Igorot Diaspora Youth and Indigenous Diasporic De-centering of the Nation-State

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ABSTRACT

What is the relationship between an indigenous diaspora consciousness and the nation-state? Using primary qualitative data composed of life histories of Igorot youth abroad, I argue in this article that an indigenous diaspora consciousness de-centers the nation-state in three dimensions: in the imagination of homeland, in the building of community, and in the construction of identity. This de-centering occurs in and through intergenerational impartation, particularly in the inheritance of homeland histories, in the activities and relations of communities, and in the discourses of indigenous diaspora identity. This article illustrates that the agency of the members of the Igorot diaspora youth is integral to the continued building and maintenance of this group's indigenous diaspora consciousness.

Keywords: Indigenous diaspora, diaspora consciousness, Igorot youth, Filipino diaspora, diaspora identity

Diaspora Consciousness and the Nation-State

Theoretically, the relationship between the concepts of diaspora consciousness and the nation-state is deeply fractured. Globalization has threatened the primacy of the nation-state by cultivating the acceptance of multiple identities beyond a singular national attachment (Cohen 1996). Diasporas, thus, can unsettle the stability of the nation-state's narrative, particularly when its own narrativization (through a diaspora consciousness) puts forth an alternative, specific story for its members that may be in tension with the monolithic myths of the nation-state.

Diasporic consciousness is defined by Clifford (2007) as "the search for somewhere to belong that is outside the imagined community of the

nation-state" (10). Essentially, the building of a diaspora consciousness is integral to the process of diasporization, where this diaspora consciousness is built around the motivations for leaving and the desire to return. It is a consciousness that migrant workers construct (and become part of) as they go overseas, thereby actualizing the diaspora (Aguilar 2015). In this way, diasporic consciousness is fundamentally political (Khan 2007), insofar as it is a rumination (and oftentimes, critique) of the diasporic group's positionality vis-à-vis the nation-state.

Other perspectives, however, assert that the phenomenon of diaspora consciousness can still tangentially reinforce the nation-state. Basch, Schiller, and Blanc (2005) assert that nation-states of origin may still strive to include their migrants abroad in their nation-building, thus reinforcing the nation-state. Biswas (2002) points out the dilemma in the logic of diasporic identities supposedly splintering the nation-state. She asserts that these identities are always set in contrast to the idealized national myth, thereby ironically upholding and reifying that which it wishes to dismantle.

The case of an indigenous diaspora further complicates this discourse. By virtue of their indigeneity, members of this diaspora have largely already been marginalized by national mythmaking (Pearcey 2015), in as much as national structures have been imposed on their indigenous ways of life (Ivison 2000). And yet, Indigenous Peoples in diaspora also experience the conscious inclinations towards "home" and the feelings of exile that animate the indigenous experience (Clifford 2007).

What then is the relationship between an indigenous diaspora consciousness and the nation-state? I argue that an indigenous diaspora consciousness de-centers the nation-state in three dimensions: in the imagination of homeland, in the building of community, and in the construction of identity. These dimensions correspond to three broad facets of diaspora, with a focus on the cumulative role that these facets play in the construction of an indigenous diaspora consciousness. These dimensions are: connection to the homeland, connection to other diasporic communities through organizational activities, and a maintained diasporic identity (Sheffer 2003). Where, theoretically, diasporic narratives center the nation-state in these dimensions[1], the indigenous diaspora consciousness critiques, upends, and replaces the nation-state with uniquely indigenous imaginations of homeland, community, and identity.

Crucially, this de-centering finds its sustenance in the youth of the diaspora. A diaspora consciousness that de-centers the nation-state can only derive its power from the members of the diaspora; it is internally and intimately constructed by the members of the community and as such, its continuity and longevity relies on inter-generational inheritance and cultivation. It is imperative, therefore, to examine this

indigenous diaspora consciousness from the perspective of those who are raised within its narratives.

This argument is illustrated in this article using the specific empirical case of the Igorot diaspora and its youth. First, I situate the Igorot diaspora within the broader Filipino diaspora, in order to establish the context for the differences between indigenous and nation-state narratives. Second, I explore the construction of the homeland for indigenous youth, and the intergenerational processes that occur in this construction. Third, I discuss the community in which intergenerational impartation builds the indigenous diaspora consciousness in practice. Lastly, I examine the discourses that animate these intergenerational interactions, culminating in an emphasis on the agency and choices of indigenous diaspora youth.

The Igorot Diaspora vis-a-vıs the National Story

The history of Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines is one of differentiation (Erni, n.d.). In the Northern Cordillera region, Spanish efforts and tactics of colonization created divides along the lines of ethnicity and religion that highlighted the separation of the "Christianized and Hispanized" lowland Filipinos versus the non-Christianized and non-Hispanized Igorots in the highlands. Eventually, this resulted in a change of highlander-lowlander relations; cultural differences became much starker, and discrimination against the highland Igorots began. In the burgeoning colonial national discourse, Igorots were thus not included in the grand Christian and Hispanic narrative of the Spanish Philippines (Finin 2005).

It was, however, during the twilight years of the Spanish period in the Philippines that the Igorots were presented to the world during the 1887 Madrid Exposition. On April 1, 1887, a group of Igorots were brought out of the Philippines on the steamship Santo Domingo to fill the Rancheria de los Igorrotes in the Madrid Exposition. Billed as living exhibits of the Philippines, they were made to show off their tattoos, build Igorot houses, and play their gongs while dancing around a "sacrificial" pig provided by the Exposition's Executive Committee (Scott 1987). In a letter to his friend, Ferdinand Blumentritt, dated November 22, 1886, when the Exposition was being advertised, future national hero of the Philippines, Dr. Jose Rizal wrote "Do not bother yourself about the Exposition of the Philippines in Madrid. From what I understand, and what the Spanish newspapers say, it's no Exposition of the Philippines at all but only of the Igorots, who will play music, do their cooking, and sing and dance" (Scott 1974, 276). While he wrote several scathing letters against the exhibit, Rizal also simultaneously implied that the Igorots were less than his conception of the "Filipino",

effectively planting the seed for the misconception of the Igorot as other that still exists today.

Following the Spanish period, the Americans were more successful in bringing the people of the Cordillera under the rule of the central colonial government. However, Cordilleran resistance still continued; some groups migrated from their settlements to escape government policies, while others opposed infrastructure and full-scale mining because of how these would open their areas to the invaders (Florendo 1994). Education was one of the defining features of American governance in the Cordillera, and this was often coupled with Christianity, as missionaries also acted as teachers (Medina 2004). Most notably, the Philippine Commission established the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes in October 1901 under the Department of Interior in order to govern those peoples that the Americans deemed "uncivilized" (Finin 2005).

Three years later, Dr. Truman Hunt – who had become the Lieutenant Governor of Bontoc Province – was appointed as officer in charge of the "Igorrote Village" at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair (Prentice 2014). This particular event was an extravagant effort by the United States to assert and justify its imperialist superiority under the guise of appreciation of cultures from around the world. The exhibition juxtaposed the "savage" colonies with civilized America. In many ways, this popular display of the Igorots angered and dismayed Filipino nationalists, who then tried to distance the notion of "Filipino" from the "savage" and "uncivilized" image of the Igorots, as this might be used by the Americans as a justification to undermine Filipino efforts for independence and self-governance (Afable 1995). This sentiment had lasting effects on the image of Igorots in the national discourse. An infamous example of such stereotyping came from Carlos P. Romulo's (1943) book, *Mother America: A Living Story of Democracy*, which stated that Igorots were not Filipinos. Romulo asserted that captions of photographs taken during the exhibition such as "Filipino Tribesman" misrepresented the Filipino nation (Palangchao 2016) because, for Romulo, Igorots are merely aboriginals and not the proper Filipinos.

For the rest of the Philippines, however, the first wave of large-scale migration that signaled the dispersal of the Filipino diaspora was beginning during the early 20th century. The first wave of large-scale migration was seen in the seafarers who manned trading ships, as well as sugarcane workers and their families who were recruited from the Ilocos Region beginning in 1906 to till plantations in Kalimantan and Hawaii (Bautista 2002). There were also families who were naturalized through their kin joining the United States military although these were still relatively few in number at that time (Laguatan 2011). In the 1920s, Filipinos also began going to the United States as agricultural and cannery workers (Guevarra 2016). This timeline shows that at around

the same period the first Filipino migrants arrived in Hawaii to work in the sugar plantations (1906), the Igorots were being exhibited in the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair in St. Louis, Missouri and brought on tours around the USA (Prentice 2014).

The second wave of Filipino migration was composed of professionals: doctors, nurses, engineers, and teachers who left the Philippines to find work in different parts of the world in the 1950s and 1960s (Bautista 2002). The post-World War II immigration restrictions imposed by the USA led Filipinos to migrate for work elsewhere notably to other regions in Asia. Filipinos worked in logging camps in Sabah and Sarawak and in the USA army bases in Vietnam, Thailand, and Guam (Center for Migrant Advocacy n.d.). In 1965, legislation like the Immigration Act allowed for the migration of professionals and Filipino healthcare workers made their way to the United States (Guevarra 2016). New immigration policies also allowed for family reunification, which led to a significant number of Filipino families moving to the USA. In the same decade, Filipinos were also migrating to Western Europe as domestic workers and nurses (Center for Migrant Advocacy n.d.). Igorots were not yet largely participating in the incipient labor migration flows during this time, although many current Igorot families in the USA are products of chain migration and immigration via family members who enlisted in the US military, a practice in which some Igorots participated after the war (Leo 2011).

In the Cordillera, substantial development of the Igorot identity took place during this period. At this time, educated Igorots (from American-established schools) began to advocate for the Igorot cause under the banner of Igorotism, "the advancement of highlanders' collective place in Philippine society", aiming to build a pan-Cordillera regional consciousness alongside a stronger identification with the Philippine nation (Finin 2005, 144). As such, the post-war Igorot generation was both highly ethnic and highly assimilationist in aspiration. Educated Igorots found ways to forward their cause in the community of the BIBAK (Benguet-Ifugao-Bontoc-Apayao-Kalinga) organization, a student organization established in Baguio City in 1950. Debates on Igorot identity took place from the local to the national level, as highland local politics had to confront growing Philippine nationalism emanating from Manila. In the 1960s, growing numbers of Igorots travelled to Manila for higher education and became politically active in the universities there (Finin 2005).

The 1970s were a turbulent time with marking the rise of Ferdinand Marcos, Sr. in the Philippines and the oil boom in the Middle East. The third wave of Filipino labor migration was mainly made up of male construction workers who were exported to the Middle East to fill their construction needs (Bautista 2002). By 1974, then-President Marcos, Sr. signed the 1974 Labor Code which officially formalized the

labor export policy of the Philippine state. While originally intended to be a temporary measure, the policy served to institutionalize the state's labor export policy through establishing the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) (Guevarra 2016).

In the Cordillera, fierce resistance reemerged during the Marcos Sr. dictatorship, such as in the successful struggle of the Kalinga communities against the building of the World Bank-funded Chico Dam project which would have inundated several villages, farms, and burial sites. The assertion of Igorot identity during this time was complex and varied. While the Manila-educated Igorots continued their activism in the nation's center, those who lived in the Cordillera joined resistance movements. However, because of their indigenous Igorot identity, many of these recruits still felt left out, cultivating only a very tenuous relationship with the broader nationalist resistance movements (Finin 2005).

However, not all Igorots were part of the resistance movements during the 1970s. It was also during this time that Igorots—due in part to having attained educational degrees—began to participate in the global migration of Filipinos enabled by the state's institutionalized labor export policy. Little by little, Igorot families began to settle in the United States (Botengan, Wandag, and Botengan Jr. 2010). Igorot nurses also migrated to the United Kingdom (UK), which was then being governed by the Labor Party's open immigration policy. In the words of Conchita Pooten, an Igorot nurse who migrated to the UK at the age of 18 in 1975, "I would submit that back then for most of us Filipino immigrants, sentiments that echo true in today's climate, migration was simply a logical response to the country's inability to generate employment" (Pooten 2013). Pooten (2013) also describes the Igorot migrants during this period as "the first batch of nurses, workers, immigrants that migrated from the Philippines in the 1970s, a decade which (I myself was part of) to the UK".

In the following decade, the market for male workers in the Middle East declined (1980s), and migration trends saw an increase of women leaving the Philippines to work as domestic helpers, nurses, and other related professions (Bautista 2002; Guevarra 2016). Back in the Cordillera, the 1980s saw the discourses of Igorot identity oriented towards the mobilization of democratic institutions for regional autonomy, that is, pushing for Cordillera autonomy on the grounds of cultural distinction. Being abroad (and largely unaffected by the discourse on regional autonomy), the "first batch" of Igorot migrants were now raising their children ("the second generation") in the 1980s. This second generation experienced differentiation and discrimination from their Filipino peers (who were also second-generation immigrants) because of their Igorot identity. Averil Pooten-Watan, daughter of the aforementioned Conchita Pooten, narrated an anecdote where "I later found out, from

my [Filipino] friend, that her [Filipino] grandmother had warned my friend not to 'trust' me because, according to her grandmother, I was an 'Igorot'" (2015). Growing up Igorot in the UK, however, had its consequences. Pooten-Watan described herself as "an Igorot that does not speak any Igorot or Filipino language". She attributed this to the fact that the UK in the 1980s was "a racially-oppressive time", where pointed comments from her teacher on her capability to speak English (at a time when she was bilingual) discouraged her from speaking Tagalog, Ilocano, or Kankanaey ever again (Pooten-Watan 2015).

In the USA during the same decade, some Igorots were already established residents notably in places like San Diego, California. Some of these were those who obtained passage to the USA by joining the US military and were stationed in San Diego. The rest are civilians who settled in the city. Seeing the need for Igorot families in the vicinity to socialize and help one another, Igorots Andy Ambuyog and James Ambasing started the organization BIBAK San Diego in 1981 in the same spirit of the BIBAK student organization that animated and sustained the Igorot movements in the 1950s in Baguio City (BIBAK San Diego n.d.). The BIBAK organizations in California eventually grew and inspired Igorots living on the East Coast of the US to establish their own organization. Thus, BIBAK Northeast was formally established in July 1989 (BIBAK Northeast n.d.). These are just two examples of the BIBAK and other Igorot organizations that were established during this decade around the world.

The broader Filipino diaspora was likewise growing during the 1980s-90s. As Gonzalez III (2012) puts it, "the Filipino diaspora started out as a drizzle in the 1980s and then turned into pouring rain in the 1990s". For the Igorot diaspora, this was seen in a continuation and increase of organizations and organizational activity in the diaspora, as well as a burgeoning consciousness of a collective identity as an Igorot diaspora. This was evident in the establishment of the Igorot Global Organization. The first formal organizational gathering of Igorots abroad was held in West Covina, California in 1995 titled the "Igorot Consultation". Recognizing the global scope of Igorot communities, the members thought about the creation of an umbrella organization for Igorot organizations worldwide. This project was initiated through the leadership of Mia Abeya during the second Igorot Consultation (then named the Igorot International Consultation) in 1997 (Botengan 2013). Abeya is a current resident of Maryland, USA, and is the granddaughter of Antero, one of the Igorot participants in the St. Louis World's Fair in 1904 who served as interpreter (Allen 2004; Dyte 2010). In 2000, nearly a hundred years after the exhibited Igorots beat their gongs in St. Louis, the Igorot Global Organization (IGO) was established through a resolution passed during the 3rd Igorot International Consultation in Baguio City, Philippines (Botengan 2013).

Thus, Igorot identity has developed and persisted both in the Cordillera, in the national Philippine discourse, and abroad in diaspora. The Spanish and American colonial periods saw the Igorots endure being portrayed as exhibits, non-Christian, non-Hispanic, and even being decidedly dismissed as "not Filipino" by the country's Filipino nationalists and statesmen. After the war, the Igorotism movement of the 1950s-60s was decidedly an effort to bring Igorot identity and issues to the level of national discourse. The Martial Law years saw Igorot identity once again being mobilized as resistance against the dictatorship, distinct from broader struggles across the nation. The autonomy movement in the 1980s opened the door to recognizing and institutionalizing Igorot identity although this avenue of formalization is continuously contested and has not yet been fully realized. In terms of migration, Igorots went abroad as part of the general migration flows that now make up the Philippine labor diaspora, and they continue to participate in this employment option. Currently, Igorot diaspora organizations such as the IGO, Igorot-UK, BIBAK Spain, BIBAK Ireland, BIBAK Switzerland, and many others, are active and have become avenues for generating a diaspora consciousness and for keeping communication among fellow Igorots in the diaspora (Longboan 2011; Tindaan 2020).

This brief history has shown that Igorot identity in the Philippines has persisted despite discrimination, differentiation, and colonizing agents like education and religion. For Igorots in the diaspora, they may be in contact with the broader Filipino diaspora, but their distance from the nation-state does not cultivate an imagined closeness or allegiance to the national narratives. Instead, the Igorot diaspora holds on to its history of differentiation, cultivating its own indigenous narratives and placing these as primary versus the secondary national myth. As Tindaan (2020) writes, "Igorots have come to perceive their lives as imbricated not only in a homeland but in a global network of variously located fellow Igorots" (483). Identity construction of Igorots takes place not just within the Cordillera Administrative Region, but also in their chosen places of settlement abroad.

Methodology

Using a qualitative methodology, this study draws from the life histories of five Igorot youth in diaspora, each portraying a unique case of migration. "Youth" was classified as being 18-30 years old. The study did not use citizenship as a defining factor. Rather, the participating youth were selected as they were identified to be Igorot on the basis of lineage which means that one or both parents are from the Cordillera. Five life histories were collected and these reflect a variety of diasporic experiences and locations.

The participants of the study were five Igorot youth contacted through personal messages and a Facebook group called Project Hawaii, a group created for the 12th International Igorot Consultation (IIC) in Hawaii and the first IIC to be organized by the second generation of Igorot migrants abroad. Five people responded and were given the following pseudonyms: 4 females (Sheryl, 19; Marjorie, 22; Nina, 26; Monica, 29) and 1 male (Jerry, 29). They reside in Canada and the United States of America. All of them trace their roots to the Cordillera, specifically to the provinces of Benguet, Kalinga, Ifugao and Mountain Province. While their ages were not that far apart at the time of data-gathering, they were at different life stages: Sheryl was an undergraduate student, Marjorie and Nina were both contemplating further studies, Jerry was employed, and Monica had started a family with her partner while practicing her creative arts. These different life stages contributed to their insights about identity and culture, particularly in how they related to their social context and communities.

The participants reflect a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Sheryl and Jerry both have parents from only one province in the Cordillera which are Mountain Province and Benguet, respectively. Nina's parents are from two Cordillera provinces which are Benguet (on her mother's side) and Kalinga (on her father's side). Monica has another Filipino ethnicity (Ilocano) on her father's side, while her mother is from Benguet. Marjorie is biracial. She is Ifugao on her mother's side and Caucasian on her father's side.

The life histories of the Igorot youth were obtained through four interviews which I conducted through video calls. Each interview was done around a week after the previous interview, lasted an average of 1 hour to 1 hour and 30 minutes, and were recorded on both video and audio. The interviews were conducted with the five participants from January 31 to March 18, 2019 and numbered 20 in total. My knowledge and position as an Igorot youth proved to be an advantage over the course of data-gathering in terms of building rapport with the respondents, understanding certain aspects of Igorot culture, and speaking a familiar language in the interviews.

I compiled all transcripts to create the life history cases for each participant, resulting in five life histories. In analyzing these life histories, I utilized the neo-positivist method (Miller 1999). The life history of the participants was first sorted according to certain concepts that exist in both indigenous and diaspora studies: homeland, community, and identity (Sheffer 2003; Clifford 2007). After sorting, the next step for analyzing these life histories is what Miller (1999) calls "validation" which asks "Does the material collected on a given topic coincide with what one would anticipate from existing theory?" In other words, I analyzed these life histories to see if the participants' experiences validated the propositions laid out by diaspora studies

and indigenous studies. In the cases where their experiences deviated, I employed the grounded theory method of analyzing life histories, particularly in terms of "generating or reformulating concepts" (Miller 1999). An example of this is Nina's explanation of "source-land", that adds to or reformulates Hall's concept of "homeland". I discuss Nina's idea of source-land in succeeding sections.

This paper therefore has unique empirical, methodological, and theoretical contributions to existing literature. Empirically, as an analysis of the obtained primary data, the following sections explore three facets of an indigenous diaspora consciousness and their tensions with the Philippine nation-state, uniquely grounded in the perspectives of Igorot diaspora youth. Methodologically, the use of life history as method and the combination of both neopositivist and grounded theory analyses allows for a theory and concept-guided view of how Igorot youth are de-centering the nation-state in the formation of their diasporic identity; but it also allows for deviations from this framework, and the possible generation of new ideas about being Igorot youth abroad.

Theoretically, this paper lies at the intersection of indigenous studies and diaspora studies. By drawing from the works of cultural theorists like Stuart Hall, and the conceptual frames of James Clifford and Gabriel Sheffer, the study's analysis thus emphasizes the impartation of this indigenous diaspora consciousness. However, the unique empirical case of the Igorot diaspora challenges the boundaries of these theories. Stuart Hall's body of work on cultural identity in diaspora was primarily based on his experiences as a minority in the United Kingdom, but it largely lacks an explicit focus on indigeneity. Gabriel Sheffer is chosen here as the main anchor of diaspora studies as he explores ethno-national diasporas in his seminal work on diaspora politics, but he likewise does not fully explore indigenous diasporas (Sheffer 2003). Conversely, James Clifford, who does explicitly theorize the intersections between indigeneity and diaspora (Clifford 2007), primarily pulls from cases where Indigenous Peoples are dispersed from their homeland but are still geographically located in the same country; thus, Clifford's work leaves out the possible transnational character of an indigenous diaspora.

While these conceptual frames are useful for the initial conceptualization and guidance of the analysis, the empirical case of the Igorot diaspora offers something new. The argument put forth here is that the indigenous diaspora consciousness de-centers the nation-state; and this de-centering occurs in intergenerational impartation, where the youth interact with uniquely indigenous histories of the homeland, practices of community, and discourses of identity handed down to them by older Igorot generations in the diaspora. In the succeeding

sections, I will engage in a detailed discussion of this decentering process with the use of three central themes namely: Indigenous Homelands and Hidden Histories, Indigenous Diaspora Communities Abroad and Diaspora Discourses on Indigenous Identity. Each theme is elaborated by several specific sections that illustrate how each theme manifests in the Igorot diasporic community based on the experiences of the participants.

Indigenous Homelands and Hidden Histories

Determining the Homeland

To develop my argument that indigenous diaspora consciousness de-centers the nation-state, I first present how this happens through diasporic Igorot youth's imaginations, histories, and reconstructions of the homeland. On tying ethnicity to a certain place, much like diasporic and indigenous identity (Clifford 2007; Sheffer 2003), Hall (1997) writes: "ethnicity is located in a place, in a specific history. It could not speak except out of a place, out of those histories. It is located in relation to a whole set of notions about territory, about where is home and where is overseas, what is close to us and what is far away" (175). For Igorot youth, their identity as indigenous is linked to provinces in the Cordillera, even though all of them have spent most of their lives away from these places.

Before these youth could even discern their identity as Igorot and contemplate on the nuances of this identity, the very first condition given to them is where their parents are from. Sheryl's mother is from Sagada, and her father is from Besao, both from the Mountain Province. Nina's mother is from Kapangan, Benguet, and her father is from Kalinga, but both are Kankanaey. Marjorie's mother is from Kiangan, Ifugao, and her father is from California. Jerry's mother is from Batan, and his father is from Bokod, both from Benguet. Monica's mother is from Mankayan, Benguet, and her father is from Narvacan, Ilocos Sur. Much of what the participants know of these places is thus tied to what their parents know and have experienced in these places. And yet, the youth claim these places as home, despite the fact that they have never — and in all likelihood, will never — experience these places in the same way that their parents did.

Sheryl describes Besao and Sagada as "the places where I'm from". This sentiment is also echoed by Jerry, who stated, "I'm from Benguet. My parents are from Bokod. I grew up in La Trinidad!"; and Monica, who said, "When I think of the indigenous Igorot homeland... This is where I'm from". It is worth noting that these three were born in the Cordillera, and thus have a preexisting experience (no matter how vaguely remembered) of the place.

For Marjorie and Nina, however, the distance is greater. While they have a claim and recognition of these places, both feel that their story of being born and raised abroad warrants more of a separation. This is not an outright rejection of the places where their parents are from; rather, they are honoring their own experience of being born and raised abroad, while simultaneously recognizing their family's origins and experiences, and keeping that connection to the Cordillera.

Despite these participants' physical distance from these places, their sentiments still echo indigenous views of the village or *ili*. While different Igorot languages have different names for these views, the similar experiences and sentiments of these Igorot youth from different places in the Cordillera region mobilize indigenous understandings such as the ili being, for example, *ebonatan/ekanakan* ("where their family, relatives and clan lived and multiplied") and *panudian/pantaulian* ("where they will always come back to") (Adonis and Couch 2018, 62).

These Igorot youths' local and indigenous views of their places of origin immediately raise a counter to the usual conceptualization of homeland in diaspora studies, which usually speaks to the nation-state as a whole and its instrumentalities, particularly as diasporas are often mobilized or reached out to by the national governments of their country of origin (Gamlen 2014; Waldinger and Shams 2023). Identifying these indigenous places of origin, however, is just the first step.

For Hall (1997), "the homeland is not waiting back there for new ethnics to rediscover it. There is a past to be learned about, but the past is now seen, and has to be grasped as a history, as something to be told" (186). Although they may be apart from the homeland, these Igorot youth actively want to know more about these places, even while they are physically distant, and they have different ways of articulating what "homeland" is and where these places are.

For these indigenous youth, their sense of homeland is of the indigenous Igorot homeland. According to Clifford (2007), "for all who identify as 'native', 'tribal', or 'Indigenous', a feeling of connectedness to a homeland and to kin, a feeling of grounded peoplehood, is basic" (10). In a broader perspective, this sentiment also immediately narrows down their perception of what the "homeland" is; it is not the Philippines as a whole, but the Cordillera. This particular perception of the homeland lends specificity to the "histories" that these youth are reaching for.

Both Jerry and Sheryl think of the indigenous Igorot homeland as "all the provinces: Benguet, Ifugao, Bontok (Mt. Province), Apayao, and Kalinga". For Marjorie, the picture is more personal pertaining to: the picturesque rice terraces of Ifugao, the town of Kiangan and the street her mother lived on, and the church that her mother and brother were both baptized in. These are what she calls the "physical place of home".

With the word "Igorot", her view of the indigenous homeland becomes more general. This is the first indication that Marjorie views Ifugao to be more separate from the general Igorot homeland. Nina views the indigenous Igorot homeland to be what she calls the "source-land".

Out of all the youth, Monica offered two views on the indigenous Igorot homeland: a political activist view and a personal view. She connects the indigenous homeland to issues of Indigenous Peoples, like the loss of rights and access to these homelands. In terms of a personal view, she calls it a "personal historical cultural understanding". Monica said:

> "This is where my ancestors are buried, where my grandfather, my family are buried, and where people have built homes and lives, for years and generations. This is where I'm from. It's not that my family migrated here 'x' generations ago, but this is where we essentially created ourselves, and our people, and our community."

This personal view of the indigenous homeland alludes to what Hall (1997) calls the narrative of "hidden histories," rooted in the places that these indigenous diaspora youth call their homelands.

For Sheryl (Besao and Sagada) and Marjorie (Ifugao), both designate these places as their homelands because of their family connections. Marjorie used to just say the Philippines was her homeland out of convenience, but as she grew older, it became important to her to understand the distinction and "to always put being Ifugao above everything else" because of how her family has helped her to understand her Ifugao identity. For Nina, the homeland is the United States of America, the source-land is Benguet and Kalinga. The reason for her distinction is that she wants to be able to contribute to survival in the place of her homeland: the United States. In terms of the source-land, she is more familiar with Benguet because she has already been there.

For Jerry, Baguio and Benguet are his homeland, because this is something that he has "come to personally adopt" and "recognize that this is where I come from". This is a fact that will not change, even if he moves residence in the future. He said "Even if I moved to London, I wouldn't say Canada's my homeland. Maybe I'm a Canadian citizen, but I'm still Igorot." For Monica, Mankayan in Benguet is her homeland, more so than Ilocos, because she relates more to her mother's side culturally and personally. Overall, what these youths know about these places as their homeland/source-land is largely a combination of what they hear from their parents, what they research, or what they know from their visits.

Hidden Histories Told Abroad

Living abroad in a new country, these youth form their identity (or in Hall's words, "come into representation") by "recovering their own hidden histories" (Hall 1997, 184) that connect them to the homeland/source-land. For them, the foremost source for hearing "hidden histories" of the homeland abroad are their parents and other family members. Sheryl hears from her father; Marjorie, from her mother; Nina, from her parents as well as from written records of her grandparents and extended family. Jerry hears from his uncle and Monica hears from her mother and her friends, as well as from books she read. "Hidden histories" can also be heard from members of their community abroad, like the women of Nina's community. In Igorot families, according to the participants, these stories are told as almost-daily or normal occurrences.

However, the way these stories are told is highly reliant on the willingness of their parents to speak about their homeland (or the source-land). Their parents' silence about these stories can be attributed to many factors, like underlying trauma about their experiences in the homeland for Sheryl, or "forgetting" about these stories because they are no longer in the homeland for Jerry and Marjorie. For participants whose parents did not tell them of these stories – like Sheryl, Jerry, Marjorie – they had to turn to other community members, relatives, or their other parent.

Hall's "hidden histories" (1997) are seen here in four kinds: family stories, cultural stories, stories of the homeland, and political narratives. They are not necessarily grand nationalistic narratives – instead, these "hidden histories" can also be heard and told in the form of personal family stories or community stories. These stories also affect these youth in different ways.

The first kind (family stories) is highly personal. Sheryl knew more family stories about Besao because she knew more family members on her father's side, and they (along with her father) told her stories about their experiences growing up in Besao. Family history and stories are the things that Jerry is sure of, despite the limited knowledge he has of Igorot culture. His uncle in San Diego tells him the most stories of Benguet and his parents, and what they experienced growing up there, in order for him to learn and understand. Monica hears the same kind of stories from her mother as well.

Hearing these stories highlights the difference of their circumstances abroad versus the circumstances that their parents or extended family grew up in. For Sheryl, this manifests in feelings of guilt that she is not growing up in the Cordillera and experiencing the same things that her parents did. However, these stories also help her rationalize how she came to the United States—the homeland and her

ancestors have brought her to where she is now, through what she calls a "chain of events" that began with them and comes to her. They are the reason why she is in the United States, and as such, she wants to continue representing Igorot youth.

Being born abroad, Nina's first encounter with the homeland was through these "hidden histories" that her parents told her about. She heard about how her grandparents survived World War 2 and took care of their families. Stories like this helped Nina understand that Igorot culture was more than just performing dances; knowing these stories of survival from Benguet shows Nina that Igorots have "lived through a lot, so we're just going to keep enduring, and living through a lot more". This, in turn, also encourages Nina to keep living and living well. "If they can do this, then I can do it, right?"

The second kind of "hidden histories" for Marjorie and Monica pertains to cultural aspects, such as supernatural experiences that family members had like people being cursed or possessed, spirits wandering and leaving bodies, or about dreams and visions from people who have passed on, prompting their living relatives to clean their bones. These stories are incredibly private for the families, and they are not talked about outside the family concerned. Other cultural "hidden histories" include stories about rituals, like those Nina hears from her Kalinga side – what to do for a newborn baby, the different funeral services, a holistic idea of prayer and medicine, or butchering a pig or chicken.

The story about spirits wandering off teaches Monica about spirituality, encouraging her to build a relationship with her ancestors and the land that they are from, even though she is abroad. She makes small spiritual practices like *atang* (offering), or praying/talking to her grandmother when she needs to. For Marjorie, hearing these stories highlight the uniqueness of being Ifugao, making her understand that "there are bigger forces at play than just myself, that I have to take care of my family no matter how old I get, and that family is to be taken care of even after they pass on". In these stories, she hears about her ancestors, family members and their lives, and understands that they are part of her lineage.

The third kind of "hidden histories" are stories of the homeland itself, like the origin stories that Monica and Marjorie heard of how Mankayan (the story of the *pako*)[2] and Kiangan (the story of Lake Ambuaya)[3] came to be. For Monica, hearing these stories teaches her lessons. The story of the *pako* tells her that she has a responsibility to take care of nature; thus, in order to be responsible, she only buys what she needs and she takes care of what she has.

Stories of this kind can heighten the sense of homesickness and longing for the homeland. For Marjorie, knowing the spiritual aspects of her homeland augments her experience of the land, "that the land itself is alive". Hearing these stories helps her stay connected to Ifugao,

and "to be a part of the place and the people", even as someone who grew up abroad. Without these things, she would not know her Ifugao identity.

The fourth kind of "hidden histories" told abroad are political narratives, like the Chico Dam and the St. Louis World's Fair. The story of the Chico Dam is also one that Monica hears repeatedly, not just from Igorots abroad but also from other progressive Filipinos. It is used as a narrative of inspiration, success, empowerment, and solidarity, towards community organizing in the diaspora. With the story of the Chico Dam, Filipinos in the diaspora are able to return to a narrative of unity and community discussion about political issues. On the other hand, the story of the St. Louis World's Fair makes Monica sad and angry, but she also knows that this "set the mode for how Filipinos were treated in the US in the future". These two stories – the Chico Dam and St. Louis World's Fair – encourage her to be mindful of taking care of her communities, both in Hawai'i and in the Philippines. As these stories teach unity, she is also finding like-minded people in her community to be with. Thus, in as much as they help the youth understand the past, "hidden histories" also help them understand the present.

As Hall (1997) writes, "hidden histories" are crucial for the formation of identity. Through these stories told by their family and community members, these Igorot youth are able to "reach back" towards the homeland. Hall (1997) points out that this reaching back is the role of "hidden histories". These stories have the power to teach them about their culture. Through these stories, they glean insights that they can apply in their everyday lives. Identity is told in stories, and these "hidden histories" allow these Igorot youth to also situate themselves in the narration of their homeland's story.

Reconstructing the Homeland

In reconstructing the homeland, Hall (1997) writes that "it is narrated. It is grasped through memory. It is grasped through desire. It is grasped through reconstruction. It is not just a fact that has been waiting to ground our identities" (186). Reconstructing the homeland is not an instantaneous process. In the Indigenous People's diaspora, Clifford (2007) writes that this reconstruction and "the reproduction of social life is always a matter of recurring 'loss' and 'recovery,' of selective transmission and reconstructed history in changing circumstances" (9). Thus, as the youth get to know more about the homeland, their reconstructions become more elaborate and more in-depth.

It starts at a young age with a simple, vague knowledge of the homeland, which eventually evolves into more questions. Sheryl said that when she was younger, she "always knew" that she "came from somewhere special". Marjorie started by wanting to understand her

heritage more and where her parents came from. When Nina was younger, her knowledge was a very simplified sense of "Oh, I just know that I'm not from here". Monica just knew that she "wasn't from Hawai'i", and that led her to ask "but where am I from?" At a young age, she started asking about her indigenous identity by asking her parents, "Where are we from? Where are you from?" She also talked to her siblings and asked about their family's previous visits to Mankayan.

Growing up, the participants had gaps in their knowledge of the homeland that which they sought to fill from different sources. For Sheryl, the gap was her knowledge of her mother's side in Sagada, which she is now learning more about. Nina says that she got to know more about these places from her family and parents, and as she matured into her teens, her understanding of these places also evolved and matured. Monica started asking deeper questions in middle school, and later started to realize that the homeland is "a part of who I am and I want to know". She also constantly asked to talk to and connect with her maternal grandmother, as part of a longing to know more about the homeland.

As they learn more and more about their homeland, the participants come up with new understandings. For Sheryl, this means that she is now learning "to blend" her Sagada and Besao roots together. For her part, Nina views these places not as the homeland, because her homeland is the States, but as the source-land.

Despite the participants' efforts to know, some gaps remain. Nina does not know specifically where her father is from in Kalinga. Monica does not know much about Ilocos except for what she has learned through books and lectures. Jerry still does not know where his mother is from in Batan, Benguet. He confessed that he does "not know very much about these places from my current knowledge. I barely know anything about Baguio, or even any Filipino geography, so my knowledge is very, very little".

Thus, these reconstructions that the youth hold are fragmented and imperfect; but they are no less real. They are also based on the "hidden histories" that they hear and learn from various sources, as well as their perceptions of what being Igorot or indigenous back in the Cordillera might be like. These reconstructions are sometimes positioned against what they are currently experiencing in their places of residence.

For Sheryl, the Besao that she reconstructs is the Besao of her father's childhood, as told by his stories. By contrast, her knowledge of Sagada is not as personal. Thus, her reconstruction of Sagada is composed of its rituals, its taboos, its practices. Overall, Sheryl says, "I know that I'm from there", linking Besao and Sagada to where she is now in the United States. For Marjorie, the homeland is "not just a place in my mind" or "not just a place in the past". Her reconstruction of the homeland affirms its existence and its present relevance to her own

life, because it's where her family is. Thus, reconstructing the homeland means to "better understand where they live and where they come from".

Nina reconstructs Benguet and Kalinga based on what she has learned from her readings, her visits, and the stories told to her. As such, she is aware of the physical aspects of culture such as language, traditional wear, rituals, and the like. As her understanding of these places matured, she "gained a better understanding of how diverse and different these places are". Within Kalinga, there are different languages, dialects and village set-ups. In Benguet, she learned about what the people did to survive. Based on the stories she has been told, she knows that the Cordillera experienced history differently compared to the rest of the country.

Jerry knows the difference between growing up as an Igorot in Vancouver and growing up as an Igorot in Baguio, but even though he does not know much about these places, he still reconstructs and views them as "special," adding that "it's something that I do not remember a lot, but it's definitely a part of me". His community and his active participation has also helped in this regard. He said his "memory of Benguet itself is small, but I'd agree that it seems so much bigger now because of the place where I am, because of the community and the family".

Monica reconstructs her homeland based on what she has learned or her visits. Similar to Sheryl, she describes Mankayan as where her grandfather and brothers are buried, where her aunt and cousins still live, and where their family home is. She also remembers the easy accessibility of cultural practices in Benguet, such as her experience of the old women pinning the *dengaw* (a type of grass) to her son's shirt when they went to the river, in order to ward off evil spirits. She also reconstructs the homeland as being the space of many cultural values like unity, solidarity, and caretaking of nature, which she experienced in her visits and through her mother's stories.

Throughout all these different facets of defining and longing for the homeland, the contours of an indigenous diaspora consciousness begin to take shape. It is highly specific, familial, and personal. It builds on connections, whether actual or perceived. It reaches back for "hidden histories" and stories of the homeland that are deeply indigenous in nature. Most glaringly, it bypasses the story of the Philippine nation-state almost entirely. In the indigenous diaspora consciousness, the Philippines exists only as a receded backdrop to a more vibrant and specific construction and re-constructions of the indigenous homeland.

Indigenous Diaspora Communities Abroad

Defining the Community

While the first dimension of indigenous diaspora consciousness de-centering the nation-state as discussed in the first theme focuses on constructions of the homeland, the second dimension explores indigenous diaspora consciousness in its community formation and practices. In the diaspora, this is most evident in the differentiation between the Filipino diaspora community and the Igorot diaspora community—an echo of the historical differentiation between the Igorots and (lowland) Filipinos. There is also a generational angle to these interactions, as these Igorot youth interact with and differentiate themselves from Filipino youth in diaspora. Hall's (2002) theory on identity and community focuses on two things: defining the political community and defining political belonging. He continues to situate the political community in a world where local spaces of marginality are being formed due to the forces of globalization and the erosion of the monolithic nation-state.

Hall (2002) is clear in defining these political communities as the communities that emerge as a "consequence of globalization". Indigenous diaspora is one such political community, which Clifford (2007, 10) describes as "concrete social networks of linked places". These communities may be composed of different groups with different traditions, but they "make a life together" and "retain in some sense the distinctiveness of their historical roots in the place in which they have ended up" (Hall 2002, 25).

For these Igorot youth, their definition of a political community are the Igorot communities abroad. These communities are their social networks. For most of the youth, this community is their BIBAK organization abroad such as in the case of Sheryl, Jerry, Nina. BIBAK started in the Cordillera to forward Igorot interests in the Philippines (Finin 2005) and Igorots abroad eventually established their own chapters of BIBAK in the places where they settled. For Monica, however, her community consists of other, smaller groups, since BIBAK Hawai'i lacks an established youth membership. Marjorie has her own separate Ifugao group, and she describes it as being less formal than the structured organization of BIBAK, although she is also aware of BIBAK and its activities. While life histories are not necessarily representative of a population, they offer deep insight into the community that shapes the individual particularly since life histories are always situated within a social context (Jones 1983). As these participants were contacted through a specific Facebook group connected to a specific organization, it would be understandable to expect that their community experiences

would echo each other. However, there are also noted variances, as individuals can be simultaneously part of several different communities.

Activities of the Indigenous Community Abroad

In relation to activities of the indigenous community abroad, Igorot-only or province/town-specific activities held by their respective communities allow these youth to interact with other members. Each community has its own activities for members, but one common activity is simply the event of gathering together. These organizational activities are founded on indigenous affiliation, defined by Clifford (2007) as extended kinship, language, and culture. It is thus also through this indigenous affiliation that the Igorot community "retains in some sense the distinctiveness of their historical roots in the place in which they have ended up" (Hall 2002, 25).

These elements are woven throughout the activities as ways of recalling and remembering the homeland, while focusing on a relational dynamic that is oriented towards building the community abroad. For example, Jerry explained that the community of Igorots abroad began in order to promote and continue the heritage of being Igorot and to help people come together in a close-knit community. The political community is thus cultural and relational.

Coming together can look like the dinners and dances in Jerry's community according to the season, Christmas parties in Sheryl's and Marjorie's communities, Igorot weddings, and picnics in Monica's community. Formal activities are usually when the youth are able to witness and participate in elements of culture such as gong-playing and indigenous dances. During these events, there are chanting, gong-playing, praying in an Igorot language, and community dancing. These are common activities replicated all over the world, in areas where Igorot diaspora communities have taken root (Tindaan 2020).

Because of the diversity of "large-scale tribal identities" (Clifford 2007, 17) in their communities, the youth are also able to learn from different groups aside from their own. Sheryl's community has Kankanaey, Ifugao, and Ibaloy people. Jerry's community has Kankanaey and Ibaloy people. Monica's community is mostly composed of Ibaloy and Kankanaey people. Nina's community is the most diverse, with Kankanaey, Ibaloy, Kalinga, Ifugao, and Apayao people. Marjorie's community is only for Ifugao people, but they are also from different towns in Ifugao. During more informal activities such as smaller gatherings or birthday parties at a community member's house, language is usually the element of culture that these youth encounter. Language is important because, according to Monica, it "holds a people's belief, a people's history, and their way of thinking". In a diverse indigenous community like BIBAK, the youth are able

to grow up hearing more than one language, although that does not necessarily translate to being proficient in the language. To these youth, however, what matters is that they are still in touch with the linguistic aspect of their culture especially since personal reasons may prevent their parents from sharing other aspects of their homeland.

In addition to language, dancing and gong-playing are elements of culture that seem to be experienced most by these youth. Any event of Sheryl's community has the *gangsas* (gongs) being played. Marjorie says that the Ifugao *dinuyya* (community dance) always happens in all of their community events, whether more formal (with the native attire and gongs) or more casual and spontaneous. Organizational dynamics can look different for every community; for Jerry, he has seen that the older members do remain quite active, but participation from the younger generations can fluctuate and vary. His community imparts indigenous identity to younger generations "by trying to incorporate us in the larger organization". This happens through the community's events and activities that seek to build a "cultural connection" between the youth and the community.

The indigenous gatherings that these youth describe also mirror gatherings in the Cordillera. This mirroring is another example and indication of how the diaspora community tries to recreate or reconnect to the homeland by replicating certain community behaviors, aesthetics, and relational dynamics (Tindaan 2020). These activities are thus opportunities to practice culture, whether through the mere act of helping out in the community gatherings or through more personal actions such as wearing beaded jewelry and a *tapis* (traditional wraparound skirt) or joining in a dance.

The Filipino-American Community: Attachments and Detachments

The de-centering of the nation-state in the indigenous diaspora consciousness is also lived out in communities, and the attachments (and detachments) that result in their interactions. When it comes to the Igorot community interacting with the Filipino community, attachments are often seen in mutual participation in certain events, but that is often where the similarities end. For the Igorot diaspora youth, they are able to identify clear differences between the two communities, even as they are part of both.

On the organizational level, the two groups sometimes encounter each other during large events. Jerry says that the people in his community are most active during summer, dancing and gong-playing, because the community is more involved with the Filipino community during these months. Their community joins the Philippine Independence Day parade, and they also participate in an exhibit for their gong-playing. They also joined a festival for Filipinos in

Vancouver called "Pinoy Hirit", which Jerry covered as videographer and photographer.

For Sheryl, BIBAK New England also participates in the Philippine Independence Day Parade as the only Igorot group. However, in participating in festivals, Sheryl observed that Filipinos who are not Igorot treat their group differently. As seen in the quote below, it seems as though the lingering stereotypes rooted in historical events like the exhibit of the Igorots in the St. Louis World's Fair and the prevailing misconceptions of Igorots in the Philippines have also been recreated abroad. Sheryl said:

> Filipinos who aren't Igorot treated my community and myself as this circus act who would answer to any whims they had, and we were basically just this thing to photograph, rather than to be appreciated for our traditions and values. I felt like we were definitely objectified in the sense that we weren't being treated as humans. We were being seen as this circus act.

Nina also said that her community experienced some conflict with Filipino-American organizations. They were sometimes invited and/or paid by Filipino student organizations to perform during "Filipino nights". However, she also said that it can be discouraging to do these dances and then see them be copied or appropriated by other Filipino dance troupes. The Igorots perform Igorot dances because they were asked to do so "because we're Igorot, so we should dance our own stuff" but for Nina, no such reason exists for non-Igorot Filipinos who attempt to do Igorot dances.

They youth also experienced other Filipino dance troupes videotaping their performances and then teaching their own members from the tape. While these dance troupes have asked BIBAK to come teach them, Nina's group refused, because they cannot teach these dances like a class; they considered these as simply part of their culture. They found these Filipino dance groups difficult to deal with, although they would still encounter each other in the same circles. Nina's group has told them that what they are doing is appropriation in an effort to make them more aware, but they've found that just talking does not really help. Instead, BIBAK invites these Filipino groups to their panel discussions and different performances to witness Igorot culture.

These encounters illustrate that there is also a certain detachment between the mainstream Filipino community and the Igorot community, even though the Igorot community sometimes joins Filipino events. Monica says that her BIBAK organization joins the Filipino Festival, as well as other parades "where different ethnicities showcase their culture". Monica herself worked at the Filipino Community Center as the program coordinator for the youth during her last semester of

college, and that is where she met Igorots in various Filipino circles, like in the academic sphere. The Filipino Community Center also hosts the Filipino Festival, so BIBAK joins as part of the broader Filipino community.

In Hawai'i, she said that if one is not part of a distinct organization like BIBAK, they will just be thought of as generic Filipino. The largest and most visible Filipino groups in Hawai'i are the Ilocanos, Tagalogs, and Visayans, and because BIBAK does not really do much aside from holding their own small picnics and joining the Filipino Festival, they are not as visible as other Filipino groups. Thus, Monica assumed that if they do have interactions with other communities, BIBAK is just seen as Filipino and not necessarily Igorot. For Monica, however, the distinction between Filipino-American and Igorot communities is clear because she can identify certain practices. An Igorot practice is different from a general Filipino practice. Monica thinks that Filipino-Americans turn to indigenous groups for this reason; "they can't really identify with anything else".

Marjorie knows that her minority group will always be different from others, and may also be similar to others, but she said that "being Ifugao is so different from being an Asian immigrant community, or especially the Filipino-American community". In college, Marjorie was part of Filipino-American organizations because these spaces were the closest she could get to an Ifugao organization. However, in these Filipino-American communities, Marjorie said their "conceptions of being Filipino are just very different from mine, even though I fit their demographic in every other way". Her Ifugao identity sets her apart in this respect.

In her latter college years, Nina also became involved in the Filipino-American community as president of her college's Filipino-American organization so she was able to see things from their point of view. She immediately saw that this group was different from her Igorot community because it was more general, while her Igorot community was able to "get in-depth", like asking specifically where in a certain province one is from, or asking about one's parents. For the Filipino-American organization, Nina says that it was "a very basic level of connection" based on the question "Where are you from in the Philippines?"

Even as the president of the Filipino organization, Nina had to correct misconceptions about being Igorot. More than misconceptions, however, Nina observed that with college-level Filipino organizations, a lot of the work is "dismantling the pressures that Filipino-American youth feel growing up", like having light skin, getting high grades, or becoming a nurse or doctor. In the Igorot organization, Nina said that the work is more on diving into "more of a cultural aspect in how we connect to our way of being". These organizations thus replicate on

a communal level what these youth are feeling and negotiating on a personal level, as they form their identity of being Igorot or Filipino-American abroad. De-centering is evident here as well; the personal process of creating communities centered around an indigenous identity necessitates a simultaneous drawing of difference from the broader Filipino diaspora.

On the interpersonal level, Sheryl's Filipino community is composed of mostly Tagalogs, and she says that "definitely the airs, behaviors, and mannerisms of people are very different". Her Filipino community is "more relaxed" than her Igorot community, which Sheryl describes as "always watching", "analyzing our actions", and "making sure that we're doing the right thing; that we're not straying away from whatever they want from us". In comparison, there is none of this wariness or watching in the Filipino community. However, even though her Filipino community is more relaxed, Sheryl said that she can only feel at home and safe in the Igorot community.

When it comes to other Filipino-American youth, they just have different experiences. Both Marjorie and her brother have had Filipino-American friends or classmates, with no desire to visit the Philippines. She can become friends with them very quickly, but the fact that she is indigenous Ifugao often changes the conversation and the way she interacts with them. She may share some stories about being Ifugao to her non-Ifugao Filipino friends, and they may understand to a certain extent, but not fully. Like Marjorie, Nina also recognizes that being indigenous makes her different from her Filipino-American friends, such as in terms of language.

Jerry goes to a Filipino church, where he has been very involved with many Tagalogs and Bicolanos, as well as other Filipino groups. Because of his participation in church, he feels as though he has been in the Filipino community more. He became more involved in BIBAK because he wanted to correct that. Due to his Igorot culture and upbringing, Jerry said that he knows the benefits of being within the Igorot culture, and that sets him apart from these friends.

In Hawai'i, Monica said that there is also a difference between "local Filipinos" and "immigrant Filipinos". Igorots can technically be part of both groups depending on how long they have been in Hawai'i. Monica thinks she was able to "blend in more" with the Filipino community because she lost her Filipino accent when speaking English at a young age. However, when she is being friends with Filipinos, Monica finds that she has to deal with stereotypes about being indigenous Filipino. Many of them are surprised that she does not fit their image of what an indigenous Filipino should look like. Conversely, however, she has also noticed a "Filipino-American awakening", where people are wanting to know more about their roots. She knows people who

have approached her about their family members being Igorot, because they were doing research to know more about their Filipino side.

One common difference that all the Igorot youth pointed out was that the Igorot and Filipino communities prioritized and practiced culture differently. Sheryl pointed out that Filipino gatherings were more "Americanized" and with more intermingling, making it seem like an "American community", even though there are markers of Filipino culture like Filipino food. By contrast, Igorot gatherings had the *gangsas*, with the different age groups of the community doing different things.

Difference between the two communities can also be discovered gradually, especially if one encounters the Filipino community before the Igorot one, like Marjorie. At first, she thought that the community was another Filipino group, but as time went on, she saw that it was different in terms of the culture and the gatherings. Marjorie thinks that the retention of culture is different, in that retaining culture is more prioritized in the Ifugao community. However, recently she also noted that some Filipino-Americans are following "the trend of trying to retain or reclaim culture", especially for those who are further distanced from the Philippines. This is a trend of trying to learn more about and reclaim "pre-colonial culture", through learning *baybayin* (pre-hispanic writing system) or calling themselves *babaylans* (pre-colonial spiritual leader) or *datus* (pre-colonial chieftain). Marjorie does not relate to these practices and she does not need to, because for her, Ifugao is very distinct, and she knows "exactly what I'm connected to and why, and I'm always constantly learning". This highlights the sense of security that an indigenous identity brings to these Igorot youth in diaspora. They know who they are and where they come from. The specificity of the Igorot identity is also contrasted to the Filipino identity that seems to beg definition; as the nation-state recedes, indigenous identity takes center stage in the hearts and minds of these diasporic youth.

Marjorie recognizes this as a privilege because these Filipino-Americans "come from colonized parts in the Philippines or parts that were touched by colonization". Thus, they have to do more searching. However, she says that only a small part of Filipino-Americans do this. In a more general sense, there are traditions behind the Ifugao traditions that Marjorie and her community try to uphold; while for the Filipino-Americans, "there's a lot more of a blend". She thinks that "there's always that loss of connection with how the things they try to hold on to – their dances, their music, any part of the culture – inevitably always gets disconnected or differs somehow with how it is back in the Philippines, most of the time, in conversations". But for Ifugaos, Marjorie says this does not happen. What they practice abroad is always connected specifically to the Ifugao homeland.

Other differences in cultural aspects include the connection to land. Marjorie thinks that this is not the same for Filipino-Americans "who are not from an indigenous community". That makes it harder for Marjorie to relate to them, because not having this connection changes their "sense of community and their sense of identity". These differences in culture do not stop her from interacting with them, but once she starts discussing her identity on a deeper level they cannot relate to her. The deeper conversations are more difficult to have, like having conversations on how "Igorot" is still a negative and derogatory term in their families. Marjorie said that sometimes, "they just can't even fathom that an Igorot person is standing in front of them". Sadly, this implies that the discriminatory misconceptions about Igorots rooted in Philippine history are still recreated and these persist even in diaspora.

These different understandings do not just make it difficult for Marjorie to connect with Filipino-Americans, but she says that she's "more discouraged to connect with other non-indigenous Filipinos, as a result of my indigenous heritage". Practicing her native heritage is something that brings her further from Filipino-Americans, even as it draws her closer to her Ifugao community; de-centering, once again, occurs here on an interpersonal and communal level. Marjorie does not agree with the Filipino-American organization's idea of reconnecting to their culture, which she says "can sometimes be appropriative, or sometimes erasing indigenous culture". That can be discouraging, as she tries to talk about indigenous issues like disrespectful ways of doing the dances or reasons for getting tattoos in these spaces but her attempts are constantly ignored.

It seems that many of these issues that Marjorie tries to address within Filipino-American spaces comes from these Filipinos' lack of knowledge about Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines. While both groups have gone through the migration experience of a diaspora, Marjorie says that Ifugaos have an understanding of being indigenous. Filipino-Americans do not, and it is harder for Marjorie to have these conversations with them, because "they're not connected, and they see it as a place in the past". Indigenous Peoples are simply not part of their vision of the Philippines. The pitfalls of a nation-state narrative, therefore, revolve around its homogenizing generality (Smith 1991); particularly in diaspora, where cultural influences abound, and diasporans are therefore forced to search for distilled elements of their identity. This distillation, however, hews to the nation-state story—and Indigenous Peoples are left out.

Thus, for all these reasons, Marjorie finds it harder to build relationships with Filipino Americans, "because I have to change their whole perception of what they think the motherland is, in order for them to understand the basics of my own identity". For Marjorie, that is exhausting. She is not close to a lot of them now, but those spaces pushed

her to ask more questions that helped her understand her own identity by seeing it through the lens of difference. Her Ifugao community was invaluable in helping her process these questions at the time.

Nina noted that in an Igorot organization, (individual and communal) experiences can be the point of discussions about culture. For Filipino-American organizations, experiences may be included, but the emphasis is more on building an inclusive space for knowledge of all Philippine cultures, and thus becoming that community for Filipino-American students. For Jerry, what sets the Igorot community apart from other communities that he knows is that they are "better" – they're more than a club, because they have so much pride and heritage in being Igorot.

When it comes to the Igorot community interacting with other Filipino groups, Jerry says that the Americans have a different experience from the Canadians. For Jerry, it is easy for Americans – which isn't really the case in the experiences of the other Igorot youth. For Canadians, Jerry said that he simply has not interacted with any Filipino groups, aside from one that the Igorot community has heard of because they have been doing the dances in a wrong way.

Monica pointed out a spectrum of ways in which Filipino-Americans try to retain culture. On one end, she said that there are still Filipinos in Hawai'i who look down on Igorots wearing a *bahag* (Igorot traditional loincloth) and say they have tails, while simultaneously recognizing a Hawaiian man wearing his *malo* (Hawaiian traditional loincloth) as an indigenous person exercising his cultural rights. There is still that distinction, borne out of the fact that there is a strong native presence in Hawai'i, but Filipinos in Hawai'i are divided along "immigrant" and "local" lines. Monica said that those who identify as "local" would not even identify as Filipino, and that there is shame in saying that. Thus, due to this shame of anything Filipino, Igorot stereotypes are still believed and are still prevalent.

On the other end of the spectrum, Filipino-Americans eager to find out about Filipino identity are mixing and matching bits and pieces of Filipino culture. The Four Waves Tribe is an example of this. Monica is frustrated and saddened by their work because they are misleading other Filipino-Americans who are genuinely curious. Nina described them as "a group of Filipinos who are calling themselves Igorot but they're not." Apparently, this group has stylized themselves as a "tribe", with acceptance that must be gained. This group does what BIBAK does, albeit in misrepresented ways – they do cultural activities like Kalinga tattoos (for money), go on trips to the Philippines, and Nina said they have "mixed and matched" indigenous attire in order "to meet their aesthetic". To these indigenous Igorot youth in diaspora, the Four Waves Tribe is an example of the bastardization of their indigenous culture by Filipino-Americans in the broader Filipino diaspora. This

has the dual effect of making them wary of other Filipino-Americans, while simultaneously strengthening their resolve to be indigenous youth culture-bearers in diaspora.

The implications of these attachments and detachments to the Filipino-American identity mean that these Igorot youth abroad know that they fall under the category of Filipino-American (by virtue of living there), but they are keenly aware of how their Igorot identity sets them apart from other Filipino-Americans. They do not feel the same sense of inclusion or connection to their Filipino-American communities that they do in their Igorot communities. They may not have the same experience of culture as non-Igorot Filipino-Americans. This encourages them to invest more in their Igorot communities and their Igorot identity, even as they navigate the divisions and conflicts that arise from their Filipino-American community and their Filipino-American identities. The conflicts and tensions with the Filipino-American community also serves to starkly draw the difference of their indigenous diaspora consciousness and the Filipino diaspora that they encounter. Thus, in this difference, the indigenous diaspora consciousness effectively de-centers the nation-state by clearly cultivating a prioritization of indigeneity in the community milieu of the Igorot youth.

Diaspora Discourses on Indigenous Identity

The discussion thus far has established that the indigenous diaspora consciousness de-centers the nation-state in its constructions of the homeland and in the indigenous diaspora community. I will now turn to the third and last dimension which is how indigenous diaspora consciousness de-centers the nation-state through its discourses on identity. According to Hall, identity is "more the product of the marking of difference and exclusion, than they are the sign of an identical, naturally-constituted unity" (Hall 2011). Thus, identity is also constituted by what it excludes, what it leaves out, what marks it as different. Often, these differences are the product of historical forces, although these forces can also give rise to similarities alongside these differences. For Hall (1990), "far from being eternally fixed in some essentialized past, [cultural identities] are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture, and power"(225). As such, there are many factors that can affect the formation of these differences. In keeping with this paper's exploration of how the nation-state becomes de-centered, the difference examined in the succeeding sections is that of Filipino identity and indigenous identity.

Filipino vs. Igorot/Ifugao

The difference between Filipinos and Igorots is shaped by historic forces of colonization and nationalism. This history is still being told by Igorots abroad, as Nina described "being indigenous" as something that makes them different. "We are different, we are set apart from other Filipinos, because of how being indigenous dates back to how many years ago". BIBAK Youth Coordinator Lani affirmed this, saying that the Cordillera is set apart from the rest of the Philippines because of different values, practices, traditions, and culture; thus, learning about the Cordillera will further help the youth understand how different they are from other Filipinos.

The Igorot youth focus their efforts on learning about their own part of the Philippines, where indigeneity here is being constructed in contrast to being Filipino. Marjorie does this as an Ifugao youth. She said that "being Ifugao isn't just like being another Filipino ethnicity." Being Igorot as a whole entails connection to land and an identity "that we haven't lost, and are still desperately trying to hold on to." Marjorie said that not recognizing the distinction of the indigeneity of these Ifugaos, Igorots, and other indigenous groups is to do them a disservice, because "it erases the very real material struggles that they go through as a part of their indigenous identity, as not being part of the Filipino mainstream."

The Igorot youth noticed that being "Filipino" carried with it its own "homogenized story about what it means to be Filipino" of which Igorots or other Filipino Indigenous Peoples are rarely part. Thus, emphasizing this difference between Igorot and Filipino means contesting this homogenized narrative. According to Nina, "there are so many pockets, there are so many different ways we can learn about each other. It's not just a singularity in upbringing or in stories".

Jerry's parents first told him about being Igorot in Canada by setting him apart from other Filipinos in Canada. While he said that they are friends with other Filipinos there, they retained that clear distinction. Thus, he said, "I'm still Filipino, but I'm still specifically Igorot". Before meeting Igorot relatives or family friends, Sheryl met Filipinos from Manila, Cebu, or Mindanao. The difference highlighted was geographic, but for Sheryl, it immediately sets her apart from other Filipinos as being indigenous or Igorot. In school, when she was asked where she's from, she said she was from the Philippines, but specifically from the mountains, where the Igorot Indigenous People live.

Another difference is the attire. During events like the Philippine Independence Day parade, Sheryl wears her *tapis*. While participating in Filipino-wide events allow her to interact with her Filipino identity, actions like wearing her *tapis* set her apart from other Filipinos and allowed her to show another side of her identity. Nina noticed that

growing up, she was wearing the *tapis* and other traditional clothing, and she "noticed I didn't have the same ones as the other Filipinos' Spanish dresses".

Language is another point of difference. Growing up, Nina did not hear Tagalog around the house. Her parents speak Kankanaey at home and in public. Even though she cannot speak this language since she had to learn English in school, her understanding and comprehension of Kankanaey is much more proficient than her grasp of Tagalog. However, she has heard a lot of Filipinos say that they are not really Filipino if they do not speak Tagalog, to which Nina says "Aw, shucks. I did not ever grow up hearing it so yeah, I guess I'm not Tagalog! Guess I'm not Filipino!" Marjorie's grandfather told her, "Do not speak to me in Tagalog!" Marjorie tried to learn Tagalog because she thought that would be the best thing to do, but her grandfather said, "Do not you ever call me 'po'!" To Marjorie, understanding being Ifugao is understanding "how it's different being native Ifugao as opposed to Filipino". Understanding this difference meant understanding why her grandfather became mad at her effort to speak Tagalog. In the Ifugao/Igorot community then, whether abroad or in the Cordillera, there is a real sense of prioritizing the indigenous languages over the national one.

Interestingly, there have also been instances where Filipinos have attempted to overcome this difference by ignoring it. This is mostly seen in Filipinos who are attempting to rediscover a culture or probable roots. For Nina, part of being Igorot is calling out these Filipinos on their untrue claims, especially when they claim to be Igorot. "You're not Igorot. Just stop. It is okay. Enjoy the culture, do not try to be it". She asserts that "you can't just claim a culture that isn't yours, because you like it or because you think you're part of ..." To address this, she tries to encourage people to find out where they came from in the Philippines, instead of making false claims on other people's culture.

On the other hand, there are also Igorots who are aware of the difference between Filipino and Igorot, but are more attuned to being Filipino. Nina's friend is an example of this. Although her mother is from Benguet and her father is from Baguio, Nina says that her friend "likes being Filipino", but "has no idea what it means to be from Benguet", aside from the travel time needed to get there. According to Nina, her friend's upbringing was very much focused on achieving economic stability, and while she did achieve that, culture was just not the priority. Nina has tried to tell her things about the culture, but she is not always interested. Her friend's mother talked to Nina in Kankanaey, and Nina's friend will not understand. Thus, while these differences exist, Igorots may also sometimes identify more as generic Filipinos.

"We weren't colonized"

One major discourse about being Igorot refers to the history of the Igorots resisting colonization by the Spanish. This is one discourse based on difference that the Igorot youth hear from their families and that they themselves use to introduce their Igorot identity. Nina calls it the "very basic aspect" of being Igorot; "being Igorot means we weren't colonized" and this independence is the starting point of imparting indigenous identity to the youth. The same sentiment is echoed by the broader Igorot diaspora community (Ruanto-Ramirez 2022).

When asked by her peers what "being Igorot and indigenous" means, Sheryl makes use of this discourse to explain the history behind her identity. However, Sheryl said that she does not know how to elaborate on it. Since it is a historical (almost academic) discourse, Sheryl may have difficulty explaining it because it does not carry the same personal aspect as her family stories do. Nina, for her part, sees the effects of colonization on other Filipinos which, for her, sets apart her identity as Igorot. According to her, while she is learning about her lineage and heritage, she has seen that mainstream Filipinos are "dismantling a lot of things that have to do with colonization". This difference translates to dissimilar cultural expectations between Igorots and Filipinos.

During one of her visits to Ifugao, this topic was part of the conversation between Marjorie's grandfather and cousins. In such conversation, it was mentioned that "being Ifugao meant something different", especially for Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines. While Marjorie may not have fully understood at that time, she did catch the pride of knowing that Spanish colonizers did not come to Ifugao. This discourse is spoken about abroad, where diasporic Ifugaos consider "never having been colonized by Spain" and "how we've retained so many parts of our traditions and rituals" as something to take pride in. Even when Marjorie did not know so much about the culture yet, she knew about this sense of pride due to independence.

"They Still Think We Have Tails"

Alongside discourses of affirmation, the participants also encounter more negative discourses. This may also come from their parents, in an effort to warn their children about the existing negative stereotypes about Igorots. Sheryl narrated:

> My father told me stories about how some Filipinos looked down on Igorots because they supposedly have a tail. So that's what was put in my head when I was younger – that Filipinos

> looked down on me and other Igorots just because of our supposed barbaric appearances and our made-up tail.

Sheryl's father experienced discrimination against Igorots in his job at the hospital, and many other times from other Filipinos, but Sheryl said she never experienced the discrimination that her father did. Regardless, she was aware that this discrimination and these negative stereotypes exist.

Marjorie said her mother is hesitant to identify as Ifugao because of these negative connotations, so she does not tell people right away that she is Ifugao. Other Ifugaos have also affirmed this, and Marjorie has her own experiences with it. She once told her Filipino-American classmates that she was Ifugao and Igorot, and they said their parents used it as an insult. While they did not mean to insult her and apologized after, the experience helped Marjorie realize that these stereotypes were real, especially for her mother's generation.

Monica said that her mother also experienced these remarks when she went to Manila. When she started asking deeper questions about her identity, her mother found it interesting that her daughter was so curious, telling her, "because a lot of Filipinos actually look down on us". She continued by telling Monica that some Igorots who travel outside the Philippines do not even mention that they are indigenous or Igorots, precisely because of these negative stereotypes. Like Sheryl, one of Monica's first encounters with Igorot culture was knowing that being Igorot was perceived as a negative belonging.

Among "local" Filipinos in Hawai'i, Monica said that many negative stereotypes of Igorots exist, like having tails, being uneducated, being simple people, being ignorant, living without electricity, and not knowing how to speak English (even though Monica's grandmother knew how to speak English more than Tagalog). Nina first realized that being Igorot was something different during her pre-teen years until she entered high school, when she heard the parents of her friends say comments like: "Oh, I would be so ashamed if I was Igorot", or "Igorots are really poor", or "They're too dark".

In high school, Nina further encountered this negative discourse when one of her tutors said, "Igorots are the black people of the Philippines". Taken aback by this statement, Nina renewed her passion to learn about her culture, because these negative stereotypes are not what she wants people to say or know about Igorots. These experiences taught her that "Igorots, wherever they are, are still always having to dismantle preconceived notions about being indigenous or being Igorot, or that there's more than one indigenous population in the Philippines".

Sheryl said that their parents in the youth group also push the youth to say that they are Igorot, especially if they visit the Philippines,

because "many Igorots are looked down upon and seen as inferior". Whenever they have the opportunity, they are encouraged to identify as Igorot. Jerry said his community expects him to "rise above the idea of what people think Igorots are". He continued:

> [The expectation is] not only to fight against stereotypes, but also to prove people wrong. That's something that a lot of the older people talk about. They say 'if you go to a Tagalog house, you have to be even more respectful, because of the way they see you'.

Even though Jerry has not personally experienced outright discrimination because of his Igorot identity, he knows that his Tagalog friends view him differently, and so he does push himself to be more respectful. "It's something I expect from myself, because if I want to distinguish myself as an Igorot, I have to distinguish myself above the other person". Thus, while the discourse itself may be negative, Igorot parents and the diasporic community choose to convey it in such a way that it serves a positive purpose which is to further build up and encourage the youth in embracing their Igorot identity.

Identity as a Choice

While all these discourses seek to inculcate indigenous identity among the diaspora youth, the deciding factor is the youth's own agency. Sheryl is forming her own identity instead of fitting the molds of either "American" or "real Igorot" set by her friends, community, or family. However, paradoxically, she has also learned that her Igorot culture defines her. She has learned and is continually learning that this is her identity, and it encourages her to be "able to identify what's me, and what's my culture, and what's driven me to this point of my life". She does identify as an Igorot youth, and for her, being an Igorot youth is someone who simply "has Igorot blood" and "is learning what it means to be Igorot". Not being shy to say that she is Igorot and from the Cordillera helps to build her identity as an indigenous youth abroad, and she also tries to be ready when people ask questions. Sheryl wants to continue identifying as an Igorot youth because she is not ashamed of it, and she wants the world to know about it. Denying her identity as Igorot would be to deny her goal of sharing Igorot culture. In addition to identifying as an Igorot, learning more about her homeland and being involved in her community allows her to "have a hand in my own identity and learn more about what being an Igorot is and what an Igorot does". This assertion of identity is two-fold; it leans on a security that comes from knowing one's indigenous roots, but also adopts a posture of growing into the identity.

Marjorie identifies as Ifugao first, Igorot second, Filipino third, and then American after that, to show that she was born abroad and grew up in diaspora. She is also biracial, which has its own implications on her identity. Being Ifugao and biracial is a reminder to her that she has to "honor the fact that I'm not full [Ifugao], and honor the fact that I didn't grow up in Ifugao". Recognizing her biracial identity also means recognizing that her other identity is white, which carries its own implications. While she has been told that she can just pick which one she wants to be, she does not agree with that. "I'm both all the time!" However, she does identify as being indigenous first because that has shaped her values the most, and biracial second, because the latter has shaped so much of her experience living in the USA.

Marjorie therefore said that she will absolutely continue identifying as Ifugao, unapologetically. While she may say that she is mixed, she will always say that she is Ifugao. She said "there's never been any shame in that", because she's privileged not to have had the same experience her mother had with the negative connotations of being Ifugao and her grandfather reinforced her "Ifugao first" identity early on. Being an Ifugao youth, for Marjorie, means taking care of family and community, wanting to pass on culture, honoring and taking care of the land, and knowing where "home" is. Being Ifugao also means "being able to recognize that you're a part of something bigger", whether to the spiritual world, the literal environment, or the community and its feeling of togetherness.

Nina described herself as an Igorot youth, despite being born and raised abroad: "Just because I'm not born and raised in the source-land, does not mean that I do not identify and I do not understand my culture, and what it means to grow up being Igorot". She asserted that Igorots can have different experiences of upbringing and different life outcomes, and that means she is still Igorot though her experience is not similar to her parents' or to other youth growing up in the Cordillera.

Nina will continue to identify as Igorot "because these voices, our voices, that need to be heard, especially in diaspora, and in being here in the States". She does not want to be classified as something else, become an invisible minority, or have someone else speak for her. "I do not want to be boxed in into some white guy's definition of what it means to be Igorot, or Filipino for that matter, so I'm going to keep identifying as Igorot". For her, being an Igorot youth means authoritatively owning the identity and its differences, not performing it. More than a label, the indigenous identity is here asserted as something personal, not performative.

Jerry finds that he is very self-conscious about identifying as Igorot, because he can't speak or understand Ibaloy and his only connection to the homeland are his parents and extended family in San Diego. This is compounded by the fact that he spent years not holding on to his

community and his culture, and never tried to make connections back in Benguet. He does know and identify as Igorot, but he is "still aware of the fact that there's much that I need to reconnect with, and I need to be a part of, in order to be fully self-actualized. I need to do better as a person". For Jerry, it was a choice to "adopt" the identity and to preserve his identity and culture. Where formerly he was not interested, now he wants to "hold on to my traditions". He would still describe himself as an Igorot, and being Canadian does not take that away. Interestingly, however, he admits that other people are "way more Igorot" than he is, like new immigrants who are more immersed in the heritage. But this is something that he thinks he can address, perhaps through giving an effort to learn more about his culture. He has found that as he is more open with his identity, other people notice and approach him about it. This is his way of fighting against the stereotype that Igorots (particularly Ibaloys) are timid and shy.

Being an Igorot youth, for Jerry, means trying to make his parents, his heritage, and his ancestors proud. He said that this is the most practical way of finding his identity as an Igorot, along with continuing to build connections in his community. He finds values and practices important and interesting, but also finds it difficult to distinguish which values have been influenced by forces like Christianity and Americanism. Nonetheless, the fact that he identifies as an Igorot and continues to learn from his community is a way of adapting indigenous culture in his own life. For him, "constant participation in BIBAK" is also the way to build his identity as indigenous youth abroad. In order to find his identity, Jerry knows that he has to be in a community, as well as do personal reflection while learning more about his culture and heritage.

Monica identifies as an Igorot Kankanaey, Filipino, Filipino-American, and local Filipino in Hawai'i. She does identify as an Igorot youth, and for her, being an Igorot youth means understanding that she is "a person of the land", and that this carries a responsibility to take care of the land and everything connected to it, like community and spirituality. She builds her indigenous identity abroad by learning from her family members or people in the community that she trusts.

Monica also grew up with a "dual Igorot-Ilocano identity." Her family speaks Ilocano at home, so she has that part of the culture, and she claims her Ilocano identity. She does not know Kankanaey, so she does not have that part of the Igorot culture, but knowing Ilocano is what helps her understand a bit of Kankanaey, which is "a huge tool for opening up worldview" and history. But she also does not know what an Ilocano practice is, compared to how she has learned about specific Igorot practices. The language is all she really has from her Ilocano side, although she knows that "Ilocanos are very proud to be Ilocanos" in Hawai'i.

She does consider herself to be "Igorot youth or Igorot-American". Personally, she asserts that identity because it took a lot of processing for her to figure out the different facets of her identity, learning to respond whenever she had to confront stereotypes, and then deciding for herself to take a stand and educate others who may not know about her identity. Out of all the youth, Monica was the only one who went beyond personal identification as a Filipino and Igorot and applied for formal-legal recognition in the form of dual citizenship. Her long-term goal is to return home to the Philippines permanently. Her decision to become a dual citizen was based on her desire to be in solidarity with fellow activists and her hope to take care of her mother's land in Mankayan, and make sure that it stays in their family. As a mother herself, she also wanted to become a dual citizen so that her son could become a dual citizen.

Identities, through history, language, and culture, are always evolving and changing. For Hall, this is a process of "becoming rather than being: not 'who we are' or 'where we came from,' so much as what we might become, how we have been represented, and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves" (Hall 2011, 4). The identity of these diaspora youth is not just Igorot—they hold multiple other identities, in varying degrees, and in different configurations. And yet, all of them asserted that their indigeneity is an integral, even primary, aspect of their identities—more than their being Filipino. The indigenous diaspora consciousness here thus de-centers the nation-state on a very personal level which is the identification of the self. Because individuals act according to sentiments based on personal identification, this degree of affirmation for prioritizing indigenous identity among the diasporic Igorot youth sidesteps the centralizing tendencies of the nation-state.

Conclusion

Through the accounts of participants in this study, it has been established that in imagining the homeland, building communities, and constructing identity, indigenous diaspora consciousness de-centers the nation-state by substituting in its place specific visions, stories, and histories of the homeland as illustrated in the formation of distinct and reinforced communities and in identities built on difference. This de-centering occurs through intergenerational impartation which manifest in constructing and re-constructing the homeland, creating and maintaining indigenous communities, and cultivating indigenous discourses of identity. These acts all contrast to the nation-state's idea of a singular homeland as the Philippines and to homogenized elements of Filipino identity abroad as often proliferated by members of the mainstream Filipino diaspora. Viewing this de-centering from

the perspective of Igorot youth in diaspora has served to underscore how this indigenous diaspora consciousness is imparted and received through generations. It highlights that this consciousness is a personal quest inasmuch as it is a political project for the collective Igorot diaspora. It illustrates this group's intention to continue and hold on to their identities in new and changing contexts. The importance of continuation is crucial here because an indigenous diaspora consciousness is clearly built and maintained through a collective intergenerational effort, and the youth are integral to this endeavor.

Ultimately, the decision for continuation lies with the youth. Throughout their experience as Igorot youth abroad, their own agency is clearly the force that is driving their formation of identity. As seen in their assertions of identity, their indigenous identity clearly holds precedence over their identity as Filipinos. It is here, on the most personal level, that an indigenous diaspora consciousness de-centers the nation-state in the hearts and minds of the indigenous diaspora youth. As Cohen (1996) boldly forecasts that diasporas may "transcend and succeed" the nation-state (520), the Igorot youth may also transcend and succeed the narratives of generations before them as they continue to create and re-create their own stories in diaspora.

The Author

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Notes

1. See, for example, the Greek diaspora (Hassiotis 2004; Kaloudis 2008).
2. The story of the pako or fern was one told by Monica's aunt during one of her visits back to Mankayan. During the interview, I asked her to recount the story as she remembered it; this in itself is proof of how stories are handed down. The following is quoted almost verbatim from the interview transcript, edited for brevity. "A long, long time ago, people were starving. They couldn't find food or water, the rivers had dried up, there were no animals to eat, and everything was barren. The land was barren, and the community was starving. They started praying for Kabunian to help them.

Everybody was looking for food; a group of brothers found green plants, and they had never seen anything like those before. They looked like ferns, with curled shoots. So they called their family members, because they were excited. Everything was brown and barren, and so they were like, 'oh, this is a green plant. How can we eat it? It has to be edible'. And so they were trying to figure out how to eat it, and I think it was the sisters who actually tried to boil it. And from that, they figured out like, okay, we can eat this plant, and they found more of it, and they started planting it all over. So from that, they regained their sustenance and everything was back to kind of normal, where like little by little, as they started planting the plants, they were able to build life back up to how it was before. But after some time people forgot what had happened in the beginning, and they kind of took advantage once again of the land. They started cutting down the trees, and they started hunting the wild animals again without any restriction, and the springs dried up again. They asked for forgiveness from Kabunian, because they were actually given what they needed, but they were irresponsible. But it was too late. They were able to find a couple of the seedlings, and they were able to restore some areas of the community, but not how it was before. And eventually, it was said that that specific type of pako actually vanished, and the only thing that was left of it was the memory of the pako."

3. I also asked Marjorie to recount the story of Lake Ambuaya as she knows it. The following is from her interview transcript, edited for brevity. "It's like a really small pond in Kiangan. There used to be a small village there, and then all of the warriors went off to war, and there was a little boy with his grandma who was walking around the village, and then he was about to step on this bug, I think it was like a cockroach or something, and then the grandma said, 'Stop! You never know like, what spirit lives in that bug, that's not a good idea.' The little boy didn't listen to his grandmother and stomps the bug. And when the warriors came back from their war the next day, the whole town is gone and it's just flooded. And that's the story of Ambuaya Lake."

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