Governing Souls and Lives: CICM Narratives on the Indigenous of the Cordillera

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ABSTRACT

This study looks into narratives written by *Congregatio Immaculati Cordis Mariae* (CICM) missionaries on their encounters with indigenous populations of the Cordillera. These narratives, published within the period 1925–1960 are gleaned from the archives of the Diocese of Baguio, particularly, through the publications: *The Little Apostle of the Mt. Province*, *The Apostle of the Mt. Province,* and *The Baguio-Mountain Sentinel: Catholic News Weekly*. This paper examines the narratives using three key aspects. First, it probes into the religio-political dimension of the Catholic Church as an institution to provide a backdrop for the exploration of CICM missionary work and encounters upon colonial surfaces. Second, the paper investigates the methods and motives of the CICM mission in the Cordillera as modes of governmentality. And finally, the paper offers a critical perspective on how institutional archives constitute knowledge production and consumption on the indigenous.

Keywords: indigeneity, CICM mission, colonial, governmentality, archives

The missionaries of the *Congregatio Immaculati Cordis Mariae* (CICM) are widely recognized in the Cordillera for their evangelization efforts. Almost all of the parishes established in the 20th century in the Cordillera, from Baguio City to Apayao, are originally mission stations of the CICM. The CICM missionaries are also known for establishing parochial schools including the well-known Saint Louis University in Baguio which they founded in 1911 thus, becoming the oldest university in the Cordillera.

The CICM is a missionary congregation of religious men instituted by Rev. Fr. Theophile Verbist on November 28, 1862 in Scheut, Brussels, Belgium (CICM 2007). The pioneering members of the congregation

were all Belgians, particularly, from Scheut and it is for this reason that the CICM missionaries have also been called the Scheut Fathers. Fr. Verbist initially intended the congregation to be "a missionary society that would come to the aid of abandoned Chinese children" (CICM 2007, 17). The congregation's motto is "*Cor Unum et Anima Una*" (one heart – one soul) (CICM 2007, 13). To describe what it means to be a CICM missionary, Rev. Fr. Gabriel Dieryck says "if anything marks CICM, it is the call to leave everything for the sake of the mission" (CICM 2007, 14).

The CICM mission is founded upon catechesis or religious instruction. A notable contribution of the CICM mission in this regard is the publication of the work of Bishop Constant Jurgens' "*Katecismo ti Doctrina Christiana*" in 1916 which lays out the doctrines of the Catholic faith in the Ilocano language (CICM 2007). To reinforce their work on catechesis, the CICM missionaries introduced the culture of media through social communication. In Baguio, the CICM missionaries established the Catholic School Press which started publishing *The Little Apostle of the Mountain Province* in 1923 (CICM 2007). They also established the Mountain Province Broadcasting Corporation in 1965 as a platform for Christian message dissemination and this radio station still exists today. Bishop William Brasseur, then the Apostolic Vicar of the Montañosa intended the broadcasting company "to provide religious and educational programs to the four provinces: Benguet, Mountain Province, Ifugao, and Kalinga-Apayao" (CICM 2007, 50). In the succeeding sections, it will also be shown how the CICM missionaries engaged in the "development" of the communities in the mission stations they established.

I called attention to the influence of the CICM missionaries in the Cordillera because in this paper, I intend to inquire on the institutional imbrications of the Catholic Church as manifested in the writings of the CICM missionaries assigned in the Cordillera for the period 1925–1960. Although, on the surface, the CICM missions seem to have constructive contributions to the Cordillera such as in the area of education, I submit this assumption to a more intricate understanding of the institutional engagements of CICM. This inquiry builds on the premise that the Catholic Church was present on colonial surfaces and on the perspective that the Catholic Church was involved in the discourse of delegitimizing, disintegrating and dissolving indigenous ways of knowing, doing, and being. Both of these claims are undergirded by the Catholic Church's exercise of institutional power through her hierarchy. This paper cannot claim to singlehandedly explain the CICM missions and the missionaries' encounters with the indigenous populations of the Cordillera. Nevertheless, it endeavors to provide an entry-point for a critical evaluation of the work of the CICM missionaries in the region.

The paper has three major sections. The first major section presents the Catholic Church in her religio-political dimension, i.e., as a geopolitical figure on coloniality. The second major section, consisting three parts, constitute the core of the paper as it examines the narratives written by the CICM missionaries. The narratives are analyzed through the concept of governmentality as proposed by Michel Foucault. Foucault begins his discourse on governmentality by asserting that government is a general problem. It is more than just the political notion of government as we understand it now. It involves the government of oneself, the government of souls and lives [through religion], government of children [through pedagogy], and the government of the state by the prince [the political notion of government]. (Foucault 1991). In this paper, governmentality as a critical concept is pertinent to the government of souls and lives. Hence, the second major section demonstrates how the narratives of the CICM missionaries elucidate how the missionaries exercised institutional power and governed the souls and lives of those they have evangelized and converted. Finally, the third major section interrogates the source of the narratives presented in this paper which is the archives of the Catholic Church. The overarching question raised in this section is "Where is the indigenous in the Church's archives?"

The Catholic Church: A Geopolitical Figure on Coloniality

The historic interactions of the Church with the indigenous have always been tied with her participation to a consolidated global imperial structure. Naomi Goldenberg (2015) defines religion as vestigial states as "the institutional and cultural remainders of former sovereignties surviving within the jurisdictions of contemporary governments" (280). There are two directions to this participation: the Catholic Church as a vestigial state of the Roman Empire or the "*imperium populi romani*" (Agnew 2010, 40) and the Catholic Church as a vestigial state of "Spain's empire in the Indies" (Schumacher 1979, 1). As to the first direction, Agnew (2010, 41) elaborates, "if the Church had thus inherited the mantle of the Roman Empire and its imperial territoriality, it has also, however, represented a universal mission to bring all souls within the walls of the one true worldwide Church." As to the second direction, Schumacher (1979, 1) elaborates, "the Spanish Church has a character all its own, which, for better or worse, it was to imprint on the nations in America and Asia to which it brought the Christian message." Hence, the Church's missions on the indigenous were not just seen as religious acts but also descriptive of her geopolitics. In this regard, Puntigliano (2019, 1) pointed out, "the creation and adaptation of geopolitical visions are made through internal processes in connection with political and cultural forces around the Church". To put it more concisely, this

gives the impression that the Catholic Church has a "religio-political dimension".

How does one understand this religio-political dimension? Puntigliano (2019, 2) contends that one approaches the dimension by perceiving it as "the political outcome of the Church's territorial (spatial) representations in terms of organizational structure, actions, and political-theological vocabularies." As such, the Church's participation in the colonial project is situated "in the territorial administration and governmentalization of the imperial state, alongside its own aim of becoming a 'global cultural hegemon'" (Agnew 2010, 41) In the religio-political dimension, the Catholic Church legitimized the conquests. Evangelization was not only concomitant to the conquest; it was the legitimizing force to the conquest. For a time, it fell upon the Church's holy pronouncements how lands and territories are to be governed for the "salvation of souls".

In the 15th century, papal bulls or statements with authoritative functions issued by the Pope, were inclined to the "convert-or-be-killed" precept of religious conversion. Illustrative examples are Nicholas V's *Dum Diversas* (While Different) (1452) and *Romanus Pontifex* (The Roman Pontiff) (1455), Calixtus III's *Inter Caetera* (Among other [works]) (1456), and Alexander VI's *Inter Caetera* (1493). A recurring theme on these papal bulls is the presentation of the Catholic Church as an entity that exercised institutional power that had consequences on indigenous populations.

In *Dum Diversas*, Nicholas V grants Alfonso, King of Portugal and the Algarve[1] to "invade, conquer, fight, subjugate the Saracens[2] and pagans, and other infidels and other enemies of Christ." Moreover, the papal bull admonishes that the Saracens and pagans be placed in "perpetual solitude" and admonishes the king and his successors to appropriate lands in the "fight for faith" and limiting rights of the colonized peoples to the land to mere occupancy. *Romanus Pontifex* (1455) echoes the same articulations by admonishing Alfonso and Henry, the Infante of Portugal (also known as Prince Henry the Navigator) to "invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens and pagans whatsoever, and other enemies of Christ wheresoever placed".

Romanus Pontifex also encouraged the transatlantic slave trade involving Africans brought to the New World. According to Okere (as cited in Adiele 2017, 3), "Although these 400 years impoverished Africa to enrich Europe, they also have inflicted on Europe and Christianity guilt and shame eternal. So much for the role of the Church and Churchmen in initiating, encouraging, and blessing the first major injustice that Europe inflicted on Africa." Adiele (2017) contends that encouraging slavery is not the end of the Church's participation as she also profited from the slave trade. With the rise of Spain as a competing colonial power in the conquest of lands outside Europe, the Spanish

monarchs turned to the Church to have the same permission that the Portuguese had. In Alexander VI's *Inter Caetera*, one reads that the objective of conquests is found in "elevating the Catholic faith and the Christian religion, especially in [these] our times, as well as extending and spreading it everywhere, securing the salvation of souls and subduing the barbarous nations and bringing them back to the faith itself".

The following examples serve as means to understand how the Catholic Church has been a legitimizing force to conquests. Elk (2023, 88) raises a compelling question, "What does it mean for the Catholic Church in the Americas to have not only been complicit, but an active participant in the erasure of various Native American peoples' cultures, languages, and spiritual traditions?" Caoili (1999, 19) raises a similar assertion, "the Catholic Church has been a destructive agent to natural worldviews and natural social cohesiveness." The Catholic Church has also leveraged the missions for souvenir collection, particularly, during the 1925 Pontifical Missionary Exhibition. According to Bell (2019) "the exhibition included art and artifacts taken by missions across the Americas, Asia, Oceania, and Africa, and sponsored by Pope Pius XI and with the cooperation of the city of Rome and Italy's fascist dictator Benito Mussolini" (19). The "gifts to the Vatican" were akin to spoils of war, in what Bell has referred to as the "conquest of the Church, part of a long history of Roman triumphal culture" (Bell 2019, 19).

The preceding examples demonstrate how the Catholic Church has been entangled with colonial aims. It would be noted that concomitant to the participation of the Catholic Church in the colonial aims is the *othering* of the indigenous who need to be converted and redeemed in order to be liberated from the bane of savagery. Undeniably, these disruptions are on the guise of evangelization which are inherently colonial (Elk 2023). However, in as early as Alexander VI's *Inter Caetera*, one reads of the Catholic Church's acknowledgment of the capacity of the indigenous to receive Christianity. Alexander VI's *Inter Caetera* states, "and they appear to be ready to embrace the Catholic faith and to be imbued with good morals, and if they are instructed, there is [good] hope for an easy introduction of the name of the Savior, our Lord Jesus Christ in said lands and islands".

Such acknowledgment was further reinforced by Paul III's *Sublimis Deus* (The Sublime God) promulgated in 1537. *Sublimis Deus* was a product of a series of letters sent by friars who worked in the Americas to Paul III. First among these friars is the Dominican, Fray Bernardino de Minaya who sent a letter to Paul III in 1517. According to Hanke (1937, 70), "this Dominican had further advocated that the pope be asked to denounce these crimes in a bull, that fines be levied on persons who persisted in such actions, and that the money thus obtained be used to aid the Indians and to settle in the Indies as colonists a number

of Spanish laborers with their wives." In 1535, the Dominican bishop Julian Garces wrote to Paul III and "lauded the Indians' intelligence and willingness to receive the faith, and declared they were "not turbulent or ungovernable but reverent, shy, and obedient to their teachers" (Hanke 1937, 71). Preceding the *Sublimis Deus* was Paul III's letter to Cardinal Tavera of Toledo on May 29, 1537 which stated, "even though the Indians are not in the bosom of the church, they may not be deprived of their liberty or their possessions… being men and as such capable of receiving the faith and of salvation. They ought not to be destroyed by slavery but rather attracted to the Christian life by preaching and good example" (Hanke 1937, 89).

Paul III's *Sublimis Deus* has the subtitle "On the Enslavement and Evangelization of Indians". It begins with the following declaration:

> The sublime God so loved the human race that He created man in such wise that he might participate, not only in the good that other creatures enjoy, but endowed him with capacity to attain to the inaccessible and invisible Supreme Good and behold it face to face; and since man, according to the testimony of the sacred scriptures, has been created to enjoy eternal life and happiness, which none may obtain save through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, it is necessary that he should possess the nature and faculties enabling him to receive that faith; and that whoever is thus endowed should be capable of receiving that same faith. [. . .] Hence, Christ who is the Truth itself, that has never failed and can never fail, said to the preachers of the faith whom He chose for that office, 'Go ye and teach all nations.' He said all, without exception, for all are capable of receiving the doctrines of the faith.

In summary, the argument in the declaration above states that if the Church deems that the indigenous have freedom and liberty, she recognizes that the indigenous are truly human and not dumb brutes to be enslaved. Consequently, as truly human, the indigenous are inherently capable of receiving Christianity. *Sublimis Deus* was reinforced by the succeeding papal bulls that Paul III promulgated. These are *Altitudo Divini Consilii* (The Height of Divine Counsel) on June 1, 1537, and *Veritas Ipsa* (Truth Itself) on June 9, 1537. In the former, Paul III emphasized the authority of Church bishops, not the *encomenderos* (the landed colonizers), to instruct the indigenous populations on matters of the Catholic faith. In this way, Paul III reaffirmed the coequal authority of both the State represented by the *encomenderos* and the Church represented by the Church bishops. In the latter, Paul III condemned the practice of slavery as enforced by the *encomenderos* and

positioned the Church bishops as staunch defenders of the rights and welfare of the indigenous populations converted to the Catholic faith.

In spite of its noble intention, *Sublimis Deus* was revoked in the following year, 1538, as it came under the overwhelming weight of the economic and political interests of the Spanish crown (Hanke 1937). In 1538, the Spanish conquistadors who also held the position of *encomenderos* beseeched Paul III, the same pope who promulgated *Sublimis Deus*, to revoke the said papal bull. Surprisingly, Paul III agreed. Hanke (1937, 92) sheds light on the matter as, "when Charles [V] made known to [Paul III] his dissatisfaction with the papal pronouncements concerning the Indians, Paul [III] was willing to go far in bowing to Charles' will in the Indies if he could thereby save the papal policy in Europe and could strengthen at the same time the position of his beloved Farnese family in Italy." In a papal brief *Pastorale Officium* (Pastoral Office), Paul III excommunicated the *encomenderos* who were slaveholders of indigenous populations. However, he later promulgated *Non-Indecens Videtur* (Let it not be seen as Indecent), where he claimed that he enacted *Sublimis Deus* and *Pastorale Officium* on the grounds of what he then referred to as knowledge "distorted with circumvention by some prejudice." On the pretext that he promulgated bulls based on "distorted knowledge," Paul III changed his earlier promulgations with *Non-Indecens Videtur* (1538) which in effect withdrew the excommunication of the *encomenderos* and nullified *Pastorale Officium* that earlier enforced their excommunication. By extension, *Non-Indecens Videtur* also nullified *Sublimis Deus*, the principle behind *Pastorale Officium.*

The papal bull *Sublimis Deus* may be contrasted with the (Colegio de San Gregorio) Valladolid Debate. Both are products of the colonial era and delved upon the treatment of European colonizers, particularly, the Spanish and the Portuguese, on the indigenous. The debate was held in 1550-1551 between the Dominican bishop Fray Bartolome de las Casas and the scholar Juan Gines de Sepulveda. Sepulveda argued that the Indians were by nature, slaves. According to Adiele (2017, 157–158), Sepulveda argued, "Indians were slaves of nature and needed to be led and directed by the wiser and superior Spanish race. His proof for this was that Indians were barbarians [eating of the human flesh and offering of human sacrifices], and being so, they are *naturalis servi*." Meanwhile, Fray de las Casas argued that slavery was not justified even when its legitimacy draws from Spanish conquest. Fray de las Casas argued, "The only Spanish Crown's just title to the claim over India and the natives of West Indies [. . .] was papal authority [. . .] on the grounds that papal authority is worldwide authority and that the Christian king has a temporal power over the whole world" (Adiele 2017, 157).

The Valladolid Debate was a significant event as it was debated upon whether or not the indigenous have rights while simultaneously

bringing to the fore of discussion how the Spanish Crown has committed atrocities under the banner of the Church. With Fray de las Casas' staunch argumentation for the Indians during the debate, the practice of unjust slavery was condemned and the Indians were freed from bondage. Fray de las Casas was widely regarded as the "Apostle and liberator" of the Indians (Adiele 2017, 5) until he proposed that in place of the Indians, the Africans could take the place of slaves. Adiele (2017, 56) points out:

> But as the natives of Española were not used to doing this kind of hard jobs [working in sugar and cotton plantations, gold and silver mines] coupled with the outbreak of 'white' epidemics that killed them in their thousands, there arose the need to hold slaves to work in their place. And the lot fell on Black Africans at the suggestion of bishop Bartolome de las Casas who in his bid to liberate the suffering Indians from enslavement suggested that Black Africans should be used to replace the dying Indian population in the slave works at the plantations and on the gold and silver mines.

Essentially, Fray Bartolome de las Casas perpetuated the very practice he condemned and sought to abolish. Similar to Paul III's *Sublimis Deus*, Fray Bartolome de las Casas adopted an inconsistent perspective on the Catholic Church's relations with the indigenous—at one point the Church advocates for the indigenous and at another point, the Church contributes to the perpetuation of systemic injustices towards the indigenous. The inconsistency sheds light on how the Catholic Church, as an institution, was also preoccupied with her self-preservation. In this regard, the Catholic Church speaks to maintain her power, if not, maintain her influence on how power relations are configured in broader geopolitics.

This section has given us three descriptions of the Catholic Church as a geopolitical figure. First, the Catholic Church, in her status as a vestigial state, is inevitably colonial. This means that regardless of the Catholic Church's religious orientations, one cannot undermine how her foundations in society are enmeshed with colonial interests prompted by her interactions with political powers. Second, the Catholic Church has a dual nature, religious and political. In the historical events presented, these two natures overlap and are at times indistinguishable. Interestingly, they mutually legitimize each other, such that a religious position taken by the Catholic Church defines her political participation and vice versa. Third, the Catholic Church offers conversion as a way out of savagery but tolerates the practice of slavery. While the Catholic Church, particularly in *Sublimis Deus* and the Valladolid Debate raised awareness on the atrocities of the conquests, she has also nonetheless

tolerated slavery to fulfill self-preservation. What is common in these three descriptions of the Catholic Church is the extensive impact of her religio-political dimension in her relations with the indigenous. This was the state of affairs in the 15th to 19th century Catholic Church. In the next major section, I look towards the state of affairs in the early 20th century Catholic Church, with particular attention to the work of the CICM missionaries in the Cordillera.

The Arrival of the CICM Missionaries: New Colonial Project?

In raising the question whether or not the arrival of the CICM missionaries in the Philippines is a new colonial project, one has to get acquainted first with which colonial surfaces are pertinent to the question. There are two colonial surfaces, one is Belgium's own colonial past, and the other is the arrival of the CICM missionaries within American coloniality in the Philippines. The first colonial surface deals with Belgium's colonial interests in the Philippines. Reports of the Belgian consul in Manila, named Edouard Andre, in 1898 informed the Belgian government of the potential enterprises in the Philippines (Blumberg 1972, 337). In response to the reports, King Leopold II ordered Count Lichtervelde, Belgian Minister to the United States "to do as much as was possible to persuade the Washington cabinet to appoint Belgian administrators to govern [the Philippines]" (Favereau to Lichtervelde, September 12, 1898 in Blumberg 1972, 337). The religio-political dimension of the Catholic Church is manifested in how, "for obvious reasons, Lichtervelde avoided describing the Belgianization of the Filipino civil service as an end in itself. Instead, he laid emphasis upon the advantage which would accrue to the church if the government of the islands were entrusted to the subject of a small, neutral, Roman Catholic state" (Blumberg 1972, 339). Unfortunately, all efforts of the Belgian government were thwarted as the United States had no interest in a shared government with Belgium even if it was on the guise of promoting the interests of the former Catholic subjects of Spain.

King Leopold II then looked towards Africa, particularly, Congo. In this regard, "King Leopold applied to the Belgian Parliament for authorization to accept the position of sovereign of the new-born State" (Prothero 1920, 31). Interestingly, "this assent was accorded without much difficulty by the two Houses on April 28 and 30, 1885, but on the express condition that the connection between Belgium and the Congo territories remained a personal one" (Prothero 1920, 31). This takes us to a reading of King Leopold II's government in Congo. In an Open Letter to Leopold II in July 18, 1890, Colonel Geo W. Williams of the United States of America wrote:

> On the 25th of February 1884, a gentleman, who has sustained an intimate relation to your Majesty for many years, and who then wrote as expressing your sentiments, addressed a letter to the United States which the following language occurs: "It may be safely asserted that no barbarous people have ever so readily adopted the fostering care of benevolent enterprise, as have the tribes of the Congo, and never was there a more honest and practical effort made to increase their knowledge and secure their welfare."

The letter to the United States which was initially intended to recognize Congo as an independent state with King Leopold II as its sovereign invokes the words of coloniality—"barbarous," "fostering care," "benevolent enterprise," and "honest and practical effort." These words give the normative impression that the indigenous are always seen in a lower tier of development and it is the colonizer's duty to raise them into civilization.

In response to the letter, Colonel Williams conducted a personal visit to Congo and was surprised to find that in spite of the letter's promises, there was no hospital; there were surgeons but with limited medical stores and no quarters except for a bed of bamboo poles without blankets. It was not, however, the miserable medical conditions that bothered Colonel Williams. He was bothered by the inhumane conditions by which the Belgian government dealt with the people of Congo. In his open letter to Leopold II dated July 8, 1890, Williams said:

> I was anxious to see to what extent the natives had "*adopted the fostering care*" of your Majesty's "benevolent enterprise" (?) and I was doomed to bitter disappointment. Instead of the natives of the Congo "adopting a fostering care" of your Majesty's Government, they everywhere complain that their land has been taken from them by force; neither love nor respect t[h]e Government and its flag. Your Majesty's Government has sequestered their land, burned their towns, stolen their property, enslaved their women and children, and committed other crimes too numerous to mention in detail.

Colonel Williams' letter went on to castigate the government of King Leopold II for not providing for the education, industrialization, and labor employment of the people of Congo. Interestingly, from one colonial nation to another, this response indicates what is conveniently omitted. Although it reprimands an apparently irresponsible colonial government, it does not reject colonization as a structure and practice altogether.

Where then are Belgian religious missionaries situated in Belgium's colonial past? In King Leopold II's letter to a group of Belgian missionaries in Congo in 1883, he wrote:

> The task that is given to you is very difficult. You will go certainly to evangelize, but your priority must be Belgium interests. Your principal mission in the Congo is never to teach the savages to know God, this they know already. They speak and submit to a Mungu, one Nzambi, one Nzakomba, and what else I don't know. Your essential role is to facilitate the task of administrators and industrialists, which means you will go to interpret the gospel in the way it will be the best to protect our interests in that part of the world. [. . .] You have to make them abandon everything which gives them the courage to affront us. Evangelize the savages so that they stay forever in submission to the white colonialists, so they never revolt against the restraints they are undergoing. Recite every day, "Happy are those who are weeping because the kingdom of God is for them".

The excerpt from King Leopold II's letter clearly manifests the religio-political dimension of the Catholic Church. The letter stipulates that while the addressees are "religious" missionaries, they are to be sent to promote "political" interests. Furthermore, King Leopold II refers to Church pronouncements as he legitimizes the necessity for the perpetual submission of the indigenous populations for the sake of protecting Belgian interests.

Moving on to the second colonial surface, the CICM missionaries arrived within the timeframe of American coloniality in the Philippines. As the Philippines was liberated from Spain, the question of self-determination confronted the Catholic Church in the Philippines. Because the Philippines was no longer a colony of Spain, can the native clergy, on their own, lead the Church? Archbishop Michael J. O'Doherty of Manila argued that the friars' mistake in their policy in governing the Filipinos lie in thinking that the Philippines will always be a colony of Spain and that they will always lead the Church structure. Two solutions were explored. The first was proposed by Archbishop Placide Chapelle of New Orleans (the Apostolic Delegate of the Vatican). It "ordered all friars, except those who were actually sick, to remain in Manila, and hoped to be able to send them back to the parishes" (Schumacher 1979, 299). The second, proposed by William Howard Taft, head of the Second Philippine Commission, indicates awareness of anti-Spanish friar sentiments. Taft proposed to negotiate with the Vatican to send priests of other nationalities to the Philippines "whose

presence would not be dangerous to public order" (Schumacher 1979, 307). In this regard, the arrival of the CICM missionaries was prompted by the Vatican's two-pronged directive, "evangelize, i.e. to preach the Gospel to convert infidels or non-Christians" (Medina 2004, 110) and to "prevent the Americans from converting the 'natives' to Protestantism" (CICM 2007, 99).

On February 14, 1906, Msgr. Ambrosio Agius, the Apostolic Delegate to the Philippines officially requested for the CICM missionaries, but the missionaries only came in November 1907 (Depre 1992). It took them more than a year to finally decide to come to the Philippines. Explaining the delay, Rev. Fr. Eugeen Flameygh and Rev. Fr. Pedro Peñaranda point out:

> It was not an easy decision to make for the CICM which was founded as an exclusionary mission Congregation. The Superior General could not respond right away; he needed to consult the confreres and the concerned authorities in the Vatican for such a major shift in their missionary orientation. Could members be sent to a Catholic country? What about logistics? The Congregation was already spread over two vast mission fields demanding ever more personnel (CICM 2007, 23).

As indicated above, the difficulty of the CICM in accepting the request for their mission in the Philippines was due to its foundational principle as an "exclusionary mission congregation". This principle means that the CICM missionaries are to be sent only in areas where there are no baptized Catholics. However, in the case of the Philippines, there are already a significant number of baptized Catholics through the Spanish missionaries so the acceptance to come to the Philippines was really a shift in their missionary orientation. In spite of their initial indecision, the first CICM missionaries arrived composed of: the Reverend Fathers Pieter Dierickx, Florimund Carlu, Albert Dereume, Seraphin Devesse, Christian Hulsboch, Constant Jurgens, Jules Sepulchre, Oktaaf Vandewalle, and Henri Verbeeck (Medina 2004; CICM 2007; Centeno and Peralta 2010). CICM (2007) notes, "Frs. Vandewalle, Devesse and Verbeeck were appointed for Baguio in deference to the request of the Bishop [Dougherty of Vigan]. Five went to Cervantes, the old capital of the mountains, to serve a region that extended to Bontoc" (25). The CICM missionaries arrived steadily in the succeeding years, ten in 1908, thirteen in 1909, and by 1912, there were at least forty CICM missionaries in the Philippines (Medina 2004).

What were the circumstances during the arrival of the CICM missionaries in the Cordillera? Prior to the arrival of the CICM missionaries in the Philippines, the mission procurator of the CICM

mission in Shanghai, Fr. Alfons Decock, was sent to the Philippines to explore the territories where the CICM missionaries were to be sent (Depre 1992). He arrived in the Philippines on March 24, 1907. The territories to be given to the CICM missionaries included: Lepanto-Bontoc, Benguet, and Nueva Vizcaya. In his exploration, Fr. Decock included in his report, data from the Official Census of 1903 indicating the population and the number of Christians and non-Christians within the territories of Lepanto-Bontoc and Benguet. His report, according to Depre (1992, 24) is as follows:

LEPANTO	POPULATION	CHRISTIANS	NON-CHRISTIANS
Angaki and Surroundings	2,866	311	2,555
Cervantes and Surroundings	2,815	1,272	1,543
Mankayan and Surroundings	3,872	483	3,389
Kayan and Surroundings	3,441	91	3,350
Sabangan and Surroundings	10,281	218	10,063
BONTOC			
Sagada and Surroundings	6,155	55	6,100
Bontoc and Surroundings	7,373	211	7,162
Sakasakan and Surroundings	3,562	24	3,538
Basao and Surroundings	9,504	37	9,467
BENGUET			
La Trinidad and Surroundings	1,926	1,926	
Daklan and Surroundings	954	16	938
Kapangan and Surroundings	1,394	2	1,392

Fr. Decock's report on the data of the Christian population cited here are from Augustinian missionary documents dating 1896, with five priests who worked in Lepanto, four in Bontoc, and three in Benguet (Depre 1992). The exploratory visit of Fr. Decock was significant as it did not only ascertain the feasibility of the missionary work of the CICM missionaries but also helped him keep the CICM missionaries informed about the actual conditions in the territories to be given to them. Unfortunately, Fr. Decock was only able to visit Lepanto-Bontoc because of unfavorable road conditions. In his letter sent on June 7, 1907, he wrote, "We [CICM missionaries] can go ahead: true missionaries face a fertile field where they will be able to reap a rich harvest. They will meet with difficulties, but whoever succeeded without pain?" (Depre 1992, 29).

The CICM "Missionary Language" in the Cordillera

In the previous section, I delved on the colonial surfaces within which the CICM missionaries arrived in the Cordillera. In this section, I now interrogate the methods and motives of the CICM missionaries. In my reading of the CICM narratives, there is an apparent pattern of evangelization. The CICM missionaries immersed themselves in the human conditions of the Igorots with the aim to convert them to Christianity and save their souls. In an article published in *The Baguio-Mountain Sentinel* titled, "Golden Jubilee of the I.H.M. Mission Society", an account is given about the initial encounters of the missionaries:

> When the first Belgian Fathers arrived, paganism prevailed all over the Mountain Province. And with paganism, hatred, revenge, and murder. After fifty years, half of the people is converted to the Catholic Faith. Churches dominate the valleys and school buildings, [bringing] the blessings of culture and civilization to these regions where once darkness and ignorance held their sway (9 November 1957, 2).

According to Bautista, Sr. (1979), "the remarkable success of the CICM Fathers in the evangelization of the Mountain Provinces could be attributed to the fact that they endeavored to live with the people and they set out to master the language of the groups to which they were assigned and to understand their customs and ways of life" (32). However, this is not devoid of contestations as the CICM missionaries did not always have a receptive appreciation of the indigenous whom they evangelized, particularly with practices that are not in accordance with Christian teachings. For instance, "the fighting lance and ax were to be taken from the hands of belligerent tribes; their hunting for heads was to be stopped through Christian conviction and love for their neighbor" (*The Baguio-Mountain Sentine*l, 5 September 1953). Bautista, Sr. (1979) notes that the anthropologist, Felix Keesing, once quoted CICM priest, Rev. Fr. Alfonso Claerhoudt who said, "One great principle of our mission is never to forbid anything without giving something to take its place. We ask them to change rather than do away with their feasts and customs" (32).

The initial impressions of the CICM missionaries on the material conditions of the indigenous to whom they were sent to evangelize may be gleaned from the following narratives which are all published in *The Little Apostle of the Mountain Province*:

> The Igorrotes… are scattered over the many hills and mountains… living beyond the reach of civilization. They are cultivating potatoes and vegetables which they sell to the

> Christians, they also cut some timber used for the construction of houses… They… come to town without any clothes but the traditional breech cloth, made of the bark of a tree with their long hair in disorder and their bodies dirty as dirty can be (Portelange 1928, 12).
>
> They are poor, these children of the Mountain Province, most of them without even the means to provide for a decent cover for their body. Have you ever seen the miserable shacks in which most of them live? Do you know that they live mostly on *camotes* and rice with some vegetables and only now and then a little meat? (Vandewalle 1924, 15).
>
> I saw the Pingad women, with baskets on their head, run down the hill in Indian line, many of them with a baby tied on their back... At home, they will eat when mother comes back with a load of *camotes*. When? Well, sometimes, in the afternoon; in the meantime, children and old people at home may satisfy their hunger with what was left of the previous day, otherwise they themselves have to find something to gnaw at breakfast and lunch time (De Samber 1939, 336).

The raw observations of the CICM missionaries, as cited above, unanimously point to the fact that the Igorots were poor. Poverty is read here from the European orientations of the CICM missionaries who were all from Belgium, i.e., poor with no decent shelter, no decent clothes (almost naked in spite of weather conditions) and inadequate food except for *camotes*.

As to the emphasis in the CICM mission, I find Carlos Medina's *Missionaries and Development*, published in 2004, as an apt description. Medina provides a cogent response to two claims made by Frank Lawrence Jenista in his book, *The White Apos: American Governors of the Cordillera Central*, published in 1987. The claims are as follows: first, that the CICM missionaries were preoccupied with the salvation of souls, which Medina refers to as *spiritual development* (Jenista 1987; Medina 2004); second, that the CICM missionaries "only became" concerned with the non-spiritual at a later time, which Medina refers to as *material development* (Jenista 1987; Medina 2004). Medina's response to Jenista's claims probes into the theory and praxis of the CICM missions in the Cordillera. Medina (2004, 132-133) asserts, "the missionaries understood their work as the salvation of souls. That was their *theory*. But they realized that they could save souls only if they civilized people. That was their *praxis*." Medina's work asserts that in evaluating the CICM missions, one cannot follow a piecemeal evaluation. Rather, one has to navigate through the CICM's institutional positionality in

doing missions, at the same time, critically appraise the individual CICM missionaries' perspectives on the tasks they carried out in the Cordillera.

Prompted by the emphasis of their mission, the CICM missionaries established structures which may be considered to be directed to two interconnected aspects: structures that seek to address the *pagan* environment characterized by perceived superstitions, and structures that reconfigure the consciousness of the indigenous into a way of life resonant with Catholic doctrines. The CICM missionaries regarded the *pagan* environment of the indigenous as heavily superstitious. In this regard, the CICM missionaries felt they had to eradicate what they regarded as apparent fear which they thought underlies indigenous religious belief systems. This is particularly evident in the following narratives: (a) At Barlig, Marcel Ghysebrechts (1935, 359) witnessed how the pagans tried to appease the deities in vain as they did not know they had pneumonia; (b) still in Barlig, Ghysebrechts (1935, 360-361) witnessed how the pagans offered to their *anitos* without knowing their relative is dying from typhoid fever; (c) De Brabandere (1933, 65-72) observed "instead of calling a doctor or a sanitary inspector, he will prefer the offering of a sacrifice, the celebration of a *cañao*;" (d) Claerhoudt (1925, 210-211) also witnessed the killing of pigs and carabaos for sacrifice in the hope of relatives being cured from their illnesses; and (e) L. Lindemans' account of how he freed the indigenous of Lubuagan of "their superstitious 'devils,' such as feathers, bones, eggshells, and bristles by taking them away across the river" (Medina 2004, 64-65). These narratives led the CICM missionaries to remark that the fear which apparently reinforces the indigenous religious belief system is a tyranny to the indigenous (Lambrecht 1962; *The Little Apostle of the Mountain Province* 1938, Medina 2006).

The CICM missionaries also established a triad in every mission station: a chapel or church (depending on population), a convent (or the priest's living quarters), and separate dormitories for boys and girls which also functioned as a school. Medina (2004, 60) points out that "among the structures introduced by the missionaries were dormitories that replaced the sleeping places for boys and girls—the *ato* and the *olog*, respectively." The CICM missionaries believed that the place had to be purified of these sleeping areas as they were "dangerous to the virtue of the youth" (Medina 2004, 60).

The CICM missionaries perceived paganism as correlative to the dire material conditions of the indigenous. Hence, to be able to exercise their *theory*, salvation of souls, the CICM missionaries would have to address not only the dire material conditions but the *pagan* environment, their praxis. In an article published in *The Baguio-Mountain Sentinel* titled, *Golden Jubilee of the I.H.M. Mission Society*, (9 November 1957, 8), one reads, "the missionaries realized that medical activities

are a very important factor in the civilization and Christianization of Igorots, and they understand moreover that, if the Igorots should go on spending all that they have in sacrifices to their many deities and spirits in case of sickness, they can never improve their condition of extreme poverty." The CICM missionaries saw that the dire material conditions of the indigenous are the biggest stumbling blocks to their task of evangelization. Consider, for instance, the following exchange among the nine missionaries from Ifugao, Bontoc, and Kalinga, who talked about the progress of their missions among the indigenous. J. De Samber (1938, 58) gives an account of the said exchange as follows:

> "It seems to me," said a Bontoc one, "that we came here simply to save individual souls and not to make Christian this Mountain Province". "We are saving souls, indeed," observed another one, "but to make the Mountain Province a Christian province is a hopeless case altogether." "And why?", I ventured to question. They gave their reasons and they were right. The Gospel is preached to the poor, but the Igorotte tribes in general are not poor, but miserable. The Igorrote standard of living is too low to go side by side with a decent Christian life.

In other narratives, some of the CICM missionaries even remarked how establishing a chapel or a mission station is unthinkable in such miserable conditions. An article in *The Little Apostle of the Mountain Province* (1933, 138) even goes as far as to say that the "poor Igorots [are] certainly the poorest inhabitants of the Philippines [. . .] perhaps, the poorest pagans on earth." At this juncture, it is important to clarify that the usage of the term, *pagan*, here is in relation to the CICM missions' offer of a civilized life. In other words, the indigenous are referred to as *pagans* as their way of life and their worldview are judged as primitive in contrast to the "civilized" life by CICM, Western standards.

The CICM missionaries also established structures which sought to promote material welfare of the indigenous. The missionaries' efforts to promote material welfare included medical, food, and clothing relief, trades, and services assistance. In the October 1954 *Data Concerning Activities of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Mission Society* in the Mountain Province, published in *The Apostle of the Mountain Province* (1954, 20-21), one reads:

> Although the operation of free dispensaries is quite expensive, the missionaries realize that their medical activities are a very important factor in the civilization and Christianization of the Igorots, and they understand moreover that, if the Igorots should go on spending all that they have in sacrifices to their many deities in case of sickness, they can never improve their

> condition of extreme poverty. For this reason, [the missionaries] resign themselves to the sacrifice of those extra expenses.

According to Van Zuyt (1925), the CICM missionaries were the closest person to a medical professional readily accessible to the indigenous. The American colonial government had traveling clinics and traveling nurses but it was the dispensary established by the CICM missionaries that effectively provided medical relief among the indigenous. In a number of cases (Ghysebrechts 1930, 206; David 1950, 29), the Igorots became acquainted with the CICM missionaries not because of the faith that they brought but because of the medical relief that they offered. In this regard, Julian de Witte (1949, 10) remarked, "the belief in the *Anitos* had lost its hold on the natives of the Maducayan—thanks to Atabrine and Santonine."

The CICM missionaries also conducted food relief. Their companions in this missionary work were the *Immaculati Cordis Mariae* (ICM) Sisters.[3] Consider the following narratives, the first one is published in *The Little Apostle of the Mountain Province* while the second one is published in *The Apostle:*

> We have now in our dormitory 50 boys to whom we can do much good, but it costs the mission one cavan of rice a week. We ask ourselves anxiously if we shall be able to provide their needs steadily. Fish or meat we cannot afford to give them anymore, except on some rare occasions. We plan to have the boys raise rabbits as industrial work! This would help us partly to solve our problem (De Boeck 1949, 23).

> They make frequent trips to the barrios to bring relief goods to the impoverished people. They help them in their difficulties and lend a willing ear to their problems… Their natural motherliness, their supernatural virtues, their character as religious, their training in the art of teaching and in the care of the weak and the sick—all these make them capable of filling out the picture of charity, making it more complete than a priest can do by himself (*The Apostle* 1966, 6-7).

What is evident in these narratives is that as the CICM missionaries and the ICM sisters recognize the poverty of the communities, they sought to address it with charity. This charity entailed sacrifices from the missionaries and the sisters with most, if not all, shelling out from their own money to buy food for their food relief initiatives.

According to De Brabandere (1933), clothing was actually an intersection of both the American colonial government and the CICM missionaries' efforts to promote the material welfare of the Igorots. The CICM missionaries observed that it was not the case that the Igorots

disliked clothing and preferred going around naked but that they were too poor to even afford one. An article in the *Little Apostle of the Mountain Province* (1925, 200) titled "Mailbag of the Little Apostle", mentions that missionaries like Fr. De Snick and Fr. Jozef Poot solicited clothes for the Igorots. Moreover, the CICM missionaries also solicited money for buying sewing machines used to teach girls to sew clothes (Quintelier 1925; Ghijssens 1931, 73-74). The [Episcopalian] Friars of the Atonement, also known as the Graymoors, were benefactors to the efforts of the CICM missionaries and even joined them in a "campaign of decency [which] meant to introduce to the Benguet Cordillerans the custom of wearing trousers" (Medina 2004, 76). Medina (2004) notes that the clothing relief of the CICM missionaries was attributed to a lawyer from Pampanga, Don Marcelino Aguas.

Aside from clothing, the CICM missionaries also sought to broaden the source of livelihood among the Igorots. The CICM missionaries trained and assisted the Igorots in vocational courses which initially aimed to seek their cooperation in the building of chapels in the mission stations and its accompanying schools and dormitories (Medina 2004). The CICM missionaries taught carpentry, brick-making, rock quarry and stoneworks ((Medina 2004; Raymakers 1936; Van Zuyt 1925). When the CICM missionaries were cut-off from their benefactors abroad due to World War I, the CICM missionaries relied on the trades they taught the Igorots for sustenance. Fathers Florimund Carlu and Clotilde Vandeputte introduced broom-making, furniture-making, tanning, carpentry, silversmithing, dress and shoemaking, and many others (De Brabandere 1938).

In spite of these structures which addressed the "pagan" environment, the CICM missionaries found that religious conversion among the indigenous cannot be fully realized without a reconfiguration of their consciousness. Hence, there was a need to "[raise] them from their *pagan* orientations, into the dignity of a Christian life" (*Apostle of the Mountain Province* 1960, 18-19). There were two factors which hindered religious conversion among the indigenous. The first factor was the unsustained conversion of the indigenous through the initiatives of the Spanish missionaries; hence, the CICM missionaries had to re-evangelize the indigenous (*The Baguio-Mountain Sentinel*, 9 November 1957). The second factor was the persisting strong influence from the elders. In some narratives, conversion to the Catholic faith became burdensome as the converts tend to be considered outcasts in their own tribe or even fined for the non-observance of reciprocity in labor due to Sunday mass obligations or the non-observance of pagan days of rest (*The Little Apostle of the Mountain Province* 1940, 383-384). One could also refer to Rev. Fr. Constant Jurgens' successful preparation and baptism of three Bontoc boys named Padit, Aguinguinet, and Nullo only for them to return the rosaries, catechism books, and the gifts the day

after their baptism (Depre 1992). Hantson (1936) contended that these not only show the strong adherence to the indigenous religious belief system but also to the "[weakness in standing] firm against the criticism of his fellow-Igorrotes" (264-265).

Having realized the two factors causing the return of the converts to their indigenous beliefs, the CICM missionaries sought to evangelize (and educate) the youth primarily through the dormitories, in the hope that the youth will be "the missionaries' bridge to the pagan people and raise them as future pillars of the Catholic community" (Castro 1959; Bandonill 1958). Consider the following narratives which are all published in *The Little Apostle of the Mountain Province*:

> It is almost needless to say that the children are the hope of a mission. These little ones can be educated in the Christian religion, and being the adults of tomorrow, they form later on Christian families wherein true Christian life has the upperhand and is well rooted (*The Little Apostle of the Mountain Province*, 1939, 11-12).

> Our missionaries in Lubuagan have well profited by this disposition of the Kalinga people: they have seen from the very beginning that up-to-date schools was the open way to bring Christian civilization into Kalingaland (De Brabandere 1940, 160)

> What is really consoling is the good spirit that characterizes our boys and girls at school: the real Christian spirit, a spirit of faith and self-denial. We have now 348 children enrolled in our elementary grades. They have come here from all parts of the mission, nearly all by themselves, without campaign on our part: an undeniable sign that our school gives satisfaction. Some of them have come from far-distant barrios where we have not gone as yet: Ayanga, Obuag, etc. As it is our duty to extend our missionary action to those barrios as soon as circumstances will allow, we shall be able to rely on these children as "kernel" (De Boeck 1949, 23).

In these narratives, it can be surmised that the dormitories gave rise to a new generation of the indigenous, a generation that is at the crossroads of the customary ways and the Christian education provided by the missionaries. The dormitories established by the CICM missionaries also served as workshops for different trades. An illustrative example is the dormitory at Campo Filipino (in Baguio City) established in 1917 where boys and girls were taught wood carving, carpentry, tailoring, and shoemaking (Bautista, Sr. 1979). The dormitories foreshadowed

decent cottages for the indigenous where the educated indigenous would have a different standard of living.

Missionary Encounters as Modes of Governmentality

After a thorough presentation of the CICM "missionary" language in the preceding section, I now proceed to analyze the CICM missionaries' methods and motives as modes of governmentality. Michel Foucault (1991, 87) elaborates on governmentality as follows:

> How to govern oneself, how to be governed, how to become the best possible governor—all these problems, in their multiplicity and intensity, seem to me to be characteristic of the sixteenth century, which lies, to put it schematically, at the crossroads of two processes: the one which, shattering the structures of feudalism, leads to the establishment of the great territorial, administrative and colonial states; and that totally different movements which, with the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, raises the issue of how one must be spiritually ruled and led on this earth in order to achieve eternal salvation.

In relation to this paper, one has to bear in mind that although the CICM missionaries were not directly part of the American colonial government in the Philippines, this fact is insufficient to argue that the CICM missions did not constitute a colonial project. With Foucault's notion of governmentality, the CICM missions fall under the government of souls and lives. Integral to the perspective that the CICM mission is on colonial surfaces is Birnbaum's (2015) assertion that for religion to actually influence, it has to be *recognizable* to prevailing social structures. Kramer (1938, 342 as cited in Ogubando 2012, 54) points out, "the missionary is a revolutionary and he has to be so, for to preach and plant Christianity means to make a frontal attack on the beliefs, the customs, the apprehension of life and the world, and by implication (because tribal religions are primary social realities) on the social structures."

In colonialism, the *recognizability* of religion aided the restructuring of society through *conquista spiritual* (spiritual conquest) (Dulay 2022; Skrabania 2021). In the case of Spanish colonialism, Dulay (2022, 2050) argued that the Church was a state-builder, i.e. "the Catholic missions proxied for the colonial state and the presence of the colonial mission implied the presence of the state itself." This was affirmed in the Manila Synod (1582-1586) where it was declared "the Spanish king had not come to rule the Philippines by inheritance nor by donation nor by just war. The legitimacy of the Spanish rule could only be found in the evangelization of the pagan natives" (Aguilan 2011, 4).

In the case of the CICM missions and the American colonial government, it could be argued that the success of the civilizing efforts of the American colonial government were complemented by the initiatives of the CICM missionaries. As a matter of fact, Finin (2005, 64) remarked, "many of the missionaries' objectives were consistent with those of the American government. Cessation of headhunting, introduction of formal education, and the construction of infrastructure were equally important for missionaries and colonial officials alike." Interestingly, in a letter by Dean Worcester, then the Secretary of the Interior for the Philippine Islands, to Bishop Dougherty, he wrote, "they [CICM missionaries] have proven most useful for the tasks which the government is attempting to further for the benefit of the peoples of the mountains and it is obvious that they themselves would like to be of assistance whenever they can" (Depre 1992, 45). In another letter to one of the CICM missionaries who arrived in 1907, Worcester wrote, "I for one know and I am happy to assure you and your co-workers that you have been for us most valuable assistants in the missions we have in common" (Depre 1992, 46-47).

How does one make sense of these missionary works as modes of governmentality? In Foucault (1991, 93), one reads:

> The things with which in this sense, government is to be concerned are in fact men, but men in their relations, their links, their imbrication with those other things which are wealth, resources, means of subsistence, the territory with its specific qualities, climate, irrigation, fertility, etc.; men in their relation to that other kinds of things, customs, habits, ways of acting and thinking etc.; lastly, men in their relation to that other kind of things, accidents and misfortunes such as famine, epidemics, death, etc.

I refer back to the *theory*, salvation of souls, and *praxis*, civilization of peoples, that Medina pointed out as I ponder upon the missionary works as modes of governmentality. In doing so, one has to bear in mind that these works are no longer just to be read as religious acts. They have to be read also as processes by which the CICM missionaries exercised the government of the soul and lives. In relation to the block quotation above, the missionary works were directed to "men in relation to customs, habits, ways of acting, and thinking, etc." Hence, the CICM missionaries' narratives are not simply their initial impressions and/or observations instead, the CICM missionaries point to how they have governed material conditions in order to turn them into conditions conducive for religious conversion. Their notes on poverty were not only accounts of material backwardness they saw among the indigenous; these were notes by which the CICM missionaries legitimized their

presence as catalysts of civilization. In other words, the narratives justified their continual presence among the indigenous as they were raising them "into the dignity of the Christian life." Thus, the CICM missionaries, in the narratives presented, have positioned themselves as benefactors of material welfare. The motive, however, is not only to meet physiological and economic needs. The missionary works in the form of medical, food, clothing relief, and livelihood projects alongside the dormitories are means to an end which is sustained religious conversion.

Where is the Indigenous in the Church's Archives?

Undeniably, the narratives on the indigenous presented in this paper are from the non-indigenous, CICM missionaries' perspective. The narratives on the initial encounters of the CICM missionaries with the indigenous point to the fact that they observed, "to be indigenous is to be materially poor, to be miserable." In reading the narratives, one cannot miss that the missionary works are always drawn to the CICM missionaries' task to evangelize. For instance, the CICM mission's emphasis on education was built on the proposition that "a better education means a less miserable life and more efforts to live according to a higher standard" (Vandewalle 1924, 15; *The Baguio-Mountain Sentinel*, 9 August 1958). As a matter of fact, the missionaries consider the schools they have established as "a great asset in the Christianization of the Mt. Province" (*The Baguio-Mountain Sentinel*, 9 August 1958). One would recall how the CICM missionaries made use of dormitories in aid of evangelization turning the indigenous youth into partners. Could it be possible that the CICM missions never really outgrew the colonial surfaces from which they were called upon for the task of evangelization? In this regard, Cura (2002, 127) raised a valid question, "has CICM educational service upheld the dignity of their indigenous cultural identity or has it brought about cultural alienation for them?"

Within the parameters of evangelization, Medina (1999-2000, 6) raises a compelling question, "Did the CICM missionaries express condescension toward indigenous Filipinos?" Medina (1999-2000, 60-61) answers his own inquiry as follows:

> If the missionaries were condescending at all, such an attitude seems to be a function of their ecclesiology and missiology rather than of their anthropology. One cannot be more explicit about this issue than Godfried Lambrecht who does not regard the Gaddang as inferior because they have been taught Catholicism. The first goal of the CICM was to send missionaries exclusively to convert pagan peoples. Such a goal reflects the pre-Vatican II concept that the Roman Catholic Church alone is

> the one, true Church and that it is identical with the Kingdom of God. In other words, the missionaries were also products of the religious ideology of their time.

One may infer from the preceding quotation that the CICM missionaries approached their mission among the indigenous in both Catholic and European orientations. The narratives presented in the preceding sections, however, point to the fact that in spite of these orientations, the CICM missionaries were also cognizant of the conditions, challenges, and circumstances of the indigenous.

One could argue that CICM education is inevitably a forgetfulness of being indigenous but one cannot be dismissive of how CICM education enabled the indigenous youth "to work for the spiritual and material upliftment of their respective tribes" (Medina 1959, 3). One can take a look at the fruits of the CICM missionaries' laborious promotion of material welfare among the indigenous alongside their task of evangelization. An article in *The Baguio Mountain Sentinel* (21 May 1955, 4) titled, "The Catholic Mission of Bontoc" points out that:

> Among some of the prominent Igorot products of the Catholic Mission of Bontoc: Jose Fagkhangang, constitutional delegate and ex-deputy governor of Apayao; William Khattel, warden, provincial jail, Bontoc; Julio Angawa, district nurse and prominent member of the community of Banaue, Ifugao; Felix Diaz, ex-representative and ex-governor, Mt. Province; Louis Claver, ex-provincial board member and ex-deputy governor.

It is clear that above anything else, the CICM missionaries came to evangelize but their missionary spirit and heart led them to sow not only seeds of faith among the indigenous. Hence, while colonial surfaces give a background to the arrival of the CICM missionaries, their actions and initiatives alongside the reception of the indigenous is the ultimate witness on whether or not they have outgrown the said colonial surfaces.

As I now turn to the final discussion in this paper, an overarching question emerges, "Is the interaction with CICM missionaries integral to what it means to be indigenous in the Cordillera?" As far as the presentation of the narratives in this paper goes, the answer appears to be in the affirmative because much of what is known about the indigenous are written by the CICM missionaries. This perspective can be understood in three ways: (i) the CICM missionaries, through their writings, defined what it means to be indigenous in the Cordillera; (ii) as there are interactions between the CICM missionaries and the indigenous, the interactions are not just part of history, it is also part of how the indigenous way of life has evolved over the years; and (iii) one

cannot be indigenous in the Cordillera unless one has an encounter with the CICM missionaries. This paper aims to unsettle this perspective. If the CICM narratives on the indigenous constitute a glorification of the Catholic Church, how does one also recognize indigenous subjectivities?

The three ways to understand the perspective highlight how the knowledge of the indigenous gleaned from the CICM writings in the Catholic Church's archives has positioned the Catholic Church as an indispensable actor in the narrative or constitution of indigeneity in the Cordillera. At this juncture, I find pertinent Foucault's thoughts on power relations. Foucault (1983-1984, 2-3) asserts that due attention has to be given also to "the type of act by which the subject *manifests* himself when speaking the truth [. . .], thinks of himself and is recognized by others as speaking the truth." In rereading the narratives of the CICM missionaries, one finds that the indigenous have become *objects of transformation* while the CICM missionaries are the *cultivators of transformation*. In this dynamic, the indigenous as objects of transformation are silent, voiceless, simply receptive. As the narratives are written by the CICM missionaries themselves, the agency highlighted is their own. In short, the narratives leave out the agency of the indigenous as encountered by the CICM missionaries. Moreover, the fact that these narratives are stored in the Catholic Church's archives perpetuate the recognition of agency of the CICM missionaries, but not the indigenous. Thus, the indigenous in the Catholic Church's archives are silent, voiceless, simply receptive, and continue to be seen only as *objects of transformation*.

Furthermore, Foucault states that knowledge is situated in an interplay of *aletheia*, *politeia*, and *ethos*. These three have their corresponding disciplines: (a) truth as a mode of veridiction concerns the discourse of knowledge; (b) power concerns the problem of governing others, but also [. . .] oneself, and (c) *ethos* concerns the "ethical elaboration of a subject." (Foucault 1983-1984, 346). The objective of the discourse I offer is not to malign the works of the CICM missionaries. The objective of the discourse is to invite the readers into a rereading of the CICM missionaries and realize that it is only the CICM missionaries' voices that are heard and recognized in the narratives. The narratives of the CICM missionaries may speak of the truth (*aletheia*) of the material conditions at the time of their missionary works. However, the narratives fail to call sufficient attention to the exercise of power (*politeia*) and the configuration of identity (*ethos*).

In this section, I emphasize how the Catholic Church's archives have become contested grounds for truth, power, and subjectivity. As a contested ground of truth, the Catholic Church's archives are repositories of the knowledge of the historical past. In this regard, Said's (1979, 93) insight raises a compelling point, "the idea in either case is that people, places, and experiences can always be described by

a book, so much so that the book (or text) acquires a greater authority, and use, even than the actuality it describes." While it is true that the narratives of the CICM missionaries are regarded by the academe as primary sources on the indigenous, it ought to bother us that they are primary sources that do not regard the indigenous as the *primary subject*. As a matter of fact, the indigenous are the *receivers of the action* of the *primary subject*, who is the CICM missionary. This dynamic deprives the indigenous of their human agency in the narratives. Said (1979, 86) himself pointed out how this is one of the colonial projects, "to dignify all the knowledge collected during colonial occupation with the title treated as anything except as pretexts for a text whose usefulness was not to the natives."

As a contested ground of power, the Catholic Church's archives is a witness to the power relations between the Catholic Church and the indigenous. According to Said (1979, 94), "most important, such texts can *create* not only knowledge but also the very reality they appear to describe." Said (1979, 97) asserts further that as an object, "as is customary, [they are] passive, non-participating endowed with a 'historical' subjectivity, above all, non-active, non-autonomous, non-sovereign with regard to itself." In this regard, the Catholic Church's archives ought to bother. As Said (1979, 94) points out, "in such time, such knowledge and reality produce a tradition, or what Michel Foucault calls a discourse, whose material presence or weight, not the originality of a given author, is really responsible for the texts produced out of it." There has to be a reframing in the way we understand the dynamic of the indigenous as *objects of transformation* and the CICM missionaries as *cultivators of transformation*. For instance, the dynamic has always been thought as linear, i.e. the CICM missionaries civilizing the indigenous; perhaps, studies may be undertaken to interrogate how the indigenous also influenced the CICM missionaries. Studies with these themes highlight the encounter of agencies and not simply be confined with a grand narrative of the CICM missionaries *discovering* and *transforming* the indigenous.

As a contested ground for subjectivity, the Catholic Church's archives bring to the fore how the Catholic Church has exerted significant influence in the way indigeneity is defined as a relational space. De la Cadena and Starn (2007, 3) argue, "reckoning with indigeneity demands recognizing it as a relational field of governance, subjectivities, and knowledges that involves us all—indigenous and nonindigenous—in the making and remaking of its structures of power and imagination." These scholars further argue, "but how, then, might indigeneity be reconceptualized? A vital starting point is to recognize that indigeneity emerges only within larger social fields of difference and sameness; it acquires its 'positive' meaning not from some essential properties of its own, but through its relation to what it is not, to what

it exceeds or lacks" (2007, 4). In pondering on indigeneity as a relational space, a major consideration is the disparity of influence. The narratives of the CICM missionaries provide an extensive description of influence, something which has led to the perspective that interactions with the CICM missionaries are integral to what it means to be indigenous in the Cordillera. In this regard, the influence of the CICM missionaries are well-established while the same cannot be said of the indigenous. Consequently, it is difficult to reconcile how there is an indigenous exercise of subjectivity when the influence of the CICM missionaries dominates the narratives. Naturally, this flows from the fact that it is the CICM missionaries who own the narratives. However, this condition calls for the necessity of the indigenous to own the narratives that concern them, to define the encounter with the CICM missionaries in their own terms, and to elaborate on the impact of transformation in relation to their own worldviews, if a balanced understanding of the encounter were to be produced.

Conclusion

This paper does not presume to have provided a final perspective on the CICM missions among the indigenous. What this paper endeavored to do is to call for a rereading of the narratives written by the CICM missionaries and to assert unease with the silence of the indigenous in these narratives. Having said thus, do I advocate for the dismantling of the Catholic Church's archives? To do so will eradicate history but this does not also mean that one adopts a convenient position. I advocate for the Catholic Church recognizing the narratives of the indigenous alongside hers, a recognition that goes beyond putting the narratives in one and the same folder. I advocate for a recognition of the narratives of the indigenous to have the same historical significance as the narratives written by the CICM missionaries. I advocate for the Catholic Church to reflect deeper on her influence on the indigenous, from the time of the CICM missions to the present. I advocate for the Catholic Church, now made up of indigenous priests, sisters, and lay faithful, to pay attention more to the co-existence of the Catholic faith and indigenous worldviews. At the very least, this paper hopes to have opened more rooms for discussion on the CICM mission encounters with the indigenous. There are still many uncovered grounds and a lot more reasons to be bothered about. This paper only offered a glimpse, but a critically engaging glimpse, I hope.

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Notes

1. According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica (2025), the Algarve is a historical province of southern Portugal, bounded by the Atlantic Ocean (south and west) and the lower Guadiana River (east). The Algarve became a part of Portugal in 1189. This province is linked to Henry the Navigator as he was the governor of the place in 1419. Henry is known more for his participation in the Atlantic slave trade.
2. According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica (2025), the Saracens referred to any person—Arab, Turk, or other—who professed the religion of Islam during the Middle Ages.
3. The *Immaculati Cordis Mariae* (ICM) Sisters were first known as the Missionary Canonesses of St. Augustine. The first Missionary Canonesses arrived in the Philippines on June 10, 1910, three years after the arrival of the pioneering CICM missionaries. Like the CICM, the ICM Sisters come from a religious missionary congregation from Belgium. The ICM Sisters came to the Philippines at the request of the Superior General of the CICM in 1910 for the Sisters to help the CICM missionaries in their task of evangelization in the Mountain Provinces. The first Missionary Canonesses to arrive in the Philippines were Dame Marie Louise de Meester (the founder), Dame Marie Charles (Louis Sabbe), Dame Marie Vincent (Martha Schotte) and Dame Marie Lutgarde (Angele Billiet) (Layugan 2014, 31). The Missionary Canonesses first resided at Tagudin before finally starting their missionary work in the Mountain Provinces on February 25, 1911 as they made their way from Tagudin to Bontoc.

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