and penalizing the taking away of any uncivilized person or member of any non-Christian tribe for the purpose of exploiting or exhibiting such person as a spectacle, and for other purposes (Philippine Commission 1915, 792-93).

The titling expresses a purposeful move to expand the power of the Filipinized Philippine Commission to the special Moro and Mountain provinces. The changes to the bill made by these two native politicians reveal the anxieties concerning the widespread popularity of Igorot imagery in the United States and its effects on their own standing or position within the new colonial order. Passed after the embarrassing episodes of the death of Igorot performers in Ghent, the publicized cry for help to the American press and president, and the Igorot performers' victories in the American courts against Truman Hunt, this bill registers a history of cultural performances as colonial *labor*. Such performers not only redefined "savage" culture within the United States but also made it possible for their performances, and the wages they earned from them, to serve as a means of cultivating status and prestige back home, thus helping to institute a system of exchange relationships for transacting with fair organizers and cultural entrepreneurs about their own rights and interests.

Earlier understandings of World's Fairs and Colonial Expositions, such as those described in my introduction, conspicuously ignore the movements and motivations of colonized peoples who labored as performers in the metropolises. Issues concerning the Igorot shows, for example, while considered, are also discounted, without contextualizing them in Cordilleran history in relation to the emerging Philippine cultural and political elites. Even as advanced a study as Paul Kramer's monograph on American imperialism leaves much to be desired in this respect. He confines his discussion of the 1904 World's

Fair to an analysis of racial discourse, focused on the purposes of the Philippine exhibitionary space as envisioned by American organizers, and the reactions of *pensionados* studying in the United States and educated, Christian Filipinos to the various non-Christian village exhibits. Although he examines colonial race-making as a dynamic process in which the boundaries of race and civility were negotiated by colonial officials and educated Filipinos, and thus intriguingly explores “the Philippine exhibit at St. Louis at the tense intersection of metropolitan and colonial histories...” (Kramer 2006, 230), he pays no attention to how the Igorot performers viewed their positioning within the Philippine exhibit, and their own negotiations concerning their place and performances of it within the exhibitionary complex, all told. Something as particular as how these performances worked with the collected and curated materials for the ethnological exhibits would have made for a more multi-vocal analysis here (these cultural performers created works that were sold as souvenirs to fairgoers; they themselves became cultural entrepreneurs of a sort).

Works like Kramer’s, while important to understanding the ways in which empires translated their visions into a visual and exhibitionary discourse that allowed citizens to participate in the colonial project, ignore how colonial cultural performers resituated (or displaced) within these networks negotiate such spaces as cultural and political agents, producing “counter-colonial” scenarios and critiques that “were neither oppositional nor accommodating” (Imada 2012, 17-18). In other words, the experience of these performers can, if taken seriously and examined in an expansive way, highlight the ambiguities of colonialism as well as recent efforts to move beyond the binaries of colonizer and colonized, and to surface the more intersectional aspects of empire and the variegated responses to it.

END NOTES

1. There has been a contemporary push to consider cultural performances through the lens of performers navigating colonial hegemony and asserting their own interpretations of culture, including cultural commodification. See McNenly (2012) and Imada (2012).
2. Retiro Park’s significance as a site may be seen in a collection of articles written about the exposition in the newspaper *El Globo* which notes the centrality of this park as a symbol of modernity in its prologue, contrasting the location as modern with the Asian civilisations (Chinese, Indian, and Filipino) dubbed “civilizaciones viejas y sacras” (old and sacred civilizations). This prologue also locates Spain as the center of modernity based on discourses of racial development; see Castelar (1887, 5-11).

3. In this context, “Indonesian race” refers to Igorot and is part of the language of wave migration theory proposed by Ferdinand Blumentritt and later expanded upon and promoted by Henry Otley Beyer.
4. Author’s translation.
5. In charge of the Exposition, among other related ideological projects, was Víctor Balaguer i Cirera (1924-1901), a Catalan writer and politician who held the ministerial position in the Ministerio de Ultramar, an office established in 1863 to centralize the management of Spanish colonial dominions in a single agency. For more on the Spanish empire and the 1887 colonial exposition, see Morillo-Alicea (2005, 25-53); and Sánchez Gómez (2003).
6. I use “Bontok” to refer to the ethnolinguistic group, and “Bontoc” to refer to the capital of the contemporary Mountain Province.
7. Newspaper Articles, 1905-1913, Box 1, Oversize Folder 2, Richard Schneidewind Papers 1899-1914, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.
8. For a critical discussion of the usage of the term “Orient” in advertisements found in women’s journals during this period and beyond, see Takagi (2003, 303-319).
9. For the representations of the Philippines after the Spanish-American War and during the Philippine-American War, see Halili, Jr. (2006), especially his chapter “Media Play: The Filipino through the Eyes of the Imperialist’s Caricature”).
10. This tagline to promote Igorot Shows was deployed continuously (beginning with the Louisiana Purchase Exposition), and pervaded the promotional material for Richard Schneidewind’s private company that travelled around the United States and Europe. Newspaper Articles, 1905-1913, Box 1, Oversize Folder 2, Richard Schneidewind Papers 1899-1914, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.
11. See newspaper articles and pamphlets, Richard Schneidewind Papers 1899-1914, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.
12. While beyond the scope of this discussion, there is a certain dietetics/culinary ethics at play here: for American audiences the issue of dog-eating, and for the Igorot performers eating dogmeat outside the confines of actual ritualized feasting associated with funerals or weddings. Beyond Filipino-American studies work which highlights how the dog-eating stereotypes are rooted within these performances at the 1904 World’s Fair, there has been little work on the history of dog-eating within the Cordillera and the colonial representations of it.
13. In exposition texts, Aetas are often referred to as Negritos, a Spanish term which refers to their darker skin tone. Owing to these racialist discourses on the black “other,” Aetas were treated

- as less than human, and even considered at times as “the missing link” in evolutionary chains; see Breitbart (1997, 56-58).
14. For a discussion of the objects from the Philippine Exposition now on deposit at the Royal Ontario Museum, see McElhinny (2000, 223-242).
 15. Archivo Histórico Nacional, Ultramar, leg. 5 nu. 617.
 16. Igorot shows are also key sites of labor; see Afable’s “Journeys from Bontoc to the Western Fairs” (2004) on Igorot shows in the context of American imperialism. In this analysis, Afable details contestations pertaining to payment of the performers’ wages and how certain Igorots begin to make a living collaborating in knowledge production and translation for these shows (such that a local term develops to describe people who would leave for the U.S. to perform these forms of labor and occasionally return: *nikimalika*).
 17. Contracts and licenses, 1905, 1907, Richard Schneidewind Papers 1899-1914, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan. Strangely, the amount for Ugaog’s compensation is not indicated.
 18. See also Prentice (2014) for her account of the Chicago trial where she provides quotations from the court transcripts.

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