Between National Rootedness and Cosmopolitan Openness:
Investigating the politics of belonging as an ‘overseas Filipino’ in Australia

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Thesis Declaration

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Abstract

Cosmopolitanism is generally understood as a concept that can be used to explain a particular mode of self-transformation that allows individuals to engage with difference and with the oneness of the world. Given the Philippines’ involvement in processes of neoliberal globalisation, Filipino migration scholars have begun to frame the ‘overseas Filipino’ experience using a cosmopolitan lens. In spite of cosmopolitanism’s growing popularity in the social sciences, scholars have criticised cosmopolitanism research for being Eurocentric, elitist, and for reinforcing a binary of difference through its rejection of ethnic separateness, and its national transcendence. As a result, critics have questioned the limits of cosmopolitanism as a basis for belonging, either arguing that ‘nations still matter’ or by criticising cosmopolitanism’s abstract, individualised nature.

This thesis aims to make a theoretical and empirical contribution to the cosmopolitanism debate by investigating the politics of belonging to collective domains of commonality based on ‘simultaneous rootedness and openness’ to allow people to see themselves as belonging to the world. It does this by investigating three ‘overseas Filipino’ community organisations: Migrante WA (an activist organisation for Filipino labour migrants), Gawad Kalinga (a diasporic philanthropic organisation) and Iglesia ni Cristo (a Filipino Christian church). The key questions that this research seeks to address are: Can national rootedness and cosmopolitan openness coexist in the lived experiences of Filipino migrants, particularly at the level of community organisations? If so, how does this coexistence play out, and what are the possibilities and limitations that arise from navigating this coexistence?

In response to the critique of cosmopolitanism’s abstract, individualised nature, this thesis draws on Delanty’s (2006, 2009, 2012) argument that cosmopolitanism may be regarded as an inherently relational ontology between self, other and the world. Using this framework, this research finds that ‘overseas Filipinos’ experience a problematic relationship between the self and the world. As a result of this problematic relationship, these community organisations play a crucial role in reimagining shared domains of commonality, allowing ‘overseas Filipinos’ to transform the relationship between self, other and the world in a culturally meaningful way. The investigation also reveals the limitations of cosmopolitanism and thus recognises that, until cosmopolitan political projects can match the nation-state’s political power, there can be no ‘cosmopolitan reality’. Through these conclusions, this thesis illuminates a pluralistic view of cosmopolitanism that
recognises the significance of rootedness to belonging, through the lens of engagement with community organisations.
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1 INTRODUCTION

As a result of Filipino global migrations, today there is virtually no global event ... that does not directly involve or affect someone both from and in the Philippines.

—Filomeno V. Aguilar, Migration revolution: Philippine nationhood and class relations in a globalised age, 2014: 2.

To belong or not to belong — that is the cosmopolitan question.

—Ulrich Beck, Toward a new critical theory with a cosmopolitan intent, 2003: 454.1

Reflections on belonging

My foray into the politics of belonging came about as I reflected on my own migratory journey to Australia. Fortunately for me, I had no language barrier, my family migrated together, which eased the process, and my citizenship story is a straightforward one. I had to do a quick test and had a short interview at the local immigration office, and once that was successful, I was put into a citizenship ceremony at my local council. A part of me thought that would be the end of it: I had become an ‘official’ citizen. The expected outcome was access to benefits such as financial assistance for tertiary education and a passport that would serve to confirm my Australianness.

But a million questions about where I am from and what I consider myself to be have resulted in a less-than-simple process of settlement and integration. While my experience with migration was simple and straightforward, navigating the messy terrain that is ‘belonging’ and ‘identity’ as a migrant was a different story. I was fortunate enough not to encounter overt racism, but the repeated questioning of where I am from has led me to believe that I must come from ‘somewhere’, that my being just an ‘Australian’ is not enough. When does one become an Australian? Such experiences even translate overseas, where the answer ‘Australia’ to questions of ‘Where are you from?’ is usually rejected and the question replaced with, ‘No, where are you really from?’

Another messy counterpoint to belonging and identity is that, due to my migrant status, my attachment to home has transformed. In Singapore, due to my foreign accent, I am accepted as an Australian. I am told I am ‘different’ by Singaporeans, as if that were a compliment. So while I have spent half my life in Australia and half my life in Singapore, and while I hold an Australian passport and my country of birth is Singapore, I am considered an outsider in both — an interloper. To make things easier I have called myself ‘Singaporean-Australian’. But where does one part end and the other begin? It is this journey that has carved out the core research questions of this thesis.
In addition to these personal questions, this study is shaped by the wider sociopolitical context that affect migrants today. Migrants are often an easy target in migrant receiving countries like Singapore, Australia, United States and Canada (Castles & Miller, 2003, 2009; Castles et al, 2014; Castles et al, 2015). Their social positioning within these nation-states is often threatened due to the fact that their presence within the nation-state reminds states of their dependence on migrant labour and the permeability of their borders (Cover, 2015; Yuval-Davis, 2011). This is particularly the case for ‘Asians’ in Australia (Fozdar, 2016; Stratton, 2009, 2011). As social scientists have pointed out, the founding of the Australian nation-state was based on the imagining of a ‘White Australia’, cemented by the passage of the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901 (Fitzgerald, 2004; Hage, 2000; Jupp, 2002). During this time, non-Europeans such as Asians were regularly targeted and ‘othered’ through racist ideologies such as the Yellow Peril (Jayasuriya, 2006; Moran, 2011). However, after the Second World War, Australia abolished its White Australia policy to signify their independence from their British colonial masters and strengthen their ties with their regional neighbours in Asia, leading to the birth of a ‘Multicultural Australia’ during the Whitlam era in the 1970s (Ho, 2014; Ho & Jakubowicz, 2014).

Despite the shift in policy and the resultant change in the image of Australian society, racial consciousness has still continued to prevail and to influence the relationship between ‘Asian’ and ‘Australian’. In 1984 leading Australian historian Geoffrey Blainey publicly objected to the increase of Asian migration (Blainey, 1984). This attack on ‘Asian migration’ continued with the Howard era and the establishment of Pauline Hanson’s One Nation Party in 1996 (Collins, 1995; Kelly, 2016). In her maiden speech in Parliament, Hanson contended that Australia was ‘in danger of being swamped by Asians [who] have their own culture and religion, form ghettos and do not assimilate’ (Hanson, 1996). This tension has continued even now, with the recent changes to immigration by former immigration minister Peter Dutton, who has framed ‘overseas Asians’ as a threat to ‘Australian jobs’ (Conifer, 2017).

Given the racialisation of Asians in Australian discourse, academics have sought to challenge this homogenisation through its inception of Asian Australian Studies as a field of cultural analysis. This shift towards de-homogenisation has allowed those who are racialised as Asian Australians to move beyond essentialist modes of identification and construct a fluid self-empowering identity category that enables political solidarity. For example, contributors to Gilbert and colleagues’ (2000) edited volume drew on the tropes of hybridity, heterogeneity, transnationalism and diaspora to illuminate the myriad possibilities of belonging as an ‘Asian Australian’.
In ‘Locating Asian Australian Cultures’, Khoo’s (2008) edited volume captures the heterogeneous and diverse experiences of belonging as an ‘Asian Australian’ and exemplifies the ways in which Asians in Australia challenge fixed cultural difference (see also Ang, 2003). However, due to the large numbers who identify as Chinese in Australia, as well as Australia’s long historical association with Chinese migrants, research on Asians in Australia has mostly focused on the lived experiences of Chinese Australians (Benton & Gomez, 2014; Collins, 2002; Collins & Low, 2010; Fozdar, 2016). In fact, one of the most renowned academics in Asian Australians Studies is Ien Ang, who has used the fluidity and diversity within Chineseness to challenge the homogeneity of Asianness in Australian discourse (Ang, 1998, 2001, 2003). Ang (2014) has written extensively on the need to go ‘beyond groupism’, that is, to move beyond the assumption that social groups are internally homogenous, externally differentiated, taken for granted units for social analysis (see also Brubaker, 2005, 2009). In line with seeking to diversify the experiences of Asians in Australia, this thesis therefore aims to contribute to the field of Asian Australian studies by focusing on a burgeoning migrant population: ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Australia.

‘Overseas Filipino’ is the term used by the Government of the Philippines to categorise any Filipino national living or working abroad (Bersales, 2014). It is a broad term and can even be used to describe descendants of Filipino nationals living abroad (CFO, 2017). Australia is currently one of the top four destinations for Filipinos looking to migrate permanently (CFO, 2017). The Department of Home Affairs recorded 225,110 Philippine-born people living in Australia, indicating a 59 per cent increase from 2006 (DHA, 2018). In fact, the Philippines-born population has surpassed Italy to become the fifth largest overseas-born population in Australia (DHA, 2018). Filipino migration to Australia began before the establishment of a sovereign Australian nation-state, when male Filipino migrants, otherwise known as Manilamen, arrived on the shores of Broome to work as pearl divers (Aguilar, 2014; DIAC, 2012; DIBP, 2013). This relationship between the Philippines and Australia strengthened with the introduction of the family reunification scheme, when Filipino women migrated to Australia as marriage migrants in the 1980s and 1990s (Jackson, 1989). Their presence in Australia led to the stereotypical attribution of the ‘mail order bride’ to the Filipino female body in the Australian national imaginary (Robinson, 1996; Saroca, 2006). This relationship has deepened with the introduction of the 457 skilled visa program in 2001, leading to the Philippines becoming one of the largest sources of new migrants from Southeast Asia (Khoo et al, 2007; Oke, 2012).
Existing research on Filipino migration to Australia have demonstrated the multilayered acts of agency that seek to respond not only to forms of national power, such as sexism and racism, but simultaneously to global impetus. For example, Espinosa (2017) demonstrates how the sexualisation of the Filipino female body reflects not only a racialised, sexualised and gendered nature of Australian citizenship, but connects these experiences to the implication of the Philippines’ place in the global economy. She argues that even in the absence of a care worker migration trajectory in Australia, Filipino in Australia are not exempt from the ‘servants of globalisation’ archetype that plague the Filipino migrant’s experience elsewhere. Similarly, Aquino’s (2018) research exemplifies how Filipinoness is a complex and multi-layered subjectivity that has emerged from national, transnational and global processes, such as Spanish and American colonialism, the Philippines’ insertion into global circuits of labour and the racialising logic underpinning Australian multiculturalism (see also Diaz, 2018; Espiritu, 1996, 2003). Existing research therefore demonstrates that Filipino’s lived experiences have become more interconnected with the advent of neoliberal globalisation, resulting in the need to situate their lives and actions not just within the nation-state within which they live, but simultaneously with the Philippines and the rest of the world.

However, while research on ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Australia has revealed the micro dimensions of their lived experiences, recent research has not highlighted the extent to which ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Australia form domains of commonality with one another, nor has research pointed out where and how ‘overseas Filipinos’ have situated themselves. These points are significant given the transformation of social dynamics within the Philippines-born population in Australia, which has led to a new wave of Filipino immigrants whose social locations are said to be distinct from those who migrated during the 1980s and 1990s (Caspersz, 2008; Penafiel, 2015; Siar, 2014). Additionally, migration scholars have continuously argued that the processes of globalisation have resulted in ‘spaces of which nations are components’ (Kearney, 2008: 274; see also Castles, 2000; Castles et al, 2014; Castles et al, 2015). According to Rapport (2012: 47), this spatial reorganisation has meant that there is no ‘singular cultural tradition’ waiting to be found, and that researchers therefore ought to focus on the ‘dynamism and multiplicities of identity, change and complexity’ (Rapport, 2012: 47; see also Hollinger, 2000: 157 – 158). Castles (2002: 1143) therefore argues that it is significant to understand ‘new forms of mobility and incorporation’ and highlights in particular the need to analyse the ‘emergence of transnational communities, multiple identities and multi-layered citizenship’.
In an attempt to capture the complex forms of mobility and migrant incorporation, researchers have turned to the concept of cosmopolitanism. Social scientists have used cosmopolitanism to explain a particular mode of self-transformation to engage with difference and with the oneness of the world (Nowicka & Rovisco, 2009: 3; see also Beck, 2006; Beck & Sznaider, 2006; Skrbis et al., 2004; Skrbis & Woodward, 2007). This concept is said to undermine natural ethnic absolutisms, ‘presupposes encounters between worldly historical actors willing to link up aspects of their complex, different experiences’ and finally recognises ‘worldly productive sites of crossing’ without trivialising the ‘complex unfinished paths between local and global attachments’ (Vertovec & Cohen, 2002: 7; see also Calhoun, 2003; Clifford, 1998; Hall, 2000, 2008; Robbins, 1998; Werbner, 2008). More specifically, cosmopolitanism has been acknowledged as being more suitable for investigating the ways in which individuals respond to the challenges brought on by neoliberal globalisation (Beck, 2006; Beck & Sznaider, 2006; Inglis & Robertson, 2011; Rumford, 2013).

Given the Philippines’ involvement in processes of neoliberal globalisation, it is no surprise that Philippines Studies scholars have begun to frame the ‘overseas Filipino’ experience using a cosmopolitan lens. In her study of Filipino migrants working as domestic workers in Israel, Liebelt (2008, 2011) demonstrates how Filipino labour migrants build commonalities with their non-Filipino employers and develop complex subjectivities that enable them to traverse global pathways. Similarly, Cuevas-Hewitt (2016) turns to the concept of cosmopolitanism to explain how Filipino immigrants in America are redefining the notion of what it means to be Filipino. He invents the label the ‘Fil-Whatever’ to demonstrate how Filipinos can be ‘simultaneously singular and common — singular albeit not at the expense of our commonality and common albeit not at the expense of our singularity’ (Cuevas-Hewitt, 2010: 122). His formulation reveals that cultural identity rather than being merely fulfilled or transcended ‘must be constantly invented and reinvented, activated and reactivated’ against a backdrop of the global other (Cuevas-Hewitt, 2010: 118). Cuevas-Hewitt’s (2010) theorisation of the ‘Fil-Whatever’ echoes Cohen’s (2008: 151) observation that those living in the diaspora need simultaneously to hold to its ethnicity and/or religion and also establish transnational and intercultural ties in order to rise to the challenges of living in a multiplex social world.

Despite its growing popularity, cosmopolitanism has been criticised for being Eurocentric, elitist, and for valuing individual freedom over collective solidarity, resulting in a poor understanding of how cosmopolitanism operates in practice.
Others have criticised cosmopolitanism researchers for reinforcing a binary of difference through its rejection of ethnic separateness and national transcendence (Glick Schiller, 2016; Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013; Yuval-Davis, 2011). As a result, critics have questioned the limits of cosmopolitanism as a basis for belonging, either arguing that ‘nations still matter’ (Calhoun, 2003, 2010; Hedetoft and Hjort, 2002; see also Aguilar, 2014), or by critiquing cosmopolitanism’s abstract, individualised nature (Lu, 2013; McKay, 2012). This research thus seeks to engage with this debate by focusing on three ‘overseas Filipino’ organisations in Perth, Western Australia. ‘Overseas Filipino’ is the term used by the Government of the Philippines to categorise any Filipino national living or working abroad (Bersales, 2014). It is a broad term and can even be used to describe descendants of Filipino nationals living abroad (CFO, 2017). To investigate the ways in which collectives rise to the challenges brought on by neoliberal globalisation, I selected three different migrant organisations for my fieldwork, during which I performed participant-observation and conducted semi-structured interviews with thirteen members over a period of eighteen months. The three organisations that I selected were Migrante Western Australia (WA), a branch of Migrante International; Gawad Kalinga Perth WA, a branch of Gawad Kalinga; and Iglesia Ni Cristo Perth, a branch of Iglesia ni Cristo (see also Chapter Three). These organisations were selected as they are all subsidiaries of a global — rather than solely transnational — institution. Additionally, all three organisations have a very active membership. Further, they stand at the juncture between culture and politics, which Hannerz (2004, 2006) has termed the ‘two faces of cosmopolitanism’. These organisations are thus useful field sites for investigating how and why shared domains of commonality are constructed, thereby yielding a more in-depth understanding of the debate on cosmopolitanism (Delanty, 2006, 2009, 2012; Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015). Below are key examples taken from research on these migrant organisations.

**Between national rootedness and cosmopolitan openness**

* Migrante WA: Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs)*

Migrante Western Australia (WA) is a labour activist organisation that was established following the execution of Flor Contemplacion, a Filipino foreign domestic worker who was working in Singapore (see Blanc, 1996; Gonzalez, 1998). This labour activist organisation has grown to support its global labour migrant population, with branches all over the world including America, Australia, Asia and
the Middle East (https://migranteinternational.org/; Rodriguez, 2010). Such a class-based organisation was not surprising, given that the extant research on Filipino migration has shown how Filipino migrants would often establish commonalities with one another based on class (see Aguilar, 2014; Amrith, 2017; Lorenzana, 2014; Parrenas, 2001; Pinches, 2001). What was surprising was that the head of the branch in Perth was not an overseas Filipino worker herself but a marriage migrant who had obtained Australian citizenship. Why then did she identify with this organisation?

As I became more involved with Migrante WA, I learnt that its vision was centred on eradicating the negative effects of neoliberal globalisation. As part of my fieldwork with this organisation, I attended their orientation session, known as RMP or Realidades de Migracion Philippines. Although the presentation was heavily focused on the Philippines and its history, what we seemed to be learning about was the current global condition. We learnt that the class struggle between the global elite and the global proletariat has worsened due to the establishment of a ‘capitalist world system’. The global proletariat — that is, those ‘at the mercy of the employer or business owners’ — is urged to fight back. Hence, the marriage migrant’s identification with this organisation is meant to signify an emergent class-based subjectivity based on the image of a ‘global proletariat’.

The idea of a ‘global proletariat’ was not necessarily defined by ethnonational or regional boundaries. During my time volunteering with Migrante, I was invited to attend the 2015 International People’s Mining Conference in Manila on behalf of Migrante WA. I was informed of the conference by another member of Migrante from Melbourne who was visiting Perth. As there was also the option to attend a Learning and Solidarity Mission to investigate mining issues in the Philippines, I seized the opportunity. The head of Migrante WA suggested that I visit Didipio, as the site was run by Oceanagold, an Australian company. I had initially wanted to visit the Cordillera region, as I knew there were other members within Migrante WA who were from that region, and I knew the region was important to Philippine migration (Espiritu, 1996; McKay, 2012). However, the head of Migrante WA assured me that those from the Cordillera region would be able to sympathise with the plight of those from the mining-affected areas in Didipio, even though Didipio was not located in the Cordillera region.

During the Learning and Solidarity Mission, I travelled with a group of other mining activists from Japan, Canada, Belgium, Africa and the United Kingdom, as well as a priest from Sydney, Australia. We were asked to discuss what we felt were the key issues and to attempt to develop a solution. Although we agreed that the key issue was governance, the host for our Mission kept redirecting our attention to neoliberal
globalisation. This focus on neoliberal globalisation continued for the duration of the conference. For example, we had a keynote speaker from Turkey who was the head of the Progressive Lawyers’ Association. He opened the speech with the following words: ‘We live in the far ends of the world, but we came here to discuss our common problems’. He established an internationalist agenda for the conference, focusing on the eradication of neo-colonialism and other global issues. Eradicating neoliberal globalisation and the ‘capitalist world system’ hence became the particular domain of commonality that allowed members to transcend parochial bases.
Gawad Kalinga: The ‘Fil-whatevers’

*Gawad Kalinga* is a Filipino phrase that roughly means ‘to give care’. Gawad Kalinga or GK is also the name of a not-for-profit association founded by Filipino businessman Antonio Meloto, who likes to be referred to as Tito Tony, ‘Tito’ being Tagalog for uncle (*GK Our Founder*, 2015). While the organisation uses the Filipino vernacular, their approach reflects a global scope. GK has established offices in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Australia and Malaysia (*Gawad Kalinga One World*, 2015). Using a combination of Tagalog phrases, as well as the shared goal of ‘making the world a better place’, the founder proclaims a ‘new way of solving problems’. This shared goal entails working with non-Filipino others to create a ‘global family’. Tito Tony Meloto commonly refers to his daughters, who are married to Westerners, during his conversations and speeches. One of his daughters is married to an Englishman and another is married to an American. Tito Tony Meloto jokes that his vision of GK as a ‘global family’ is that he wants to make America and Europe better for his children and grandchildren. GK is therefore marketed as a ‘platform for East and West to work together to have the best, so that we can become a global family’.

Members drew on similarly global frames to articulate their involvement with the organisation. The Gawad Kalinga Youth Ambassador in 2015 framed his involvement with Gawad Kalinga as part of ‘restoring life to the fragile earth and focus on sustainability’. When I asked one of the ‘Titas’ (Tagalog for aunty) if GK could be considered nation-building, she pointed out that a couple of members were Indonesian, proving her point that the organisation was ‘global’ in outlook and attitude — a real ‘international solidarity’ movement espoused in reality.

As part of my fieldwork with Gawad Kalinga, I attended meetings and events which included an informal meeting with Gawad Kalinga youth who had just returned from their outreach in the Philippines. This meeting was hosted by the head of Gawad Kalinga Perth. There were seven youth in total, which included a mix of Filipinos as well as Filipino youth of mixed parentage, such as Filipino-English, Filipino-German and Filipino-Malaysian. One Filipino youth shared how she would often return to her family’s region of origin, but that since she became involved with Gawad Kalinga, she has been able to visit other provinces, allowing her to expand her knowledge of a familiar country. I later found out that one of the youth did not speak Tagalog (the national language of the Philippines). I therefore argue that Gawad Kalinga is a migrant organisation that caters to the ‘Fil-whatevers’, a subjectivity based on diversity and heterogeneity rather than on sameness (Cuevas-Hewitt, 2010, 2016).
Iglesia ni Cristo: The Religious

Iglesia ni Cristo or INC is a Filipino Christian church. First established in Manila in 1914 by Brother Felix Manolo, the church now reflects a global scope. According to their website, their membership comprises ‘at least 110 nationalities’ in ‘104 districts in the Philippines and in 100 or more countries and territories in the six inhabited continents of the world’ (http://iglesianicristo.net/eng). INC’s national expansion progressed on a global trajectory during the advent of neoliberal globalisation. As nation-states began to relax their borders, INC’s strategy went from national to global. Mirroring his father’s internal campaign, Brother Erano G. Manalo made use of the increased number of Filipino migrants going abroad by bestowing on them what Van Der Veer has referred to as ‘cosmopolitanism with a moral mission’ (Van Der Veer, 2002: 165). Most recent evidence of this form of cosmopolitanism with a moral mission are their philanthropic programs, as their members have conducted outreach programs that are open to members and non-members alike all over the world. Through these philanthropic programs, INC members are able to demonstrate a commitment to global justice and human dignity in various parts of the world.

My foray into Iglesia ni Cristo occurred rather serendipitously. At the start of my fieldwork, I had cast a wide net in the hope of recruiting as many Filipino migrants living in Perth as possible. I was invited to attend a church service by Melvin, who was a member of the church. After the service, I was asked to wait in the foyer while he attended a meeting. The foyer was crowded with members of the congregation, most of whom looked like they could be Filipino or at least of Asian ethnicity. There were a couple of Caucasian men in attendance. I found myself sitting next to an elderly lady who told me, in halting English, that she was here for family. The elderly lady introduced me to another woman, who introduced herself as ‘Sis’ Anna. Sis Anna told me that she was from Manila and asked me where I was from. When I responded that I was from Singapore, her eyes lit up and she proceeded to tell me that she had many Singaporean friends and good memories of her time in Singapore. She had only moved to Perth a couple of years ago in 2013, and said she missed Singapore. Sis Anna explained that she was a nurse by profession and that she had worked at the National University Hospital in Singapore for the past five years before moving to Australia to be with her husband. She became very animated as she insisted on catching up, so we exchanged numbers and agreed to catch up another time, thereby beginning my journey into the lives of ‘the religious’.

Thesis aim and overview
These three organisations demonstrate how overseas Filipinos relate to and participate in collective, global and institutionalised organisations that are, at once, nationally rooted yet global in scope. While all three organisations had their beginnings in the Philippines, they have since surged on the world stage, riding the wave of neoliberal globalisation. These organisations have sought to challenge their emplacement in global circuits, either by confronting the ‘servant of globalisation’ archetype (Migrante), resisting their place in the global racial hierarchy (Gawad Kalinga), or by reframing their global migrations (Iglesia ni Cristo). Similarly, these organisations have also emplaced overseas Filipinos in their new homes in Australia, while at the same time rooting overseas Filipinos in the Philippines and the world in simultaneous and contradictory ways. This thesis therefore aims to explore the politics of belonging in connection to these domains of commonality and lays bare their collective forms of resistance.

As this thesis will demonstrate, these organisations can be used to understand the possibilities and limitations of ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’ (Appiah, 1997, 2006), defined as the creation of particular domains of commonality based on ‘simultaneous rootedness and openness’ to allow people to see themselves as belonging to the world (Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 400; see also Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015; Werbner, 2006, 2008; Yuval-Davis, 2011). This research draws on the understanding of rootedness as one that can be used to define claims to symbolic ethnicity and long-distance nationalism (Glick Schiller, 2015; Glick Schiller & Fouron, 2001). Cosmopolitan openness is defined as the engagement with difference and openness to the world (Delanty, 2006, 2006a, 2009, 2012; Woodward & Skrbris, 2012). This thesis aims to make a theoretical and empirical contribution to the cosmopolitan debate by investigating the politics of belonging to three ‘overseas Filipino’ organisations (Yuval-Davis, 2011). It seeks to contribute to two fields of inquiry: Philippine Studies and cosmopolitanism research. The key questions that this research seeks to address are: Can national rootedness and cosmopolitan openness coexist in the lived experiences of Filipino migrants? If so, how does this coexistence play out, and what are the possibilities and limitations that arise from navigating this coexistence?

The second chapter is divided into two parts. To contextualise the thesis, I begin with a discussion of the hegemonic processes that undergird the participants’ lived experiences. I start with a history of the Philippines’ implication in the processes of globalisation, demonstrating how the nation-state has attempted to create a ‘new nationalist construct’. One of the ways in which the nation-state has sought to do so is through the use of the terms ‘global Filipinos’ and ‘overseas Filipinos’. These
terms are used interchangeably in an effort to mobilise a de-territorialised citizenry and unify its fragmented constituents, resulting in the conceptualisation of a ‘Filipino diaspora’ in the academic literature. As this chapter will argue, however, the notion of a ‘Filipino diaspora’ is limited. The term ‘diaspora’ does not take into account internal divisions or notions of return and might be used to indicate a form of ‘minority ethnic politics’ (Anderson, 1998). For this reason, this research seeks to move away from ‘concepts of diasporic identities or ethnic communities’ and move towards a cosmopolitan lens (Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 413; see also Vertovec, 2009).

In the second part of Chapter Two, I begin with a discussion of cosmopolitanism. I then outline existing knowledge on how cosmopolitanism has been used to analyse individuals’ lived experiences (Lamont & Aksartova, 2002; Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015; Skrbis & Woodward, 2007). This research builds on Delanty’s (2009) idea of cosmopolitanism as a relational ontology that includes self, other and the world. However, it extends Delanty’s (2009) idea further by including understandings of power and agency found in Yuval-Davis’s (2011) politics of belonging framework, which explicates more clearly how particular domains of commonality are created (Glick Schiller et al., 2011). The research expands on Yuval-Davis’s (2011) framework by arguing that agency is also about ‘sustaining a culturally meaningful life’ (Ortner, 2006: 142; see also Rosaldo, 1989), resulting in various political projects. The goal here is not to present cosmopolitanism as a ‘guaranteed outcome’, but to investigate its limits, its uses and its purpose in structuring and ordering complex worlds (Werbner, 1999, 2006). Hence, this thesis aims to ‘contribute to the growth of a critical and situated cosmopolitanism that speaks to the anxieties, contradictions and disparities in power that give rise to — and arise from — cosmopolitan projects and claims’ (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015: 6).

In Chapter Three, I explore the methods and methodologies that were used to empirically investigate the ‘dirty work of boundary maintenance’ (Favell, 1999; Yuval-Davis et al., 2006). This chapter illustrates the paradigms that guided the process of my fieldwork, as well as the qualitative research methods that were used to collect and analyse the data. The chapter also shows the disparities and anxieties that arose during the process, thereby presenting a more transparent and reflexive perspective that is in line with the paradigms used to guide this research. The significance of this chapter is to illuminate as much as possible my relationship with knowledge, which had an influence on the research tools used to collect and interpret the data. The resultant knowledge, summarised in the following chapters, may have
been influenced by this subjective relationship. This chapter thus ensures that the reader is not only fully aware of the epistemologies and methodologies of this research but is also informed of the limitations of the research, which may have had an impact on how knowledge was constructed.

Drawing on interviews with over thirty Filipino migrants in Perth and Singapore, Chapter Four explores how self, other and the world are constructed in the imaginaries and lived experiences of Filipino migrants in Australia and Singapore. I present findings from the field that demonstrate how the world is not understood as an abstract category. Instead, the world is presented as a series of regimes of mobility, ranked according to a hierarchy of citizenship regimes (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013). I demonstrate how the act of crossing border regimes becomes the impetus for their rootedness as a national subject. This impetus for national rootedness, however, did not always translate into ethnonational solidarity, resulting in a ‘fragmented nationalism’. This chapter, therefore, disrupts the naturalised image of the nation as the basis for ‘thick belonging’ (Beck & Levy, 2013).

In the next three chapters, I examine three Filipino migrant organisations that seek to address this ‘fragmented nationalism’. Chapter Five focuses on Migrante WA, a local branch of Migrante International, a non-governmental organisation established in 1996 after the execution of Flor Contemplacion’. The purpose of this organisation is twofold. At one level, Migrante WA is concerned with the creation of a just and equal society. This society is not merely national, but global, due to their belief that individuals are now equally implicated in international affairs, therefore calling for a more global solution to the problems caused by neoliberal globalisation. Part of this process of finding global solutions involves working with non-national others. Language barriers and differences are considered superfluous in light of the greater struggle against the forces of neoliberal globalisation, imperialism and neocolonialism. At another level, Migrante WA aims to mitigate the vulnerabilities that are said to have emerged from the Philippines’ labour emigration policy. Their political activism and advocacy on behalf of Filipino migrants are understood as part and parcel of the creation of a just and equal society, whereby Filipino labour migrants are treated as human beings and dignified with human rights. Such a multilayered process, however, has brought up certain exclusions through its reinforcement of gendered norms.

Chapter Six showcases a Filipino diasporic philanthropic organisation known as Gawad Kalinga (GK). Like Migrante, the purpose of the organisation is twofold. At one level, GK reflects a commitment to ‘build a better, safer and kinder world’ for all. GK’s idea of creating ‘one world’ is said to be based on the personal mission of
the founder, Anthony Meloto, who uses his own ‘global family’ to illustrate GK’s philosophy. At another level, GK attempts to mobilise overseas Filipinos worldwide by encouraging diasporic philanthropy (Kares, 2014). Filipinos are asked to give back to the motherland through either volunteerism or sponsorship. This form of diasporism is not so much based on the development of a particular territory but is seen as part and parcel of creating a better, safer and kinder world. Hence, Gawad Kalinga presents a reflexive constitution of relationships and an alternative way of belonging that goes beyond ethnonational bases. The processes that undergird GK as a cosmopolitan political project of belonging, however, reveal the reinforcement rather than eradication of existing social hierarchies.

In Chapter Seven, I focus on a Filipino Christian church known as Iglesia ni Cristo (INC). INC’s collectivity and unity is centred on a universal Christian ideology that allows them to imagine themselves as a ‘global church’ (http://iglesianicristo.net/eng). Through their global philanthropic programs, INC demonstrates a commitment to global justice and human dignity in various parts of the world. However, while the members I interviewed were aware of their responsibility to the world, they also acknowledged that their social networks were more closed off than open. What emerges is not a cosmopolitan openness to the world, but a ‘hierarchy that supports some moral positions and interests while discriminating against others’ (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015: 3).

Finally, in Chapter Eight, I situate this research’s findings within Philippine Studies and the field of cosmopolitanism research, revealing why national rootedness and cosmopolitan openness can coexist in the lived experiences of Filipino migrants and how. I conclude the thesis by addressing the limitations of this ethnographic account of ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Australia and offering future directions for research.
2 LITERATURE REVIEW

… the normative significance of globalisation rather consists of a different kind of reality beyond the condition of globalisation as such and necessitates a new kind of imagination, which can be called the cosmopolitan imagination.


To what extent and in what constellations [the boundary-transcending imagination] can succeed is a completely open empirical question, to which, to my knowledge, no adequate answer has been offered.


Introduction

This chapter is intended as a literature review of Filipino migration and cosmopolitanism theory. To contextualise the thesis, I begin with a discussion of the hegemonic processes that undergird the participants’ lived experiences. I start with a history of the Philippines’ implication in the processes of globalisation, demonstrating how the nation-state has attempted to create a ‘new nationalist construct’. One of the ways in which the nation-state has sought to do so is through use of the terms ‘global Filipinos’ and ‘overseas Filipinos’. These terms are used interchangeably in an effort to mobilise a de-territorialised nation-state and unify its fragmented constituents, resulting in a new nationalist construct. The effect of this new nationalist construct is that ‘overseas Filipinos’, both temporary and permanent, become implicated in structural constraints that are at once, transnational, global and national. The existing literature in Philippines Studies has emphasised the need to illustrate the agency that Filipino migrants demonstrate through their navigation of these multifarious macrostructural contexts. However, despite the growing numbers of Filipinos in Australia, Australia has generally been mapped on the peripheries of scholarly activity in Philippines Studies. This thesis therefore aims to contribute to an understanding of ‘overseas Filipinos’ in an area outside of the Philippines and beyond the United States.

While earlier studies have aimed to illustrate how overseas Filipinos respond to local, transnational and global structures among the earlier wave of female Filipino immigrants in Australia, such studies do not examine the recent wave of Filipino immigrants whose lived experiences are said to be an adaptation to the social transformation brought on by the new global immigration policy context (Castles & Miller, 2009; Castles et al, 2014; Castles et al, 2015; Penafiel, 2015; Siar, 2014). This research therefore extends the field of knowledge on ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Australia by analysing the extent to which Filipino migrants in Australia build collective domains of commonality to engage with local, transnational and global
structural forces. More specifically, this thesis aims to use a cosmopolitan lens to investigate the politics of belonging as an ‘overseas Filipino’ in Australia. Cosmopolitanism has been acknowledged as being more useful in investigating the effects of neoliberal globalisation, as a cosmopolitan lens emphasises the ‘dynamism and multiplicities of identity, change and complexity’ (Rapport, 2012: 47; see also Beck, 2006; Beck & Sznaider, 2010; Hollinger, 2000: 157–158; Rumford, 2013). Accordingly, this research seeks to move away from ‘concepts of diasporic identities or ethnic communities’ and move towards a cosmopolitan lens in an effort to understand the multiple positioning of migrant actors (Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 413; see also Vertovec, 2009).

In the second part of Chapter Two, I begin with a discussion of cosmopolitanism. I then outline existing knowledge on how cosmopolitanism has been used to analyse individuals’ lived experiences (Lamont & Aksartova, 2002; Skrbis & Woodward, 2007). In an effort to address the criticisms made by Filipino migration scholars, I draw on an alternative understanding of cosmopolitanism that takes into account both rootedness and openness (Beck, 2006; Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013). Cosmopolitanism is thus understood as a relational ontology that encompasses self, other and the world (Delanty, 2006, 2009, 2012). However, this research extends Delanty’s (2009) idea further by including understandings of power and agency found in Yuval-Davis’s (2011) politics of belonging framework, expanding this framework to investigate ‘whether there is any place for culture or ethnicity in such theory except as the stigmatised other, more or less tolerated’ (Calhoun, 2003: 532). Cosmopolitanism is thus understood as creation of particular domains of commonality based on ‘simultaneous rootedness and openness’ to allow people to see themselves as belonging to the world (Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 400; see also Appiah, 2006; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015; Werbner, 2006).

**Globalisation and Filipino migration**

In Nira Yuval-Davis’s (2011: 26) book on the politics of belonging, she argues that globalisation is the ‘context within which contemporary contesting political projects of belonging are taking place’. Globalisation on its own has many implications due to its multifaceted existence. An examination of its definition yields many facets, ranging from a theory to a context, and its presence can be felt in various disciplines, such as economics, history, social sciences and anthropology. For example, an economic definition of globalisation focuses on ‘the growing liberalisation of international trade and investment, and the resulting increase in the integration of national economies’ (Griswald, as cited in Lewellen, 2002: 8) — whereas within the
social sciences, the definition of globalisation is used to refer to ‘the cross-national flows of goods, investment, production, and technology’ (Petras, as cited in Lewellen, 2002: 8); in anthropology, globalisation is defined as the ‘social, economic, cultural, and demographic processes that take place within nations, but also transcend them’ (Kearney, 2008: 273); and in migration studies, globalisation is used to contextualise migration flows between core and peripheral regions (Basch et al., 1994). In a nutshell, globalisation may be understood as the process of increased flows and exchanges between nation-states that has resulted in a de-territorialised and interconnected world (Castles & Davidson, 2000).

Processes of neoliberal globalisation are evident in the recent history of the Philippine nation-state. There are a number of reasons for this. The first is the positioning of the Philippines as a postcolonial nation-state. The Philippines was first colonised by the Spanish in the sixteenth century, and it was then that the Philippines first became exposed to capitalism through trade, tax and the uses of labour (McKay, 2012; Tyner, 2009). During the period of Spanish colonisation, the Philippines became an agent for the ‘extraction of wealth from the majority of the population’ as farmers became compelled to participate in the cash economy in order to pay the taxes imposed by their Spanish colonisers and the Church and to attain enough capital to climb the hierarchy implemented by the Spanish colonisers (Basch et al., 1994; Tyner, 2009). This trajectory towards capital expansion and extraction of wealth accelerated after the Philippines became an American colony in 1898 (McKay, 2012; Tyner, 2009).

Although the Philippines gained independence from the United States of America in 1946, ideological ties between the two countries continued to develop. Migration between the Philippines and the United States continued. Espiritu (1996) has described this within the context of the Ilocano-Hawaiian migration, which has resulted in a burgeoning Filipino migrant population in Hawaii. In another publication, she also traces the historical migrations of the Filipino navy men who settled in the San Francisco Bay area when the Philippines was a part of the American nation and could easily cross borders due to the neo-colonial ties and trade links between the two countries (Espiritu, 2003). Filipinos went to the United States in search of work in 1906, where they found labouring jobs in sugarcane and pineapple plantations in Hawaii; agricultural work in California, Washington, Oregon; and work in salmon canneries in Alaska (Asis, 2006; Blanc, 1996; O’Neil, 2004). Filipinos also gained a worldwide reputation as seafarers, due to the extensive training by their American colonisers during and after the period of colonisation (Espiritu, 1996; McKay, 2007).
Policies were also implemented to ensure that the Philippines operated in America’s, rather than the Philippines’, interests. One of the most notable developments can be seen in the introduction of the Rehabilitation Act implemented in 1946, which stated that $620 million from America was to be given to the Philippine nation-state for development (Tyner, 2009). However, of this sum, only $120 million was set aside for the development of infrastructure following the destruction caused by the Second World War, leaving the rest to be claimed by American military personnel and property owners in the Philippines, most of whom were American citizens (Tyner, 2009). What resulted was an uneven distribution of wealth within the country and a struggle for economic, political and social development nationally, which further encouraged migration to the United States (Tyner, 2009).

The global events of the 1970s and 1980s further complicated the development of the Philippine nation-state. These events include the debt crisis of the 1970s and 1980s, which began as a result of oil shocks imposed by OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) due to the 1973 Arab–Israeli War (Lewellen, 2002: 15). OPEC eventually collapsed and global organisations stepped in to provide loans and development strategies for developing countries, which were hardest hit by the collapse (Basch et al., 1994; Lewellen, 2002). This emphasis on neoliberalism resulted in a shift in ‘strategy for development for inward-oriented policies directed toward national self-sufficiency to outward-oriented policies designed for maximum integration into the global market’ (Lewellen, 2002: 18). The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank consequently ‘dismantled the Philippines’ former import-substitution protected industries, using as an incentive large structural adjustment loans and requesting further peso devaluations in 1981 and 1982’ (Basch et al., 1994: 231). In an effort to boost economic growth while maximising the nation-state’s integration into the global economy, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank led a ‘strategy of export-oriented industrialisation’ (Tyner, 2009: 47; see also Basch et al., 1994). This trend towards outward-oriented policies continued when former President Marcos established ‘export processing zones for multinational companies, while simultaneously producing tourism in the Philippines and transferring ‘lumber and rice land to agri-businesses, often foreign-owned’ (Basch et al., 1994: 231). What transpired was a ‘deterioration of the standard of living for all but the dominant classes’ (Basch et al., 1994: 228), as the ‘top 5% of families [in the Philippines] throughout this decade reported more income than the bottom 60%’ (Basch et al., 1994: 232; see also Shalom, 1981). In an attempt to elevate their class positions, Filipinos from all classes emigrated to a variety of countries (Basch et al., 1994).
One of the key issues that has unfolded from neoliberal globalisation and the Philippine nation-state is labour migration. Labour migration became a key policy for national development in the Philippines. Former President Marcos implemented the 1974 Labor Code to regulate and control overseas employment through its tax on migrant remittances (Basch et al., 1994; Tyner, 2009). Sea-based workers were required to remit 80 per cent of their wages earned overseas, while skilled and professional workers and domestic and service workers were required to remit 70 per cent and 50 per cent of their wages, respectively (Tyner, 2009). This movement gained momentum when the Government of the Philippines collaborated with the private sector, resulting in the establishment of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) as an official body (Tyner, 2004, 2009).

Due to the affordability of Filipino migrant labour, as well as the liberal policies surrounding the issue of labour emigration in the Philippines, there is a worldwide demand for Filipinos to occupy low-skilled positions in sectors, most notably domestic and aged-care work (Constable, 1997; Lopez, 2012; Madianou & Miller, 2012; McKay, 2012; Parrenas, 2001; Pratt, 1999; Yeoh et al., 1999; Yeoh & Huang, 2000). For example, in 1978, the Foreign Maids Scheme was introduced and implemented by the Singaporean government (Huang et al., 2012; Tyner, 2009). Similarly, the Live-in Caregiver Program was implemented by the Canadian government to obtain lower labour costs for live-in care workers (Pratt, 1999). In Japan, a bilateral treaty was struck between Japan and the Philippines in 2008 in the form of the Japan–Philippine Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) (Lopez, 2012). Embedded within the JPEPA is an ‘export-oriented migration policy’, which allows Filipinos to work in Japan as nurses and care workers (Lopez, 2012: 256). This bilateral agreement has allowed Japan to fill much-needed positions in aged-care facilities to cater for its ageing population (Lopez, 2012). As a result of their occupation in low-wage sectors, Filipino migrants worldwide have been regarded as ‘servants of globalisation’ (Guevarra, 2009; Parrenas, 2001; Rodriguez, 2002).

More recently, certain political and economic events have further accelerated the emergence of a global presence of Filipinos. The devaluation of the peso dollar, expansion of the foreign export market, increased foreign investment, tourism and economic ‘liberalization’ (Basch et al., 1994: 231) all led to the near-collapse of the domestic economy in the Philippines (Basch et al., 1994). The result was a mass exodus of Filipinos of all classes, due to the unequal distribution of wealth during a period of economic growth (1956–1965), low household income and wages, as well as continued exportation of food to other countries (Basch et al., 1994). Under the Marcos government, the 1974 Labor Code of the Philippines was introduced to
counteract the effects of the 1973 oil crisis and the Philippines’ national debt (Asis, 2006; O’Neil, 2004). From thereon, the government instituted a number of organisations and policies to manage labour emigration flows. Governmental organisations such as the POEA and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, were established and became apparatuses of the Department of Labor and Employment in the Philippines, thereby integrating labour emigration into the local economy (Asis, 2006; O’Neil, 2004). Since then, Filipinos have travelled all over the world in search of better social and economic opportunities, including the Middle East, Southeast Asia, America, Canada and Australia (Asis, 2006; Tyner, 2009).

‘A new nationalist construct’

In line with their encouragement of labour migration, the Philippines has created a de-territorialised nation-state, or what Basch and colleagues (1994) have termed a ‘new nationalist construct’. In his 1976 speech President Ferdinand Marcos made comparisons between the overseas labour migrant — the overseas Filipino worker (OFW) — and the prodigal son, claiming the migrant’s return as one that was prodigious to the development of the nation (Encinas-Franco, 2015; Tyner, 2004, 2009). Marcos claimed that OFWs had ‘sacrificed’ their individual gains for the ‘national good’ (Tyner, 2009: 58). Such rhetoric worked in two ways. Firstly, it propagated the notion that the overseas labour migrant was an individual working to ensure the collective good, the act of migrating overseas thus becoming a symbolic act that guaranteed the migrant’s membership in the nation, even though the migrant was no longer living within its territory. Secondly, Marcos’s national rhetoric became a promise that the overseas labour migrant would be welcomed with open arms upon return to their home country — as they inevitably would since OFWs were usually temporary rather than permanent emigrants (CFO, 2017). From the macro perspective, membership of these migrants in the nation-state became unquestionable, even as their bodies were no longer bound to the territory of the Philippines (Rafael, 1997).

This rhetoric intensified with the end of Marcos’s reign and the establishment of President Aquino’s administration. In March 1987, then-President Corazon Aquino declared the last week of March, ‘Overseas Filipino Contract Workers’ Week’ otherwise referred to as Proclamation No. 91 (Tyner, 2009). In June 1988, the President declared December the ‘Month of Overseas Filipinos’, Proclamation No. 276 (Tyner, 2009). The link between the OFWs and their membership to the nation was cemented when President Aquino referred to them as bagong bayani, or new heroes, in her speech to domestic helpers at Saint Margaret’s Church in Hong Kong.
in April 1988 (Aguilar, 2015; Encinas-Franco, 2013, 2015; Mitra, 2017). The OFW was no longer just a member of the nation. He or she was now a ‘hero’.

Rafael (1997) traces the construction of the OFW as the new national hero to the themes of sacrifice and suffering that have constituted the national imaginary. Jose Rizal is an important figure for Filipinos as he is said to have suffered and sacrificed his personal gains for the benefit of the greater good, allowing the Philippine nation to reclaim independence from its colonisers (Aguilar, 2014; Ileto, 1998; Rafael, 1997). To refer to the OFWs as new national heroes, then, is to say that the OFW suffers and sacrifices for the national good. The OFWs sacrifice closeness with their family for the benefit of not just their family, but their nation (Encina-Franco, 2016; Gavilan, 2015). The OFWs suffer as they put their lives at risk to ensure that others are taken care of (Encina-Franco, 2016; Gavilan, 2015).

The portrayal of the OFW as a ‘new hero’ continues even today. A recent article in the Philippine Daily Inquirer outlined the contributions that Filipino migrants made not only to the Philippine economy, but also to their receiving countries (Mitra, 2017). The author portrays them as the invisible workforce who make contributions in several essential sectors of both home and host societies, such as healthcare, seafaring and engineering (Mitra, 2017). The fact that this ‘new hero’ rhetoric has endured warrants a closer examination. The Centre for Filipinos Overseas (2017) defines ‘overseas Filipinos’ as Filipino immigrants, legal permanent residents, Filipino spouses of foreign nationals, Filipino dual citizens and Filipinos naturalised in their host country, as well as the descendants of overseas Filipinos born overseas. Such a broad definition can be interpreted as an attempt by the Philippine state to homogenise its nationals and thus create a de-territorialised nation-state (Rafael, 1990; Teechankee, 2016).

This broad definition is strategic. Firstly, anyone who can claim a relationship to the country by birth or descent is able to claim a ‘Filipino identity’. However, this relationship is not without cost. The overseas Filipino is more commonly referred to as the balikbayan in national discourse, translated as ‘returnees’ and used to include those who are no longer Philippine citizens but who wish to ‘return home’, either physically or financially (Aguilar, 2015; Basch et al., 1994; Blanc, 1996; Encina-Franco, 2016). The balikbayan policy was used to ensure the circulation of goods and monies between those in the developed countries and the Philippines as well as to promote tourism, thereby contributing to the economic development of the nation (Basch et al., 1994; Blanc, 1996). Later administrations built on this strategy by introducing Lingkod sa Kapwa Filipino or the LINKAPIL program, an initiative meaning ‘service to fellow Filipinos’ (Asis et al., 2010: 9; CFO, 2017). LINKAPIL
is a developmental program that establishes and maintains ties between those living within the nation and Filipino migrants through diaspora philanthropy (CFO, 2017). The continuance of this program is seen as testament to the ‘enduring sense of bayanihan’ (Asis et al., 2010: 9) of Filipinos living overseas. Derived from the Filipino term bayan, used to refer to town and nation, bayanihan is best understood as a form of community building, a practical response underpinned by the spirit of unity (Asis, 2004; Asis et al., 2010; Tan, 2017). The tenets of the ‘new hero’ discourse thus apply even to those who are not overseas Filipino workers, as those who wish to lay claim to a balikbayan status have to contribute to the development of the nation in some way, either through remuneration or through return visits.

Secondly, such a broad definition of ‘Filipino-ness’ means that second- and third-generation Filipino migrants are able to represent the country on the world stage. One example would be Catriona Elisa Gray, who represented the Philippines in two global pageants, Miss World 2016 and Miss Universe 2018. She was accepted as a representative of the Philippines despite the fact that she was not born in the Philippines. In fact, Catriona was an Australian-Filipino, born to an Australian father and Filipino mother, who grew up in Cairns, Australia (Gray, 2018). Such a broad definition has led to the surge of a new kind ofFilipino, known colloquially as the ‘global Filipino’ (http://globalfilipinonetwork.org/; Special Report: BalikBayanihan, 2015; Vina & Azada-Palacios, 2017). This phrase is described as a strategic basis for ‘inciting a collective community of Filipinos all over the world and promoting a sense of obligation to other Filipinos and the Philippines’ (Lu, 2013: 6). The term ‘global Filipino’ is said to have been coined by the national hero Dr Jose Rizal, who is regarded as the first global Filipino (Cabreza, 2013; Caluen, 2018; Knights of Rizal Awardees, 2017). The attribution of the term ‘global Filipino’ to Rizal can be traced to the fact that on his travels abroad he discovered a love for his homeland. His fight for Philippines’ independence from their Spanish colonisers was born from his travels abroad. On his voyage to Europe, Rizal is said to have lamented how he was called ‘Chinese, Japanese, American, etc., anything but Filipino! Our poor country — nobody has ever heard of you’ (Guerrero, 1974: 95). In fact, Rizal’s writings were what inspired Anderson (1991) to theorise nations as ‘imagined communities’. In Rizal’s Noli Ma Tangere he uses a dinner party scene to imagine the nation as a horizontal comradeship, developing a basis for solidarity and belonging (Anderson, 1991). Rizal’s fight for Philippines’ independence was based on universal principles, such as peace, freedom, justice, virtue and sacrifice (Guerrero, 1974). In the coining of the phrase ‘global Filipinos’, the media has thus served to resurrect a common basis for belonging among Filipinos worldwide.
The term ‘global Filipino’ is acknowledged as one that has significant political implications. The idea of the ‘global Filipino’ is to ensure continued loyalty to the nation without the political implications of state citizenship (Blanc, 1996). The execution of Flor Contemplacion, a Filipino foreign domestic worker who was tried and found guilty of two counts of murder in 1995, is cited as an exemplary case of the perils of working abroad (Constable, 1997; Tondo, 2012). Contemplacion’s execution exposed the neglect and lack of protection and citizenship rights of an overseas labour migrant, which, until then, both sending and receiving states had systematically ignored (Aguilar, 2014; Gonzalez & Holmes, 1996; Pinches, 2001). Although Contemplacion’s trial compelled the Ramos administration to pass the Republic Act 8092, which has translated into more security and protection for OFWs (Tyner, 2004, 2009), Filipino migrants still face a precarious existence (Parrenas, 2005, 2008, 2012; Tronto, 2001). Even though overseas Filipinos dream of returning home (Caspersz, 2008; Yeoh & Huang, 1998), their return home is almost never realised as they become shackled by these cultural imperatives, which foster non-migrant dependence on the Filipino migrant (Liebelt, 2008; McKay, 2012). The nation-state’s deployment of service, suffering and sacrifice is thus used to perpetuate political strategies for national development without initiating major structural changes around employment and welfare (Encina-Franco, 2013, 2016; Tyner, 2009; Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002).

This separation between overseas Filipinos as ‘permanent’ and overseas Filipino workers as ‘temporary’ has been similarly mirrored in the literature. Research on overseas Filipinos has mostly been done in the United States (Aguilar, 2014; Espiritu, 2003; Ocampo, 2016; Okamura, 1998; San Juan, 1994). Research on overseas Filipino workers, on the other hand, has been conducted in other countries such as Singapore (Yeoh & Huang, 1998, 2000), Japan (Parrenas, 2008), Taiwan (Lan, 2003; Liu, 2015), Canada (McKay, 2012; Pratt, 1999), India (Lorenzana, 2014), Hong Kong (Constable, 1997), and Israel (Liebelt, 2011). This separation is no doubt a mirroring of the disparate experiences of migration between these two categories. While overseas Filipinos as permanent émigrés generally have access to full citizenship rights in America, their temporary counterparts often suffer from quasi-citizenship or partial citizenship (Bakan & Stasiulis, 1995; Liebelt, 2011; Parrenas, 2001). The distinction between the two is to reflect the fact that while the former are considered permanent émigrés, the latter are considered contractual workers who will return to the Philippines upon fulfilment of the terms in their labour contract.
However, others have pointed out the agency that Filipino migrants demonstrate through their navigation of structural constraints imposed by global structural forces, migrant categories and representations. Aguilar (1996; 1999) has repeatedly refuted economic rationales for migration, pointing out that migrants often have to have significant capital for them to migrate across nation-state borders. Further, while migrants may claim that their migration is driven by familial reasons, migration is often an individual rather than collective decision (Aguilar, 1996, 1999; 2014). Other researchers have supported Aguilar’s (1996, 2014) arguments. Madianou and Miller (2012) illustrated how Filipino migrants left the Philippines for a combination of personal and structural reasons, thus leading the authors to emphasise agency when examining the lived experiences of migration. This emphasis on agency can also be applied to the notion of ‘return’ in understandings of Filipino migration. Constable (1999) found that the notion of return is an open-ended one that, while desired, may never materialise. Yeoh and Huang (1998) argued that notions of ‘home’ and ‘away’ were superfluous with regard to Filipino migrants working as foreign domestic workers in Singapore. Others have further found that some would exercise agency amidst the global, local and national structural constraints and representations imposed on them in their host society (Barber, 2000; Constable, 1997; Lorenzana, 2014; Margold, 1995; Pinches, 2001). For example, Tondo (2014) demonstrated how Filipino migrants would exercise agency by holding fiestas in Catholic churches, so as to create an alternative image that challenged stereotyped representations of Filipinos as, for example, foreign domestic workers in Malaysia. These studies indicate the need to view Filipino migrants as social actors who have the ability to exercise agency against structural forces.

Most of the research on agency among Filipino immigrants has been done in the United States. For example, Basch and colleagues (1994) found that Filipino immigrants would challenge the hegemonic whiteness of their new host society by creating a single social field. Since then, others have demonstrated how Filipino immigrants would challenge the structural constraints imposed on them by their new host society along this home–host axis. Okamura (1998) has shown how Filipino immigrants take part in practices that construct a Filipino–American diaspora. Espiritu (2003) has demonstrated how Filipino immigrants exercise their agency amidst the racism and global power structures that confront them. Parrenas and Siu (2007) have argued that Filipinos in America draw on a ‘pan-ethnic’ or ‘pan-national’ identity that creates ‘Asian diasporas’.

However, as Johnson and McKay (2011: 183–184) have pointed out, the majority of ‘overseas Filipinos’ — half of whom are settled on a more permanent basis — reside
outside of the United States, work in a wide variety of occupations, and experience substantive social, cultural and material processes and relationships that are not limited to or defined by migrants’ working relationships. In fact, Australia can be considered to be a significant node in the global migratory pathways of overseas Filipinos. Due to Australia’s permanency pathway, Australia is considered to be one of the preferred destinations for settlement (Amrith, 2017; Liebelt, 2008; 2011). Australia is currently one of the top four destinations for Filipinos looking to migrate permanently (CFO, 2017). The Department of Home Affairs recorded 225,110 Philippine-born people living in Australia, indicating a 59 per cent increase from 2006 (DHA, 2018). Despite the growing numbers of Filipinos in Australia, Australia has generally been mapped on the peripheries of scholarly activity in Philippine Studies. Its peripheral location may be because the Philippine-born population is scattered and unevenly distributed across Australia, making the population difficult to research ethnographically. Its peripheral location may also be attributed to the fact that most academic work on ‘overseas Filipinos’ has either focused on domestic and care worker migrations (e.g. Huang et al., 2012; Lopez, 2012) or permanent settlement in the United States that has historicity dating back to the American colonial period (e.g. Choy, 2003; Ignacio, 2005). Thus, this research aims to contribute to an understanding of ‘overseas Filipinos’ in an area outside of the Philippines and beyond the United States. In the next section, I situate ‘overseas Filipinos’ within this research’s primary field site of Australia.

‘Overseas Filipinos’ in Australia

Filipino migration to Australia is recorded as early as the 1870s, when male Filipino migrants, otherwise known as Manilamen, arrived on the shores of Broome to work as pearl divers (Aguilar, 2014; DIAC, 2012; DIBP, 2013). Filipino migration at that time, however, was still small due to Australia’s White Australia Policy, which effectively excluded non-Anglo migrants from the nation's imaginary (Hage, 1997; Jayasuriya, 2006). Australia officially established itself as a sovereign nation-state after the introduction of the Immigration Restriction Act 1901, otherwise referred to as the 'White Australia policy' (Ang, 2001). Legislative measures such as the Dictation Test were used to maintain the sovereignty of the Australian nation as a ‘white nation’ (Jupp, 2002; Moran, 2011). The White Australia policy consequently inculcated a racial consciousness in the imagination of the Australian nation (Hage, 2000; Jayasuriya, 2006). The main types of migrants targeted were ‘Asians’, including Filipinos (Collins, 1995; Coughlan, 1997). During that time, anti-Asian sentiment was high, and as a result, Filipino migrants were racially targeted, leaving
only 141 Filipinos recorded in Australia at the time of the 1947 census (Espinosa, 2017).

The establishment of a ‘White Australia’ policy saw the number of Philippine-born people decline in 1901, until the introduction of the Colombo Plan in the 1950s when Filipino students were able to enter Australia (DHA, 2018). Filipino migration to Australia gained momentum once more after the official establishment of a ‘Multicultural Australia’ during the Whitlam era (1972–75). The political move towards a ‘Multicultural Australia’ was propelled by two factors. The first factor was the socio-political decision to establish the Australian nation as a new non-colonial identity, separate from its British roots (Pettman, 1995). Stratton and Ang (1994: 129) argued that as a ‘settler society’, Australia was faced with the conundrum of creating a distinctive national identity ‘without having recourse to a pre-existing distinctive common culture as raw material’ (see also Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1989; Stasiulis & Yuval-Davis, 1995). This led to the formal establishment of a ‘multicultural Australia’ and a move towards ‘unity in diversity’ (Stratton & Ang, 1994: 138).

The second factor that led to the establishment of a ‘Multicultural Australia’ was the restructuring of the global economy. Like the Philippines, Australia was similarly affected by the global events of the 1970s and 1980s. As mentioned in the previous section, the world market shifted towards neoliberalism, resulting in a shift in national policies, from internal policies to outward oriented policies towards maximum integration into the global market (Castles & Miller, 2009; Lewellen, 2002). Australia’s response to their implication in the global market was to shift their policy of racial exclusion to a multicultural policy (Moran, 2005). Due to the ‘insufficient supply of desirable (that is ‘White’) migrants, Australia opened its gates to those who were traditionally considered ‘less desirable’ (Hugo, 1992, 2003). Filipino migrants were now allowed to enter its shores.

Even so, the racialisation of the Filipino migrant did not end with the abolishment of White Australia. Although Australia’s adoption of an official multicultural policy allowed its people to claim ‘unity-in-diversity’ (Ang, 2001; Stratton & Ang, 1994), multicultural Australia presented a ‘public fantasy — a collective narrative fiction — of the diverse character of Australia as a nation’ (Stratton & Ang, 1994: 139; see also Ang, 2001; Hage, 2000). Multiculturalism, however, did not eradicate the underlying racial consciousness, particularly for those who are considered visibly different from the dominant ‘white’ Anglo national imaginary (Fitzgerald, 2004; Jayasuriya, 2006). Due to the long-lasting legacy of ‘whiteness’ as a significant feature in the imagination of the Australian nation, Asians are considered...
unabsorbable’, unable to belong fully as members of the nation-state - even as they are officially recognised as citizens (Ang, 2003; Fozdar, 2016; see also Beaman, 2016; Ip et al, 1997). These issues are further compounded when one considers the ethnicisation of identity, that encourages or forces migrants to preserve their cultural heritage (Stratton and Ang, 1994: 127; see also Balibar, 1991). As Ang (2014: 1190) once said, Asians in Australia ‘are not expected to melt, and are supposed to remain true to their ethnic identity’. The term 'ethnic identity' is said to reinforce similarities between those who are perceived to be different, while at the same time managing ‘cultural difference’ (Balibar, 1991; Castles, 2000; Castles & Miller, 2003, 2009). Academics researching the lived experiences of migrants in other multicultural societies such as the United States of America and Singapore have pointed this out when they discuss the restrictions such policies have on the lived experiences of migrants (Espiritu, 2003; Chua, 2003). Migrants may not necessarily choose to identify with 'being Asian', but may strategically position themselves in myriad other ways in order to claim belonging in their new ‘host societies’ (Basch et al, 1994; Bonus, 1999, 2000; Vergara, 2008). Scholars particularly in the United States therefore suggest that social scientists should aim to evaluate and analyse the ways in which migrants strategically position themselves that may extend beyond their ethnonational identities (Bonus & Vo, 2002; Wolf, 2002).

This is particularly true for Filipinos in Australia, whose long history of migration is highly feminised. The majority of Filipinos who migrated during the 1970s and 1980s arrived in Australia as 'marriage migrants' (Robinson, 1996). Jackson (1989) wrote about the lack of data on the burgeoning Filipino migrant population but remarked that the phenomenon of marriage migration among this cohort has sparked robust academic discussion among Asian Australian academics. Indeed, social scientists have documented the effects of the 'mail order bride' discourse on Filipino female migrants (Cooke, 1986; Holt, 1996). In response to the proliferation of the Filipina marriage migrant as 'mail order bride' discourse in the Australian media, research on Filipino migration has revealed how Filipino migrants exercised their agency against these hegemonic discourses by transforming their identities (Saroca, 1997, 2002, 2006). For example, Filipino migrant women who migrated to rural Australia as marriage migrants would contribute actively to their new homes by participating in the labour market and in civic life (Espinosa, 2012; Roces, 2003). Others revealed how Filipino female immigrants would transform a gendered, ethnicised and sexualised identity into a class-based one (Limpangog, 2011). Such instances demonstrate how female Filipino immigrants are at the forefront of
transforming and negotiating the meanings and limits of 'Filipinoness' as an ethnonational identification in Australia.

The recent shift in Australia policy, however, has profoundly transformed the dynamics of the ‘overseas Filipino’ population over the last decade. Penafiel (2015) refers to the new immigration policy in Australia as a ‘quasi-permanent migratory scheme’, as migrants can now enter Australia on a temporary skilled migration visa and apply for permanent residency after a number of years. These ‘quasi-permanent migratory schemes’ were introduced by the Australian government to fill skill shortages in Australia (Khoo et al, 2007; Siar, 2014). The most common of these migratory streams is known as the 457 skilled visa program, a scheme introduced by former Prime Minister John Howard in 2001 to fill skill shortages in Australia (Caspersz, 2008; Collins, 2013; Hugo, 2006). Filipino migration to Australia in general and to Western Australia in particular greatly increased with the introduction of this skilled visa. In fact, the Philippines has emerged to become one of the largest source countries of foreign migrant labour for Australia (DHA, 2018; Stratton, 2011). Although the 457 visa program was used to fill professional occupations, the skilled visa category also includes non-professional occupations such as chefs, mechanics and butchers (Caspersz, 2013). In the recent Department of Immigration and Border Protection statistics on the Philippines-born population, one of the top ten occupations that Filipino migrants served in was ‘chef’ (DIBP, 2013).

In response to the changing social dynamics of the Philippines-born population in Australia, social scientists have begun to analyse the lived experiences of these differing waves of immigration concomitantly. For example, Aquino’s (2016, 2018) work reveals the ‘everyday acts of anti-racism’ that Filipino immigrants use to challenge not only the casual racism that they encountered in Australia, but also the Philippines’ position within the global racial order (Aquino, 2016, 2018; see also Bonus, 2000; Espiritu, 1996). Espinosa (2017) connects the fetishization of the Asian exotic other in Australia to the ‘servants of globalisation’ archetype (Parrenas, 2001). She argues that the sexualisation of the ‘Filipino female body’ cannot be extracted from the global feminisation of Filipino migration (see also Robinson, 1996; Saroca, 2006). The acts of agency exemplified in Filipino print media in Australia are therefore regarded as a multiscalar response to global, transnational and local sexualised representations (Espinosa, 2017). Filipino migrants are thus seen as social agents who have transformed the meanings and limits of ‘Filipinoness’ to respond not only to national and local representations, but simultaneously to global and transnational impetus (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004).
However, while research has revealed the micro dimensions of their resistance, recent research has not highlighted the extent to which ‘overseas Filipinos’ form domains of commonality with one another, nor has research pointed out where and how ‘overseas Filipinos’ have situated themselves. These points are significant given the transformation of social dynamics brought on by neoliberal globalisation. Migration scholars have continuously argued that the processes of globalisation have resulted in ‘spaces of which nations are components’ (Kearney, 2008: 274; see also Castles, 2000; Castles et al, 2014; Castles et al, 2015). According to Rapport (2012: 47), this spatial reorganisation has meant that there is no ‘singular cultural tradition’ waiting to be found, and that researchers therefore ought to focus on the ‘dynamism and multiplicities of identity, change and complexity’ (Rapport, 2012: 47; see also Hollinger, 2000: 157–158). Soysal (2000) argues that collectives can make a claim for recognition and membership by using a type of particularistic identity that is based less on ethnonational sameness than on universalistic ideas of personhood. In the conclusion of his volume, Cohen (2008: 155) projects that a:

form of adaptive behaviour that meets the needs of a complex world is for a group simultaneously to hold to its ethnicity and/or religion and also establish transnational and intercultural ties, first with groups sharing similar origins and characteristics, and then more widely.

Such forms of adaptive behaviour have already been observed among the earlier wave of Filipino migrants who had migrated as ‘marriage migrants’ in Australia. For example, Bonifacio (2009) found that Filipino women formed groups not only to counter the ‘mail order bride’ stereotype that plagued them at a national Australian level, but also built relationships with those in the Philippines through charitable projects (see also Saroca, 1997). Similarly, Pinches (2004) outlined the formal organisations that were established by Filipino women who migrated as marriage migrants, where they supported other Filipino women in their new ‘host society’ while simultaneously cultivating ties with those ‘back home’. He also highlights how these Filipino women would form intercultural community ties with non-Filipinos in Australia and anticipates that these intercultural exchanges will only intensify with the increase in Filipino migration (Pinches, 2004; see also Soriano, 1995). Misajon and Khoo (2008) revealed how Filipinos in Australia have continued to engage people outside out of the Filipino community and collaborate with those in intercultural partnerships in order to provide a platform for subsequent generations, the majority of whom do not speak Filipino at home. However, such studies have not been integrated with the recent wave of Filipino immigrants, whose social
locations are said to be distinct from those who migrated during the 1980s and 1990s (Siar, 2014). This research therefore extends the field of knowledge on ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Australia by exploring the ways in which they build commonalities with other non-Filipinos and with other Filipino migrants.

To highlight the adaptive behaviours that accompany the spatial reorganisation brought on by neoliberal globalisation, scholars have called for a move beyond the ethnic lens. Brubaker (2009: 28) refers to this move as a paradigmatic shift away from the tendency within the social sciences to regard ‘various categories of people as if they were internally homogeneous, externally bounded groups, even unitary collective actors with common purposes’ (see also Brubaker, 2005). Although Ang (2003) acknowledges the symbolic capital of ethnicity, she argues that the term may reinforce fixed cultural difference. Glick Schiller and associates (2006: 613) argue that studying ethnic modes of incorporation reinforces the ‘hegemony of a single model of migrant incorporation’. Ang (2014: 1184) thus argues that there needs to be a much broader concept that can capture the ‘diverse difficulties, ambivalences and failures of identification, belonging and political agency’ experienced by those who identify with a particular ethnic or national identity.

However, other scholars have argued that the move away from an ethnic lens may neglect the extent to which individuals are implicated in global and national structures of power. This is especially true in an ‘age of migration’ (Castles et al, 2014), as states attempt to manage cultural difference while maintaining their position in the global economy (see also Castles & Miller, 2003, 2009). In the earlier part of this section, I discussed the politics of multiculturalism in Australia and its implications for those who are considered visibly different (p. 25; see also Ang, 2001). This problem is not just unique to Australia. In fact, social scientists have argued that, although race has no scientific basis, its ideological bases, particularly in ‘settler societies’ like Australia cannot be dismissed (Castles & Davidson, 2000; Castles et al, 2015; Perkins, 2007). Vickers and Isaac (2012) demonstrated how settler societies like Canada, United States and Australia have used state institutions and laws to ‘make race’ (see also Vickers, 2002). Castles (2000) has linked racism with the crises caused global restructuring. He argues that racism is no longer a national issue, but can be considered a global problem that is linked to changes in the global economy, politics, technology and communication (Castles, 2000: 167). Castles (2002: 1154) therefore argues that it is significant to examine the extent to which migrant settlement and community formation change under conditions of globalisation.
Indeed, the literature on Filipino migration to other receiving countries has demonstrated how ‘overseas Filipinos’ adapt to processes of globalisation by creating specific socio-spatial extensions in their new host countries (Liebelt, 2008, 2011). For example, Pinches (2001) found that Filipinos labouring in Saudi Arabia built solidarities with other Pakistani workers to form a workers’ strike against poor working conditions for migrant labourers. Constable (1997, 2010) found that Filipino and non-Filipino domestic workers engaged in alliances and unions to protest for better working conditions. Tondo (2010, 2012) further illustrated how folk Christianity has emerged as a more significant domain of commonality for Filipinos in Singapore and New Zealand. She argued that folk Christianity proved to be a significant cultural resource that ‘overseas Filipinos’ in both countries used to challenge their nonbelonging in their new countries, to build commonalities with other non-Filipinos and to bridge regional differences (Tondo, 2012). Vergara (2008) found that, in the face of racism from other ethnic groups, ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Daly City in America have concretised their Filipinoness. At the same time, to manage their rejection from their compatriots in the Philippines, they have held the Philippines at a safe distance, preferring to use their ‘home’ country as a symbolic rather than literal representation of ‘home’ (Vergara, 2008; see also Espiritu, 2003).

In contrast, Bonus’ (2000) volume demonstrated how the fluidity of Filipinoness allowed ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Southern California to organise and mobilise against antiunion employers and policymakers by building relationships with co-ethnics and with those from other ethnic categories. This research thus seeks to contribute to extending the field of knowledge by examining their lived experiences from an emerging node in the global migratory pathways of Filipino immigrants and analysing the extent to which ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Australia build collective domains of commonality with co-ethnics and non-nationals to engage with local, transnational and global structural forces.

To investigate these experiences even further, this thesis draws on a cosmopolitan lens. As the following section will demonstrate, the themes found within the literature on Filipino migration reflect the continued debate raging within the literature on cosmopolitanism. This debate is centred on the role that the nation-state plays in people’s lived experience (Calhoun, 2007; Kendall et al., 2008; Skrbis & Woodward, 2013); how cosmopolitanism operates as a social strategy (Delanty, 2009; Rumford, 2013), the empirical rather than normative aspects of cosmopolitanism (Glick Schiller, 2015a; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015: 6; Krause, 2011; Stacey, 2015); and finally, the overt focus on cosmopolitanism as an abstract, individualistic ontology (Calhoun, 2003; Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2017).
Hence, this research on Filipino migration and cosmopolitanism aims to contribute to the debate by addressing these themes in particular.

**Cosmopolitanism**

Cosmopolitanism is generally understood as a moral ideal whereby the individual transcends particular solidarities to see themselves as belonging to humanity as a whole. The term cosmopolitan originates from the Greek word *kosmopolites*, which loosely translates to ‘citizen of the world’. The essence of this ideal is best captured by Ancient Greek philosopher Diogenes, where he defines himself based on a commitment to the world rather than to a particular country (Cheah, 2006; Miller, 2018; Werbner, 2008). This identification was a contrast to the political culture of Ancient Greece reflected in the writings of Plato and Aristotle, where men were said to identify themselves first and foremost as a citizen of a particular city (Miller, 2018).

The idea of cosmopolitanism was further developed by Immanuel Kant. In 1795 he wrote the manifesto *Toward Perpetual Peace*, arguing that:

> The peoples of the earth have … entered in varying degrees into a universal community, and it has developed to the point where a violation of laws in one part of the world is felt everywhere.  
> (cited in Nussbaum, 2010: 27)

Kant’s words in *Toward Perpetual Peace* on the interconnection of the world and the importance of universal law seem prophetic given the world today. Social scientists generally describe the modern-day context as one that consists of increased flows and exchanges (Harvey, 2005; Ong, 1998; Robertson, 1992). This phenomenon is often referred to as neoliberal globalisation (Lewellen, 2002). Social scientists use the phrase ‘neoliberal globalisation’ to denote the difference between the contemporary epoch and previous globalisation brought on by imperialism and colonialism (Basch et al., 1994). According to Kearney (2008: 274), neoliberal globalisation is said to have accelerated since the 1970s, when a global market was established to transform the world into a ‘single planetary unit’ (see also Amelina & Faist, 2012; Inda & Rosaldo, 2008). These processes are said to be attributed to increased economic liberalisation, technological advances, and increased migration (Castles & Miller, 2009; Gold & Nawyn, 2013; Lewellen, 2002). The world is said to have become more de-territorialised and interconnected as a result of the advent of neoliberal globalisation (Castles, 2002, 2010; Faist, 2000; Kennedy & Roudometof, 2002; Khagram & Levitt, 2008).
However, the rise of neoliberal globalisation has brought challenges. The world is described as unequal, as the benefits of globalisation are unevenly distributed. For one, the interconnection of the world is said to be established on the division between the Global North and the Global South, where those from the Global South migrate to fulfil demands in the Global North (Castles & Davidson, 2000; Castles & Miller, 2009). One of the countries that has become implicated in this global division of labour is the Philippines (Basch et al., 1994; Parrenas, 2001; Tyner, 2004, 2009). The Philippines has become one of the primary sources of affordable migrant labour for countries worldwide. Their implication in the global market has become the basis for what Hoschchild (2000) has termed the ‘global care chain’, whereby female migrant labour leaves the Philippines to care for other woman’s children in the Global North (Parrenas, 2001). This migration has had implications that are far-reaching, leading Isaksen and colleagues (2008) to refer to what they term a ‘global care crisis’.

Kant’s cosmopolitanism has thus found resurgence among philosophers. Due to its universal and transcendent ideals, cosmopolitanism is generally offered as a normative solution to dealing with the challenges brought on by neoliberal globalisation. Nussbaum (1994, 2001, 2010), one of the most prolific advocates for cosmopolitanism (see Calhoun, 2003), argues that in this context, cosmopolitanism is the ethos that we should select. Appiah (1997, 2006) has argued that cosmopolitanism is the ethics of living in a world full of strangers.

Cosmopolitanism in the social sciences has sought to engage with the philosophical and normative aspects of cosmopolitanism in a number of ways. On the one hand, cosmopolitanism is used to refer to global citizenship and the development of supranational institutions based on universal human rights. This idea has been propagated most prominently by David Held and Mary Kaldor. For example, Held and colleagues (1999) argue that, due to globalisation, there needs to be a new form of global governance, which they refer to as a ‘cosmopolitan democracy’ (see also Brown & Held, 2010). Kaldor (2003) has similarly argued for global structures by calling for a ‘global civil society’. Sassen (1998) has argued that the establishment of supranational institutions like the United Nations, as well as grassroots organisations focused on human rights, mitigates the economic imperatives of neoliberal globalisation. Such an approach is referred to as ‘cosmopolitanism from above’, as the emphasis is on the development of a new type of citizenship and a new form of global government (Held, 2010; Skrbis et al., 2004). ‘Cosmopolitanism from above’ is used to celebrate the demise of the nation-state and to herald a new, post-national basis for belonging (Cheah, 2006: 486).
On the other hand, in anthropology and sociology, the term ‘cosmopolitanism’ is used to describe new kinds of social dynamics that have arisen from processes of neoliberal globalisation. According to Beck (2006), ‘the human condition has itself become cosmopolitan’. As a result, people are said to no longer identify with the nation-state and are instead free to choose their allegiances and to create new identities. These emergent identities are said to create new social actors often referred to as ‘cosmopolitans’. These social actors were popularly theorised by Hannerz (1990), who has referred to cosmopolitans as social actors who willingly engage with the other on their sojourns overseas and therefore expand their cultural repertoires. Cosmopolitans are distinguished from locals, who are said to have a more parochial outlook, and they are further distinguished from other types of travellers, such as migrants, refugees and tourists, who engage with the other on a more rudimentary basis (Hannerz, 1990; 2004; Roudometof, 2005, 2012). Cosmopolitans are therefore seen as individuals who exhibit a culturally open disposition and a sense of commitment to belonging to the world as a whole (Hannerz, 1990; Vertovec & Cohen, 2002).

However, such a distinction has drawn criticism from others who argue that it overlooks the many ways in which people can be cosmopolitan (Clifford, 1992; 1998; Robbins, 1998; Werbner, 1999, 2006, 2008). Clifford (1992) has argued that such an understanding is Eurocentric, as it reinforces the status of the traveller as one who is able to cross boundaries undetected — that is, a European, educated, bourgeois male. In Clifford’s (1992) terms, ‘a non-white person cannot figure as a heroic explorer’ — the status of a heroic explorer can be attributed to Hannerz’s (1990) earlier definition of the cosmopolitan, due to Hannerz’s emphasis on the cosmopolitan’s willingness to engage with the other, celebrate diversity and recognise difference. Calhoun (2002) has more recently argued that such a definition of the cosmopolitan inhibits the ‘class consciousness of frequent travellers’. McKay (2012) has drawn on translocal subjectivity rather than a cosmopolitanism framework, even as she uses the term ‘global Filipinos’ (see also Conradson & McKay, 2007; McKay, 2006, 2007). Her basis for arguing against the cosmopolitan framework is attributed to its Eurocentric, abstract and individualised structure (McKay, 2012). Lu (2013)¹ has further rejected the premise of the ‘global Filipino’ as a ‘moniker for the cosmopolitan individual’ based on the Eurocentric understanding of cosmopolitanism as one who engages with the other on their

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¹ Instead, Lu (2013) sees the ‘global Filipino’ as a deliberate attempt to create a new national subject.
travels. Social scientists, then, are drawing our attention to the pitfalls in the theoretical aspects of cosmopolitanism.

Existing understandings of cosmopolitanism have sought to redress this elitism and Eurocentricism by investigating non-elite global persons. Clifford (1992) has reflected on the lived experiences of companion servants, guides and migrant labourers in his formulation of cosmopolitanism. Beck (2006) has meditated on the experiences of the ‘average migrant’, whereby transportation workers, doormen, janitors and cleaners can communicate in several languages and demonstrate the ability to shift perspectives, utilise a dialogical imagination and handle contradictions in a creative manner. In their extensive study of blue-collar workers in America and France, Lamont and Aksartova (2002) have demonstrated how workers can draw on cosmopolitanism in more minute ways to counter forms of racism. Skrbis and Woodward (2007) have built on this conceptualisation further to argue that ‘ordinary cosmopolitans’ are ambivalent towards neoliberal globalisation.

Given the Philippines’ involvement in processes of neoliberal globalisation, it is no surprise that Filipino migration scholars have begun to frame the ‘global Filipino’ experience using a cosmopolitan lens. Liebelt (2008) demonstrated how Filipino migrants working as foreign domestic workers in Israel develop a cosmopolitan subjectivity that enables them to create global pathways (see also Werbner, 1999). She used a cosmopolitan lens to exemplify how the Filipino migrant travels ‘on and on’ rather than ‘back and forth’ and is able to belong to their host country in an intimate and affective way, as an insider rather than as an outsider. Liebelt (2008, 2011) showed how Filipino labour migrants built commonalities with their non-Filipino employers and that their migratory trajectories are determined by a ‘cosmopolitan imagination’. Her research demonstrated how Filipino migrants exercised agency to overcome the precarity brought on by temporary work contracts, migration regimes and quasi-citizenship in the hope of attaining permanency in a more secure citizenship regime. Liebelt’s definition of cosmopolitanism is inspired by Werbner’s (1999) notion of a ‘working class cosmopolitanism’, which sought to unearth the complex social process and moral shifts that emerge out of ‘specific socio-spatial extensions’ (Liebelt, 2008; Werbner, 1999). Such examples are used to demonstrate ‘cosmopolitanism from below’ — that is, a practice based on openness and transcendence that can be enacted by ordinary persons (Rapport, 2012; Vertovec & Cohen, 2002).

However, such an emphasis on transcendence and openness in formulations of cosmopolitanisms have raised a number of criticisms. The most prolific critic of existing conceptualisations of cosmopolitanism is Calhoun (2003). Firstly, he
criticises cosmopolitanism research for neglecting to attend to the extent to which individuals are situated within existing structures of social domination. Kurasawa (2004: 240) summarises this critique rather succinctly by paraphrasing George Orwell: ‘all world citizens are equal, but some world citizens are more equal than others’. Secondly, Calhoun (2003) points out that transcendence of boundaries does not necessarily indicate a freedom from relationships but might instead indicate a reorganisation of relationships. Finally, he urges social scientists to consider if ‘cosmopolitan theory [can] value humanity, not merely in its abstract, but in the concrete variety of its ways of life’ (Calhoun, 2003: 532).

These issues raised by Calhoun (2003) arguably form the crux of the cosmopolitan debate (see also Beck & Levy, 2013). Some critics have followed Calhoun (2003) in arguing that ‘nations still matter’ (see Calhoun, 2007, 2008). For example, Hedetoft and Hjort (2002) have argued that cosmopolitanism is generally thought of as overly rational and too ideological to compel concern for global others. They argue that while individuals can imagine themselves as belonging to ‘a nation’, the extent of belonging to the globe is problematic at best and is therefore limited (Hedetoft & Hjort, 2002). Kendall and colleagues (2008) have further argued that people’s lived experiences are still constrained by the nation-state. Skey and Antonsich (2017) argue that the continuing appeal of nationalism around the world proves that the nation still persists as the primary basis for culture, identity and belonging.

Such debates can also be found in the field of Philippines Studies. Cuevas-Hewitt (2010) argues for a post-national basis for belonging based on translocalism against transnational capital and environmental issues. His argument for cosmopolitanism is one based on diversity and difference as opposed to homogeneity and sameness, and on a notion of belonging that does not include the nation-state as the point of ‘fixity’. For the members of the postcolonial social movements within which Cuevas-Hewitt (2009, 2010, 2016) researched, the ‘global Filipino’ actually exists. The global Filipino’s clamour for diversity and heterogeneity appears to be presented as ‘radical’ in that it challenges the essentialism and homogeneity inherent in the term ‘Filipino-ness’, leading the author to regard his subjects as ‘radical cosmopolitans’ (Cuevas-Hewitt, 2016). However, Aguilar (2014) has argued against such a conceptualisation, as he challenges any assumptions of a post-national social order. To exemplify his point, he draws on the experiences of second-generation Filipinos living in America. He contends that American multiculturalism dictates that these youths must belong ‘somewhere’, leading them to take part in cross-border practices and lay claim to a ‘Filipino’ identity (Aguilar, 2014). However, these cross-border practices are interpreted as a ‘roundabout way’ to nationalism — belonging to the
nation within which they were born (America). In this way, then, Aguilar (2014) is arguing that 'nations still matter’ (see Calhoun, 2003, 2007, 2008, 2010; Hedetoft & Hjort, 2002).

Others have argued that a universal concern for others does not necessarily have to surpass or supersede a preference for one’s own kind. There is the notion that cosmopolitanism and nationalism are not to be seen as oppositional forces, but as complementary. In Aguilar’s (2014) volume, he argues that ‘there is no need to pit cosmopolitanism against nationalism’. To exemplify his point, he uses the historical migration of seafarers who travelled around the world when the Philippines was under Spanish colonial rule (Aguilar, 2014). He demonstrates how they were able to expand their horizons beyond the local and the parochial and were able to gain intimate knowledge of other cultures (Aguilar, 2014). His argument that cosmopolitanism and nationalism are seen as necessary and complementary emerged from the historical record, whereby these same cosmopolitan seafarers returned to the Philippine homeland when their country went to war for Independence (Aguilar, 2014). He also draws on Wolf’s (1997) study of Filipino–American youth whose parents would threaten to send their children back to the Philippines as punishment, arguing that these sentiments were anti-national and were therefore classified as against cosmopolitanism (Aguilar, 2014). In this view, Aguilar (2014) is purporting a rooted cosmopolitanism (Appiah, 1997, 2006; Delanty, 2006a; Werbner, 2006, 2008). To support one’s compatriots was seen as part and parcel of cosmopolitanism — that is, belonging to humanity as a whole.

Such an ideal is commonly expressed in Appiah’s (1997, 2006) idea of a ‘rooted cosmopolitan’, where he uses the example of his father to exemplify how one’s obligations to humanity as a whole do not negate one’s obligations to one’s nation (see also Werbner, 2006). Social scientists have built on this idea further by suggesting that cosmopolitanism is a ‘new kind of nationalism’ (Delanty 2006, 2006a; Delanty & O’Mahony, 2002; see also Ignatieff, 1994). Delanty (2006) has suggested that inclusion of others, an appreciation of diversity and openness to the world are seen as necessary attributes to cultivate in today’s age of globalisation. These scholars attempt to query any assumptions as to how cosmopolitanism is lived, whose cosmopolitanism is being noted, and who is in fact open to the world (Glick Schiller, 2015: 103; see also Werbner 2008). As Glick Schiller and colleagues (2011: 400) have emphasised:

rootedness and openness cannot be seen in oppositional terms
but constitute aspects of the creativity through which migrants
build homes and sacred spaces in a new environment and within transnational networks.

Cosmopolitanism is thus defined as a simultaneous rootedness and openness to build particular domains of commonality (Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 399; see also Appiah, 1997, 2006; Glick Schiller, 2015; Rapport, 2012; Werbner, 2006, 2008). However, what remains to be empirically examined is the extent to which these variants — rootedness and openness — co-exist in the lived experiences of non-elite persons. In Glick Schiller and Irving’s (2015) words, the questions still remain: who is a cosmopolitan, and whose cosmopolitanism is to be valued?

Categories of analysis: identity and belonging

_A cosmopolitan identity?

In an attempt to answer the questions posed by Glick Schiller and Irving (2015) — who is a cosmopolitan, and whose cosmopolitanism is to be valued? — social scientists have turned to the concept of identity. In Skrbis and Woodward’s (2013) volume on *Cosmopolitanism: Uses of the idea*, they explore the possibility of a cosmopolitan identity. They build on earlier work with Kendall (see Skrbis et al., 2004) to theorise the cosmopolitan identity as a set of ‘dispositions’, inspired by Bourdieu’s (1977) idea of ‘habitus’. Cosmopolitans are identified as having a particular set of dispositions that can be used to distinguish them from non-cosmopolitans or locals (Skrbis & Woodward, 2007; 2013; see also Roudometof, 2005, 2012).

Such a definition of the ‘cosmopolitan’ is built on earlier work by Hannerz (1990). Hannerz (1990: 238) defined the cosmopolitan as a ‘perspective, a state of mind or — to take a more processual view — a mode of managing meaning’. In light of criticism that his definition reflected an elitist and Eurocentric bias, he has since revised his definition to include ‘thick’ and ‘thin’ cosmopolitans to reflect the various ways in which people can be cosmopolitan (Hannerz, 2004). Szerszynski and Urry (2002: 470) created a typology of cosmopolitan traits that can be used to test for the existence of a cosmopolitan identity, a model that includes mobility, consumption, curiosity, encounter with difference, comparative knowledge of own and others’ societies and culture, and the ability to interpret various images of cultural differences (see also Beck, 2000, 2002). This typology is not meant to be exhaustive but is meant to be used to create a set of analytical attributes for investigating the empirical dimensions of cosmopolitan identity (see also Beck, 2006; Rapport, 2012; Urry, 2000).
However, a focus on the cosmopolitan identity has brought up a number of dilemmas. For one, the openness that has been emphasised in formulations of cosmopolitanism has been acknowledged as being ‘a rather vague and diffuse notion’ (Skrbis et al., 2004: 117). Openness is assumed to be either ‘consciously assumed’ or ‘circumstantially induced’, rather than a grounded and measurable entity (Skrbis et al., 2004: 117). To contribute to an understanding of cosmopolitanism as a grounded and measurable entity, Skrbis and Woodward (2013) suggest that researchers ought to view the cosmopolitan identity as a form of ‘habitual self-revision’ based on interactions between the individual and the environment (see also Nowicka & Rovisco, 2009). Such a focus will thereby ensure that researchers focus on how individuals see themselves as belonging to the world, rather than resulting in the imposition of a researcher’s gaze upon its subjects (Skrbis & Woodward, 2007, 2013). In arguing for such an approach, however, they further acknowledge that such a focus also ‘privileges a narrowly conceived and idealistic type of cosmopolitanism based on educated, middle-class forms of cosmopolitan’ (Skrbis & Woodward, 2013: 26). A focus on qualities that underpin a ‘cosmopolitan identity’ may thus inadvertently reinforce the ‘class consciousness of frequent travellers’ (Calhoun, 2002, 2003).

Furthermore, cosmopolitanism’s universality is also contested. Theorists have argued that cosmopolitanism is not exclusively Western because ‘the idea itself remains universal though the language, idiom and form in which it is expressed may differ’ (Vertovec & Cohen, 2002: 13; see also Turner et al., 2011; Werbner, 2008; R. Werbner, 2008). However, what is universal about the idea may inadvertently enforce an understanding of a Western, liberal, rational individual at its centre. As McKay (2012) has argued, its reinforcement of the understanding of the self as a liberal and rational individual is largely determined by a Western understanding of identity. She argues that cosmopolitanism is premised on the assumption that all beings agree on the same baseline principles (McKay, 2012; see also Latour, 2004). Thus, a focus on the universality of the cosmopolitan identity may eventuate in the social scientist imposing normative definitions of cosmopolitanism onto their subjects, thereby either succumbing to the ‘cosmopolitan temptation’ (Scheslinger, 2007) or neglecting to explain how cosmopolitanism may be understood as a process (Krause, 2011; see also Beck, 2006; Beck & Sznaider, 2010; Glick Schiller, 2010; Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2017).

Social scientists have argued that this poor understanding of cosmopolitan identity may be attributed to the problem of the concept of ‘identity’. Beck and Levy (2013: 11) have argued that existing debate on cosmopolitan identities ‘is circumscribed by
a narrow understanding of belonging … compounded by the vagueness [of] the notion of identity’. They draw on earlier work by Brubaker (2003, 2005, 2010), which argued against the focus on identity due to its invocation of bounded groups. Brubaker (2002: 174) has urged researchers not to simply assert that identifications are constructed, but to specify how they are constructed. He urges researchers to specify how and when individuals invoke particular identifications, construct the other, and interpret their situations in some terms rather than others (Brubaker, 2002: 175). Brubaker finally urges social scientists to link macro-level outcomes with micro-level processes. Brubaker (2002; 2003) and Beck and Levy (2013: 11) thus urge social scientists to ‘push for a more complex understanding of “groupness”’ rather than identity when analysing cosmopolitanism. This research attempts to do so by focusing on belonging.

**Belonging and the politics of belonging**

Belonging is understood as a fundamental human need (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Baumeister and Leary (1995: 497) argue that humans ‘have a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and significant interpersonal relationships’. Probyn (1996) defines belonging as a complex, messy process that is fuelled by yearning. Yuval-Davis (2011) defines belonging as one that is about ‘feeling at home’. She draws on Hage (2000), who argues that this feeling may be either positive or negative.

Despite the importance of belonging to the human psyche, belonging in cosmopolitanism research is said to be poorly understood. Beck and Levy (2013: 11) point out that this poor understanding of belonging is attributed to the fact that ‘thick’ belonging is typically based on a ‘naturalised image of the nation’. Furthermore, cosmopolitanism is often presented as an individual-level phenomenon, resulting in the assumption that cosmopolitanism represents ‘freedom from culture’ and a ‘matter of individual choice’ (Calhoun, 2003: 544; see also Kendall et al., 2008: 414; Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2017). Rather than continue to perpetuate the naturalised image of the nation as the basis of the imagined community or use cosmopolitanism as a driving force for individualism, social scientists have since called for a move away from such binaries (Beck & Levy, 2013; Glick Schiller, 2015; Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013; Glick Schiller, 2016; Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2017; Woodward, 2014). They have generally followed Calhoun (2003: 544), who suggested that cosmopolitanism ought to be viewed as ‘participation in a particular, if potentially broad, process of cultural production and social interconnection that spans boundaries’.
One of the ways in which social scientists have sought to analyse this process is by examining peoples’ participation in processes of cultural production (Calhoun, 2002, 2002a). Hannerz (2006: 14) refers to cultural cosmopolitanism as one that includes ‘enjoying new sights, sounds and tastes [and] new people’. Szerszynski and Urry (2002) argue that such forms of ‘banal cosmopolitanism’ may ‘motivate identification and a will to action’ (cited in Hannerz, 2006: 14). Finally, Skrbis and Woodward (2013) argue that consumption patterns that reflect ‘immanent transcendence’ ‘may go hand-in-hand with more fundamental and progressive social-structural changes’ (see also Nava, 2002, 2007). Their argument is built on their earlier research into the consumption patterns of ‘ordinary cosmopolitans’ (Skrbis & Woodward, 2007). Participation in processes of cultural production in cosmopolitanism has largely been thought of in terms of Calhoun’s (2002) ‘class consciousness of frequent travellers’, based on the jet-setting frequent flyer who attends Ivy League universities, reads The Economist and who assumes the universality of human rights (see also Calhoun, 2003; Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2017). This interrelation between consumption and culture, however, does not address if and how cosmopolitanism has developed in other non-Western cultures (Iqtidar, 2010; Monshipouri, 2009; Turner et al., 2011: 85; Vertovec & Cohen, 2002).

Such theorisations of culture in cosmopolitanism research is problematic, particularly in the cosmopolitan debate. Hannerz (2006: 13) points out that the reason nationalism and cosmopolitanism are polarised is because nationalism has demonstrated that ‘culture can be a resource for politics’. Hedetoft and Hjort (2002: xviii) have argued that the nation continues to matter to individuals as this entity is able to provide:

- cultural concreteness and ethnic exceptionalism, in addition to
- the existence … of a political superstructure with which one can
- identify and which is the provenance and safeguard of passport,
- citizenship, and a sense of communal solidarity. [emphasis
- added]

Cosmopolitanism researchers have attempted to bridge culture and politics to transform understandings of cosmopolitanism in the same way that Anderson (1991) has. Anderson (1991) has notably transformed understandings of nationalism by arguing that nations are able to use the media to create a cultural source to allow individuals to imagine themselves as belonging to the nation as a community. Delanty (2009: 14) has argued that cosmopolitanism ‘can certainly be seen as one such imaginary component of society and can be contrasted to, for instance, Benedict
Anderson’s (1983) somewhat affirmative conception of the imaginary as a national imaginary. He argue that globalisation has produced a different kind of reality that requires a new ‘cosmopolitan imagination’ (Delanty, 2009: 2).

Delanty (2009: 14) uses Castoriadis’s (1987) notion of the imaginary to convey his notion of the ‘cosmopolitan imagination’ (see also Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis, 2002). According to Delanty (2009: 14), Castoriadis (1987) argued that ‘all societies possess an imaginary dimension, since they must answer certain symbolic questions as to their basic identity, their goals and limits’. Cosmopolitanism can then be understood as ‘an orientation that resides ... in an imagination that can take many different forms depending on historical context and social circumstances’ (Delanty, 2009: 15). In this way, cosmopolitanism is framed as an:

immanent orientation that takes shape in modes of self-understanding, experiences, feelings and collective identity narratives. The imaginary is both an experience and an interpretation of that experience in a way that opens up new perspectives on the world. (Delanty, 2009: 15; see also Wagner, 2008)

Delanty (2006, 2009, 2012) has further reframed cosmopolitanism as a relational ontology, one that is concerned with the relationship not just between self and other, but between self, other and the world. His work can be viewed as an extension of Lamont and Aksartova’s (2002) earlier work on non-elite global persons who have argued for a framework that emphasises boundary maintenance when investigating cosmopolitanism. According to Delanty (2012), the name of the cosmopolitan game is social transformation, a process that should, ideally, include ‘immanent transcendence’. ‘Immanent transcendence’ is understood as the opening up of social spaces that ‘allow for particular social actions whose origins and implications go beyond the local and national’ (Skrbis & Woodward, 2007: 737; see also Roudometof, 2005, 2012). However, this framework does not take into account power and agency. Glick Schiller (2010: 419; see also Gilroy, 1993; Glick Schiller & Fouron, 2001; Featherstone, 2008) points out the importance of including an understanding of the agency and social positioning of actors in cosmopolitanism theory to:

research and theorise conditions within which people come to recognise injustice and its causes and build on situated subaltern difference to openness to all struggles against oppression.
Stoertzler and Yuval-Davis (2002: 327) argue that without the agency of human actors, social transformations would not take place. The cosmopolitan imagination thus needs to be viewed as a form of ‘human agency transforming the present in the image of a shared future’ (Rumford, 2013: 108–109; see also Delanty, 2009).

To include understandings of power and agency in cosmopolitan theory, this research draws on the politics of belonging framework (Yuval-Davis, 2011). The politics of belonging is an intersectional approach that combines the ‘broad macro analytical approach with the case study approach in order to be able to gain a proper and valid understanding of any particular social phenomena’ (Yuval-Davis, 2011, 2011a). Yuval-Davis’s (2011b) politics of belonging framework is based on Bourdieu’s (1977, 1984, 1990) theory of practice, a theory that focuses on the continuous interaction between the individual and his or her social fields (see also Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004; O’Reilly, 2012). Yuval-Davis (2011, 2011b) prioritises the process of boundary maintenance over any static notions of identity, preferring to argue that the self is a fluid and dynamic entity that can be used to create, dissolve and/or reinforce boundaries (see also May, 2013). Yuval-Davis’s (2011) politics of belonging framework thus allows the researcher to look beyond static notions of identity and instead regard the self as a social actor embedded in multiple social locations (Glick Schiller, 2012; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015; Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013; Glick Schiller, 2016; Woodward, 2014).

A politics of belonging framework contributes to the study of cosmopolitanism in two ways. Firstly, the approach is based on Haraway’s (1998) situated knowledge, whereby knowledge production cannot be observed as emerging from ‘nowhere’. The politics of belonging thus takes into account the situational perspectives of both the research subject and researcher, addressing the ‘dirty work of boundary maintenance’ that inevitably accompanies building commonalities (Favell, 1999; Yuval-Davis et al., 2006). Yuval-Davis’s (2011) framework furthers the understanding of cosmopolitanism as ‘simultaneous rootedness and openness’ by situating the rootedness in cosmopolitanism within the human body (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015; see also Nava, 2002, 2007; Yuval-Davis, 2011). The openness that is inherent in existing definitions of cosmopolitanism is seen instead as something that is situationally and contextually dependent (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015: 6; see also Nava, 2002, 2007; Yuval-Davis, 2011). As a result, ‘contexts and situations where individuals and groups make choices about how they engage with and act towards other human beings’ become salient (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015: 5; see also Glick Schiller et al., 2011). In this way, cosmopolitanism is not only about ‘belonging to the world’, but also:
about belonging to [the world] in a particular way, *one in which a person’s situated positioning creates a domain of commonality* — however partial, fleeting or contradictory — across categorical identities. (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015: 5) [emphasis added]

Secondly, the creation of shared domains of commonality is further understood as a complex one. In Yuval-Davis’s (2011) framework, she argues that there are three different analytical facets to the politics of belonging. According to her, shared domains of commonality may be determined by social locations, identifications and emotional attachments, and ethical political values. Social locations are considered fixed categories, as they are marked by ‘different embodied signifiers’ such as ethnonationality, race and gender (Yuval-Davis, 2011: 13). Although they are fixed and therefore the least permeable out of the three analytical facets, they are not to be ‘collapsed and automatically equated with subjective identifications and emotional attachments’ (Yuval-Davis, 2011: 13). Identifications and emotional attachments are considered to be shared narratives, which are related, directly or indirectly, to what membership to a particular collectivity might mean, and so are central to the self/other question (Yuval-Davis, 2011; see also Yuval-Davis et al., 2006). According to Yuval-Davis (2011: 14), these narratives need to be shared to be made collective so as to provide a ‘necessary condition for any notion of agency and subjectivity to occur’. Identifications and emotional attachments, when shared, then become the basis for collective social order. These shared narratives are further evaluated through the prism of ethical and political values, which can either be made more or less permeable (Yuval-Davis, 2011). As Yuval-Davis (2011: 25) explains:

> ethical and political values can be transformed, under certain conditions, into the inherent personal attributes of members of particular national and regional collectivities … and, thus, in practice, become exclusionary rather than permeable signifiers of boundaries.

As a result, the creation of particular domains of commonality can sometimes be fraught with anxieties, contradictions and tensions (Skrbis & Woodward, 2013). Skovgaard-Smith and Poulfelt (2017) have demonstrated how transnational professionals draw on the cosmopolitan imagination to imagine themselves as ‘non-nationals’. The process of imagining themselves as ‘non-nationals’ involves a simultaneous maintenance of difference that results in the reinforcement of boundaries based on national identities (Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2017: 142). Krause (2011: 421) has shown how, while Pentecostal Christian churches rely on the
cosmopolitan imagination to establish themselves globally, their ‘boundary-drawing practices [created] simultaneously cosmopolitan moments and situations of exclusions’. The politics of belonging framework used in this research, therefore, foregrounds the value of particular social solidarities and its importance in developing a sense of collectivity (Calhoun, 2003; see also Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2017; Skrbis & Woodward, 2007).

Consequently, the framework privileges the dialogical enterprise by examining the possibilities and limitations of cosmopolitanism as ‘simultaneous rootedness and openness’ (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015; see also Nava, 2002; 2007; Yuval-Davis, 2011). As Hannerz (2004) points out, since the publication of his first article on Cosmopolitans and Locals in World Culture in 1996, the social bases of cosmopolitanism are expanding (see Clifford, 1992; Ferguson, 1999; Wardle, 2000). He argues that ‘there seems to be no single relationship … between cosmopolitanism and degrees of rootedness’ (Hannerz, 2006: 21). However, despite this acknowledgement, empirical research on collective (rather than individual) cosmopolitanism is still lacking. The contributors to Glick Schiller and colleagues’ (2011: 400) special issue have helped fill this research gap by examining a variety of ‘transnational networks’ — that is, networks that span nation-state borders. The focus on transnational networks in the special issue fill an important gap in understanding the politics of belonging in cosmopolitanism research, as the politics of belonging in cosmopolitanism is typically analysed at the level of the individual (e.g. Lamont & Aksartova, 2002; Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2017; Skrbis & Woodward, 2007). As Beck (2006: 89) points out, the extent and in what constellations that a boundary transcending imagination can succeed is still an open empirical question (see also Delanty, 2006; Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015; Rumford, 2008, 2013). As Hannerz (2006: 23) points out:

a more comprehensive ethnographic mapping of the actually existing varieties of cosmopolitanism should also allow us, even prompt us, to be more precise in the use of the cosmopolitan concept, and perhaps not least to make some further distinctions.

As a result, he argues that social scientists ‘should rather seek out, along more varied dimensions, the loci where experiences and interests may come together, in individuals and groups, to expand horizons and shape wider sets of relationships’ (Hannerz, 2006: 14). This research, therefore, seeks to make a theoretical and empirical contribution to understanding the possibilities and limitations of cosmopolitanism by examining Filipino migrant organisations.
However, while Yuval-Davis’s (2011) framework is comprehensive in investigating the political aspects of belonging in cosmopolitanism, her framework has not addressed culture and its role in building particular domains of commonality. In her chapter on cosmopolitan political projects of belonging, Yuval-Davis (2011) focuses mostly on global and supranational institutions such as the Global Social Forum to demonstrate ‘cosmopolitanism from below’ (Vertovec & Cohen, 2002; Werbner, 2008). However, such an account does not explain how the cosmopolitan imagination is translated into practice by social actors to become a shared resource (Delanty, 2006, 2009, 2012). Consequently, her framework is inadequate to investigate ‘whether there is any place for culture or ethnicity in such theory except as the stigmatised other, more or less tolerated’ (Calhoun, 2003: 532).

To extend Yuval-Davis’s (2011) framework further, this research draws on what Ortner (2005: 46) has referred to as a ‘subjectivity-oriented theory of culture’. According to Ortner (2006: 153), agency can have a dualistic meaning. On the one hand, it can be regarded as a form of power. Such an understanding of agency can be found in Yuval-Davis’s (2011) politics of belonging framework. On the other hand, Ortner (2005: 33) criticises the idea of agency for being limited in its ‘tendency to slight the question of subjectivity, that is, the view of the subject as existentially complex … who makes and seeks meaning’. She therefore refers to a ‘subjectivity-oriented theory of culture’, whereby agency is understood as being culturally constructed (Ortner, 2005: 46).

A culturally constructed agency is regarded as a form of intention and desire towards the pursuit of goals and the enactment of projects (Ortner, 2006: 153; see also Geertz, 1973; Ortner, 2005; Weber, 2003 [1958]). Such a theorisation of agency allows researchers to investigate how ‘people sustain a culturally meaningful life in situations of large-scale domination by powerful others’ (Ortner, 2006: 142). To investigate the cultural construction of agency, researchers must look toward the ‘public systems of symbols and meanings, texts and practices, that both represent a world and shape subjects in ways that fit the world as presented’ (Ortner, 2006: 116; see also Geertz, 1973; Weber, 2003 [1958]).

Such a view allows researchers to acknowledge that people are not just ‘passive consumers but active participants’ who can use cultural symbols and understandings towards existential ends (Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 403; see also Leitner et al., 2007; Massey, 2005). Understanding that agency is culturally constructed thus extends the limits of cosmopolitanism by including existential understandings that are essential to allowing people to feel that they belong, without reinforcing nationalism as the only available basis for ‘thick belonging’ (Hedetoft & Hjort, 2002). More
importantly, combining culture with agency makes it clear that ‘cosmopolitanism can never be gender, racially or ethnically neutral’ (Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 404; Krause, 2011; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015). This research thus extends Yuval-Davis’s (2011) framework by including an analysis of culture, which Yuval-Davis’s (2011) volume does not focus on.
Conclusion

In keeping with Yuval-Davis’s (2011) politics of belonging, this research seeks to combine an understanding of macrostructural contexts with ethnographic evidence that illustrates micro-level processes (see also Brubaker, 2002, 2003). Due to the Philippines’ implication in processes of neoliberal globalisation, the case study chosen for this research on cosmopolitanism is ‘overseas Filipinos’. The goal of this research is not to present cosmopolitanism as a ‘guaranteed outcome’ but to investigate its limits, its uses and its possibilities for understanding complex social worlds (Werbner, 1999, 2006). This thesis does so by focusing on Filipino migrant organisations. It aims to ‘contribute to the growth of a critical and situated cosmopolitanism that speaks to the anxieties, contradictions and disparities in power that give rise to – and arise from – cosmopolitan projects and claims’ (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015: 6).

In the first section, I outlined this research’s context. I explained the reasons for selecting Filipino migrants as the case study to investigate cosmopolitanism. The main reasons for a focus on cosmopolitanism are: the implication of the Filipino national subject in processes of globalisation; an understanding of the Filipino national subject when one is located at the level of the world rather than nation-state; and the importance of including agency in Filipino migration research.

In the second section, I situated ‘Overseas Filipinos’ within this research’s primary field site of Australia. I demonstrated how the overseas Filipino population contains ethnic, racial, gendered and class elements, resulting in a heterogeneous and diverse population. However, while the research on temporary Filipino labour migrants has shown how Filipinos engage with both co-national and non-national others, the literature on permanent émigrés has not been developed to the same extent. Hence, this research seeks to extend this inquiry using the concept of cosmopolitanism.

In the third section, I explored how cosmopolitanism is theorised and used in the social sciences. These themes found within the literature on Filipino migration reflect the continued debate raging within the literature on cosmopolitanism. This debate is centred on the role the nation-state plays in people’s lived experiences (Calhoun, 2007, 2008; Kendall et al., 2008; Skrbis & Woodward, 2013); how cosmopolitanism operates as a social strategy (Delanty, 2009; Rumford, 2013), the empirical rather than normative aspects of cosmopolitanism (Glick Schiller, 2015a; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015: 6; Krause, 2011; Stacey, 2015), and finally, the overt focus on cosmopolitanism as an abstract, individualistic structure (Calhoun, 2003; Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2017).
In the final section, I explored the categories of analysis used in cosmopolitan theory. One way in which social scientists have sought to contribute to this debate is through the investigation of a ‘cosmopolitan identity’ (Skrbis & Woodward, 2013). However, the notion of a ‘cosmopolitan identity’ has resulted in critiques that belonging is poorly understood in cosmopolitanism research (Beck & Levy, 2013; Calhoun, 2003). Instead, this research has chosen to focus on belonging in cosmopolitanism research. This research aims to make a theoretical and empirical contribution to cosmopolitanism research in three ways. Firstly, it moves away from the abstract individualistic structure of cosmopolitanism by referring to cosmopolitanism as an inherently relational ontology between self, other and the world (Delanty, 2006, 2009, 2012). Secondly, it focuses on belonging in cosmopolitanism, while moving away from the reinforcement of the nation as the basis for ‘thick belonging’ (Beck & Levy, 2013). Instead, it uses a politics of belonging framework, an analytical tool that focuses on the creation of particular domains of commonality using a boundary transcending imagination (Beck, 2006; Delanty, 2009; Yuval-Davis, 2011). Thirdly, this thesis argues that agency is culturally constructed rather than solely one about gaining power from more powerful others (Ortner, 2006). In other words, understanding that agency is culturally constructed allows researchers to extend the limits of cosmopolitanism by including existential understandings that are essential to allowing people to feel that they belong to the world, without reinforcing nationalism as the only available basis for ‘thick belonging’ (Hedetoft & Hjort, 2002). ‘Rooted cosmopolitanism’ (Appiah, 1997, 2006) is thus understood as creation of particular domains of commonality based on ‘simultaneous rootedness and openness’ to allow people to see themselves as belonging to the world (Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 400; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015).

In the next chapter, I outline the methods and methodologies used to investigate the politics of belonging as an ‘overseas Filipino’ in Australia. This chapter will illustrate the paradigms that guided the process of fieldwork, as well as the qualitative research methods that were used to collect and analyse the data. The chapter also shows the disparities and anxieties that arose during the process, therefore presenting a more transparent and reflexive perspective that is in line with the paradigms used to guide this research.
3 METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

Cultural anthropology is not valuable because it uncovers the archaic in the psychological sense. It is valuable because it is constantly rediscovering the normal.
—Edward Sapir, Cultural anthropology and psychiatry, 1949 [1932]: 515.

From one point of view, that of the textbook, doing ethnography is establishing rapport, selecting informants, transcribing texts, taking genealogies, mapping fields, keeping a diary, and so on. But it is not these things, techniques and received procedures, that define the enterprise. What defines it is the kind of intellectual effort it is: an elaborate venture in, to borrow a notion from Gilbert Ryle, ‘thick description’.

Introduction

This thesis aims to explore the possibilities and limitations of what has been referred to as a ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’, that is, the creation of shared domains of commonality based on ‘simultaneous rootedness and openness’ to allow individuals to see themselves as belonging to the world (Appiah, 1997, 2006; Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015). Its key objective is to ‘contribute to the growth of a critical and situated cosmopolitanism that speaks to the anxieties, contradictions and disparities in power that give rise to — and arise from — cosmopolitan projects and claims’ (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015: 6). The key question that this research seeks to address is: Can national rootedness and cosmopolitan openness coexist in the lived experiences of Filipino migrants? If so, how does this coexistence play out, and what are the contradictions and tensions that arise from navigating this coexistence?

In the preceding chapter, I engaged with these questions by drawing on a cosmopolitanism framework. Cosmopolitanism is understood as a relational ontology that encompasses self, other and the world (Delanty, 2009). This research extends this focus on self, other and the world by drawing on a politics of belonging framework (Yuval-Davis, 2011). As I mentioned in the preceding chapter, the main contribution that this research seeks to make is to provide a processual understanding of how self, other and the world are constructed, and an understanding of culture in creating shared domains of commonality based on ‘simultaneous rootedness and openness’ (Appiah, 1997, 2006; Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015). In her book, Yuval-Davis (2011) urges researchers to combine an understanding of macrostructural contexts with ethnographic evidence that illustrates micro-level processes (see also Brubaker, 2002, 2003). Due to the Philippines’ implication in processes of neoliberal globalisation, the case study chosen for this research on cosmopolitanism is ‘overseas Filipinos’. This chapter
explores the methods and methodologies that have been used to empirically investigate the ‘dirty work of boundary maintenance’ among Filipinos living abroad (Favell, 1999; Yuval-Davis et al., 2006).

This chapter will also illustrate the paradigms that guided the process of fieldwork, as well as the qualitative research methods that were used to collect and analyse the data for this study. The chapter shows the disparities and anxieties that arose during the process, thereby presenting a more transparent and reflexive perspective that is in line with the paradigms used to guide this research. The significance of this chapter is to illuminate as much as possible the researcher’s relationship with knowledge, which had an influence on the research tools used to collect and interpret the data. The resultant knowledge, summarised in the following chapters, may have been influenced by this subjective relationship. This chapter thus ensures that the reader is not only fully aware of the epistemologies and methodologies of this research but is also informed of the limitations of the research that may have had an impact on how the knowledge was constructed.

This chapter is divided into four sections. In keeping with the disciplinary methods traditionally used in anthropology and sociology, this thesis deploys an ethnographic toolkit. I refer mostly to Geertz’s (1973) idea of ‘thick description’ or what Herzfeld (2001) has referred to as the ‘practice of theory’. Geertz’s (1973) thick description argues that the researcher is implicated in the production of knowledge in the field, because the researcher is given the task of sorting out the complex layers that structure the subject’s social world. Due to the researcher’s implication in the process, the researcher’s positioning in relation to his or her research subjects is considered significant (Ackerly & True, 2010; Hume & Mulcock, 2004). In this section, I reflect mostly on my own positionality and its ethical implications, as well as the strategies that I used to resolve these implications in the field.

Furthermore, this research deployed a grounded theory approach to data collection. Grounded theory is considered a methodology that does not privilege theory over the lived experiences of people. Due to its emphasis on qualitative research methods, this methodology is seen as complementary to ethnographic fieldwork. In this section, I outline how grounded theory was applied. Such a methodological approach informed this research’s preference for cosmopolitanism as an analytical framework.

One of the main components of cosmopolitanism as an analytical framework is reflexivity. Reflexivity is considered a mediating mechanism between the individual’s social context and the individual’s ultimate concerns and desires (Archer, 2007). Due to this emphasis on reflexivity, the individual is considered the primary unit of analysis. In the third section I explore how an individual unit of
analysis is applied, what its limitations are, and how these limitations were addressed. Cosmopolitanism is viewed as the creation of shared domains of commonality based on ‘simultaneous rootedness and openness’ to allow people to see themselves as belonging to the world (Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 400; see also Appiah, 2006; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015; Werbner, 2006).

This creation of shared domains of commonality is empirically investigated using multi-sited ethnography. Multi-sited ethnography is a method that encourages the researcher to move beyond the boundaries of one’s field site, thereby ensuring that the construction of locality is not confined to the nation-state. Such a method is said to be useful to counter the ‘methodological nationalism’ that has pervaded social science methodologies, particularly in studies of migration (Amelina & Faist, 2012; Levitt, 2012; Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002). As I explain in the final section, there are three factors that led to the utilisation of multi-sited ethnography. The first relates to the investigation of de-territorialisation. The second is attributed to the social and physical geography of Perth, Western Australia, this research’s primary field site. Thirdly, there is the notion of ‘community’, which researchers have acknowledged is a problematic concept (Espiritu, 2003; McKay, 2007; Pinches, 2001). These factors led to the undertaking of multi-sited ethnography as my primary method, resulting in a study of multiple transnational communities (Anderson, 1991; Castles, 2002; Faist, 2000; Kennedy & Roudometof, 2002; Yuval-Davis, 2011).

While multi-sited ethnography proved to be a useful method for dealing with the issues of de-territorialisation and investigating the relationship between the global and the local (see Lewellen, 2002; Yuval-Davis, 2011; Sassen, 1998), the implementation of this methodology was not without challenges or limitations. In the final section, I go into greater detail on what challenges and limitations were anticipated, how these challenges and limitations were dealt with, and finally what challenges and limitations remain unresolved. The inclusion of the latter part is to ensure that the reader is fully aware of the limitations of this research. These limitations may have had an impact on the data collection, coding and analysis.

**Thick description, or ‘practice of theory’**

According to Geertz (1973), ethnography is what anthropologists and sociologists ‘do’. As illustrated in the opening quote included in this chapter, Geertz (1973) refers to ethnography as the intellectual enterprise that underpins the technicalities of fieldwork — what he refers to as ‘thick description’. Thick description is said to be an awareness of the contextual implications and structures that influence what the social scientist witnesses in the field (Dawson, 2010; Herzfeld, 2001; Ortner, 2006).
Geertz (1973) refers to this method as an interpretive approach to the study of cultures, i.e. understanding theory through the practice of participation and observation. His most exemplary account is his essay titled *Deep Play*, where he uses the example of the Balinese cockfight to illustrate how thick description can be applied. The researcher, given the task of ‘sorting out the complex layers of understanding that structure the social world’, is implicated in the process (Dawson, 2010: 2). In this sense, thick description can be argued to be complementary to a theory of practice (see Chapter Two). Herzfeld (2001) touches on this play of words by referring to ethnography as a ‘practice of theory’.

Since the ‘cosmopolitan turn in social and political theory’ (Calhoun, 2010: 598), cosmopolitanism researchers have repeatedly called for more qualitative research to be conducted to provide a more empirically informed basis for cosmopolitan theory. In her critique of cosmopolitan theory, Glick Schiller (2010) argues that ethnographic thickness is needed to drive future research on cosmopolitanism so as to provide more of an explanation of the key players behind cosmopolitanism. Beck and Levy (2013: 24) point out that ‘the cosmopolitan turn in the social sciences requires a new kind of middle-range “descriptive social theory”’ that will expand the empirical dimensions of cosmopolitanism theory. By using ethnographic research methods, this research aims to bridge analytical theorising with a descriptive theoretical approach and thereby extend the parameters of cosmopolitanism theory, particularly with regard to its presence in non-Western cultures (Roudometof, 2012; Turner et al., 2011).

Given the researcher’s implication in ethnography, positionality is said to be important to the creation of knowledge. Positionality is understood as a researcher’s delineated position in relation to the study that influences aspects of the study, such as the data collected and its analysis and interpretation (Chacko, 2004; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Okely, 2012). To ensure that the reader is aware of my positionality as a researcher and the implications for the data collected and knowledge created, this section gives a brief reflective account of my positionality.

Other researchers have built on the importance of positionality in the field of Filipino migration. Most of the research in the field has discussed their positions in relation to their subjects. Lorenzana (2014) describes himself as an ‘insider’ researcher but reflects on his sexuality as an element that may have influenced his ability to manoeuvre gendered dynamics within the field. Tondo (2012) refers to herself as a ‘native’ researcher, being of Cebuano origin. She explains that her ‘native’ research status was able to give her the ability to attune to nuances that ‘non-native’ researchers may not have noticed (Tondo, 2012).
Given my own positionality as a researcher with Asian, albeit non-Filipino, association or background, my subjective engagement with knowledge may have had implications for the data collected. As I mentioned in Chapter Two, ‘White Australia’ never fully disappeared for those considered visibly different (Ang, 2001, 2014). Informants generally drew on discourses of Asian-ness to bridge the gap between ‘us’ and ‘them’. Hence, while I go into detail in Chapter Four about the ways in which Filipino migrants draw on ‘Asian-ness’ as a structural discourse, I am aware that my positionality may have shaped these responses.

However, other researchers have pointed out the complexities between the binaries of insider/outsider and native/non-native. Nititham (2017), who conducted research among Filipino migrant research communities in Ireland, says that her mixed-race background meant that her positionality was never fixed but had to be negotiated. Positionality could not be taken for granted, nor did it always rest on such binaries as insider/outsider. Narayan’s (1993: 671) essay on the native/non-native binary in ethnographic work explicates this dynamic succinctly: ‘how “native” is a native anthropologist? How “foreign” is an anthropologist from abroad?’

This move away from the insider/outsider binary was further coupled with a move towards a more subjective engagement with knowledge. According to Narayan (1993: 682), one of the ways in which such binaries may be avoided was to move away from any claim to objectivity. She instead calls for an:

involvement that is unabashedly subjective as it interacts with
and invites other subjectivities to take a place in anthropological
productions. Knowledge, in this scheme, is not transcendental,
but situated, negotiated, and part of an ongoing process.

This subjective engagement builds on Haraway’s (1988) idea of situated knowledge (see also Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis, 2002). Haraway (1988) defines situated knowledge as an awareness that ‘there is no view from nowhere’ (see also Rumford, 2008). Such a methodology is meant to emphasise a more reflective engagement with participants in the field, as well as to acknowledge the situatedness of the researcher (Ackerly & True, 2010: 22–23; see also Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2002). The papers in Hume and Mulcock’s (2004: xxiii) volume emphasise the importance of ‘willingness to embrace a rigorous reflexive process as a necessary component of the participant observation methodology’.

I attempted to apply this understanding by keeping an electronic journal during the course of my fieldwork to ensure that reflection on issues of relationships between myself and participants was made. Preliminary research was also achieved by way
of a literature review to ensure that I had some awareness of any social and political protocols. Theoretical scholarship was further strengthened by attendance at a Tagalog language school, where I learnt the language, as well as customs, traditions and histories. I also regularly consulted with colleagues at my workplace who are Filipino migrants, as well as with Professor Michael Pinches, retired professor of Filipino studies in the discipline of anthropology.

In addition to a move towards a more reflective and subjective engagement in the field, I attempted as much as I could to prioritise relationships in the field over the fulfilment of a research objective. Narayan (1993: 672) urged researchers to focus on the ‘quality of relations with the people we seek to represent in our texts’. Such a stance is meant to ensure that participants are regarded as ‘subjects with voices, views and dilemmas’ and as ‘people to whom we are bonded through ties of reciprocity and who may even be critical of our professional enterprise’ (Narayan, 1993: 672). More recently, others have built on this reflexive understanding and have reflected on similar issues in their own research. The papers in Voloder and Kiritchenko’s (2014) edited volume reflected on similar issues pertaining to insider research on migration and mobility. Carling and colleagues (2013) urged researchers to consider the mutability and flexibility of their relationships with their subjects by focusing on building trust, rapport and bridging differences.

To this end, potential research subjects were made aware of my research, even during informal conversations. Lunches or coffees were used in exchange for the participants’ time. Dialectical interviewing and dialogical exchanges regularly occurred during the course of the interview. My background as a migrant and my own experience of migrating to Australia were often shared during the interview and when interacting with participants. Furthermore, with Migrante and Gawad Kalinga, I was involved as a volunteer, thereby exchanging unpaid labour and social engagement for the data gathered in the field.

Finally, the relationship between researcher and participants in the field was treated as dynamic and non-linear. Marcus (1995, 1998, 2007) has written extensively on the ‘changing conditions of ethnographic fieldwork and the implications for anthropological praxis’ (cited in Hume & Mulcock, 2004: xxi). Okely (2012: 56) explains that:

fieldwork is non-linear. The approaches from elsewhere, the voyage out and chaotic vastness of an openness for cooperation, whom you cannot control — these approaches are applicable in an unpredictable flux anywhere.
To account for both a subjective and reflective engagement, as well as to prioritise relationships with participants in the field, this research deployed a grounded theory approach to data collection, which I explore in the following section.

**Grounded theory**

Grounded theory is a methodology that prioritises the processual and subjective nature of knowledge. Ackerly and True explain grounded theory as a ‘lived, interactive process … in their social, historical, and local contexts’ (2010: 207): ‘The “theory” in grounded theory is … guided by certain normative or epistemological commitments, such as understanding people as sources of knowledge not objects of study’ (2010: 203). As Bryant and Charmaz (2007: 1) explain, grounded theory is considered an iterative process that allows the researcher to move back and forth between empirical data and the analytic process.

This methodology was first developed by sociologists Glaser and Strauss in 1965 to ensure that theory was grounded in the lived experiences of the subjects we study. Strauss and Juliet (1994) summarise the rationale behind grounded theory as a research methodology. Firstly, grounded theory enables researchers to close the gap between theory and empirical data. Secondly, grounded theory means that qualitative research methods take precedence over quantitative approaches, thereby substantiating ethnography as a valid practice in the social sciences (Strauss & Juliet, 1994; see also Hastrup, 1995; Okely, 2012). As such, this methodology can be seen as complementary to the ‘thick description’ method advocated by Geertz (1973).

Charmaz (1996: 28) summarises six key characteristics of grounded theory (see also Glaser & Strauss, 1967):

1. The researcher is simultaneously involved in the data collection and the analysis phases of research.
2. Analytic codes and categories are developed from the data rather than from a hypothesis.
3. Middle-range theories are developed to explain behaviour and processes.
4. Analytical memo-ing.
5. Theoretical sampling.
6. A delayed literature review.

Ackerly and True (2010: 206) further suggest that one begins with an analysis of data collected within the context of ‘theoretical categories and ideas generated from the initial coding process’. The researcher is further advised to plan a subsequent
return to the field site for a deeper analysis, until ‘theoretical “saturation” or “sufficiency”’ is reached, as well as a visual map of the ‘relationships among the concepts in the emergent theory’ (Ackerly & True, 2010: 206).

In accordance with grounded theory, the data collected from interviews were transcribed and organised. I used a transcription service for some of the audio from interviews, and transcribed the other interviews using either Evernote or OTranscribe. Data from both interviews and participant-observation were organised into various notebooks on Evernote and then tabulated in Microsoft Excel. Thematic analysis was also used in Microsoft Word (Miles et al., 2013). Repeated terms and phrases gathered from participant-observation were also colour coded by hand. In Vivo coding was also practised (Saldana, 2012). From these codes and tables, descriptive accounts were first written up to give a more general and substantive account of what took place in the field. These were loose accounts that were used to illuminate the narrative and emergent themes and were inspired by Geertz’s (1973) ‘thick description’ (see also Ortner, 2006).

Various theoretical lenses were then used to understand the politics of belonging as an overseas Filipino (Yuval-Davis, 2011). The diversity of the Philippines as an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 1991), confirmed both by the literature and the data, shaped this research’s goal to move ‘beyond groupism’ (Ang, 2014; Brubaker, 2003, 2005, 2010; Brubaker & Feischmidt et al., 2006; Brubaker et al., 2004; Glick Schiller, 2010; Levitt, 2012). As Brubaker (2002) explains, ‘groupism’ is understood as the tendency to regard ethnicities, nationalities and races as singular, homogenous entities and thus as fundamental building blocks of the social world. He instead urges researchers to consider how individuals reach a form of ‘self-understanding’ (Brubaker, 2002). In accordance with this goal, individuals were selected as the primary unit of analysis. As the theories on cosmopolitanism prioritise the individual and the individual’s engagement with the world and others, cosmopolitanism was selected as the analytical framework (Beck, 2000, 2002, 2006; Delanty, 2006, 2009, 2012; Skrbis & Woodward, 2013). In the next section, I discuss one of the main components of cosmopolitanism as analytical framework — that of reflexivity.

**Reflexivity and the individual unit of analysis**

Reflexivity is considered a mediating mechanism between the individual’s social context and the individual’s ultimate concerns and desires (Archer, 2007). In fact, reflexivity is said to be the key factor that distinguishes cosmopolitanism from its theoretical cousins. Inglis and Robertson (2011) distinguish cosmopolitanism from globalisation by arguing that the latter is to be seen as the backdrop against which
cosmopolitan perspectives emerge and make sense (see also Rumford, 2013). Similarly, while cosmopolitanism can be used to denote particular dispositions, attitudes and outlooks that can be used to transcend and/or dissolve ethnonational boundaries (Lamont & Aksartova, 2002; Skrbis & Woodward, 2007; Szerszynski & Urry, 2002), transnationalism is considered a signifier that can be used to describe an external reality (Roudometof, 2005). To illustrate this distinction, Roudometof (2005) applies transnationalism as a spatial metaphor, resulting in the understanding of the world as one that comprises transnational social spaces rather than ‘container’ nation-states (Roudometof, 2005; see also Amelina & Faist, 2012; Baubock, 2010; Faist, 2010, 2015; Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002). One of the types of cosmopolitan dispositions that Skrbis and Woodward (2007: 732–733) identified is the ‘inclusive valuing of other cultural forms whose origin is outside one’s home culture’, calling for a ‘degree of reflexive engagement’ (see also Savage, Bagnall & Longhurst, 2005: 191; Skrbis et al., 2004). Reflexivity is therefore seen as one of the cornerstones of the theory of cosmopolitanism.

The focus on reflexivity is meant to affirm two ontological realities or social truths. The first is the idea that people have multilayered identities and thus can have multiple allegiances (Rumford, 2008, 2013; Woodward, 2014). Glick Schiller (2016: 186) argues that ‘modernist Western social theory’ has neglected the reality of such multiplicity through the imposition of binaries of difference (see also Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013). Hollinger (2000: 157) points out that cosmopolitanism allows for an emphasis on ‘dynamism and multiplicities of identity, change and complexity’, as there is no ‘singular cultural tradition waiting to be found’.

The second ontological reality that cosmopolitanism seeks to reflect is that these multilayered identities and multiple allegiances can exist simultaneously. Woodward (2014) stresses that ‘we simply need to learn how to simultaneously embrace multiple forms of belonging and various layers of openness and closure’. Glick Schiller (2016: 184) builds on her earlier work on conceptualising simultaneity (see Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004) and argues that:

migrants have all kinds of transnational ties and they have all kinds of local ties, simultaneously. Migrants do not live with networks defined by national origins or ethno-national religious background either in their new homes or transnationally.

As a result of this focus on reflexivity, cosmopolitanism is often used to understand particular modes of self-transformation (Nowicka & Rovisco, 2009). One way that researchers may investigate this process of self-transformation is by focusing on the individual as the primary unit of analysis. Lamont and Aksartova (2002: 2)
demonstrated how individuals draw on ‘cultural repertoires of particular universalism’ to counter experiences of racism. Skovgaard-Smith and Poulfelt (2017) used interviews with individuals to demonstrate subjects’ reflexive engagement with the other. As Skovgaard-Smith and Poulfelt (2017) explain, this analytical focus allows the researcher to move beyond essentialised understandings of how self, other and the world are constructed. It is through taking the individual as the primary unit of analysis that the researcher can determine the extent of their understandings of self, interaction with the world, and the extent of their inclusion of the other (Delanty, 2012).

I applied the individual unit of analysis by using interviews as the primary research method. Through these interviews, I unearthed what the participants’ residency status and history was, where participants resided in the Philippines, where they were currently located, what kinds of affiliations they held and what their occupations were. A table of the background of the interviewees is included in Appendix A. A focus on the individual provided perspective on who the ‘other’ is and how the self interacts with the ‘other’ and in what contexts, as well as how individuals construct ‘the world’.

However, while the individual unit of analysis is acknowledged as important, this research further acknowledges its limitations. The emphasis on the individual has resulted in a criticism that structural constraints are neglected in favour of a liberal, abstracted and rational individual as the starting point (Calhoun, 2003; Hedetoft & Hjort, 2002; McKay, 2012). Furthermore, cosmopolitanism theory has been criticised for its universalising premise. Kahn (2008: 271) believes that the notion of the ‘human’ is a construct and is therefore ‘not independent of cultural symbologies’; therefore, he argues that ‘no universalising project can be culture-free’.

To account for these limitations, I combine the individual unit of analysis with Yuval-Davis’s (2011) politics of belonging framework, explored in the literature review in Chapter Two. In this way, subjects are considered to be partially knowing rather than liberal or abstracted (Yuval-Davis, 2011; see also Bourdieu, 1977, 1984, 1990, O’Reilly, 2012; Ortner, 2006). This partial, rather than full, reflexivity means that two types of agency may be understood. The first, and more commonly understood, is the notion of agency of power (Ortner, 2006). Cosmopolitanism is understood as a strategy of connectivity that allows one to act on the awareness that ‘others are more connected and well-resourced than they are’ (Rumford, 2013; see also Liebelt, 2008; Werbner, 1999).
The second is what Ortner (2006) refers to as the ‘agency of (cultural) projects’. Here, one focuses less on subjects as individuals and more on situating them within their ‘communities of practice’ (O’Reilly, 2012). As McCrone and Bechhofer (2008: 1253) have said, there are possible discrepancies between ‘how people respond in principle’ and how they ‘actually behave in real life situations’. Focusing on the ‘agency of projects’ allows the researcher to view cosmopolitanism ‘less as a psychological property or capacity unto itself, and more as a disposition toward “the enactment of projects”’ (Ortner, 2006: 152). Ortner further elaborates that for the subject, agency may appear as ‘issuing from one’s own desires’, but for the analyst ‘it is the projects that define the desires in the first place’. The agency of projects is explored in Chapters Five, Six and Seven and its methodological considerations are reflected on in the following section.

Furthermore, this research draws on Billig and colleagues’ (1988) framework of ‘ideological dilemmas’, a framework that encourages the social scientist to regard the conflicting relationship between ideology and common sense as one that allows individuals to make their lives more meaningful. Skey (2012: 471) applies this methodology to research on cosmopolitanism to ‘emphasise the contradictory and rhetorical aspects’ of social interaction. Contradictions are not seen as something to be rid of but are instead used to empirically explore ‘when bridges are both built and dismantled, in relation to whom and at which moments’ (Skey, 2012: 481). By applying such a framework, one is able to view cosmopolitanism less as an outcome or social reality and more as a continuous interaction between the individual and their social environment that does not presuppose rootedness or openness (Delanty, 2006; Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015; Skrbis & Woodward, 2013).

**Multi-sited ethnography**

As I mentioned in the preceding chapter, one of the effects of the process of globalisation is de-territorialisation. De-territorialisation is defined as the detachment of ‘production, consumption, communities, politics, identities’ from local places (Kearney, 2008: 274; see also Chapter Two of this thesis). As a result, contemporary identities are said to be less spatially bounded, historically unitary, or culturally homogeneous, resulting in burgeoning and hybridised identities (Appadurai, 2008; Lewellen, 2002). New ‘imagined communities’ emerge as a result (Baubock, 2010; Cuevas-Hewitt, 2016; Faist, 2010; Kennedy & Roudometof, 2002; Rumford, 2008; Yuval-Davis, 2011). These emergent identities and new
communities have resulted in a rising interest in cosmopolitanism (Rumford, 2008, 2013).

One of the key theorists to focus on de-territorialisation and its implications for ethnography is Appadurai (2008: 54), who argues that ‘more persons in more parts of the world consider a wider set of “possible” lives than they ever did before’ due to repeated and constant exposure to mass media, news of and rumours about those in their locality who have moved away (see also Appadurai & Breckenridge, 1988; McKay, 2012). As people, images and ideas have become increasingly de-territorialised, people no longer see themselves as fixed or immovable, but instead see themselves in a form of ‘ironic compromise’ between their imagined lives and their social life (Appadurai, 2008: 54). What this means for ethnographers is that imagination has come to play a vital role in the constructions of identity in ordinary lives (Appadurai, 2008: 55):

The issue, therefore, is not how ethnographic writing can draw on a wider range of literary models, models which too often elide the distinction between the life of fiction and the fictionalisation of lives, but to figure out a way in which the role of the imagination in social life can be described in a new sort of ethnography that is not so resolutely localising.

Appadurai (2008) calls for innovative ways to incorporate imagined lives as part of the investigation of realisms in everyday, individual lives (see also Salazar, 2011; Salazar & Smart, 2011). One of these ways would be through the implementation of multi-sited ethnography. Multi-sited ethnography is a method that encourages the researcher to move beyond the boundaries of one’s field site, thereby ensuring that the construction of locality is not confined to the nation-state. Such a method is said to be useful to counter the tendency to equate the boundaries of one’s social life with the nation-state, also known as ‘methodological nationalism’ (Amelina & Faist, 2012; Levitt, 2012; Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002).

of information of some sort’ (Mitchell, 1974: 292). Secondly, there are the ‘various transactions or exchanges between people as links in a social network’ (Mitchell, 1974: 293). Finally, there is the ‘normative content of network linkages’, which ‘refers to the actor’s construction of the meaning of that relationship to him in terms of his understanding of the other person’s expectation of his behaviour’ (Mitchell, 1974: 294).

Thus, although the term ‘multi-sited ethnography’ was acknowledged only recently, it was already widely practised in the field. As such, multi-sited ethnography can be considered a credible tool for qualitative research, particularly with regard to Appadurai’s (2008: 55) point on the importance of the imagination in social life and its implications for ‘a new sort of ethnography’.

The value of multi-sited ethnography as a tool has been further substantiated in the extant research on Filipino migration. Such a method is meant to reflect the fact that the social lives of Filipino migrants are not confined to the boundaries of the nation-state that they live in (Aguilar, 2014, 2015; Camroux, 2008). Parrenas (2001) used multi-sited ethnography to investigate how a ‘Filipino diaspora’ may be understood as a global workforce of dispersed citizenry who share a class consciousness with one another. McKay (2012) believed that the village of origin provides the primary basis from which Filipino migrants develop their global subjectivities. Tondo (2012) divided her time in the field between three main field sites: New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia (although the final site was not included in her thesis). Her research led Tondo (2012) to conceptualise ‘the Filipino diaspora’ as a ‘network of networks’. Lorenzana (2014) conducted research in different cities within India. Aguilar’s research team (2009) conducted ‘centripetal ethnography’ to illuminate emergent ‘cultures of relatedness’ between globally dispersed villagers (see also Aguilar, 2013). Madianou and Miller (2012) conducted research in London and a village in the Philippines to gather a holistic perspective on mediated lives. Multi-sited ethnography has therefore become a more commonplace research tool, particularly in the field of Filipino migration.

This research similarly deployed a multi-sited ethnography. The fieldsites initially chosen for this research were Singapore and Australia. Singapore was chosen as a comparative fieldsite to Australia as Singapore is a well-known destination country for ‘overseas Filipinos’. Singapore is listed as one of the top three destinations for land-based overseas Filipino workers in 2015 (POEA, 2015). This is attributed partly to Singapore’s dependence on foreign labour (Chua, 2003; Velayutham, 2007). Filipino migration to Singapore can be traced to the 1970s, when the Philippines and Singapore developed bilateral relations and introduced the foreign domestic workers' policy (Gonzalez, 1998; Gonzalez & Holmes, 1996). Due to the increased demand
for migrant labour in other professions such as hospitality and retail, Filipino migration to Singapore has not only increased, but has also become more diversified, making it a significant site to study Filipino migration (Amrith, 2010, 2017). Singapore is also considered a favourable destination for Filipinos as it is one of 67 countries in the world that allow Philippine citizens to enter Singapore on a 30-day no-visa entry basis (Embassy of the Philippines, 2019; Henley & Partners, 2019).

However, despite the advancement of bilateral relations between Singapore and the Philippines, tension between Singaporean nationals and Philippines citizens is said to have increased. An example that illustrates this tension would be the Philippines Independence Day celebrations in 2014, when public outrage caused the Filipino Independence Day Council Singapore to withdraw their application to hold the event in a public venue on Orchard Road (Suarez, 2014; Tan, 2014). This incident was used to highlight the rise of anti-foreign sentiment in Singapore (Watts, 2014; see also Macaraig, 2015; Visconti, 2013a). In addition to these informal barriers to migrant incorporation, Singapore places significant barriers on the pathway to permanency (Chua, 2003; Visconti, 2013; Yeoh et al, 2004). These barriers are augmented by the state of ‘double liminality’ (Aguilar, 1996) that accompanies temporary labour migration (see also Asis et al, 2004; Yeoh & Huang, 2000). McKay (2012) found that the expectations for those returning from their migrations abroad made it difficult for overseas Filipino workers to adjust when they return home, leading Filipinos to embark on repeated sojourns.

As a result of the social and political barriers to permanent incorporation in Singapore, Filipinos have adapted to these restrictions by using Singapore as a transitory country to get to their desired destination (Paul, 2011; Tan, 2013). In Paul’s (2011) interviews with 95 ‘overseas Filipinos’ working as foreign domestic workers in Singapore and Hong Kong, she found that the desirable destination countries in the social imaginaries of ‘overseas Filipinos’ were the United States, Canada, Spain and Italy. These destinations were collectively imagined and culturally constructed as ‘The West’ due to their pathways to permanency (Paul, 2011; see also Pratt, 2002). The Filipino migrants in Amrith (2017)’s study also discussed their dream of going to the United States, Canada and Europe. What eventuates is the continuation of the emigration trajectory, whereby Filipino migrants transition into other visa categories such as ‘marriage migrant’ or ‘family reunification’ to reach their desired destination (Chapter Two; see also McKay, 2016; Paul, 2011; Pratt, 2002; Soco, 2008; Yeoh & Huang, 2000). However, while this strategy is acknowledged as an agentive response to migration regimes (see Liebelt, 2008, 2011), existing research has not comparatively analysed the migratory
trajectories of ‘overseas Filipinos’ in these two contexts. In Chapter Two, I discussed how Australia has become the fourth most popular destination country for Filipino immigrants due to their marriage migration and family reunification schemes, making it a significant site to study ‘overseas Filipinos’ (see also CFO, 2017). A comparison between the migratory experiences of ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Singapore and Australia therefore attempts to fill this gap.

Part of my fieldwork for this doctoral research thus consisted of six weeks' of fieldwork in Singapore and conducted fifteen interviews with Filipino migrants. Departing from Delanty’s (2009) understanding of the world as an ‘abstract category’, evidence from ‘overseas Filipinos’ both Singapore and Australia revealed instead an experience of the world as a series of border regimes (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013; Rumford, 2006). I thus followed Glick Schiller and Salazar (2013) in arguing for a regime-of-mobility approach to understanding ‘the world’, particularly from the vantage point of the Filipino migrant. Cosmopolitan openness is viewed less as a goal and more about ‘reconciling increasing self-autonomy with a multiplicity of governance regimes, and about electing to live in some communities while at the same time opting out of others that may make claims on our allegiances’ (Rumford, 2008: 14).

A comparison between the lived experiences of ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Singapore and Australia further revealed the significance of ‘transnational communities’ (Faist, 2000) not only for navigating ‘the world’ as a regime of mobility, but also as forms of emplacement in a new country (Glick Schiller et al, 2011; Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013; see also Castles, 2002; Yuval-Davis, 2011). As a result, this more literal multi-sited focus was subsumed in favour of investigating multiple imagined communities (Anderson, 1991; Castles, 2002; Faist, 2000; Yuval-Davis, 2011). One of the ways in which I sought to do so was through researching publicly established organisations in Australia. Before commencing fieldwork, I emailed several of the organisations listed on the official website of the Philippine Consulate General to see if they required any volunteers. Four organisations responded to my email. Out of these four, I selected three organisations: Migrante Western Australia (WA), a branch of Migrante International; Gawad Kalinga Perth WA, a branch of Gawad Kalinga; and Iglesia Ni Cristo. These three organisations were selected because they are all subsidiaries of a global — rather than solely transnational — institution. They further stood at the juncture between culture and politics, which Hannerz (2004, 2006) has termed the ‘two faces of cosmopolitanism’. These three organisations also had a very active membership. As such, taken together, these organisations can be used to understand how shared domains of commonality are constructed, therefore...
yielding a more in-depth understanding of the processual mechanisms between self, other and the world (Delanty, 2006, 2009, 2012; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015).

Further, multi-sited ethnography proved useful in countering the social and physical geography of Perth, Western Australia. The challenge to surmount was the Filipino migrant population’s geographic dispersion and invisibility in the public sphere. Rather than having a specific, concrete place or space — like Lucky Plaza in Singapore — where Filipino migrants chose (or in some cases, avoided – see Amrith, 2017) to congregate, there was no specific point of locale that this research could focus on. The only visible and obvious field site was the Filipino Australian Club of Perth, Incorporated (FACPI). However, the clubhouse was only used during special occasions and events, meaning that participant-observation could not be practised to the extent of full immersion. Further, internal cleavages and divisions among the Filipino population in Perth meant that audiences were generally divided. Some events that I attended did not include some of the participants that I knew from fieldwork. For this reason, the FACPI clubhouse was not a useful strategic field site to use for collecting data.

An alternative was sought through participation in Catholic spaces. Tondo (2012) has pointed out the importance of religious spaces for Filipino migrants worldwide. Due to Australia’s official multicultural policy, Filipino migrant organisations were able to organise Tagalog masses in various Catholic churches and even integrate elements of ‘folk Christianity’ in some local masses (see Chapter Four). However, I was also aware of the multitude of Filipino associations and did not want to exclude them as potential field sites (see Appendix B). In an attempt to capture the politics of belonging exemplified by these organisations, this research compares the data gathered from Catholic spaces (Chapter Four) with the other migrant organisations (Chapters Five, Six, Seven), thereby contributing to an understanding of how and why shared domains of commonality between Filipinos and their others are created.

More importantly, by utilising a multi-sited ethnography, this research aims to present a more heterogeneous construction of locality so as to avoid an essentialised or singular construction of community-building. Community, as others have argued, presumes closure and commonality (Amit & Rapport, 2002; Kennedy & Roudometof, 2002). However, this notion of community has proven to be problematic, particularly among Filipino migrants. Class and regional divisions have been known to proliferate (Espiritu, 2003; Pinches, 2001). This research therefore takes a constructivist approach to community-building (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). As Glick Schiller (2016: 184) likes to put it, ‘whether migrants form a “community” and if and when they use the term “community” is a research question’. This research
follows Glick Schiller’s example and looks at how and when features of commonality came to the fore (Woodward, 2014). To exemplify the heterogeneity that characterises the Filipino population, three different migrant organisations were selected for fieldwork, during which I performed participant-observation and conducted semi-structured interviews with thirteen members. I also undertook two field trips to the Philippines on behalf of two of the three migrant organisations chosen for this research. These localised spheres can be categorised under Faist’s (2000) typology of transnational communities as they use social and symbolic ties to create an imagined community at a global–local level. What eventuates are communities that emerge out of ‘specific spatial extensions’ (Webner, 1999) rather than a pre-given, essentialised ‘diaspora’ that reinforces methodological nationalism (Amelina & Faist, 2012; Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013; Kennedy & Roudemotof, 2002; Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002).

However, the practice of multi-sited ethnography was not without its challenges and limitations. One of the main challenges was the matter of logistics, most notably pointed out by Hage (2005; see also Kurotani, 2004; Muir, 2004; Teaiwa, 2004). For one, there were budgetary concerns that accompanied undertaking a multi-sited ethnography of that scale. This issue became more problematic when one had to consider more long-term immersion, which is usually the case in traditional anthropological methods. Anthropologists traditionally undertake a lengthy period at their field site to really give adequate time to understand the other’s point of view (e.g. Geertz, 1973; Malinowski, 1922; Rosaldo, 1989). The anthropologists in *Writing Culture* – a paradigmatic text (Starn, 2015) – and *Women Writing Culture* wrote about how they took the time to immerse themselves with their subjects (Behar & Gordon, 1995; Clifford & Marcus, 1986). I was unable to do so during my short sojourn in Singapore in a way that gave my research participants full justice, and thus have not included that to a great extent, beyond demonstrating how the world is constructed as a series of border regimes (see Chapter Four).

Furthermore, even though I did not undertake multi-sited research at a transnational or global scale, I did undertake multi-sited fieldwork by examining various political projects. However, time at each field site was divided and did not lead to the immersive experience that anthropological practice typically entails. Hence, I am aware that I was not able to attend to the ‘nuances’ that one may have been able to achieve if one had used a single-site ethnography (Okely, 2012; see also Muir, 2004). To counter this, however, I undertook ‘virtual fieldwork’, whereby I included data collected from the organisations’ respective webpages and organisations as well as news media. Doing so enabled a more comprehensive view of both imagination and
practice without precluding one from the other (Appadurai, 2008). Despite the absence of a physical transnational or global scope, I argue that this research still utilises a multi-sited ethnographic framework in its construction of the field as a ‘single geographically discontinuous site’ (Hage, 2005: 463; see also Hume & Mulcock, 2004).

**Conclusion**

This chapter demonstrated the methods and methodologies that were used to guide the research process. As I stated in the introduction of this chapter, the significance of this chapter is to ensure that the reader is not only fully aware of the epistemologies and methodologies of this research but is also informed of the limitations of the research, which may have had an impact on how knowledge was constructed. In the first section, I reflect on my own positionality and its ethical implications for the data collected in the field. Due to my positionality as a non-Filipino researcher, I was aware of the need to engage more reflexively with the participants in the field. I sought do so by keeping an electronic journal, attending a Tagalog Language School and consulting with Professor Michael Pinches and with other Filipino migrants. I also sought to prioritise relationships in the field through maintaining transparency, exchanging lunches and coffees for my participants’ time, voluntary engagements, and sharing my own migrant experiences and background.

Fieldwork is also acknowledged to be a dynamic process due to the dynamism of the lives of the subjects that social scientists study. Hence, a grounded theory approach was used to account for this dynamism. In keeping with the tenets of grounded theory, a theoretical lens was only selected after fieldwork. As theories on cosmopolitanism prioritise the individual and its engagement with the world and others, cosmopolitanism was selected as the preferred analytical lens (Beck, 2000, 2003, 2006; Delanty, 2006, 2009, 2012; Skrbis & Woodward, 2013).

One of the theoretical cornerstones of cosmopolitanism is reflexivity. As a result of this focus on reflexivity, cosmopolitanism is often used to understand particular modes of self-transformation (Nowicka & Rovisco, 2009). I applied the individual unit of analysis by using interviews as the primary research method. However, while the individual unit of analysis is acknowledged as important, this research acknowledges its limitations. To account for these limitations, I combined the micro dimension with Yuval-Davis’s (2011) politics of belonging framework, explored in the literature review (Chapter Two). Cosmopolitanism is understood as a strategy of connectivity that allows one to act on the awareness that ‘others are more connected and well-resourced than they are’ (Rumford, 2013; see Liebelt, 2008; Werbner,
Cosmopolitanism is further understood ‘less as a psychological property or capacity unto itself, and more as a disposition toward “the enactment of projects”’ (Ortner, 2006: 152). Furthermore, this research draws on Billig and colleagues’ (1988) framework of ‘ideological dilemmas’, a framework that encourages the social scientist to regard the conflicting relationship between ideology and common sense as one that allows individuals to make their lives more meaningful. By applying such a framework, one is able to view cosmopolitanism less as an outcome or social reality and more as a continuous interaction between the individual and their social environment that does not presuppose rootedness or openness (Delanty, 2006; Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015; Skrbis & Woodward, 2013).

Finally, to investigate the effects of globalisation, this research draws on a multi-sited ethnography. I argue that multi-sited ethnography allows the researcher to witness the interplay between rootedness and cosmopolitan openness that a single-site ethnography may not have been able to yield. One of the ways in which I sought to do so was by conducting interviews with Filipino migrants in Singapore, undertaking two field trips to the Philippines, and investigating publicly established organisations. Multi-sited ethnography proved useful in yielding a more in-depth understanding of the processual mechanisms between self, other and the world, and in countering the social and physical geography of Perth, Western Australia. However, the practice of multi-sited ethnography was not without its challenges and limitations, such as budgetary concerns and the lack of an immersive experience. To counter this, I undertook virtual fieldwork among the various political projects, whereby I included data collected from the organisations’ respective webpages and organisations, as well as news media.

The next chapter is the first empirical contribution of this thesis. Using data gathered from interviews and participant-observation, it explores the possibilities and limitations of a ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’ (Appiah, 1997, 2006). The chapter is intended to be used as a comparison to the data gathered from the migrant organisations outlined in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.
4 ‘NOBODY KNOWS WHAT A FILIPINO IS’

When I go overseas, they will ask me, ‘Oh where do you come from?’ I can’t say the Philippines. So I say, ‘Originally from the Philippines but I live in Australia’. If I said, ‘I’m Australian’, they will probably not believe that. Because of my colour. My image [laughs] how I look like, that I’ve no fair skin, my eyes are a bit slanted, dark hair. I don’t know. My eyes are like, it’s a bit dark brown. So that’s how I identify myself. You’re overseas, where do you come from? That’s how I answer. Sometimes they identify me as Chinese or Vietnamese. Nobody know what a Filipino is! [laughs] It’s true. Or Indonesian they would say. Or Burmese! But never Filipina.

—Myrna.

I think for me it’s – aside from being born in Philippines — it’s more of really like, I mean, you get to know what all the idiosyncrasies that goes with being a Filipino but you hate it and love it, I guess. You hate it sometimes because you know you could do better or something like that, but you love it as well because it’s being — it’s home. Yeah, it’s quite tough because it’s sort of that dichotomy, I guess … because me, as Filipino, I understand why it is like that, but at the same time, I don’t totally agree that it should be like that.

—Jerome.

Introduction

I begin this chapter with the quote from Myrna because her experience is neither singular nor unique among the Filipino migrants interviewed for this research. Filipino migrants often suggest a complex and ambivalent relationship between themselves and the homeland, resulting in an experience that illustrates not only cosmopolitan openness (Woodward & Skrbis, 2012) but at the same time a claim to symbolic ethnicity and long-distance nationalism (Glick Schiller, 2015). As I demonstrate with the quote from Jerome, this claim to symbolic ethnicity and long-distance nationalism is not a straightforward one but is one fraught with anxieties, contradictions and ambivalence (Glick Schiller, 2015). Thus, this chapter seeks to contribute to the literature on the agency of Filipino immigrants by investigating their politics of belonging through a cosmopolitan lens.

Cosmopolitanism is an analytical tool used to explain a particular mode of self-transformation to engage with difference and with the oneness of the world (Nowicka & Rovisco, 2009: 3; see also Beck, 2006; Beck & Sznaider, 2006; Skrbis et al., 2004; Skrbis & Woodward, 2007). Despite its usefulness, cosmopolitanism has been criticised for reinforcing a binary of difference through its rejection of ethnic separateness and national transcendence (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013). This binary of difference becomes most obvious when one considers the debate between nationalism and cosmopolitanism (Delanty 2006; Delanty & O’Mahony, 2002; see also Ignatieff, 1994). Hedetoft and Hjort (2002) appear to favour the national over the global as the basis for subjectivity, as they argue that the national
carries with it an irrational weight of familiarity or ‘roots’. Beck and Levy (2013: 11) have argued that ‘belonging’ in cosmopolitanism research is poorly understood because ‘thick belonging’ is still associated with a ‘naturalised image of the nation’. Due to this poor understanding, nationalism and cosmopolitanism are polarised rather than reconciled in extant research, even as they are touted as necessary bedfellows (Beck & Levy, 2013; Delanty, 2006a).

This chapter thus builds on the critical literature on cosmopolitanism that aims to move away from an understanding of cosmopolitan openness and rootedness as diametrically opposed (Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Glick Schiller, 2015; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015). One key theorist who has sought to critically analyse cosmopolitanism is Gerard Delanty (2006, 2009, 2012; see also Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015). Delanty (2009: 14) uses Castoriadis’s (1987) notion of the imaginary to argue that ‘all societies possess an imaginary dimension, since they must answer certain symbolic questions as to their basic identity, their goals and limits’. Cosmopolitanism can then be understood as ‘an orientation that resides ... in an imagination that can take many different forms depending on historical context and social circumstances’ (Delanty, 2009: 15). Delanty (2006, 2009, 2012) has further reframed cosmopolitanism as a relational ontology, one that is concerned with the relationship not just between self and other, but between self, other and the world.

This research extends Delanty’s (2006, 2009, 2012) framework further by seeking to understand how self, other and the world are constructed. In her critique of Beck’s (2006) cosmopolitanism framework, McKay (2012) has argued that cosmopolitanism presumes that the ideas of the self are universally understood and agreed upon. As a result, she has criticised cosmopolitanism theory for reinforcing an abstracted, liberal, modern individual at its centre (see also Glick Schiller, 2010). Similarly, Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt (2017: 147) have argued that cosmopolitanism needs to include a processual understanding in order to understand how it may be ‘socially and relationally accomplished’. This chapter aims to illustrate how the categories of self, other and the world are neither straightforward nor mutually agreed but contain boundaries that constantly shift and change (Rumford, 2006: 163; see also Darieva, 2011; Glick Schiller, 2015).

The chapter is divided into four sections. Drawing on interviews with over 30 ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Perth and Singapore, the first section demonstrates how the self and the world is not an unproblematic relationship. Departing from Delanty’s (2009) understanding of the world as an ‘abstract category’, this section presents instead an experience of the world as a series of border regimes (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013; Rumford, 2006). I thus follow Glick Schiller and Salazar (2013) in
arguing for a regime-of-mobility approach to understanding ‘the world’, particularly from the vantage point of the Filipino migrant. Cosmopolitan openness is viewed less as a goal and more about ‘reconciling increasing self-autonomy with a multiplicity of governance regimes, and about electing to live in some communities while at the same time opting out of others that may make claims on our allegiances’ (Rumford, 2008: 14).

In the second section, I expand on the simultaneity between rootedness and cosmopolitan openness (Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004). The relationship between cosmopolitanism and belonging so far rests on the idea that individuals can exercise the same amount of agency in order to belong to the world. For example, Rapport (2012: 47) emphasises that what is central to cosmopolitanism theory is that cosmopolitanism ensures the right to freedom, or what he prefers to call ‘voluntarism’. However, Calhoun (2003) criticises cosmopolitanism’s inherent liberalism, arguing that not everybody has the ability to choose to transcend their identifications and/or parochial affiliations. More pertinently, Yuval-Davis (2011: 156) points out that the central question that cosmopolitanism researchers ought to be addressing is ‘whether “the other”, and not just me/us, can/should belong’. In this section, I demonstrate how Filipino migrants often experience ‘otherness’ not only through the process of migration, but also during the process of ‘re-grounding’ in a new country, a process that occurs long after the attainment of foreign citizenship (Ahmed et al., 2003). I demonstrate how ‘overseas Filipinos’ exercise their agency against their experiences of otherness by drawing on ‘cultural differences’. They do so by drawing on the ethnonational subjectivity of ‘being Filipino’. However, this affiliation is considered fragile when translated into practice, resulting in a ‘fragmented nationalism’.

In the third section, I explore a source of rootedness that has emerged more poignantly for the ‘overseas Filipinos’ interviewed in this study: Filipino Catholicism. I argue that Filipino Catholicism — which traces its origins to Spanish colonial days, when lowland Filipinos used Filipino Catholicism to create a cultural symbol that represented the subversion of their Spanish colonisers (Ortner, 2006; see Tondo, 2010, 2012) — is not just a legacy of a ‘global design’ (Mignolo, 2000). This cultural symbol has further evolved with the global migration of Filipinos. I demonstrate how the particular universalism of Filipino Catholicism has produced a cosmopolitan dimension. I explore the role that Filipino Catholicism plays in expanding the participants’ cosmopolitan imagination, allowing Filipino immigrants in this study to utilise a boundary-transcending imagination and build a collective basis for belonging to the world (Beck, 2006; Delanty, 2006, 2009).
Finally, I contend with the limits of cosmopolitanism by investigating the relationship between cosmopolitanism and capital accumulation. I explore the entanglement between the two and discover how cosmopolitanism may be used to navigate the global market. Here, I attend to Calhoun’s (2003) caution to pay attention to the relationship between cosmopolitanism and capitalism in order to contend with capitalism’s power (Glick Schiller, 2015a).

**Crossing border regimes**

Jovita is a recent marriage migrant to Australia. Prior to her migration, she had travelled to India for a month for a ‘lay leadership conference’. She also attended a teachers course in New Zealand when she was awarded a Steiner-Waldorf teaching scholarship. She has holidayed in Bangkok and has a sister in Canada, who migrated there ten years ago, and some cousins in the United States. Despite being well travelled and despite having social ties overseas, Jovita describes how difficult it is to travel from the Philippines:

No, I have never been to the US. It’s very expensive, of course, to travel, and the salaries in the Philippines are very low. So we couldn’t afford to travel that far. And it’s very hard to get a visa to the US.

Interviews with Filipino migrants in Singapore — a known transit country (Amrith, 2017; Liebelt, 2011) — reinforces this conclusion. Ruth knew that if she went through Singapore, she could then travel on to her dream destination: Canada. She emphasises how ‘in our country, it’s difficult. When we apply for tourist visa, there are a lot of requirements’. Ruth says that her visa in Singapore will allow her to travel to countries that were previously closed off to Philippine passport holders. To exemplify her point, she draws on a Filipino colleague who had recently visited Australia on a holiday. Ruth explains that the Singaporean visa in the Philippine passport proves to the immigration officer at the airport that ‘we are not going to stay long in your country’. In another interview, a Filipino labour migrant in Singapore brought up similar concerns regarding crossing nation-state borders.

Ruth later introduced me to a friend of hers, Elaine, who was also on a two-year contract but working in a furniture store. Elaine says that the Philippines is a ‘red flag, red alert country’, meaning that single women from countries like the Philippines were likely to be stopped at the airport or denied a visa. Although Singapore allows Filipino passport holders to enter without the need for a visa, the chance of Filipino nationals being denied entry was still high. Elaine would know; she herself was nearly stopped at the airport when she first went to Singapore on a
tourist visa in 2010. She was detained and interrogated by immigration officials wanting to know why her ticket was ‘one way’. Elaine responded that she wanted to maximise her stay in Singapore. She was then fingerprinted, and the officer counted her money in front of her:

They ask me why your money is not enough. And I said, ‘I have money, but it was just divided by my aunty’. My aunty was there because my aunty was holding a dependent pass. Because my cousin is a PR2 right. ‘Oh we divide the money because Philippine immigration would not allow us both money. You want I call my aunty?’ I said like that to the immigration at Changi, who count it in front of me. ‘I also have my credit card, you want to see?’ I said like that. Then: ‘It’s your first time coming here. Why?’ I said like that, ‘Are there any problems?’ They said, ‘No, no there’s no problem’. Then they allow me to go in. Then my cousin said, ‘Ahhh, oh my god, Elaine, you be from A to A ah!’ You know what A to A? Airport to airport [laughs].

Jovita’s, Elaine’s and Ruth’s experiences of mobility illustrate how the world does not appear as an abstract category in the migrants’ lived experiences. Although Delanty’s (2012) framework is useful in that it brings to the fore a relational, rather than abstract and individualistic, ontological understanding of how the self relates to the other and to the world, he does not problematise the relationship between the self and the world. ‘The world’ is understood as an abstract category and background (Delanty, 2006, 2009, 2012). However, as one can see, for migrants leaving the Philippines, ‘the world’ emerges as one of multiple-border regimes. Destination countries were assessed according to how easy it was for Philippine passport holders to enter and find employment. For example, Ruth, a Filipino migrant on a two-year contract working in a national bookstore chain in Singapore, talks about her experience going to Singapore. She had looked at other possibilities, such as Dubai and Hong Kong, but settled on Singapore because of its higher wages.

The world was further understood through the best possible benefits that citizenship could bring. When I spoke to both Ruth and Elaine, they dreamt the same dream — that of being able to settle in Canada someday. Ruth says that she applied for Singapore after her initial application to be a live-in caregiver in Canada fell through.

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2 PR is short for ‘permanent resident’.
At the time of our interview, Ruth was studying her IELTs — the International English Language Testing System — in the hope of going to a ‘more secure’ citizenship regime. She says that she had friends in Canada who talked of the benefits ‘immigrants’ received such as healthcare and education. Although her future trajectory was open ended — Ruth had also applied for permanent residency in Singapore — she was hopeful: ‘If others can do it, why can’t I?’ Similarly, Elaine spoke of her friends who were also enjoying the privileges associated with the citizenship regime of Canada. Elaine says that the fact that her friends were able to go to Canada reinforced her dream of going there someday.

There emerges a similarity between the participants’ interactions with the world and that of other Filipino migrants in other parts of the world. Liebelt (2011) found that Filipino domestic workers in Israel imagined the world as a hierarchy of citizenship regimes. Similarly, Amrith (2017) found that a hierarchy of citizenship regimes similarly influenced the medical workers’ migratory routes in her study. The practice of seeing the world as one consisting of multiple-border regimes suggests that there is not an unproblematic relationship between the self, other and the world. In Delanty’s (2012: 45) formulation of cosmopolitanism, he summarises his framework as one that results in a ‘shared normative culture based on an orientation towards world consciousness’. The fact that most Filipino migrants experience a complex relationship between themselves and the world suggests that ‘world consciousness’ is neither straightforward nor mutually defined. Hence, cosmopolitanism is regarded here as social imaginary that contains a ‘regime of mobility’ (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013).

What is lesser known about the literature on ‘regimes of mobility’ (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013) is how Australia as a migrant destination is viewed. In Paul’s (2011: 1858) depiction of a typical hierarchy of migrant destinations, USA, Canada, Spain and Italy are considered the most desirable dream destinations for ‘overseas Filipinos’ due to their better living and working conditions. Interviews with Filipino migrants in Singapore revealed that Australia also ranked as one of the more desirable destinations in their social imaginaries (see also Chapter Three). Another labour migrant in Singapore, working in hospitality, tells me that she might visit her friend in Australia. Her friend had recently migrated to Sydney for work and so she knew that the wages there in the hospitality sector were much higher than in Singapore. An Information Technology professional working in Singapore had an aunt living in Sydney and he says that when he visits her he might explore employment options. His friend, also an Information Technology professional, asked
him why he wanted to move there when Singapore was so safe. He responds that he had heard the pay was higher.

In Australia, Filipino migrants constructed the world in similar terms. For example, Faith tells me that she appreciated how the ‘Australian government protects its citizens’. This act was something she had observed while working for the Australian Embassy in the Philippines. She considers this a privilege that she wishes to bestow upon her son as he ‘would grow up here having that kind of protection’. Although Faith acknowledges that citizenship is a ‘conceptual thing’, she says that if she was after ‘consular, government support’, then she ‘would rather be Australian’. She contrasts that with Philippine citizenship, where ‘you don’t really see much privilege holding the Philippine passport’. Romel explains how ‘being Australian’ is different from elsewhere:

If you say Australian — it’s very different actually. It’s laid back. If you are Australian, you’re secure. Mainly so to say, your job is secured, you earn a living. If you don’t work, the government will support you. If you want to go to the hospital — go to the public hospital — you don’t need to pay anything. Even medication, we supply them. Even transport to go home! Yeah! And then if you have a transplant, they can do it for free. Kidney transplant — do it for free.

Benedict summarises what it means to be Australian:

The difference is, if you are Australian everything you can do when you get back home. More high-quality people, more respectable. But being Australian as well I’m very proud because we are in high country, quality country. So when I go back home they see my passport, wow! We have VIP privilege. The passport is a very good thing to someone, You are Australian.

Migrating to their desired destinations, however, comes at a high cost. Jovita shares her experience applying for a 90-day tourist visa to visit her Anglo-Australian husband, Paul, in Perth. Despite the fact that Jovita was a full-time teacher at a prestigious, private school in Makati, Manila, and had properties in the Philippines, her visa application was rejected and subjected to ‘no review’. The reason given was that she did not have sufficient funds to travel and was a determined risk of overstaying. Jovita speculates that the rejection ‘was a judgement against the Filipino. Most Filipinos would go outside and not return’. She admits that ‘it was very demeaning, actually, and I thought of complaining to the Australian Embassy
in Manila’. Her husband, Paul, interjects to say that he thought that the immigration officer ‘put [Jovita] in the same basket and said [she was] too much of a risk’. Jovita adds, ‘That’s why I’m saying that as a Filipino we do not have a right to become tourists’. She further speculates that it was because she ‘never had any long visits outside the Philippines at the time. If I had shown them that in the last few years I’d been travelling out of the Philippines, then maybe’. Jovita attributes this process once again to ‘being Filipino’: ‘I think the embassies are getting strict with Filipinos’. I respond by asking, ‘Just Filipinos?’ Jovita replies, ‘I think so’. She says that the migratory process was ‘very hard’ and adds that ‘I know there could be some Filipinos who are doing dodgy things like not returning to the Philippines’.

Jovita’s experience of exclusion was the exception in the pool of interviewees interviewed in Perth, perhaps because she was the only one who had not travelled overseas recently before her visa application. Before his migration to Perth, Romel had worked away from the Philippines since 1979. He found work in Kuwait as a registered nurse, but he was able to migrate to Australia in 1986 when there was a shift in migration policy. Benedict had worked as a mechanic in Taiwan before being recruited as a mechanic for Toyota to work in Australia. Sis Anna (mentioned earlier and in Chapter Seven) and her husband had lived and worked in Singapore and Korea, respectively. Faith thus explains that migration is more than ‘just about finding a job’, but is about the willingness to engage with others – said to be a key trait of cosmopolitans (Hannerz, 2004):

There are certain Filipinos that stay together in a community and they get a kind of support whereas, for example, they’re probably not as exposed to that kind of interaction in the international community, so we know how it is, living next to somebody who is not a Filipino. We are somebody who enjoy that lifestyle. So it’s not easy for somebody, just because you want better opportunities. It’s going to be very difficult if you uproot yourself. We didn’t really feel that much uprooting in our case.

Further, their experiences could be attributed to the fact that they had not applied for a tourist visa but had entered on a skilled-visa pathway, affirming Jovita’s conclusion that ‘Filipinos do not have a right to become tourists’. Their ability to be open to the world was contingent on their ability to provide their labour and service the global economy. Existing research on Filipino migration has examined the ways in which Filipino migrants exercise their agency against this ‘new global immigration policy context’ (Castles & Miller, 2009; Lewellen, 2002; Yuval-Davis, 2011). Paul (2011) illustrates the dynamic nature of Filipino migration and argues that this dynamism
can be viewed as a form of autonomy against the increasingly inaccessible migration regimes. Liebelt (2008) similarly found that Filipino migrants would travel ‘on and on’ rather than ‘back and forth’, using transitory countries such as Singapore to get to their desired destinations. Her illustration of such complex trajectories is based on Werbner’s (1999) idea of ‘global pathways’, which demonstrates cosmopolitanism as one that ‘fosters an understanding of transnational (migrant) subjectivities beyond both an ascription of victimhood and an uncritical celebration of cosmopolitanism’ (Liebelt, 2008: 582). Such instances are similarly observed in the literature on ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Australia. The ‘overseas Filipinos’ interviewed in Caspersz’s (2008: 5) study migrated to Australia after working elsewhere, primarily in the Middle East. She observed that most of them had not worked in the Philippines for a considerable amount of time since entering the adult workforce (Caspersz, 2008). Cosmopolitan openness is therefore viewed less as a goal and more about ‘reconciling increasing self-autonomy with a multiplicity of governance regimes’ (Rumford, 2008: 14).

For Filipino migrants, however, traversing these regimes of mobility paradoxically reinforces rather than eradicates the need for a ‘nationality’, resulting in national rootedness (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013). From Jovita’s experience, one can see how nationality is reinforced through the visa-application process for Filipinos who wish to visit Australia. Even before her arrival in Australia, Jovita found that she could not escape her ‘Filipino-ness’. Furthermore, even though Faith says that they ‘enjoy that lifestyle’, Faith and Jerome similarly recognise the importance of building networks in a new locale. Faith describes how her network in Perth expanded after a serendipitous encounter with three Filipino university students:

I just heard them talking Tagalog. We just got here less than a month or something, so I said, ‘alright’. And then I said hello to them and we had a chat and they invited us to their house, just near Garden City [a shopping centre in one of the Perth suburbs]. They invited us to their birthday party and then we visited them more often because they were very welcoming, and also teaching us what we are going to do here. Because we didn’t have any support here or network.

I thus move away from presuming rootedness and cosmopolitan openness are in opposition and instead view them as simultaneous. Such a view ensures that the relationship between the self and the world is not assumed as a straightforward one. This simultaneity between rootedness and cosmopolitan openness has been dealt with in the extant research on cosmopolitanism. In their special issue, Glick Schiller
and colleagues (2011) focus on ethnographies to contribute to a more empirically grounded understanding of cosmopolitanism. They suggest that a:

‘cosmopolitan dimension’ and the maintenance of ethnic/national ties or religious commitments and identities can occur simultaneously in the daily activities and outlooks of some mobile people. Hence rootedness and openness cannot be seen in oppositional terms but constitute aspects of creativity through which migrants build homes and sacred spaces in a new environment and within transnational networks. (Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 400)

The fact that the self and the world does not indicate an unproblematic relationship means that the relationship between self, other and the world in cosmopolitanism needs to be reconsidered (Delanty, 2006, 2009). In fact, as Rumford (2013: 111) argues, access to the world requires ‘cosmopolitan opportunities’. Rumford (2008, 2013) therefore argues that this relationship should be expanded to include the idea of ‘community’. He argues that the self, other, and world relationship assumes that the individual can access ‘the world’ easily and with the same amount of power. Inserting ‘community’ in this triad calls our attention to new relationships between self, other and the world (Rumford, 2008: 14). Most of the papers in Glick Schiller and colleagues’ (2011) special issue exemplify Rumford’s (2008, 2013) point by examining the meso level of analysis, such as global religious movements and diasporic groups. The authors in the special issue exemplify the significance of these ‘transnational communities’ (Faist, 2000) not only for navigating ‘the world’ as a regime of mobility, but also as forms of emplacement in a new country (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013).

While this section has focused more on the relationship between self and the world, the next section explores in greater detail the relationship between self and the other among Filipino immigrants in Australia.

The self and the other

Cosmopolitanism is understood as an ‘immanent orientation’ that is expressed through modes of ‘self-understanding, feelings, and collective narratives’ (Delanty, 2009: 15). This orientation is said to emerge from an internal rather than external process of change (Delanty, 2009: 252). The emphasis on the internal process of change distinguishes cosmopolitanism from other theoretical concepts such as transnationalism and globalisation. Beck and Sznайдer (2010) define cosmopolitanism as a form of ‘internal globalisation, a globalisation from within’.
Delanty (2006: 42) argues that ‘the micro dimension of cosmopolitanism is exemplified in changes within, for example, national identities rather than in the emergence in new identities’. He associates the latter with the framework of transnationalism. The self is then considered important to understanding how this immanent orientation may be analysed. This understanding of the self does not operate in a vacuum, but in relation to the encounter with the other (Beck, 2006; Skovgaard-Smith & Pouflet, 2017).

Filipino migrants frequently discuss how their physical location outside the country has made them more aware of the need to exert difference. In the case of Australia, this difference is often attributed to the visibility brought on by the Filipino migrant’s physical difference. For example, Myrna describes how she cannot claim to be Australian despite her citizenship status:

> like here in Australia, I know I’m an Australian citizen, and you would say you are an Australian because you’re a citizen. But really, when people would look at you, you don’t look it. You don’t have blue eyes, you don’t have fair skin. Isn’t it? So you still identity yourself as where you come from.

Experiences of discrimination towards Filipinos in Australia range from mild to extreme. Most of the experiences of discrimination emerge for those who migrated as young adults or children rather than adults. Gabriel, who migrated to Australia in the 1980s as a dependent on his mother’s visa, mentions being ‘exposed to racism’. He says he was ‘bullied through school’, as ‘back then there weren’t many Asian people’. He contrasts his experiences with his children’s: ‘fortunately the kids hadn’t been [bullied], only been a couple of times. Nothing major’. Joseph, who migrated to Australia more recently, says that he was also bullied at school, but he attributes this to the cultural composition of Karratha, a rural part of Western Australia. These experiences changed when his family later moved to Perth:

> Yeah, so I went to Rossmoyne and Rossmoyne obviously had the reputation of being filled with Asians so the divide, my transition from having an isolated identity in a white-dominated neighbourhood to having ‘We now are the dominant race or culture of people’ and there was a minority of white people [Laughs]. It ended up being an interesting transition.

Amy, who migrated to Perth in the 1990s as a dependent when her mother married an Australian citizen, describes how she was put down a year when she first moved here:
Because when I came here, I was supposed to be in year nine, but because I came from Asia they put me down a year. I was so upset, because it was just — first day at school I just hated it. Because, yeah, you’re just put back a year down and then they put me in an English as a Second Language (ESL), which is fine but they did really, really basic stuff like spelling and just the basic spelling. And it was just — it wasn’t for me. Yeah, my mum and dad came to the school the next day to complain. I got moved up, not a year, but I got moved up a class because they put me in — it was a different class, you know how they divide the class in two, and I was just like — it was just too slow for me and I couldn’t do it.

As Stratton and Ang (1994) have argued, Australian multiculturalism has the ‘potential to create a symbolic space in which racial difference can be turned into ethnic/cultural difference, without, however, being able to make the traces of “race” disappear completely’ (Stratton & Ang, 1994: 141). What this means is that for those who are visibly different, such as Asians in Australia, they will always be considered ‘unabsorbable’, unable to belong fully as members of the nation-state — even as they are officially recognised as citizens (Beaman, 2016; Fozdar et al., 2009; Jupp, 2002; Stratton & Ang, 1994). In other words, the historical underpinnings of the Australian nation reinforce the need for those who are visibly different to claim membership elsewhere, even after they become Australian citizens. As Ang (2014) once said, Asians in Australia ‘are not expected to melt, and are supposed to remain true to their ethnic identity’ (Ang, 2014: 1190). What the Filipino migrants appear to be articulating is their awareness of a boundary demarcated by their visible difference, resulting in a boundary between themselves as ‘Asians’ and their others as ‘White’ Australians (Hage, 2000; Jayasuriya, 2006).

The empirical evidence here can be used to challenge the racism implied in ‘multicultural Australia’, which other scholars have done (e.g. Aquino, 2015, 2016, 2018). However, I wish to use this quote to engage with the literature on cosmopolitanism and belonging. The relationship between cosmopolitanism and belonging so far rests on the idea that individuals can exercise the same amount of agency in order to belong to the world. For example, Rapport (2012: 47) emphasises that what is central to cosmopolitan theory is that cosmopolitanism ensures the freedom to choose who and what they belong to, or what he prefers to call ‘voluntarism’. However, as Calhoun (2003) has argued, not everybody has the ability to choose to transcend their identifications and/or parochial affiliations. Kurasawa
(2004) paraphrases George Orwell and argues that ‘all world citizens are equal, but some world citizens are more equal than others’. This is certainly true for Filipinos, who are faced with discrimination even after attaining citizenship, as Myrna has. In addition, as the quote at the start of this chapter has demonstrated, Myrna cannot transcend this discrimination even when she is travelling to other countries. This form of racial discrimination may thus be more global than national, thereby further complicating that relationship between self, other and the world (see also Aquino, 2018).

To rework this relationship, one may consider another central question that cosmopolitanism research has neglected to address — namely, ‘whether “the other”, and not just me/us, can/should belong’ (Yuval-Davis, 2011: 156; see also Calhoun, 2003; Skey, 2015). I argue that in order to answer this question in cosmopolitanism research, one needs to investigate the agency and social positionings of migrants (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015). I investigated the agency of Filipino migrants by examining the ways in which Filipino migrants challenged such forms of racial discrimination. For one, I found that Filipino migrants concretised boundaries around what it means to be Filipino on ethnonational bases. This concretisation of boundaries is explained as ‘positively enforcing self’. Faith recounts how her colleagues were having a conversation in the office about ‘being Australian’. Faith mentions that her colleagues observed that it was ‘strange’ that ‘when you’re an Australian, just say you’re Australian, I’m Australian. Why would you say that I’m Italian Australian?’ Faith argues that to claim such an identity is a form of ‘positively reinforcing self’ to explain one’s difference. However, this positive enforcement of the self can be interpreted as one that is directly contingent on the visible difference that Asians in Australia experience (Ang, 2001, 2003, 2014). For example, Faith recounts an incident with their Indonesian friend who is the best friend of their son. She says:

One day he told his mum, ‘Mum, please don’t tell people I’m Indonesian’. And then the mum was just so shocked, ‘Why do you want to be just Australian?’ I don’t know why he said that. You know it’s interesting, Jackson suddenly said when we were in the Philippines, ‘I’m Australian’ he said that. I said, ‘No you’re not’. Sometimes he sings the national anthem; maybe the Caucasian in school is so strong.

The concretisation of boundaries on ethnonational bases may be viewed as a form of agency against the visible differences that the Filipino migrants experience. Fozdar and colleagues (2009: 26) pointed out that ‘ethnicity pointed to self-identified
groupings formed on the basis of shared culture’. This self-identification can be used
to demonstrate ‘human agency’ as these forms of identification can be used as a
‘self-proclaimed label of pride’ (Fozdar et al., 2009: 39). Such examples of agency
were similarly found in the field. Jovita says that the differences that she’s
discovered in Australia has made her appreciate her ‘country and culture’. She
exemplifies: ‘people here in Australia, you don’t see them outside of their houses.
But in the Philippines, all the people are always outside the house, chatting, very
friendly’. Her Anglo-Australian husband interjects: ‘We were saying that the culture
is different here, so we would chat about news, new health things, more external
things’. He contrasts that with Jovita’s culture: ‘You’d go through all your
experiences, what’s bothering you, what’s bothering someone else’. Jovita responds
by contrasting this culture with the culture ‘back in the Philippines’, where one
would ‘talk to friends and family’:

I was telling him I noticed that among his friends when they get
together they would only talk about the superficial things. And I
was telling him, you know, you are paying a lot of money to your
psychiatrist but, you know, you just have to talk to your friends;
you don’t need a psychiatrist.

Gabriel says that Australians ‘don’t value family like we Asians do’:

You know how most Australians, they don’t. Yea, my uncle said
that, having worked in aged care. A lot of Australian people they
pretty much leave the parents in the home and that’s it. Which is
sad. I don’t think they value families like we Asians do. You
know what I mean? That’s, yea, that’s different.

Jovita points to the individualism inherent in Australians and contrasts that with
Asians: ‘That’s the good thing about Asian families — we are very close-knit’. Ela
Elaine, who works in the aged-care industry, says that the industry has grown as
nursing homes are part of ‘their culture’: ‘That’s their culture. If their parents get
old, they just put them in the nursing home. Unlike Asians’. Benedict describes
Filipinos as a:

kind of hardworking people, very, very responsible to family.
Mostly Filipino people, not like Western country or American
country, where if any problem just divorce, but most Filipino
people they look after the children, they look after the family.
And any troubles, just settle down, instead of divorce. So mostly,
80% people, only 20 have trouble in relationship; 80% have very
good relationship. So majority, they look after their family for the rest of their lives. That’s why I’m very proud of being Filipino. So family-oriented. So because even though you get your gold success, even though you have good money, beautiful car, but your family is broken, it’s not worth it. That’s why I’m very proud of that.

Romel distinguishes between his practice of taking care of his children from ‘the Australian way’:

That’s the way they are, actually. The kids — what we learn, actually once they are eighteen — they’re kicked out. And if you come back to your parents, they need to charge you. More than likely. Because of the crisis now — so these kids are going back to family because of the money crisis, but the fact is the parents are also crisis still. I supported my kids all the way until they finished uni, and they’re still living with me.

In Calhoun’s (2003: 547) critique of belonging in the cosmopolitan imaginary, he argues that ‘we should not dismiss the mere invocation of “groupist” notions of sharp boundaries and clear composition as merely errors made by practical participants to be avoided by analysts’. Skey (2012: 482–483) goes one step further by analysing the ‘ideological dilemmas’ that individuals face in social contexts, whereby people can draw on various lens to present themselves ‘above any narrow-minded belief’ while simultaneously constructing ‘powerful symbolic boundaries between national in- and out-groups’ (see Billig et al., 1988). Such behaviour has already been documented among Filipino immigrants in other destination countries. For example, Espiritu (2001: 415) found that cultural reconstruction has been especially critical in the assertion of Filipino immigrants’ presence in the United States, particularly in the face of visible difference. In Australia, Aquino (2015, 2016) has researched the cultural repertoires of ‘everyday anti-racism’ that Filipino migrants would deploy against the everyday racism that they face in Australia. Cultural reconstruction was thus one of the ways in which Filipino immigrants would exercise their agency of power within a world of domination and inequality (Espiritu, 2001; Ortner, 2006).

Despite the fact that Filipinos lay claim to an ethnonational identity, these forms of identification do not translate into commonality resulting from shared culture. In practice, other forms of social division came to the fore. Participants mentioned the regionalism that dominates the Philippines, both geographically and socially. Joseph describes the geography of the Philippines as one that consists of a chain, where ‘at the top is Luzon’ (the northern most region of the Philippine archipelago). According
to Joseph, people in the Visayas were considered ‘village people’. He explains how each region has its own dialect:

but it’s really its own language because it’s indistinguishable.
Sorry, not indistinguishable, it’s not understandable. People in the middle region, I can’t understand them. Sounds more like Indonesian. It’s like a mix between Indonesian and Malaysian.

One Filipino colleague also explains the bullying he used to face from his Tagalog-speaking compatriots when he moved from the southernmost island of Mindanao to Luzon in high school, where his peers used to make fun of his accent. He learnt to alter his accent in an effort to fit in. He also points out that while Filipino migrants do like to connect with fellow kababayan (Tagalog for ‘compatriots’) overseas, they quickly ascertain the region of origin that they are from. Regionalism then proved to be more the norm in the lived experiences of the Filipino migrants I interviewed.

Regionalism also determined one’s social position within the Philippines. Ruth mentions how she had worked as a manager at a restaurant in Cagayan de Oro in the province of Mindanao in the Philippines. She says that she found out that she was getting paid less than her co-workers in Manila and says that it was ‘really different and really unfair’. As Joseph explains, in the Philippines:

there’s nothing else that you can go on [as] people are in the same social class as you. It’s the next people up will not be accessible to you, the higher, upper-class people because they’re living in a mansion with 25 gates. You can’t get in there. You never talk to these people. They wouldn’t be shopping at the same place that you are. They’ll be in the VIP section. It’s very, very apparent, the cultural divide, especially if you are a person that is within that boundary.

Other Filipino migration scholars have pointed out how Filipino migration is similarly characterised by regional and class divisions. Espiritu (2002) found similar regional and class-based divisions in the United States, affirming Anderson’s (1988) earlier point that ‘district and region are the most important demarcations’ in the Philippines. McKay (2012) found that the Filipino migrants in her study were able to become ‘global Filipinos’ due to their expansive village subjectivities. An interview with Joseph reaffirms these findings, as he explains that in the Philippines:

there’s a social class. So if you're looking from a social class perspective, and I’m talking about classes now from a geographical distribution perspective, the closer you are to Metro
Manila, the higher class you are. The further away you are, the lower class you are. So, in the same way, you would hire someone from a lower class than you to work for you. Someone outside of the Philippines is automatically considered higher class.

As a result, the Philippine nation as an ‘imagined community’ shatters upon contact with other overseas Filipinos (Anderson, 1991). Jovita says that while her migration to Perth has granted her more appreciation of her ‘culture’, she realised that this shared consciousness did not necessarily translate into practice:

I was speaking to my [Filipino] friend over the phone last night. I was asking her how was her experience here [in Australia]. She’s been here for a long time. She’s been here eight years. I asked her, ‘Have you, do you have any Filipino friends?’ Then she says, ‘I’ve met a lot of them’, but most of them are not grateful to her and she said, ‘I have many bad experiences with fellow Filipinos’. And then I asked her, ‘Why, how come? Aren’t we supposed to help each other?’ I told her, ‘Because you know we are both Filipinas, aren’t we supposed to support each other?’ And she said, ‘No that’s not how it is’. I do not really understand what she’s saying because I don’t have any experience yet.

This fragmented nationalism challenges the ‘naturalised image of the nation’ as the basis for ‘thick belonging (Beck & Levy, 2013). However, that does not mean that the identification is not significant. In the next section, I examine a ritualistic tradition that is used to convey and celebrate ‘Filipino culture’: Filipino Catholicism. Rather than signifying an escape into the realm of the universal (Calhoun, 2010), Filipino Catholicism represents a shared domain of commonality that allows Filipino migrants to be ‘both transnational and rooted’ (Beck, 2006).
Universal personhood or cultural identity?

In the first section of Chapter Four, I described how ‘the world’ is constructed as a series of border regimes (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013; Rumford, 2006, 2008). ‘The world’ was not an abstract category but was experienced as a constricted one by Filipino migrants. I argued that the relationship between the self and the world is considered problematic (Delanty, 2009; Rumford, 2013). In the preceding section, I demonstrated that there were structural constraints within the country that Filipino migrants eventually migrate to, even after attaining citizenship (Myrna, Faith, Jerome). These structural constraints deepen national rootedness among Filipino migrants. However, despite these constraints, the nation as an ‘imagined community’ shatters upon contact with other overseas Filipinos, thereby refuting the ‘naturalised image of the nation’ as the basis for ‘thick belonging’ (Beck & Levy, 2013).

In this section, I explore a source of rootedness that has emerged more poignantly for the ‘overseas Filipinos’ interviewed in this study: Filipino Catholicism. I argue that Filipino Catholicism is not just a legacy of a ‘global design’ (Mignolo, 2000) that traces its origins to Spanish colonial days, when lowland Filipinos used Filipino Catholicism to create a cultural symbol that represented the subversion of their Spanish colonisers (Ortner, 2006; see Tondo, 2010; 2012) — this cultural symbol has further evolved with the global migration of Filipinos. I demonstrate how the particular universalism of Filipino Catholicism has produced a cosmopolitan dimension and its role in expanding the participants’ cosmopolitan imagination, allowing Filipino immigrants in this study to utilise a boundary-transcending imagination and build a collective basis for belonging to the world (Beck, 2006; Delanty, 2006, 2009).

Given that the majority of Filipinos identify as Catholic, Catholic churches proved to be the obvious choice for participant-observation (Pew Research Centre, 2011). One of the first Catholic masses I attended for fieldwork was a Tagalog Mass. The sermons and songs were held in both English and Tagalog. The priest commenced the service by reminding the congregation of ‘our identity as God’s children’. Amy said that the ‘best thing between Filipinos is that we are Catholic’. Joseph points out that religion for his parents is ‘huge’, describing his parents as ‘devout Roman Catholics’. Popular Catholic rituals were observed in the field. When I visited Faith and Jerome’s house for an interview, we said grace before commencing our meal. Mabel (see Chapter Five) jokingly said she learnt to say the rosary before she could learn to speak. I observed her saying a Hail Mary for Veloso outside the Indonesian Embassy. Myrna said that ‘religion plays a big part in the Philippine community’. Religiosity proved to be a more significant basis for identifying as a Filipino.
This religious identification proved to be both particular and universal. Faith exemplifies by saying ‘being Filipino’ is about ‘appreciating your eccentric values because we got different values there, like being religious and all those things’. Another interviewee, who wanted to be referred to as Uncle Cyril, says that he ‘very much considers myself still a Filipino’, but then defers to a Catholic identity. Joseph points out, ‘Catholicism in the Philippines is not just, it’s not like Catholicism everywhere else. Catholicism in the Philippines is mixed with paganism’. He elaborates on the historical context and significance behind Filipino Catholicism:

Catholicism came after our original belief system and then we just merged the two. You know it was to appease the castida or conquistadors. And all of that put together, we just made approximations of the local deities and then just put them into different places. For example, the name for God is Diyos or Pangingoon. The origin of the actual term Pangingoon is actually from the original greater deity called Paala, which came from the hill people and they just got re-translated and re-translated so the legends have been reconfigured to fit Catholicism, which is why it really goes together hand in hand with the belief system; why people have been able to embrace it so easily is because it is approximation of what we already do.

Yeah, so religion’s a huge part in the Philippines. Not just from the official religion standpoint but from an unofficial because there’s such a huge culture of identity that was built with these things in mind.

In fact, Filipino Catholicism may be referred to as an ‘internal, developmental transformation of cultural models’ arising as a result of an earlier global process: that of Spanish colonialism (Delanty, 2006: 39). Filipino Catholicism has been referred to in the literature as a form of ‘folk Christianity’. Ileto (2008 [1979]: 11–12) explains the creativity behind this syncretisation, arguing that:

the fact has to be accepted that the majority of the lowland Filipinos were converted to Spanish Catholicism. But like other regions of Southeast Asia which ‘domesticated’ Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, and Islamic influences, the Philippines, despite the fact that Catholicism was more often than not imposed on it by Spanish missionaries, creatively evolved its own brand of folk Christianity.
As a result of this syncretisation, researchers have debated whether ‘Filipinos have been truly Christianised, or … Christianity has simply been Filipinised’ (De Mesa, 2000). Larkin (1982: 604) coined the term ‘Philippinisation’ to ‘refer to native religious practices aimed at the subversion and rejection of the Spanish culture’ (cited in Tondo, 2012: 176). I was later introduced to an important religious festival that celebrated this ‘Philippinisation’ (Larkin, 1982: 604). Every year at the end of January, the Filipino clubs would organise festivities celebrating Santo Nino. A Tagalog language teacher in Perth explains that Santo Nino was a largely Cebuano tradition. However, she acknowledged that this tradition has spread everywhere in the Philippines. I saw images of the Santo Nino statue many times when I was in Manila for fieldwork in 2016. I observed that the rear-view mirror of the taxi I was in was decorated with a white rosary with Jesus on the cross, as well as a gold patron Santo Nino on the dashboard. I asked the driver what the latter was, and he proudly informed me that it was a Catholic figure unique to the Philippines, describing the saint as an ‘image of Jesus’. Gabriel tells the story of Santo Nino thus:

He’s an Infant Jesus. He was originally brought by the Spanish to Christianise the Philippines. There’s a lot that believe that Jesus is a little statue and, apparently, he came to life. I don’t know; there’s a lot of stories. And Magellan brought him over and tried to take him back to Spain but the ship got burnt or something? And when they reach Spain the little statue cried. They noticed him back in Cebu but a lot of people seen him in real life, a little boy. Whether that’s true, I don’t know. But we believe in him. He protects pretty much the whole region of Visayas. From any natural earthquake or storm something like that. It didn’t help a couple of years ago. The big one.

An interviewee who wanted to be referred to as Uncle Nelson also refers to the historical legacy of Santo Nino as the ‘Infant Jesus’ and refers to its universal element:

The child, the baby infant Jesus. The history of Santo Nino is in the Philippines when the Spaniards and this infant Jesus in the boat that went through lots of, in the battle in that boat the Santo Nino survived. So the Spanish thought the Santo Nino saved them. So that’s probably one legacy of Santo Nino.

And the interesting thing is, you know this idea of, if you have faith in something, not necessarily in Santo Nino — say you have faith in God, or they considered Santo Nino as god as well. And
you go through this mind exercise of help me and then you survive. Gee, I was helped. I was given a miracle. It has a lot of impact to the person involved. So if a third party comes, why do you believe in something like that? You cannot break his faith because he’s got a relationship with that particular [entity].

Ness (1992) explains that Santo Nino was introduced by the Spanish colonisers to subdue the indigenous inhabitants of the Philippines in the region of Cebu. However, despite the colonisers’ best efforts, Santo Nino became a force of its own through its integration and amalgamation with other indigenous cultures, such as Filipino cosmology (Ness, 1992). The colonised demonstrated their agency as ‘interactive subjects with distinct intentions and the ability to form power relations and interests in the colonial setting’ (Braunlein, 2009: 28). While initially a regional devotion, Santo Nino later evolved to become a significant symbol during moments of national struggle (Braunlein, 2009; Ness, 1992). For example, Santo Nino was used as a vehicle for national solidarity during the Philippines’ fight for independence. Members of the nationalist group, Katipunan, would use the slogan: ‘Long Live the Kapituann! Viva Santo Nino’ to counter the Spanish troops (Bautista, 2006; Braulein, 2009). Similarly, Jovita says that the nuns used images of Mary and Santo Nino and the cross during the 1986 revolution to protest Martial Law in the Philippines. Santo Nino can be interpreted as a historical symbol that allowed Filipinos to gain power from their colonisers and build a ‘culturally meaningful life in situations of large-scale domination by powerful others’ (Ortner, 2006: 142).

This religious national symbol has expanded with the global migration of Filipinos. For example, in her research on Santo Nino festivities among Filipino migrants in New Zealand, Tondo (2010: 240) concluded that these festivities allowed Filipino migrants to celebrate a ‘common Catholic Christian identity’, while at the same time ‘establishing diaspora distinction from other cultures in New Zealand’s multicultural society’ and ‘assisting integration’ in their new home (see also Nititham, 2017). The same was true for the Filipino migrants interviewed for this study. In the preceding section, I discussed how Filipino migrants would draw on ‘cultural differences’ to exert their agency against the visible differences they experienced in Australia. Furthermore, Filipino migrants often use the family as a reason for their migration to Australia. Faith and Jerome had successful and stable careers in the Philippines but decided to leave for Australia for the sake of their son. Joseph, who migrated as a dependent on his father’s skilled migrant visa, says that his parents ‘wanted a better life for us and therefore, they decided if we’re going to do this, we might as well do it right. Let’s just go. Let’s take this opportunity’. Amy, who migrated to Australia
when she was 12, says that ‘the reason why we travel and work overseas and sacrifice is for the family. I think one big thing in the Philippines is that family is always first and you make sacrifices for your family’:

if you find out most Filipino workers that go overseas, they would send their money back home and it’s always that way. And even me, I grew up pretty much here but we still — it’s kind of your obligation to look after your family. So whoever is back home, it’s your obligation to look after them.

The family is thus an important part of claiming a collective cultural identity and belonging as a Filipino. This need to claim a cultural identity has led to the popularisation of Santo Nino, a symbol that is both uniquely Filipino and universal. A Filipino priest who led one of the Santo Nino masses I attended in Perth mentioned that he had not celebrated Santo Nino until he arrived in Australia, thereby indicating that the Santo Nino devotion may be more popular in Australia than in the Philippines. Indeed, the familial narrative conveyed by the story of Santo Nino echoes the collective identity narratives told by Filipino migrants in Australia (Yuval-Davis, 2011; Yuval-Davis et al., 2006). The iconography depicts a nuclear family in the form of the Trusted Father, Mama Mary and Santo Nino (Carroll, 1970; De Mesa, 1987; Mulder, 1992: 250). The mass emphasised celebrating children and the childlike innocence that accompanies children. The priest talked about how Mother Mary said to listen to her son as well as the devotion we can learn from Mother Mary’s devotion to her son. There was a procession, led by women of Damayang dressed in traditional Filipina attire. The women and children held flowers and walked towards the front of the church, where the statue of Santo Nino was. There were offerings left at the altar as well, in the form of foods and gifts and flowers. Towards the end, the priest blessed the children with proclamations and holy water.

In the modern world, Santo Nino can be viewed as a cultural symbol that displays Filipino migrant’s individual agency in a social and collective way (Fozdar et al., 2009). As Durkheim (2008 [1912]: 10) points out, ‘religion is eminently social. Religious representations are collective representations which express collective realities’. The particular universalism of Filipino Catholicism, therefore, provides the Filipino migrants with the opportunity to explain their perceived difference. Although Jerome professes ambivalence around his Filipino-ness, he says that ‘but for me, it’s not all positive’, but also ‘it’s who I am’. Similarly, Faith says that:

we are not necessarily proud of everything, but there is certainly pride there. But not proud of everything because we also
understand that we have a lot of issues there, but just appreciating
that we’ve got a nice culture, for example. When you ask what
kind of culture I love, it is the festivities.

Through its celebration of the familial unit, the Santo Nino festivity captures the
Filipino migrants’ claim for cultural difference, transforming a private, abstracted,
disconnected sentiment into a ‘public possession [and] a social fact’ (Geertz, 1993: 232). The particular qualities of Filipino Catholicism afford a participatory
dimension for a collective rather than solely individual identification, an important
point given the lack of solidarity among the Filipino migrants in Australia. Santo
Nino, as a symbol of Filipino Catholicism, then represents an ‘attempt to find a
synthesis or connection which is both transnational and rooted … in the particular

The particular universalism of Filipino Catholicism demonstrates the significance of
including culture in understanding how the cosmopolitan imagination is translated
into practice by social actors to become a shared resource (Delanty, 2006, 2009,
2012). However, culture in cosmopolitan theory is typically thought of in terms of
Calhoun’s (2002) ‘class consciousness of frequent travellers’, based on the jet-
setting frequent flyer who attends Ivy League universities, reads The Economist
and assumes the universality of human rights (see also Calhoun, 2003; Skovgaard-Smith
& Poulfelt, 2017). This interrelation between consumption and culture, however,
does not address if and how cosmopolitanism has developed in other non-Western
cultures (Iqtidar, 2010; Monshipouri, 2009; Turner et al., 2011: 85; Vertovec &
Cohen, 2002).

Such theorisations of culture in cosmopolitanism research is problematic,
particularly in the cosmopolitanism debate. Hannerz (2006: 13) points out that the
reason nationalism and cosmopolitanism are polarised is because nationalism has
demonstrated that ‘culture can be a resource for politics’. Hedetoft and Hjort (2002)
defer to the nation as the basis for ‘thick belonging’ due to its ability to provide
‘cultural concreteness’. Delanty and O’Mahony (2002) have posited that nationalism
has endured during this global age due to its cultural power. Beck and Levy (2013:
11) have argued that belonging in cosmopolitanism research is poorly understood
because belonging is still posited on a ‘naturalised image of the nation’. Such an
understanding is typically founded on Anderson’s (1991: 7) work on nations as
‘imagined communities’, whereby he argues that the nation is the basis for ‘deep
attachments of fraternity’.

In response to these criticisms, Delanty (2009: 14) has argued that cosmopolitanism
‘can certainly be seen as one such imaginary component of society and can be
contrasted to, for instance, Benedict Anderson’s (1983) somewhat affirmative conception of the imaginary as a national imaginary. He argues that globalisation has produced a different kind of reality that requires a new ‘cosmopolitan imagination’ (Delanty, 2009: 2). He uses Castoriadis’s notion of the imaginary to convey his notion of the ‘cosmopolitan imagination’ (see also Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis, 2002). Delanty (2009) further theorises the cosmopolitan imagination as one that relates to a global society rather than a national one. Beck and Levy (2013) have attempted to extend Delanty’s (2009) framework further by arguing that collectivities are reimagined within the global context due to the notion of shared risk. However, such an account does not take into account the multi-scalar levels of commonality that can be formed, nor does the notion of ‘shared risk’ take into account ‘larger patterns of cultural affiliation, religion, or civilisation’ (Calhoun, 2010: 605; see also Glick Schiller, 2015, 2016). He further criticises cosmopolitan theories for attempting to ‘escape cultural bias by imagining an escape from culture into a realm of the universal’ (Calhoun, 2010: 597). Others have echoed Calhoun’s (2010) critique. Kahn (2008: 271) believes that the notion of the ‘human’ is a construct and is therefore ‘not independent of cultural symbologies’. He argues that ‘no universalising project can be culture-free’ (Kahn, 2008: 271). Thus, a broader definition of culture in cosmopolitanism theory is necessary to reconcile nationalism and cosmopolitanism, and to address if and how cosmopolitanism has developed in other non-Western cultures.

To analyse culture in cosmopolitanism, this research draws on what Ortner (2005: 46) has referred to as a ‘subjectivity-oriented theory of culture’, whereby agency is understood as being culturally constructed (Ortner, 2005: 46). A culturally constructed agency is regarded as a form of intention and desire towards the pursuit of goals and the enactment of projects (Ortner, 2006: 153; see also Geertz, 1973; Weber, 2003 [1958]; Ortner, 2005). Such a theorisation of agency allows researchers to investigate how ‘people sustain a culturally meaningful life in situations of large-scale domination by powerful others’ (Ortner, 2006: 142). To investigate the cultural construction of agency, researchers must look toward the ‘public systems of symbols and meanings, texts and practices, that both represent a world and shape subjects in ways that fit the world as presented’ (Ortner, 2006: 116; see also Geertz, 1973; Weber, 2003 [1958]). Such a view allows researchers to acknowledge that people are not just ‘passive consumers but active participants’ who can use cultural symbols and understandings towards existential ends (Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 403; see also Massey, 2005).
I argue that Filipino Catholicism is one of the public systems that Filipino migrants can draw on to reimagine relationships between self, other and the world (Delanty, 2009: 15; see also Ortner, 2005, 2006; Rumford, 2008, 2013; Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis, 2002). For one, Filipino Catholicism in its particular universalism provides a new basis for belonging that is more global than national. For example, Uncle Cyril’s claim to a Catholic rather than solely Filipino identity has occurred due to his working away from the Philippines ‘for most of my adult life’. He says he has been working overseas since 1995, when he went to work in Oman as an electrical engineer. He worked there for ten years before relocating to Brunei and explains that Brunei is: ‘quite liberal when it comes to religion. There’s a Catholic church, everywhere they have Catholic churches’. Uncle Cyril says that his Catholic identity has allowed him to carve out a lifestyle ‘as a Catholic here, which is not really that difficult, because we have lots of Catholic churches here’. Similarly, Amy informs me of a church that she attends in Perth that has a global network. She shows me a photo of the church and explains that ‘all the churches look like that; everywhere in the world you go, there are shrines’. Further, Jovita was able to successfully apply for a scholarship through her missionary work with the Catholic church, allowing her to travel to New Zealand to attend a course. This universalising element of Filipino Catholicism affords Filipino migrants a less problematic connection between self and ‘the world’, a contrast to the problems that they experienced when navigating the border regimes as individuals.

For another, Filipino Catholicism is typically integrated with the formalised institution of the Catholic Church, particularly among the Filipino migrant population overseas (Tondo, 2010, 2012). One of the masses I attended for Santo Nino was integrated with the general mass and led by a priest from Ghana to a diverse crowd. Another Santo Nino mass that I attended in Perth was also integrated with the general Catholic mass and was led by an English priest. Both of these masses were led in English to ensure social inclusion. Despite the fact that clubs like Damayang and churches like Saint Mary’s Catholic Church in Perth have attempted to create a Filipino mass by using the Filipino national language, I found out that most of the Filipino migrants I interviewed did not attend them, preferring to attend the general mass at their local churches instead. Another interviewee, Uncle Romel, says that he attends a local church because he knows the priest. When I asked if the priest was Filipino, he responds ‘No, no, no. He’s Australian’. The universal basis of Filipino Catholicism provides Filipino migrants with opportunities that enable them to transcend the relationship between self and other (Beck, 2006; Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Krause, 2011).
Further, this particularistic aspect of Filipino Catholicism allows Filipino migrants to ‘assert the desire for autonomy’ against the ‘instrumentalising logic of capitalism’ at a global rather than national level (Delanty, 2009: 183). Filipino Catholicism has been constantly reworked and revised to become a cultural repertoire of particular universalism that Filipino migrants use to ‘answer certain symbolic questions as to their basic identity, their goals and limits’ (Delanty, 2009: 14; see also Lamont & Aksartova, 2002; Tondo, 2010). This religiously defined basis for belonging allows Filipino migrants to imagine themselves beyond the stereotypes and stigmas enforced on them by the Philippines’ implication in the global market. For example, Jovita draws on her religious background to address the fact that Filipinos are the ‘only one whose race or nationality is spread all over the world’, framing this global migration as the fulfilment of a religious ‘mission’. She says that Filipinos are in the ‘care industry, because we are very caring, very nurturing and we adapt easily to anything’. Jovita draws on an example from a 2008 Filipino drama film called Caregiver to exemplify her point:

> it’ll be good for [you] to know it because that really speak about the real situation about the Philippines. It’s a story about caregiver Filipina who came over to the UK. She was a professional teacher in the Philippines. She was looked up to in the school. She is intelligent, but when she came to UK she became care worker and taking care of the elderly and so that was a struggle. It was a very nice movie. And so in that movie, which I think is true, the elderly person became attached to the Filipino caregiver. And he was saying that that love he’d never experienced from his family, which I think is true because Filipinos are very nurturing, very caring, and it’s easy to establish connection.

From Jovita’s perspective, the downward social mobility experienced by Filipinos in the ‘care industry’ is a religious mission to give care to those who need it. Rather than draw on the bagong bayani discourse deployed by the nation-state to create a de-territorialised nation-state (see Chapter Two; Guevarra, 2009; Rodriguez, 2010), Jovita draws on her religious background to argue that these migrants are doing so out of a religious rather than national calling. The fact that Jovita uses her religious background to exemplify her point suggests that the particular universalism of ‘the Church’ has allowed Jovita to imagine an alternative, religiously characterised world and so reimagine the Filipino migrant’s place in relation to this global frame (Rumford, 2008, 2013).
This section has demonstrated how forms of rootedness can extend beyond the nation to another form of collectivity: Filipino Catholicism. Rather than represent an escape into a realm of the universal (Calhoun, 2010), I argue that Filipino Catholicism is one of the public systems that Filipino migrants can draw on to reimagine relationships between self, other and the world (Delanty, 2009: 15; see also Ortner, 2005, 2006; Rumford, 2008, 2013; Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis, 2002). While the particularity of Filipino Catholicism legitimises the Filipino migrants’ claim for cultural difference, its universalising basis — Catholicism — further affords the Filipino migrant the opportunity to transcend the self and the other, while at the same time allowing Filipino migrants to imagine an alternative relationship between the Filipino self and ‘the world’.

In the next section, I explore the limits of cosmopolitanism by investigating the relationship between cosmopolitanism and capital accumulation.
Cosmopolitanism and capital

In the preceding section, I explored a more poignant source of rootedness: Filipino Catholicism. I concluded the section with Jovita, who used her religious background to frame the global migrations of Filipinos. However, when I brought this up with other interviewees, they did not agree with Jovita. Both Faith and Jerome disagreed that the reason Filipino migrants are in the care industry is because they feel that they have a religious mission. They point out that they had friends who were Information Technology professionals who became aged carers when they moved to Australia because the pay was better.

In this section, I contend with the limits of cosmopolitanism by investigating the relationship between cosmopolitanism and capital accumulation. I explore the entanglement between the two and discover how cosmopolitanism can be used to comply with global structural forces of capital accumulation. Here, I attend to Calhoun’s (2003) caution to pay attention to the relationship between cosmopolitanism and capitalism in order to contend with capitalism’s power (Glick Schiller, 2015a).

To illustrate, I draw on the example of Uncle Nelson. Uncle Nelson has lived outside the Philippines since the 1980s, first migrating to Florida in the United States before settling in Perth. Since living in Perth, he has returned regularly to the Philippines. At our interview, he talked about how he had recently returned to Manila for a Filipino diaspora forum titled the ‘World Peace Summit’. He attended the forum as a representative of the Australian and New Zealand regional chapter of the Order of the Knights of Rizal. Although Jose Rizal first emerged as a national rather than international symbol, his legacy is now being used by the Order of the Knights of Rizal to move beyond ethnonational particularity. In an advertisement for the Knights of Rizal, they describe themselves as ‘an Order of the Brotherhood that recognises the universality of man’. While the Order has not been researched extensively in academia, media articles and websites devoted to the Knights of Rizal abound. The Handbook of the Order of the Knights of Rizal describe their mission as to:

- inculcate and propagate the teachings of our national hero not only to the Filipinos but to foreign nationals as well
- promote the spirit of Rizalian virtues, patriotism and internationalism
- engage in educational, social and cultural endeavours. (Torres, 2016: 5)
Their vision is described as one that is in line with the ‘benefit of humankind’, reinforcing the universal message once more. The Order of the Knights of Rizal thus emulates the ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’ so favoured by Appiah (2006), whereby patriotism and cosmopolitanism are not seen as mutually exclusive.

While professing a certain cosmopolitan openness, the Order is still rooted in the Philippines and promotes relationships with their co-ethnics. As Uncle Nelson explains, ‘I thought, the only way this Knights of Rizal can take off is for me to get involved at the international level. I have to attend an assembly in Manila’. Uncle Nelson describes how he was ‘surprised’ to find ‘many Germans and French’ at the ‘national assembly’. He attributes the spread of Rizal’s writings and ideals to his travels, explaining that ‘Rizal went all over the place’. In Guerrero’s (1974: 84) biography of Rizal, he devotes a chapter to Rizal’s ‘voyage to a new world’. Rizal is said to have travelled to Singapore and to Naples, Marseilles and Barcelona (Guerrero, 1974). During his voyage, he demonstrates the trait of cosmopolitanism most commonly identified in the literature as the willingness to engage with the other and openness to difference (Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013; Hannerz, 2004; Werbner, 2006).

However, this openness neither presupposed nor negated his love for the Philippines. Uncle Nelson quotes one of Rizal’s principles: ‘A life that is not consecrated to a great ideal is like a stone wasted in a field, never to become part of an edifice’. While Uncle Nelson says that the application of this quote is important to Filipinos as it could lead to the Philippines being ‘a better nation’, the development of this nation does not stand in contrast to the development of a better world. In fact, Uncle Nelson believes that one of Rizal’s principles is a ‘solution to world peace if only people can absorb or understand this great concept or principle’:

Rizal said, ‘No one has a monopoly of the true god. No one or no group of people has a monopoly of the true god. No one can prove or claim that they were given the divine right to this being’. Powerful, isn’t it? Which just means we have to respect each other.

The themes of the ‘World Peace Summit’ that Uncle Nelson attended appeared to be centred on the development of the country, as topics discussed included the gross domestic product (GDP) of the Philippines and the development of the Philippines as a ‘medical hub’. Developing the country and ‘giving back’ to the motherland was then framed as a form of giving back to the world. Uncle Nelson says that the forum discussed the possibility of building an aged-care facility in the Philippines, which would ‘change the whole scenario of aged care’:
There will be lots and lots, we talking twenty million Filipinos sending money. When these people retire, they’ll go to the Philippines and enjoy first-class retirement facility. And then they, it’s an aged care where normally in Australia, the Australian government pays for. Australia pays for, contributes to the economy in the Philippines. And easily assist many cultural problems with aged-care facilities.

Uncle Nelson, and by extension, the Order of the Knights of Rizal, could easily be regarded as evidence of ‘actually existing cosmopolitanism’ (Beck, 2006; Delanty, 2006). Beck (2006) argues that ‘actually existing cosmopolitanism’ is the new reality that has emerged due to processes of globalisation, such as de-territorialisation and interconnectedness (Beck, 2006). Delanty (2012: 44–45) has said that cosmopolitanism is always present and is ‘always a matter of degree. The question then is not whether or not cosmopolitanism exists, but to what degree is it present in a given social phenomenon’. Although Delanty (2012) attempts to offer a critical approach that moves away from viewing ‘cosmopolitanism as a particular or singular condition that either exists or does not’ (Delanty, 2006: 27), he follows in the footsteps of other cosmopolitanism realists like Beck (2006) and his colleagues (Beck & Levy, 2013; Beck & Sznaider, 2010).

However, I argue that this form of rooted cosmopolitanism ought not to be regarded as the realisation of a ‘cosmopolitan horizon’ (Beck & Levy, 2013). In Cheah’s (2006) critique of cosmopolitanism, he argues that cosmopolitanism has not addressed the slippage between cosmopolitanism and instances of ‘long-distance nationalism’ (Anderson, 1998; see also Cheah, 1998). Glick Schiller and Fouron (2001) refer to ‘long-distance nationalism’ as a strategy for developing a specific territory (see also Skrbis, 1999). ‘Long-distance nationalism’ may be exercised by individual social actors looking to exert their elevated status ‘back home’ through continued involvement with those left behind (e.g. Aguilar, 2014; Dzenovksa, 2013) or as a strategy exercised by the nation-state to create a ‘new nationalist construct’ (Camroux, 2008). In terms of the Philippines, the latter is definitely the case. This notion of developing the country as symbolic of ‘world peace’ is part of the nation-state’s project to incorporate their overseas constituents. The 2018 Global Summit of Filipinos in Diaspora page describes their main objective as one that encourages ‘outstanding Filipinos’ to become ‘the country’s partners in development’. The Global Summit further focuses on the ‘return and reintegration’ of overseas Filipinos. At a Knights of Rizal meeting in the Australia, New Zealand and Oceanic region, the Philippines Ambassador to New Zealand ‘urges migrants to become like
Jose Rizal, a “nationalist internationalist” – a Filipino with a global perspective’ (Knights of Rizal Awardees, 2017). The Order of the Knights of Rizal may therefore represent a ‘rooted cosmopolitan’ project that is complicit with the Philippines’ political strategy to create a ‘new nationalist construct’ (Basch et al., 1994; Camroux, 2008).

I thus wish to emphasise that the cosmopolitanism encouraged by the Order of the Knights of Rizal is still an aspiration rather than a reality. In the specific case of Uncle Nelson, joining the Order of the Knights of Rizal allowed him to imagine a type of peoplehood not defined by either nation or state, but by the encounter with difference (Beck, 2006; Delanty, 2006a). Uncle Nelson explains another principle of Rizal: ‘It is not the race or the colour, but rather the character and confidence that can provide you with maximum opportunity for success in the future’. He exemplifies how he has practised this philosophy:

I know a lot of Filipinos that go out of the Philippines. The number one enemy they have when they go to another country is culture shock. Why? We had this tradition we’re subjects of the Spanish. So we don’t tend to intermingle straightaway. We will prefer to just be on the sideline and not be involved in the discussion. But in my case, it wasn’t like that, so I thought, gee, this teaching is very important. And I already apply it to me. That’s why I’ve been to America, I’ve been to Australia, no problem.

While examining his story, however, untangling his cosmopolitan aspirations from capital accumulation became increasingly challenging. Uncle Nelson was working full-time in the Philippines as a branch manager in a truck dealership. He says that he was ‘doing well’, as he had his own car, apartment and was earning ‘good pay’, but he felt like he wanted to challenge himself. He described going to America as a journey undertaken based on his belief that there is ‘more to life than just selling trucks’. Uncle Nelson decided to travel to America as a tourist. Even though he had a brother who was an American citizen living in America, he said going there as a tourist has been ‘hard’. He explained that one had to ‘have a bank account, you have to show you got this amount of money’. He was finally able to go to America after he met a manager of a company at a Rotary Club:

You know what he said to me? ‘Do you want to go to America? I’ll sort out your bank account’. ‘How do you go about it?’ ‘No problem’. He give me a cheque for a hundred thousand pesos. You opening an account. I know that that cheque does not have
any money. You don’t have a hundred thousand. But because he
gave me a cheque, I open new account. ‘I give you a receipt
saying I received a cheque from you. So you have a hundred
thousand in your account’. So I got all those copies, boom,
approved. I went. I attended a conference. Rotary international
conference.

When he arrived in America, he rang up an old friend, who happened to be working
as a manager in a transnational company. Through this connection, he was able to
secure a job and convert his tourist visa to a business visa. He ended up staying in
Florida for three years after that, flying his girlfriend over from the Philippines and
getting married there. After three years, Uncle Nelson’s wife was contacted by the
Australian embassy about her visa application that she had submitted three years
earlier. Uncle Nelson demonstrates ‘confidence’ once more, saying that ‘as far as
I’m concerned, I’m confident that I’ll be able to find a job, whatever type of job it
is’. When asked by the interviewer at the Australian Embassy, ‘What will you do if
the Australian government cannot find you a job?’, Uncle Nelson responds:

Job? You wouldn’t have a problem with me, because even if I
have to clean the streets and clean the toilets, as long as I do
something, I’ll be able to do find a job. And the interviewer was
like [makes a ticking motion with his hand].

While Uncle Nelson draws on cosmopolitan aspirations, his social networks and
solidarities suggest that his idea of success is based rather on the successful crossing
of border regimes, attainment of visa status and eventually foreign citizenship (see
also Gaudette, 2013). There emerges another side to the cosmopolitanism story,
which further negates the arguments put forward by cosmopolitanism realists like
(see also Robbins, 1998). As Calhoun (2002: 886) states, ‘the current enthusiasm for
… cosmopolitanism reflects not just a sense of its inherent moral worth but also the
challenge of an increasingly global capitalism’. The interrelationship between
cosmopolitanism and capitalism is a complex one and deserves the attention of
another doctoral thesis (see Kares, 2015, for an example). Accordingly, while this
research acknowledges the ‘cosmopolitanism of capital’ (Calhoun, 2002: 891) that
underpins cosmopolitan aspirations, I do not focus on this interrelationship in detail
in this thesis. Nonetheless, Uncle Nelson’s solidarities and networks reinforce
Calhoun’s (2003: 550) caution that ‘inattention to social solidarity may make for
slippage between cosmopolitanism based on strong ethical universalism and that
based on misrecognized personal advantage’. Thus, this research has highlighted the
need to foreground solidarity and belonging when investigating cosmopolitanism in order to better contend with capitalism’s power (Kendall et al., 2008).

**Conclusion**

This chapter contributes to the critical literature on cosmopolitanism and its politics of belonging by analysing rootedness and cosmopolitan openness as processes that occur simultaneously (Glick Schiller, 2016; Skovgaard-Smith & Poulsfelt, 2017; Woodward, 2014). The chapter has engaged with Delanty’s (2009) cosmopolitan imagination framework, which has theorised cosmopolitanism as a relational ontology that includes self, other and the world. This chapter has extended Delanty’s (2006, 2012) framework further by investigating how self, other and the world are constructed. It has shown how the source of rootedness might not be national, contrary to what critiques of cosmopolitanism have argued (Anderson, 1991; Calhoun, 2002, 2003, 2008; Hedetoft & Hjort, 2002; Smith, 1990). Hence, this chapter has disrupted the assumption commonly made by social scientists that the nation is the ‘natural and rational form of socio-political organisation’ (Fine & Chernilo, 2004: 36; see also Beck & Levy, 2013).

Drawing on interviews with ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Australia and Singapore, I demonstrated how ‘the world’ is not an abstract category. Instead, Filipino migrants experience the world as a regime of mobility (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013). Such a construction reinforces the fact that there is a problematic relationship between ‘self’ and ‘the world’, therefore making rootedness important to experiencing any form of belonging to the world (Yuval-Davis, 2011).

This relationship between rootedness and cosmopolitan openness continues when analysing participants’ lives even after migration. Visible differences emerged as a significant structural constraint for Filipino migrants, not just in their new country of Australia, but also while they are overseas. This research has sought to engage with what Yuval-Davis (2011) has referred to as the ‘other central question’ in cosmopolitanism research that has thus far been neglected: ‘whether “the other”, and not just me/us, can/should belong’. To answer this question, I examined the ways in which Filipino migrants challenged such forms of racial discrimination. These forms of agency emerged most notably as the concretisation of boundaries around what it means to be Filipino, leading to imagined ‘national rootedness’.

However, this form of national rootedness has not always translated into practice. The naturalised image of the nation disintegrated upon contact with other ‘overseas Filipinos’, resulting in fragmented nationalism (Beck & Levy, 2013). I explored another source of rootedness that has emerged more poignantly for the ‘overseas
Filipinos’ interviewed in this study: Filipino Catholicism. Rather than represent an escape into a realm of the universal (Calhoun, 2010), I argued that Filipino Catholicism provides the cultural context within which Filipino migrants can reimagine relationships between self, other and the world (Delanty, 2009: 15; see also Rumford, 2008, 2013; Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis, 2002). While the particularity of Filipino Catholicism legitimises the Filipino migrants’ claim for cultural difference, I argued that its universalising basis — Catholicism — further affords the Filipino migrant the opportunity to transcend the self and other relationship, while at the same time allowing Filipino migrants to imagine an alternative relationship between the Filipino self and ‘the world’.

In the final section, I contended with the limits of cosmopolitanism by investigating the relationship between cosmopolitanism and capitalism. I used the examples of the Order of the Knights of Rizal to illustrate the slippage between strong ethical universalism and misrecognised personal advantage (Calhoun, 2003). The Order of the Knights of Rizal is presented as a ‘rooted cosmopolitan’ project that is complicit with the Philippines’ political strategy to create a ‘new nationalist construct’ (Basch et al., 1994; Camroux, 2008). I thereby follow Rumford (2008, 2013) and Calhoun (2002, 2007, 2008) in arguing against proclaiming cosmopolitanism as ‘actually existing’, even in its rooted variant (Beck, 2006; Delanty, 2006; Robbins, 1998).

Thus, this section highlighted the need to foreground solidarity and belonging when investigating cosmopolitanism in order to better contend with capitalism’s power (Kendall et al., 2008).

In keeping with the need to foreground solidarity and belonging when investigating cosmopolitanism, the next chapter presents the first Filipino migrant organisation for this thesis: Migrante International.
5 THE OFWs

Our vision is to support a society where justice, freedom and equality reigns so that Filipino migrants stand proud of their heritage and can exercise their rights and potentials to the fullest.
—Migrante Australia

We live in the far ends of the world, but we came here to discuss our common problems.
—Selçuk Kozağaçlı, keynote speaker at the International People’s Mining Conference 2015.

Introduction

Migrante International is a non-governmental organisation (NGO) that was established following the execution of Flor Contemplacion (Encina-Franco, 2013, 2016; Rodriguez, 2002, 2010). Flor was a foreign domestic worker convicted and later executed for the murder of her employer in Singapore in 1995 (Tondo, 2012). Two decades later and her innocence is still a matter of contention. Her case pointed to the Philippines’ role in perpetuating the export of migrant labour and their failure to protect its de-territorialised citizenry (Aguilar, 1996). It is at this juncture in history that Migrante International was established (Aguilar, 2002a; Gonzalez & Holmes, 1996).

Migrante International currently has offices all around the world, from Australia to Austria to Canada, while its headquarters remain in Manila, Philippines (Migrante International, 2016). Its wide reach reflects the large numbers of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), a group that Migrante International supports and advocates for. Because Filipinos working in Australia are classified by the Government of the Philippines as ‘overseas Filipinos’ and not ‘overseas Filipino workers’ (CFO, 2017), I was surprised to find a branch in Perth: Migrante WA. My foray into Migrante WA coincided with the case of an overseas Filipino worker that Migrante International was petitioning for. Mary Jane Veloso, a former OFW, had been found guilty of possessing and trafficking into Indonesia 2.6 kg of heroin (Aquino Govt Lying Through its Teeth, 2015). Once again, the government remained nonchalant while echoes of Flor Contemplacion’s plight reverberated around the world. Migrante International mobilised their international counterparts and launched a global campaign pleading clemency for Veloso.

The case of Mary Jane Veloso was typical of the OFW described in the literature: working-class, female, and forced to migrate to overcome structural inequalities such as poverty and unemployment (Parrenas, 2001; Pinches, 2001). She had first worked in Dubai as a domestic worker where she was the victim of an attempted rape, leading to her return home (Veloso, 2015). Veloso was once again forced to look
overseas for employment when she found she could not support herself and her family in the Philippines. Veloso’s role as breadwinner for her husband and two children was framed as a consequence of the state’s failure to take care of its citizens (Aquino Govt Lying Through its Teeth, 2015). Parrenas (2001) has described OFWs collectively as a hierarchal labour diaspora, whereby OFWs like Mary Jane Veloso are at the bottom due to their ‘quasi-citizenship’ and their low-wage, unskilled position. Tondo (2014) has described how Filipino domestic workers overcome similar problems with their status as foreign domestic workers with regard to their marginality in Malaysia. Yeoh and Huang (1998, 2000) also document the temporality and precarity that reinforces their marginal status as ‘foreign domestic workers’ in Singapore. Mary Jane Veloso, as an OFW, was the kind of individual that typically belonged to Migrante International. The organisation would regularly campaign and advocate on their behalf, aiming to mitigate their ‘quasi-citizenship’ by demanding better working conditions for OFWs in their countries of employment and by petitioning for more effective consular support from the Philippine nation-state (Cohen, 2008; Rodriguez, 2002, 2010).

Enter Mabel, head of Migrante Western Australia (WA), a local branch of Migrante International. The first time that I met Mabel she was petitioning for Mary Jane Veloso’s case in Perth. Every weekend, she would travel to various sport associations, private parties, functions and church services to gather signatures for Mary Jane Veloso’s petition and raise awareness of her plight. Mabel spoke at the local Filipino radio station to petition Veloso’s case and was also asked to speak on SBS radio. On the day of Mary Jane Veloso’s planned execution, Mabel took the day off work and delivered the signatures personally to the Indonesian Embassy in Perth. That night, Mabel stayed up to await news of Mary Jane Veloso’s fate. She cried tears of relief when she heard Veloso’s execution had been stayed.

Mabel’s membership of Migrante WA was notable, given the differences that existed between herself and individuals like Veloso. Although Mabel and Mary Jane Veloso share the same ethno-nationality and gender, what sets them apart from one another is their class position. Although class in sociology has been used to define one’s relationship to the means of production (Marx and Engels, 1969 [1848]) or as an aggregate of those with identical life chances (Weber, 2003 [1958]), due to globalisation and international migration, class can now be defined according to access to resources (Baldassar & Merla, 2014; Lorenzana, 2014). Mabel arrived in Australia in 1989 on a partner visa and attained citizenship after her marriage to a Scottish-Australian in 1990. As an Australian citizen, Mabel has access to a wide set of resources such as Medicare, welfare and housing. She is socially located at the
top end of the global hierarchy of destinations due to her physical location in a settlement country like Australia (Liebelt, 2011). Also, due to her university education and her current occupation as a high school teacher in Australia, Mabel is socially located at the top of the Filipino labour diaspora (Parrenas, 2001). Parrenas (2001) and Amrith (2010, 2017) found that there were class differences when they examined ‘belonging’ among the overseas Filipino population in receiving contexts, like Rome, Los Angeles and Singapore. Filipinos working as foreign domestic workers would form communities around their social locations as domestic workers, while Filipino nurses and foreign domestic workers in Singapore would form separate migrant communities and actively attempt to distinguish themselves from one another (Amrith, 2010, 2017; Parrenas, 2001). Given that Migrante International’s members generally include individuals like Mary Jane Veloso and other OFWs worldwide, why then does Mabel identify with this migrant organisation?

Mabel’s membership of Migrante WA signifies a cosmopolitan political project of belonging. At one level, Migrante WA is concerned with the creation of a just society. This society is not just national, but global, due to their belief that individuals are now equally implicated in international affairs; they therefore call for a more global solution. Part of this process of finding global solutions involves working with non-national others. Language barriers and cultural differences are considered superfluous in light of the greater struggle against the forces of neoliberal globalisation, imperialism and colonialism. Thus, I argue that the ideology that underpins this organisation reflects a ‘Marxist cosmopolitanism’, defined as a necessary and existing form of solidarity grounded in the global exploitation that has resulted from the global development of forces of production (Cheah, 2006: 490).

At another level, Migrante WA aims to mitigate the vulnerabilities that are said to have emerged from the Philippines’ labour emigration policy. Their political activism and advocacy on behalf of Filipino labour migrants is understood as part and parcel of the creation of a just and equal society, whereby Filipino labour migrants are treated as human beings and dignified with human rights. Such a multilayered process, however, has brought up situations of exclusion through its reinforcement of gendered norms. Therefore, I argue that the cosmopolitanism that Migrante is demonstrating is one that does not include the transcendence of the nation-state (Cheah, 1998, 2006).

By examining cosmopolitanism in practice (see Delanty, 2006, 2009; Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Kendall et al., 2009; Lamont & Aksartova, 2002; Nowicka & Rovisco, 2009; Pollock et al., 2000; Robbins, 1998; Skrbis & Woodward, 2007, 2013;
Werbner, 2008), this ethnographic chapter aims to ‘contribute to the growth of a critical and situated cosmopolitanism that speaks to the anxieties, contradictions and disparities in power that give rise to — and arise from — cosmopolitan projects and claims’ (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015: 6). Thus, this chapter views cosmopolitanism more as a ‘product of subjective experience’, stemming from ‘the need to open up new possibilities for human sociality’ (Rumford, 2013: 111). Cosmopolitanism is viewed as the creation of particular domains of commonality based on ‘simultaneous rootedness and openness’ to allow people to see themselves as belonging to the world (Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 400; see also Appiah, 2006; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015; Werbner, 2006).

In the first section, I build on Rodriguez’s (2013) research to illustrate the global, counter-hegemonic politics that undergird the narratives of the members in Migrante. However, I diverge from Rodriguez (2013) to argue that Migrante’s vision goes beyond migrant labour transnationalism. In its call for a boundaryless (Beck, 2006, 2008) approach to international solidarity, Migrante unites members based on a Marxist cosmopolitanism (Cheah, 2006). A class-based solidarity is presented as a necessary solution to the problems caused by neoliberal globalisation (Rodriguez, 2013; Yuval-Davis, 2011). What emerges beyond class is the ‘intense play of multiply positioned subjects pursuing cultural goals within a matrix of local inequalities and power differentials’ (Ortner, 2006: 144). The dominant game is neoliberal globalisation (Ortner, 2006) and Migrante’s call for international solidarity becomes the strategy for its subversion and resistance (Beck, 2006; Beck & Sznaider, 2010).

In the next section on the Philippines as a microcosm of global issues, I explore how Migrante aims to create a particular domain of commonality. Unlike the Order of the Knights of Rizal mentioned in the previous chapter, Migrante’s construction of a shared domain of commonality is centred on denouncing the Philippines’ political strategy to create a ‘new nationalist construct’ (Basch et al., 1994; Camroux, 2008; Rodriguez, 2002). This centre can be best thought of as a ‘new vernacular historical culture’ (Smith, 1990: 65). Here I focus on the shared past that Migrante teaches its members. I demonstrate how this vernacular culture is seen as necessary to achieving Migrante’s cosmopolitan society (Beck, 2006).

In the third section, I further explore the relationship between the global and the national. Here I demonstrate a tension between a cosmopolitan and national morality. I demonstrate how Migrante’s ideology dictates that national moralities could not precede a cosmopolitan one due to the absence of protection that Filipino migrants receive from the sending state, resulting in a marginal status that is not
alleviated by the receiving state. To ignore their Filipino counterparts would be tantamount to abandoning their Marxist cosmopolitanism (Cheah, 2006). Moreover, the structural constraints of Australia suggest that they cannot fully transcend their ‘visible difference’ (see Chapter Four; Fozdar et al., 2009), even as Migrante attempts to create a global proletarianism.

Finally, in the section on proletarian moral anxieties, I focus more on the resultant anxieties that arise from the class-based cultural transformation. In this section I juxtapose the seemingly boundaryless approach of class-based vernacular cosmopolitanism against the moral boundaries that the organisation imposes on its membership and advocacy campaigns. I argue that Migrante’s global proletarianism is based on the reinforcement rather than eradication of social hierarchies.

'Long Live International Solidarity!'

I begin this section by returning to Mabel, the protagonist in this chapter on overseas Filipino workers. Mabel’s belief in Migrante stems from her belief that we are all part of a world system. In her words, ‘we are all part of the global’, whether it be ‘Australia, China, Indonesia or the Philippines’. This implication in a global rather than national system has necessarily called for ‘international solidarity’. On Migrante International’s website, the organisation claims international solidarity as one of its core programs (https://migranteinternational.org/). The website refers to international solidarity as a program that encourages ‘harmonious working cooperation between and among migrant associations around the world’. It describes Migrante International as ‘a founding and active member of the International Migrants’ Alliance (IMA)’ — the global coalition that Migrante is a part of (https://migranteinternational.org/). In fact Rodriguez (2013) refers to IMA’s approach as a form of counter-hegemonic and re-scaled politics due to IMA’s critique of the ‘broader global order and instrumentalities of neoliberal globalisation … which shape both sending and receiving countries’ policies and ultimately migratory processes’ (Rodriguez, 2013: 739). Although Rodriguez (2013) refers to this counter-hegemonic and re-scaled politics as a form of political transnationalism, I argue that the social basis for IMA is much broader than transnationalism.

In fact, I argue that Migrante’s vision of a society is not national but global. As Mabel explains:

When we are talking about Philippine issues we talk about globalisation now because we are part and parcel of the whole thing. So whatever is happening in the Philippines, we support the change process there, the movement for change. It is because
it is also impacting the neighbouring, or whatever countries who are claiming the same thing or pushing for the same thing to happen in their countries. And that’s why when we say that Filipino people are still doing their share for change in the Philippines and then us overseas we support and at the same time we link up with other progressive forces around the world. So Migrante, for example, we are linked up with International Migrants’ Alliance. Because you see the pattern in other countries that there are also forced migration and it’s all dictated about because of the globalisation of the economy run by multinational corporations, Americans and all that. So this segment of RMP [Realidades de Migracion Philippines] is very focused on the Philippines’ history and what we can do. But when we study global economy and all that we will learn that there is a space. There is. Change is possible.

The IMA is a global coalition of 108 grassroots migrants’ organisations founded in 2008 (Rodriguez, 2013). On their website, aptly named ‘We Are Migrants’, they refer to themselves as the ‘first-ever global alliance of migrants, refugees, displaced peoples and their families’ (https://wearemigrants.net/). Their reason for ‘international solidarity’ is outlined in a document entitled IMA Basis of Unity published in 2008. The first point outlines the current epoch, described as the ‘deepening crisis of world capitalism’, ‘imperialist plunder, war and terror’ and ‘the failure of “free-market of globalisation”’ (IMA, 2008). International migration is contextualised within these conditions, as the document states that ‘forced migration and displacement of peoples’ have worsened ‘as a result’ (IMA, 2008). This global class struggle is what forms the basis for the IMA. For example, Mexican and Filipino relations were built through their positioning against the inequalities brought on by neoliberalism and capitalism (Rodriguez, 2013). I asked Mabel if Filipinos were turning to globalisation as a solution. Mabel responded they were, ‘in terms of linking with struggles of other people who are under imperialists. Because Americans are not only controlling the Philippines; they are controlling other parts of the world’. This awareness of issues such as forced migration that plagues not only the Philippines but also individuals from other countries indicates a domain of commonality built on a shared goal: the eradication of the current class system (Marx, 1849). As a result of this shared goal, Migrante members also proclaim their support for other migrants. In a speech at an International Human Rights event, Mabel proclaimed that ‘We do not see boundaries if other migrants want us to advocate for them’.
I thereby argue that Migrante is a public representation of a particular type of cosmopolitanism: Marxist cosmopolitanism, defined as a necessary and existing form of solidarity grounded in the global exploitation that has resulted from the global development of forces of production (Cheah, 2006: 490). According to Marx and Engels (1969 [1848]), all history is a history of class struggle between the working class or the proletariat and the capitalist class or bourgeoisie. According to Marx and Engels (1932), the proletariat are united by their experiences of exploitation (Cheah, 2006; Denning, 2011). Famously, at the end of The Communist Manifesto, Marx and Engels (1969 [1848]) conclude their volume with this stirring call to arms: ‘Working men of all countries, unite!’ (cited in Denning, 2011). Marxism is understood as a social theory that focuses on transformation of the economic system (Callinicos, 1983; Cheah, 2006). I argue that a Marxist cosmopolitanism is the shared cultural resource that Filipino migrants can draw on to reimagine relationships between self, other and the world (Delanty, 2009: 15; see also Ortner, 2005, 2006; Rumford, 2008, 2013; Stoetzler & Yuval-Davis, 2002).

Through their involvement with Migrante, members can reimagine themselves as the global proletariat. One of the key events for Migrante is May Day or the International Workers’ Day rally, which I attended during my fieldwork. The day started off with a march around Fremantle, where organisations such as trade unions responded to neoliberal globalisation by carrying banners that proclaimed slogans like ‘Build a better future’, and workers from all sectors came together to celebrate ‘international solidarity’. Other social justice groups such as Amnesty International and Sea Shepherds were also present, thus demonstrating a form of solidarity that went beyond workers. What appeared to unite social justice groups and the workers was their stance on social injustice. When I first arrived at the rally, Mabel was talking to a gentleman about their latest petitions, which included the Mary Jane Veloso petition. After the march we joined the rest of the groups in setting up stalls, displaying our banners and putting out petition sheets. There appeared to be an exchange of petitions, as people from other stalls would sign our petitions if we signed theirs. It was clear that to ‘build a better future’ did not mean to build a better future for Australia only, but also for the rest of the world, as we signed Amnesty International petitions against human trafficking and picked up newsletters, newspapers and pamphlets decrying neoliberalism and capitalism. The current world order was established, and the people who were implicated in this class struggle were urged to fight back. The employers and multinational corporations became ‘the other’.
Similarly, Migrante members were encouraged to attend conferences and meetings. In a document entitled *Status and Struggle of Filipino Migrants*, Migrante International (2012) sets forth specific duties, which include getting non-Filipinos to engage in the struggle of Filipinos by inviting them to forums and activities and requesting that they attend conferences or exposure trips to the Philippines. One of the conferences I attended in the Philippines on behalf of Migrante was the International People’s Conference on Mining. Although the majority of the attendees were from the Philippines, people from all over the world attended to partake in international solidarity in the flesh. The conference was held in English. Some of the speakers could not speak English but had interpreters with them to translate their native language for the audience. The keynote address from a speaker from Turkey established neoliberalism, capitalism and neo-colonialism as the root causes of mining. Another speaker from an NGO based in London emphasised action-oriented five-year plans and strategies, including a call for the involvement of the United Nations to enforce sustainable mining. The connection between the self, world and the other (Delanty, 2006) was established through the global class struggle once more, which cut across ethnic, national, racial and linguistic boundaries (Rumford, 2013).

The fact that the conference was held in the Philippines was no accident. One of the speakers from the Philippines explained why our presence in the country was needed. The speaker established the internationalist agenda of the conference, affirming that issues in the Philippines such as increased demand for ‘cheap and docile labour’, ‘application of neoliberalism in mining policies’ and ‘minimisation of state intervention’ were global rather than national issues. She pointed out that the Philippines was a microcosm of these issues and thus served as an exemplar of what was going on in the rest of the world, such as China, the Appalachians in eastern United States, and Latin America. At the end of her speech, she raised her arms and we joined her in chanting, ‘Long live international solidarity!’

As per the parameters of Marxist cosmopolitanism, the global proletariat can only overcome this class struggle with the involvement of ‘the nation and its appendages’ (Cheah, 2006: 490). However, to ensure that international solidarity ensued, members had to undergo a cultural re-education that aims to eradicate a form of ‘false consciousness’. Castles (2000: 168) defines ‘false consciousness’ as the Marxist idea that ‘all workers “really” had the same interests, but were duped by the capitalists into accepting divisions based on race, gender, skill level and nationality’ (see also Wallerstein, 1991). As a result, Migrante aims to reform the national history
of the Philippines along Marxist lines. In the next section, I elucidate the process of social transformation that is needed to achieve global proletarianism.

**The Philippines as a microcosm of global issues**

In the preceding section, I discussed Migrante’s vision of a cosmopolitan society (Beck, 2000, 2006; Beck & Sznaider, 2010). I outlined the process of internal cosmopolitanism (Beck, 2006) that Migrante uses to counteract neoliberalism and capitalism as the overarching cultural system. The section ended with a Filipino activist presenting the Philippines as a microcosm of global issues. In this section I elaborate on this point further by exploring the counterculture that Migrante is attempting to create. This section explores how Migrante creates a collective domain of commonality based on ‘simultaneous rootedness and openness’ to allow people to see themselves as belonging to the world (Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 400; see also Appiah, 2006; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015; Werbner, 2006). They do so by teaching members a ‘new vernacular historical culture’ (Smith, 1990: 65). I argue that this form of expression does not preclude an alternative nationalism (Rodriguez, 2002).

Members and allies of Migrante are encouraged to attend Realities de Migracion Philippines or RMP. Mabel had told me about the session when I first began volunteering with the organisation. The presentation and accompanying media were in Tagalog, but Mabel translated the content into English for my benefit. There were four of us in total, including Mabel. We covered this session over two days and on the second day, another man joined us. There was also Mabel’s younger brother, Lonnie, a recent migrant to Australia, who works in environmental services at a local shopping centre. Tita Rowena was there as well, a lady that Mabel had met while doing a massage course at TAFE. The last gentleman who joined us was Nestor, the secretary of Migrante, who had already obtained Australian citizenship.

I was the only non-Filipino in attendance at the time, but Mabel informed me that she had shown this presentation to other non-Filipinos. At the start of the RMP session, Mabel explains the reasons for migration, telling us that the:

migrant sector is one important sector in Philippine society. Ten per cent of the Philippine population are migrants, scattered in 106 countries all over the world. And then also 20% of the Philippine population is dependent on them. Most of the migrant Filipinos come from farmer sectors, mangagawa workers, and professionals. And because of extreme lack of land and also unemployment situation, little salaries or low wages in the
Philippines and also no security for jobs in the Philippines. These are the reasons why most of us are looking for jobs overseas so that we can support our family back in the Philippines. Would you like to add on to the characteristics of Filipinos overseas?

Tita Rowena jumps in and adds:

You’re not satisfied that your salary is enough for you to live on. And because in the Philippines, in the family, there are a lot of children. And it’s just like, even if the children get married they are still living together with the parents, so then if you are the only ones earning or the only ones that have a job or you’re supporting the family, then there is always not enough; so that’s why.

We trace these reasons for migration back in time. We delve into kasehsayan. Mabel explains, ‘kasehsayan means history of Philippines, and then at migracion Filipino. This is the history of the Philippines. We’re going to trace what caused Filipinos to migrate’. The lack of abundance that Tita Rowena points out as a compelling reason for Filipinos to emigrate is directly related to the Philippines’ ‘colonial masters’. This correlation becomes evident when Mabel talks about the Philippines’ pre-colonial history:

Now in the olden times before the arrival of the Spaniards, these people here they are the tribe people. They migrate from one place to another in search of food. They don’t see the need to plant because there’s enough. But this is in the olden times and this is what you call systema-primateva-communal. Some parts of the islands this kind of system has existed hand in hand with other ones that you’ve seen a while ago. And I think this is in the Northern part of the Philippines. You see here they wander and they hunt for food whenever they need it.

When, for example, this tribe sees the need to quarrel with another tribe, for example this tribe gets defeated [points to slide]. They join this tribe and they become one big tribe. And of course whoever is the leader of the winning tribe becomes the leader for both. So sometimes, tribes that’s how they grow and when they’re growing they obviously become more reliant on food so, for example [turns to others and speaks in Tagalog. CB is searching for the right term in English] short of food [supply];
as they become bigger in tribe they become more systematic in how to get food, how to store food and all that. So even before the Spaniards, what we’re saying here is that even before the Spaniards came to the islands, the people are already continuing to develop or progress at their own pace and their own rate. And given the environmental richness of the Philippines, for sure they will definitely later find out that there’s gold, there’s mineral, oh good we’ll do this more. Because they are already interacting with the environment. They are very proactive with the environment. That’s what is happening before the arrival of the Spaniards.

This pre-colonial history serves as a contrast to the forced migration that took place after Spanish colonisation. Due to Spain’s establishment of the *en-commiendas* system, Filipinos:

were treated as slaves. Filipinos were forced to work as seafarers and navigators and used for quarry labour. So because of the forced labour and the cruelty of the conditions, Filipinos jumped ship and then they settled in New Orleans in what they call Manila Village. So this is one way of how Filipinos migrate — forced migration. It’s not something; oh love it, like let’s settle in New Orleans. It’s because of poverty, forced labour, being treated as slaves.

Although the presentation was heavily focused on the Philippines and its history, what we seemed to be learning about was the current global condition and its economic and social systems. Mabel would read from the PowerPoint slides that explained these systems. We began by learning about feudalism. Mabel’s brother, Lonnie, interrupted Mabel to ask her to explain the words feudal and feudalism for me. What we appeared to be learning was Marxism. Following Marx, we learnt that the history of the Philippines is a history of class struggle. Mabel’s explanation highlighted the class struggle that had already existed before Spanish colonisation:

When the system here, the mala-communal became more progressive it created landlordism, or what you call landlords. Because they have enough to produce, then they can store it somewhere and then it created serfs. Like, for example, slavery, like this one here owns land and he can afford to have a slave. These people here kind of like they are the workers, they are subjects, they kind of have to, like, give him money for
repayments of the land or whatever. And because this one becomes richer and richer and richer and these people here becomes tied up to them being slave to the land. That’s what you call the system, becomes feudal, feudal. Feudalism.

Lonnie: It comes from the word feud, feudal — like competition or something.

Mabel: Yea, it can be, but this one talking about economic system. Economic and political system of the time. It can be best described as what is the relationship between this man and these people [points to the characters in the slide]. This is obviously the slave and this is the lord of the slave, or the master. And this one [the slave] has to satisfy the needs of this one [the lord] or economic needs of this guy. They are the labourers for that guy.

Mabel explains:

When the Spaniards came, it was very controversial. Because at the time, what is happening in the world, Spain is looking for more colonies to conquer because it is a very imperialist country at that time. Imperialist, which means controlling land so that they can be a superpower.

She continues and explains what this means for the Philippines today. Pointing to the slides, she describes the social structure of the population in the Philippines today, and we learn that the:

Imperialist US controls our country along with the local rich people who are landed [by ‘landed’, Mabel is referring to their land ownership] at the same time and who own big corporations. And they are the top 1% in the Philippine population which is this one. And then the rest of the country is divided to the — this one here is like 30% or 40% and these are the professionals. They are able to support themselves because they have regular income, but these ones here are the workers who are, their wages are kind of like not able to feed the family properly. And they comprise 70% of the population. Farmers also are here. And also fishermen … The US imperialists and the local elite that connives with them are actually taking advantage of the skills and natural resources of our country for their own selfish
interests. That is why a lot of Filipinos are experiencing poverty, and extreme poverty.

Mabel takes us through the Presidential history of the Philippines. We discuss various policies that have led to forced migration, such as the Export Incentive Act. We learn about how the Republic of the Philippines’ ‘puppet regime’ was created or established and the ‘different puppet regimes that pursue the interests and became subservient to the imperialism and feudalism of the Americans’.

We learn about President Marcos’s Export Incentive Act and the persecution of the Filipino people via operatives like Oakland Mamayan and the ‘total war policy’. Mabel explains that total war means ‘anyone who is going to stand against government policy or opinion or laws will be totally wiped off the face of the earth’.

We learn that jobs have become ‘contractualised’ and that ‘in the Philippines now you cannot have a permanent job’, leading to unemployment and underemployment, compelling Filipinos to leave the Philippines. Mabel explains, ‘Even though you are educated you can’t land a job. You better go out of the country and become 457 visa workers, for example’. And finally, we learn about globalisation and the Philippine government’s complicity with neoliberalism (Glick Schiller et al., 2011):

> When the government enters into this agreement it is ensured that the Filipino people and our country will remain at the mercy of the big corporations. We don’t have any control any more. And this is why when we got aware of this in global scale we tried to organise Filipinos and overseas Filipino workers, and this is at the time when Migrante International would like to organise this and get support and be aware of what is happening.

The themes of exploitation, corruption and deregulation became increasingly apparent as we progressed into the section on globalisation (Skribis & Woodward, 2007). The Philippine state was held responsible for the implementation of a system that has perpetuated social issues such as poverty:

> We’re getting poorer and poorer and worse. But if we have a system that is into looking after our natural resources and lets us industrialise from within, the Philippines islands, invest there, create job opportunities, don’t sell our gold to foreigners but then let’s do it here, let’s produce here, let’s manufacture here — *that* should be the situation because we’ve got the natural resources and we’ve got the human resources as main ingredients in nationalisation and industrialisation. But it’s not happening that
way. Why? Because the American government controls the puppet government. All the presidents and their cohorts and all the corporations are there, already American and foreign controlled. And here comes the 90% of Filipinos who are predominantly working-class poor, very much dependent on remittances from abroad. Unfortunately, now 40% of the Filipino population depend on overseas jobs.

This unequal division of labour is said to have worsened with the advent of globalisation, resulting in a global class struggle:

Unfortunately, now that you are in a capitalist world system, the conflict between the landlords or the corporations or the owners of the means of production and the workers is really heightened. It’s so intense that the workers have no power at all. They are just at the mercy of the employer or business owners.

By telling this story, what Migrante is attempting to do, then, is to create ‘a new vernacular historical culture’ (Smith, 1990: 65). This new historical culture is not just centred on the nation, but on changing what Mabel refers to as ‘the system’. It became clear what the system was when we discussed former President Marcos. Lonnie’s brother maintains that, ‘Marcos was best, not worst, president. Marcos is the best because the only commodities in the Philippines were maintained cheaper’.

When I responded with surprise at the remark by saying that others regard Marcos as a dictator, Lonnie responds:

Dictator [but] like Lee Kuan Yew, like Lee Kuan Yew. And you know the dollar before was only 2 pesos for 1 dollar. It was maintained. All the capitalist corporations … were controlled by Marcos because of the martial law. So there was some good advantage of martial law and bad advantage. Because Marcos was being dictated by the US government. So he cannot really overpower the US government but he wants to be independent. According to my father, my father was telling all these stories because we are being puppet by the US government so we cannot do anything about it or against it.

I decided to ask if Tita Rowena and Mabel shared a similar opinion about Marcos. Tita Rowena agreed that he was good, but not his wife Imelda Marcos. Mabel defends Marcos by replying that:
I think in the beginning he has the support of the majority of the Filipinos, but then when the power gets into him and because traditionally he was just succeeded by puppets so it’s not actually — it’s so impossible for Marcos to enact genuine change. Because the American power is there, so whoever sits there unless they go against the power of the Americans and expose the power of the Americans, there wouldn’t be any genuine change in the Philippine society.

Tita Rowena: So in saying that, we are doomed.

Mabel: Not really because —

Tita Rowena: We have no way out, if that is the case.

Mabel: No, I’m not saying we are doomed; actually the reason why we are studying Philippine history is for us to have an analytical point of view; change is possible and there is hope. Because now that we — realistically, when we are doing community resolution problem-solving it has to be based on reality, in the past, and we can maybe draw out conclusions about what can be done.

In this session then, what Migrante members are learning about is Wallerstein’s (1974) world systems theory, whereby the world is unequally connected, resulting in a dichotomy between developed and developing countries. Migrante’s vision of international solidarity is twofold. On the one hand, Migrante aims to eradicate this world system (Wallerstein, 1974). On the other, the organisation seeks to reform the Philippines’ place in this world system. After the presentation a conversation on the development of the Philippines ensues. Tita Rowena says:

And it will be good for the Philippines, you know, who will be on par at least with a developed country. We are so down below. We are not even considered developed! And to think that the Philippines have been there for how many centuries already. It seems like the situation is, we’re going backwards. We are not — instead of going up, we are going backwards!

Nestor mentions that the Philippines is now ‘on par or below Afghanistan, Pakistan and other countries in the Middle East’. The Philippines is presented as a microcosm of the consequences of neo-colonialism and neoliberalism, leading to a country of ‘servants of globalisation’ (Parrenas, 2001).
As a result, Migrante believes that the solution can be found within rather than outside the nation-state. Indeed, Migrante has chosen to cling on to their local national heroes and to speak for themselves rather than be spoken for. This action has come about due to the Filipinos’ sensitivity to being the subaltern (Rodriguez, 2013). As a result, members draw on their national heroes to frame the change that they wish to see. Mabel first tells us about the ‘pockets of armed resistance’ that existed during Spanish colonisation. Their lack of success was contrasted with the success of the Philippines Revolution in 1896, led by Filipino hero Andres Bonifacio. A national kind of unity brought about ‘from the ranks of farmers and workers’ led to unification of armed resistance against the Spanish colonial masters. Bonifacio, however, was overthrown by a member of the *illustrado* (Spanish for the enlightened ones), Alginowdo, who later became one of the first neo-colonial ‘slaves’ to their new American ‘masters’ and established a puppet regime that serves American rather than Filipino interests.

Migrante’s emphasis on the disempowered is meant to directly counter what Mabel refers to as a ‘monster government’. During the session, there was a contrast between Migrante’s work with the Lumad, an indigenous Filipino group, and the government’s persecution of the Lumads, the deregulation and dismantling of public governmental services, human rights violations, extrajudicial killings and political prisoners as well as the government’s preference for the elites rather than the working-class. The implicit solution was said to be found in a movement based on ‘people power’, which can be found in Philippines’ recent history.

The narrative of resistance is meant to be a continuation of the past — one in which Filipinos can be found to work with one another to counteract the perils of former colonisation and oppression. The ‘new vernacular historical culture’ (Smith, 1990: 65) in this case works to formulate a case of authenticity. This call for authenticity is countercultural, as this version of Philippine history is believed to be written by Filipino people rather than by their colonisers. As Mabel puts it:

Actually [when] we were growing up we were like little Brown Americans. We like to be Americans — you know, when you read something it’s good about the Americans coming over to the Philippines. They become our first teachers of English. They teach us democracy and blah blah blah and self-governance. This is all about in our history books and this is what we learn in primary, high school and university. Then when we are exposed to books written by the Philippine nationalists and it’s like, oh yea, that makes sense. And this is part of it. And then it makes
In this section, I demonstrated how and why the global and national cannot be separated in the case of Migrante. As per Marxist cosmopolitanism, Migrante believes that a global proletarianism cannot be achieved without ‘the nation and its appendages’ (Cheah, 2006: 490). Migrante, thus, aims to reform the Philippines’ place in the current world system (Wallerstein, 1974). They do so by drawing on a ‘new vernacular historical culture’ to reform their individual and collective subjectivities from within (Smith, 1990: 65). In the next section, I further explore the relationship between the national and the global.

The relationship between the national and the global

In the preceding section I discussed how the Philippines is a microcosm of global issues, prompting a cosmopolitan rather than solely national approach. I use the term cosmopolitanism rather than transnationalism to denote the contingent relationship between globalisation and cosmopolitanism (Rumford, 2013). For members of Migrante, cosmopolitanism has emerged as a necessary response to the exploitation and oppression that has led to their forced emigration from the Philippines. While their strategy may appear nationalist, their awareness of an existing global hierarchy and their home country’s place in it suggests the use of a cosmopolitan imagination (Delanty, 2006, 2009).

In the third section, I further explore the relationship between the global and the national. Here I demonstrate a tension between a cosmopolitan and national morality. I demonstrate how Migrante’s ideology dictates that national moralities could not precede a cosmopolitan one due to the absence of protection that Filipino migrants receive from the sending state, resulting in a marginal status that is not alleviated by the receiving state. To ignore their Filipino counterparts would be tantamount to abandoning their cosmopolitan vision. Moreover, the structural constraints of Australia suggest that they cannot fully transcend their ‘visible difference’ (see Chapter Four; Fozdar et al., 2009), even as Migrante attempts to create a global proletarianism.

I begin this section with Myrna, one of the founding members of Migrante, and Gabriela in Australia. Gabriela had flown in to Perth for a visit and was staying with
Mabel. Like Mabel, Myrna had met her husband in the Philippines. Myrna described how she first met her Anglo-Australian husband while he was attending an exposure program as part of a solidarity movement. She was involved in a development program that would give forums and bring these attendees to areas and lend their solidarity. Myrna narrates her migration to Australia as such:

There was no ceremony at all because of the Marcos dictatorship. And because I was active, Marcos was pursuing the activists. Then my husband said maybe you should go to Australia. Maybe it’s safe for you. I didn’t want to leave. I didn’t want to leave the Philippines. It was so sad, yea. I think it took me a while to get used to being here. It took a while to accept that, oh OK, I’m now living here so I might as well. Before it was just like, 70/30. My heart was like 70/30. My heart was 70% in the Philippines still, 30% here. Because I was still active, actively supporting and then organising Philippine women. Organisations. You know when I came here, there was an Australian solidarity and their friends, so I talk to them.

She currently works in an ethnic refuge that has a ‘program funded by the state and the Commonwealth to assist migrant women from non-English-speaking backgrounds who are in that [domestic violence] situation, escaping’. Instead of cultivating a universal openness and obligation to others that goes beyond kith and kin (Appiah, 2006), her orientation seems to be predominantly geared towards the Philippines and its people. As she explains, Myrna’s work with the ethnic refuge is with ‘mostly Filipinos’ due to the influx of Filipino 457 visa workers. Her predominant interest in the Philippines is rooted in the position of the Philippines as a part of the ‘neo-globalised world’. She highlights the issues that Filipinos face:

There are no jobs in the Philippines, low wages, really no — economic conditions are really at their slowest. And so if the government cannot give jobs to the populace — unemployment, it’s at a crisis. It creates this crisis for labour export policy, which is based on the neoliberal globalisation concept, policy of World Bank and IMF. And so, because of that they encourage the sending and receiving country. People would go, migrate to greener pastures.

What Migrante aims to do then — as a matter of reforming the current neoliberal globalisation epoch — is to advocate against the Philippines’ complicity in processes of neoliberal globalisation. Myrna’s political activism lies in her hope that the
Philippines ‘would no longer be a colony of the United States and that Filipinos will be proud of our skin, our race’. Myrna, in fact, emphasises the government’s responsibility to provide employment and adequate living conditions for its people:

It’s accountable to have jobs for its people, its constituents. And make sure that the law should have policies for just wages. And at the moment there is this demand for the workers, even the organisations in the Philippines claiming for raising the wages to a level that can support six kids in the family. That’s sort of like the average family size. Oh, there are some who have 10, 12. My eldest sister had 12, my gosh. The first children, the first she had twins. Jo gave birth 11, 11 times. It’s just difficult.

For the members of Migrante, then, they see the state’s reform as necessary for achieving justice, equality and freedom for all. This belief is shaped by Migrante’s aim to reform the Philippines’ place in the current world system. In the preceding section I showed how the Philippines is presented as a microcosm of the consequences of neo-colonialism and neoliberalism, leading to a country of ‘servants of globalisation’ (Parrenas, 2001). As a result, part of Migrante’s work involves working with Filipino labour migrants and campaigning for their rights. They do so on two levels. At the global level, Migrante supports campaigns such as the one for Mary Jane Veloso (see Introduction to this chapter). Mabel’s rationale for supporting her Filipino compatriots reflects a sensitivity to the plight of her former compatriots in the Philippines (Cheah, 2006). She explains the disparity in the Philippines, where if one had money, one could ‘buy everyone’ and ‘get the best lawyer’. However, for the majority who are ‘just a poor farmer or fisher folk, you will die in jail, you will rot in jail’. Mabel explains that was the reason Migrante decided to take up Veloso’s cause:

That’s why when we heard about her, even though we don’t know her personally, oh my god let’s help her because that is the case in the Philippines; you don’t have money, nobody in the government will give time for you. And no wonder, she nearly died, Mary Jane, and she even marched with them! What a waste of life!

And because we’re Christians as well, we don’t believe that your life should be taken, the death penalty, nobody has the right to do that to you except God. You die by accident, okay, by health failure, okay, but for you to be — especially to be executed when you’re a victim of the society’s trafficking and drugs, oh my god!
I think my soul, if I’m Mary Jane, I think I’m going to be … I don’t know … It’s just so bad, I think it’s unacceptable. So, when we rallied behind her … You were there, when we rallied behind her, we felt so sorry for the family. If you are from the Philippines and if you’d been in the farming community, you will see that and you will see how the family has been aggravated and neglected by the government …

She further explains that ‘that’s why we talk about changing things and articulating for justice’ and adds that ‘we do this because we care for what’s happening in the Philippines, it’s going really bad for the majority of the people there’. This sensitivity to the plight of her former compatriots has continued after her migration to Australia as Mabel feels that they are ‘rich by the Philippines’ standards’:

Maybe us, we eat, we have water, we’re rich by the Philippine standards, even though my kitchen is like that, that’s still rich. So I think the bottom line is that we are not happy for what is happening there and so we have to stand behind them for what they know that’s wrong for them.

I’m starting to articulate for the Lumad — you know, the indigenous people. We said to them that they’d been militarised because of the mining situation, so the Filipinos are getting aware of mining issues and all that and from there, it’s so easy … It’s just where the money is coming from and where do they get the money from, the support … Of course these rich companies are trying to bribe them. So, even though it’s the mayor, you’re thinking the mayor has got no money, of course, easy money.

At the national level, Migrante’s work also involves informing Filipino labour migrants of their local rights. An example was the campaign of a labour migrant and his two sons. Migrante had heard about the plight of a widower who was at risk of facing deportation from Australia after suffering a stroke, leaving him unable to work and therefore unable to fulfil his obligation as a 457 visa worker. Mabel represented the widower for free when he had to attend a hearing to determine if the appeal had any legal standing. She explained to me that a migration agent was helping them with the case, but that the widower would have to pay the agent for representation at this hearing. Mabel explained to the widower the process, suggesting that the next step would be to campaign for his deportation to be
overturned on compassionate grounds. National moralities in this case could not precede a cosmopolitan one as Filipinos are seen as more vulnerable due to the absence of protection by the Philippine state. To ignore their Filipino counterparts would be tantamount to abandoning their Marxist cosmopolitanism (Cheah, 2006). This relationship between the national and the global continued to shape and challenge the members’ lived experiences as they navigated this complex moral terrain. The unresolved tension between a cosmopolitan and national morality was further illustrated during another RMP presentation by Mabel where she outlined the issues Filipino migrants face in Australia. As most of the Filipinos in Australia currently enter on temporary labour migration pathways such as 457 visas (Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2012), the presentation focused mostly on such problems as redundancy, lack of workers’ representation, their desire to work rather than to ‘accept handout goods’, their lack of knowledge on living in Australia, no Medicare, no right to join unions, no overtime entitlement, unequal treatment for manual labourers in regional areas, and no health waiver in the event of sickness. Domestic violence against Filipino women was also cited as an added issue, one that is attributed to the feminisation of migration (Migrante International, 2012). Mabel ended the presentation by opening the discussion to the others in the group.

Lonnie pipes up:

Just want to ask, why is it that ... with all the issues with asylum seekers in Australia compared to — I mean I’m not saying that — they should also be helping the Filipinos, we came here with proper documentation and everything, so what’s happening with this? [Why do] they want to save asylum seekers from the seas? Why, why we are suffering here? Why these migrant workers, why 457 visas are suffering?

Mabel: I think that’s a good point, Lonnie, but you know we have an obligation to help the war-torn Syrian people. If you take ten thousand people we just have to be creative how to support them because other countries are also chipping in to assist, although it is not the end-all of helping people, you know. Displacing them and it’s not — it’s because of war and I think we have to address why it is that there is a war in Syria itself. But at the same time I think it’s not good to raise that issue while we’re talking about migrant Filipino issues. Because ours —
Tita Rowena: Ours is a different issue.

Mabel: Yes, and also that’s why we are relating our problems back to the Philippines. It’s like in Syria they’re relating. When we look at their issues as a receiving country, I think we have to look at what is happening in Syria. What causes the war in Syria. It’s like what we say in the Philippines, what make you come out of your country for Filipinos? So that’s how we view it. I think we’re representing the, for example, the labour export policy of the government that Australians understood where we’re coming from. We’re not here because we’re taking your jobs. No we’re here because our government is taking us here; they’re the ones bringing us here and promoting us to be here.

Lonnie: It’s not only that, the reason why we have to — we were forced according to the forced migration law, or what is it? Policy? The government of the Philippines? But we are here to help out the economic — I mean Australia is composed of skilled workers; we are all skilled and we are helping society. We are paying tax anyway, all the workers here are paying tax for the sake of the government, revenue, to raise revenues and tax for the government.

Mabel and Lonnie’s discussion needs to be contextualised within the discursive realm of Australia as an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 1991). At the May Day rally, Mabel pointed out a banner that proclaimed finding a permanent solution to temporary labour migration, which stood at the front of one of the local stalls. She said that she was going to bring that banner up with the Australian union at their next meeting. This nationalist rhetoric on protecting Australian borders and, by extension, protecting Australian workers against non-Australians is not new (Khoo et al., 2007; Oke, 2012). Temporary labour migrants are frequently pitted against the Australian workforce. In March 2017 Immigration Minister Peter Dutton banned the fast food industry from hiring 457 visa workers to fill skill shortages, arguing that ‘Australian workers, particularly young Australians, must be given priority’ (Conifer, 2017; Griffiths, 2017). This nationalist rhetoric continues even after the attainment of citizenship. As Myrna explains:

When somebody — like, here in Australia I know that I’m an Australian citizen, and you would say you are an Australian because you’re a citizen. But really, when people look at you,
you don’t look it. You don’t have blue eyes; you don’t have fair skin, isn’t it? So you still identify as where you come from.

Even the international solidarity proclaimed by Marxist cosmopolitanism could not transcend these ethno-racial boundaries. An example can be gleaned from when Mabel and I had joined a queue for coffee at the International Workers’ Day rally. Mabel had left momentarily to go to the toilets. An Anglo-Australian representative from the Australian Manufacturers Workers’ Union (AMWU) was moving along the queue with a petition to stop former Premier of Western Australia Colin Barnett from sending rail work overseas in an effort to save the jobs of apprentices in Western Australia. He was rather talkative to the Anglo-Australian lady behind me, telling her that the key countries that Colin Barnett’s office was sending work to were China and India, and said that it was a message about how Colin Barnett did not think that ‘we’ were capable enough to build trains. When he got to me, he regurgitated a well-memorised spiel, but left out the part on China and India. When he got to the lady in front of me, who was also of Asian appearance, he repeated the same spiel, also sans China and India. It was only when he got to the other two individuals who were not of Asian appearance that he became chattier and mentioned China and India again. I noticed that he did not ask another Asian couple at the start of the queue for signatures. When the partner of the lady behind me returned, the rep came back and asked for signatures. He, however, neglected to ask Mabel for one when she joined the queue beside me.

The vignette above illustrates the structural constraints that Migrante members have to contend with (see Chapter Four). Despite the fact that the organisation claims to be global, they still have to contend with the structural constraints at the nation-state level. This unresolved tension suggests the fragility of Marxist cosmopolitanism. Cheah (2006: 490) refers to the ‘irreducible disparity between the working class in different parts of the world’ to exemplify this fragility, but here I wish to point to the ethnonational structural constraints within the Australian nation-state. In the preceding chapter, I discussed how Filipino migrants often experience visible difference when encountering the (white, Australian) other. To rework this relationship, one may consider another central question that cosmopolitanism research has neglected to address: ‘whether “the other”, and not just me/us, can/should belong’ (Yuval-Davis, 2011: 156). I argue that in order to answer this question in cosmopolitanism research, one needs to investigate the agency and social positionings of migrants (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015).

By drawing on a global proletariat identity, Filipino migrants are in some way challenging the visible difference that they experience as the ‘other’ in Australia.
One of the ways they demonstrate their willingness to protect the interests of Australian workers is to form alliances with Australian trade unions. OFWs formed a sub-committee within the AMWU’s Western Australian division (Caspersz, 2008). Their alliance with the trade union is directed towards the trade union’s greater goal of eradicating unemployment and social inequality amongst Australian workers. As Mabel proclaims, ‘Filipino workers have to join Australian unions and support all campaigns to prevent threat of massive unemployment and poverty of Australian workers and their families. Long live international solidarity!’

Furthermore, both Mabel’s and Myrna’s support for Filipino issues have generated ‘moments of openness’ (Delanty, 2006) with non-Filipino others, even when they were in the Philippines. Myrna’s interaction with her Anglo-Australian husband even before her marriage and subsequent migration is evidence of her crossing ethnic, national and racial boundaries. Mabel first met her husband in the Philippines: he was a unionist from Australia and they communicated via phone and letter before getting married. Similarly, Myrna discusses how she and other Migrante members have raised funds ‘from Australians’ in Australia and sent funds back to the Migrante International headquarters in Quezon City. Although the Red Cross had ‘helped too’, Myrna explained that the Red Cross ‘had a difficult time’. By formulating solidarities with non-Filipino others, Migrante members demonstrate a cosmopolitan capacity. However, as this chapter has shown, this cosmopolitan capacity to love thy neighbour as thyself has its limits, as Filipinos are ‘othered’ by the government and by their non-Filipino worker compatriots. Thus, the findings demonstrate that the tension between cosmopolitan and national morality may continue so long as the political entity of the nation-state continues to exist (Kendall et al., 2008; Skrbis & Woodward, 2007).
Proletarian moral anxieties

I would like to return to Mary Jane Veloso. As I mentioned in the introduction, Mary Jane Veloso is the archetypal OFW that Migrante typically supports. Migrante was first founded in 1996, following the execution of Flor Contemplacion (https://migranteinternational.org/about/). Contemplacion was a foreign domestic worker working in Singapore, who was convicted and later executed for the murder of her Singaporean charge and another Filipino domestic worker (Gonzalez, 1996). Contemplacion’s case brought to light the vulnerability that OFWs face while working overseas. Her case was not the first, and neither was it the last, but her case signified a pivotal moment in Philippine history that catalysed the formation of Migrante International.

OFWs represent the global proletariat due to their international presence as well as their temporary, contractual status. In the academic literature Filipino labour migrants are generally regarded as the empirical crucible for global care chains (GCCs) (Raghuram, 2012). In fact, GCCs were formulated based on the Filipino nanny working in the United States to care for another woman’s children (Hochschild, 2000; Parrenas, 2001). Their occupation in the global labour hierarchy, temporary working conditions, minimal rights and physical absence from their familial units resulted in Parrenas (2001) famously referring to OFWs like Contemplacion and Veloso as ‘servants of globalisation’.

The title ‘servants of globalisation’ (Parrenas, 2001), however, stands in stark contrast to the Philippine nation-state’s reference to their de-territorialised worker-citizens. Ever since then-President Corazon Aquino referred to a congregation of OFWs in a public square in Hong Kong as bagong bayani (Tagalog for ‘new national heroes’), Filipino labour migrants have been regarded as the ‘new national heroes’ of the Philippines (Encina-Franco, 2013). They are often given special privileges upon return that appear to substantiate that special status designated by the Philippine state (Encina-Franco, 2016). The Philippine state’s referral to their de-territorialised worker-citizens reflects the state’s complicity with neoliberal globalisation (Rodriguez, 2010). It further reinforces the special status that OFWs hold compared to the rest of the Filipino population, both national and diasporic (Aguilar, 2015).

Veloso, as Migrante’s global archetype, then stands at the crossroads of these two discourses. On the one hand, there is the vulnerability associated with her having to find employment overseas so as to keep the well-oiled machine of neoliberal globalisation running. On the other hand, her designation as ‘new national hero’ serves to keep her away as the Philippine state continues to discipline its population as flexible labour (Rodriguez, 2002, 2010, 2013). In contesting these two parallel
forces, then, Migrante claims a voice for these workers on the global stage. Rodriguez (2002, 2013) has pointed out that due to their counter-hegemonic politics that criticise the current global system within which the Philippines and its constituents are positioned, Migrante members have formulated solidarity with other workers based on their shared human experiences, aspirations and desires as global workers seeking to eradicate neoliberalism and end inequality for all (Glick Schiller et al., 2011). What I wish to highlight in this instance is the effects of the process of this class-based cultural transformation. I argue that Migrante’s global proletarianism is based on the reinforcement of gendered and class-based norms.

Early on in my fieldwork, I accompanied Mabel on a trip to the Indonesian Embassy in Perth. Mabel had taken the day off work so that she could submit the petition sheets she had collected for Mary Jane Veloso to the embassy in person. She had given me a Migrante T-shirt to wear and we had brought Migrante banners and ‘Save Mary Jane Veloso’ posters with us. After submitting our petition sheets in person to an Indonesian diplomat from the Embassy, we stood outside the Consulate to put the posters and banners up as well as gather more signatures for Veloso’s petition. Our presence outside the Consulate attracted attention and Mabel responded patiently to enquiries about Veloso’s case.

Over the course of the day one particular person stood out in my mind. Mabel had approached a passer-by to sign the petition. The female passer-by introduced herself as Sam and appeared quite sceptical about the plight of Veloso but signed the petition anyway. She asked Mabel what Migrante was, to which Mabel replied that it was a group for Filipino migrant workers. Sam then said Mabel would not like her, as she was an employer, the owner of a cleaning agency. From Sam’s response, it seems that she had encountered Filipinos at work, as she went on to complain that Filipinos were lazy and that they would stop turning up to work at her agency after a couple of weeks. Sam further complained that some would open up cleaning businesses of their own, thereby competing with Sam’s own business. She then said it was because these Filipinos had married old white men who had brought them over from the Philippines. According to Sam, these women did not realise that their husbands were not wealthy.

What Sam appeared to be drawing on is the ‘mail-order bride’ discourse. When Filipino women started migrating to Australia in the 1980s, they were generally referred to as ‘mail-order brides’ in Australian newspapers and popular Australian films such as Priscilla: Queen of the Desert (Robinson, 1996; Roces, 2003; Saroca, 1997). The phrase was unkindly and inaccurately used to refer to Filipino women as a commodity that could be ordered from a catalogue and brought to Australia as a
‘bride’. Such a reference served to orientalise and exoticize the Filipino women as immoral other, thereby excluding them from the imagined community of their new home (Saroca, 1997). As a result of this stigmatisation, Espinosa (2017) refers to Australian citizenship as a ‘sexualised citizenship’, one that is marked by ethnic, racial, gender and sexual lines. As shown from this vignette, their effects are far reaching, and continue to influence the everyday lives of Filipino women.

Others have noted how Filipino women have exercised their agency in resisting such a discourse imposed on their social bodies. Roces (2003) found that Filipino women in a rural town in Queensland would bond over their shared predicament. Limpangog (2011) found that women would emphasise their highly skilled migrant status to counter this racialized and sexualised discourse. Bonifacio (2009) found that Filipino marriage migrants would establish their own not-for-profit organisations, practising what she refers to as ‘activism from the margins’. Filipino women were anything but objects in the face of social exclusion and would continue to assert their belonging to the (white, Australian, patriarchal) centre.

Mabel’s response was to reflexively distance herself from the Filipino women that Sam was referring to. She does so by drawing on the differences between herself, as one of the ‘global proletariat’, and the Filipino women as ‘mail-order brides’. Mabel pointed out to Sam that these women were probably from the red-light district or were formerly bar girls. Mabel later told me that these Filipino women should become ‘cultured’, to learn about the correct work ethic. When Sam left, Mabel wondered wryly out loud: ‘I wonder how much she pays these workers?’ In one way, therefore, Mabel’s act of distancing herself from the ‘mail-order bride’ discourse in this banal encounter can be viewed as a form of resistance and thus an act of agency against social exclusion. However, at the same time, what Mabel appeared to be doing was reinforcing gendered hierarchies through her emphasis on a particular ‘global proletariat’ archetype.

The ‘global proletariat’ archetype was based on the reproduction rather than transformation of gendered norms. One such way that such cultural transformation occurred was through the enforcement of dress codes. We were given Migrante T-shirts to wear at events such as the May Day rally and Mary Jane Veloso’s petition submission. I later learnt that T-shirts were generally given as souvenirs at international events and conferences over the course of my fieldwork. However, with Migrante, I was educated on how women should dress. I was given cultural tips such as best dress for Sunday mass, shoes, and casual to formal dresswear. Mabel also explained that when meeting priests and interviewees during my research it was considered polite and respectful to dress appropriately. Such behaviour would be
rewarded with respect and equality from men. Mabel explains that ‘Filipino men would have high regard for women especially [for] those who know how to conduct themselves appropriately in a modest manner’. This cultural education did not end in Perth. On my learning and solidarity mission to Nueva Vizcaya I was similarly informed that short-sleeved tops on women were not encouraged, for our protection. I was not given the same advice when I went to the Philippines with another Filipino organisation for fieldwork.

In addition, women were expected to learn how to approach men in a respectful way. As well as dressing appropriately, Mabel advised behaving appropriately around married men:

I don’t think it is good for you to be, for example, with Ron only because the wife may not be happy about it, so that’s to protect them. Me, I don’t usually become friends of males because jealousy for the family and also, I don’t feel comfortable with males being friends. But I talk to them as Migrante and that’s about it. For example, Ron and myself, I talk about going to the next meeting but, ideally, I said we should be with other people but we have a level of trust. But I don’t know — with other people, maybe not.

Such dress codes did not fall far from the Philippine state’s role in transforming the Philippine citizenry for migrant work abroad (Rodriguez, 2010). Pratt (1999) found that agents would urge prospective Filipino nannies to not wear makeup, to look less attractive and to dress conservatively. Similarly, Guevarra (2009) found that labour brokers would construct Filipinos as ideal nurses and domestic workers by presenting a certain image on videos and photographs, which would then be presented to employers. Constable (1997) found that Filipino domestic workers had to navigate similarly complex emotional and social terrain when working for their employers in Hong Kong. Migrante’s creation of a ‘global proletariat’ through the use of these gendered norms was thus a reproduction rather than rejection of the very apparatus that Migrante seeks to reject (Rodriguez, 2010).

These gendered codes were a stark contrast to the response towards Filipino migrant women whom Migrante would typically support. These women were typically portrayed as ‘victims’. During an RMP session, Mabel described the problems that female OFWs face when working in countries such as Singapore, Hong Kong and the Middle East. She talked about the exploitation that these women face as a result of their overseas employment, where they are raped and sexually assaulted. Mabel’s discussion echoes Mary Jane Veloso’s predicament. In her confession, Veloso
declared that she had left her former employment as a foreign domestic worker in Dubai after she was almost raped by her employer (Veloso, 2015). Lonnie jumps in and says ‘I’m not saying that Filipinos are being “raped” quote unquote, because I heard also things like they also seduce their employer. That happens’. At this remark, Mabel and Tita Rowena immediately exclaimed loudly in outrage, ‘Excuse me!’ and ‘It happened!’”

Mabel’s response was to defend the women:

Mabel: Actually that is to tell you the truth, they are selling their bodies. They are not seducing; they are selling their bodies because —

Tita Rowena: Prostituting themselves —

Mabel: Prostituting themselves! But if they have a choice not to of course again they are forced to do that by circumstances. Because some of them they said their employers are feeding them properly, they receive their monies on time and then it’s those — my god, if they are being fed properly why do they have to sell their bodies? And then sometimes you hear that they jump from the towers, they commit suicide —

Tita Rowena: ’Cos they’ve been abused.

To mitigate such views, male members of Migrante were expected to undergo cultural transformation. Mabel explains ‘respectful Filipino men would normally simply bow their heads in greeting and not shake your hand’. She further explains that such a gesture was a ‘sign of Filipino men respecting women. Also Filipino men do not expect women to extend their hand for a handshake and also, they will not kiss you on the cheek. Generally, Filipino women do handshake in formal introduction and they don’t prefer to be kissed on the cheek’. She warns that:

after several meetings, handshake is not expected. Handshake is for first meeting for formal introduction. Some malicious men would always want to shake your hand and it is called ‘chansing’, a step for being macho men [and is] considered rude and inappropriate.

It becomes clear, however, that these gender codes apply mostly to the incoming 457 visa holders. A conversation with Mabel reveals this hierarchal distinction:

With the older Filipinos, I think they understood where you’re coming from, but I think the new ones like the 457 who are fresh
from Middle East and different parts of the world, because most of these skilled migrant workers, they’ve been from other countries with rigid and structured way of life, maybe had experience of bad employer relationship and culturally suppressed, so when they come here and were relatively relaxed, they can drink here! In Middle East they can’t drink, they can’t see the girls, here they can see bikini girls and so it’s like a big culture shock I think if they’re coming from that direction.

As a result, Mabel suggested that if I were to meet men, even for an interview, that I should be accompanied by someone. She cautioned against going to group interviews on my own and offered to act as a chaperone. I asked if her advice was due to the gender dynamics in the Philippines. She responded that such gendered behaviour is part of Migrante’s cultural transformation:

In Migrante, they [male migrants] have to go through a study session and they learn about a lot of our culture that are very bad, that we have to learn in terms of how we look at women and respect our women and unless the leaders are accepting those things, they can’t be leaders of Migrante. They have to go through that re-orientation; otherwise they will be perpetuating a male-dominant kind of behaviour and unequal treatment of women and all that. So, because we’re coming from broad political experience and we’re picking up on those and that’s how we live and that’s how we are here, so when you are in Migrante, that’s why we have sessions, like my brother, and at least we have a basic understanding of how we went through in the Philippines and then here we’re trying to have a movement for change and how is that political change happening and as well our personalities into it … So, if they are untrained or they don’t have the orientation of the progressive movement, then they can try to victimise us or take advantage of us.

Even my brother, I said to him, the culture in Australia is quite different — I think my brother knows now how to conduct himself but for example, they have to respect women I said to them … even myself, if I’m with Migrante with 457, I respect them and I see them as workers with rights and that’s what we talk about and yes — But on some occasions, I’m not sure whether these guys know what I’m doing, I have to be introduced
as Migrante and that’s why when I come I have to be with another person, it’s buddy-buddy.

The fact that the male workers — that is, the people that Migrante is meant to support — have to undergo a study session suggests the instability of the global proletariat image that Migrante is attempting to cultivate. What Mabel appears to be enforcing in this case is what others have observed as characteristic of middle-class boundaries (Amrith, 2010; Espiritu, 2001). Lorenzana (2014: 32) argues that one of the ways in which Filipino transnationals in India create a middle-class identity is by claiming for themselves moral qualities. Sayer (2005: 953) suggests that boundaries based on morality are strong among groups that are anxious about their position, either in terms of how they are regarded from above, or in terms of falling into groups below the group whom they fear and despise. Mabel’s reinforcement of gendered norms among the workers suggests that she could be attempting to create a middle class, rather than proletariat, social basis, thereby resulting in the reinforcement rather than the eradication of social hierarchies.
Conclusion

This chapter contributes to the understanding of cosmopolitanism as a process by investigating a Filipino migrant organisation known as Migrante International. More specifically, this chapter has investigated cosmopolitanism’s limits, uses and its purpose in structuring and ordering complex worlds (Werbner, 1999, 2006). The chapter furthers the thesis’s aim to ‘contribute to the growth of a critical and situated cosmopolitanism that speaks to the anxieties, contradictions and disparities in power that give rise to — and arise from — cosmopolitan projects and claims’ (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015: 6).

I first built on Rodriguez’s (2013) research to illustrate the ideology that underpins this organisation. I depart from Rodriguez’s (2013) point to argue that what Migrante is demonstrating is a form of Marxist cosmopolitanism, understood as a necessary form of class-based international solidarity to the problems caused by neoliberal globalisation (Cheah, 2006).

In the second section, I demonstrated how and why the global and national cannot be separated in the case of Migrante. As per Marxist cosmopolitanism, Migrante believes that a global proletarianism cannot be achieved without ‘the nation and its appendages’ (Cheah, 2006: 490). Migrante thus aims to reform the Philippines’ place in the current world system (Wallerstein, 1974). They do so by drawing on a ‘new vernacular historical culture’ to reform their individual and collective subjectivities from within (Smith, 1990: 65). As a result of the unequal division caused by the current world system, nationalism emerged as a core issue, and one that was fundamental to the creation of a ‘just and equal global society’.

In the next section, I further explored the relationship between the national and the global. For the members of Migrante, then, they see the state’s reform as necessary for achieving justice, equality and freedom for all. In their case, to proclaim themselves as an organisation supporting Filipino migrants is to resist the Philippine nation-state’s complicity with the neoliberal global order (Rodriguez, 2002). National moralities in this case could not precede a cosmopolitan one as Filipinos are seen as more vulnerable due to the absence of protection by the Philippine state. To ignore their Filipino counterparts would be tantamount to abandoning their Marxist cosmopolitanism (Cheah, 2006). Furthermore, the support for their Filipino compatriots could have come about because members had to contend with the structural constraints that Filipino migrants still experience at the nation-state level. The findings thus demonstrated that the tension between cosmopolitan and national morality may continue so long as the political entity of the nation-state continues to exist (Kendall et al., 2008; Skrbis & Woodward, 2007).
The final section presented the resultant anxieties that have arisen from a class-based cultural transformation. I argued that Migrante’s global proletarianism is based on the reinforcement rather than eradication of social hierarchies. What emerges is a middle-class, rather than proletariat, social basis.

In the next chapter, I continue to foreground solidarity and belonging by presenting another Filipino migrant organisation for this thesis: Gawad Kalinga.
6 THE FIL-WHATEVERS

Gawad Kalinga is a global movement of nation builders who are committed to expanding the work and advocacy of caring and sharing across countries, to build a better, safer and kinder world.


Born poor but now a business owner in Australia. This is Kuya Gerry and his beautiful daughter. … He says that it was not his dream to go abroad. But it was his dream to rise out of poverty. What drove him forward was his poverty and the fact that he didn’t want to experience it forever. Now with his business, he’s able to provide a life for his family. Now he also dreams of bringing his business to the Philippines where he can touch the lives of his countrymen.

—GK Enchanted Farm Facebook page.

Introduction

Gawad Kalinga (GK) is one of the first Filipino organisations I came into contact with at the start of my fieldwork. ‘Gawad Kalinga’ is a Filipino phrase that roughly translates as ‘to give care’. It is a not-for-profit association founded by Filipino businessman Antonio ‘Tito Tony’ Meloto, who likes to be referred to as Tito Tony, ‘Tito’ being Tagalog for uncle. While the organisation uses the Filipino vernacular, its approach reflects a global scope. As of writing, Gawad Kalinga has established offices in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Australia and Malaysia. Using a combination of Tagalog phrases, as well as the shared goal of ‘making the world a better place’, Tito Tony proclaims a ‘new way of solving problems’. This new way of ‘giving care’ is based on an institutionalised global responsibility that involves working with governments, businesses, families and individuals to solve problems such as climate change and poverty. Due to the nature and extent of global problems, openness to all is deemed crucial and necessary. As part of GK’s ‘openness to all’, it has collaborated with governments, businesses, families and individuals, as exemplified by the Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm, whereby non-Filipinos work side-by-side with Filipino nationals. Racial, ethnological, religious and class-based divides are cast aside in favour of creating ‘shared value’, thereby birthing ‘one world’.

The local Perth contact for Gawad Kalinga eagerly responded to my request to work as a volunteer for the organisation. Her eagerness was due to a projected visit of the founder of GK, who would be visiting Perth on his Australian tour to promote GK and to give his thanks for the donations GK had received during Typhoon Haiyan. Although his visit to Perth was the first and last trip to Perth I personally observed, his visit would be the first of many trips undertaken to Perth by other representatives.
To welcome Tito Tony to Perth, the ‘First Perth Filipino Symposium’ was organised to coincide with his arrival. Although it was advertised as a ‘First Perth Filipino Symposium’, there were members of parliament in attendance as well as other non-Filipinos, including other guests and me. Travelling with Tito Tony were some of the individuals who have made a home at the Enchanted Farm. There was a former journalist from the United Kingdom, who had written a book on his experiences with GK and who had established the social tourism branch of GK in Manila. There was also a social entrepreneur from France, who had established a business collaborating with the local mothers living on the Enchanted Farm. Finally, there was Tito Tony’s assistant, who was introduced as being ‘100% Chinese and 100% Filipino’.

The opening speaker, a Filipino priest, starts off the event with a statement:

Our event tonight is mainly a forum for which we express any issues or concerns, share our dreams and aspirations, explore our identities as Filipinos in a collective, very friendly presentation. With an invited speaker to provide a direction in our encounter this evening, we hope to be able to raise our consciousness to the things that are very important to us. To be able to encourage a sense of belongingness, a sense of identity, a sense of pride, and even a sense of being held as a Filipino and for which we are being known for worldwide. It is only by knowing who we are, why are we here for, and what are we looking for that we can actually be proud of ourselves as Filipino.

This exploration consisted firstly of discussing the history of Filipino migration to Western Australia, whereby the presenter first traced Filipino migration to the 1870s and the migration of ‘Manilamen’. She pointed out how even during that period Filipino men had married the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, resulting in surnames like Torrence and Vensaluez in Broome where ‘Manilamen’ eventually settled. The second wave of Filipino migration to Perth was attributed to the rise of Filipino women who came to Perth as marriage migrants. The third wave of migration to Perth was the influx of Filipino migrants who arrived after the establishment of the short-term visa designed to fill Australia’s skill shortages, commonly known as the 457 visa. The presenter concluded her speech by outlining the challenges facing the Filipino population in Perth. The three challenges outlined were how Filipinos in Australia could look after the new Filipino migrants in Perth, contribute to Australia, and simultaneously ‘still be able to provide financial support to our relatives in the Philippines’.
The issues that the presenter pointed out echoed the emergent trends pointed out by researchers on Filipino migration to Australia and New Zealand. The surge of Filipino female migration in the 1980s resulted in Filipino women becoming synonymous with the ‘mail-order bride’ archetype in Australian media (Bonifacio, 2009; Robinson, 1996; Roces, 2003; Saroca, 2006). One of the most generous sponsors of Gawad Kalinga is John Hughes, a businessman who has married a Filipino woman. Another woman I met at another social event with Gawad Kalinga was a Filipino woman who had married an Anglo-Australian. Members of Gawad Kalinga also consisted of individuals of other ethnic backgrounds. I met a Malaysian-Singaporean mother who had married a Filipino man and whose son was very much involved with GK, even travelling to the Philippines on an outreach. Mixed marriages, then, were a predominant feature of Filipino migration to Perth.

It was no surprise that Tito Tony Meloto, the key speaker for the event, addressed this trend in his speech:

So, anyway, I’m just here simply to share with you the journey and I know many Filipinos have not only become good citizens of other countries, but they have also got married to foreigners.

Furthermore, Tito Tony drew on his own experiences as a labour migrant to establish commonalities with the other members of the audience. He said he had initially gone to the United States as an American Field Service scholar, and then had won a scholarship to Ateneo de Manila, one of the universities in the Philippines. After his return to the Philippines, he worked in Australia in the marketing and branding department at Procter and Gamble. He described his time as a labour migrant in Australia as the period when he found his true calling working with the poor. At the symposium, he said he remembered taking two of his daughters to one of the biggest slums in Manila and one of his daughters encountering a street prostitute:

And I was looking at her and looking at my daughter and it came to me that if one of my daughters were born to the same circumstances she could have been a prostitute. And I realised she had no future in my country if I did not consider the poor as my family. Because the streets would never be safe. We will never create wealth for people of future generations.

‘To give care’ was a concept centred on this familial model of inclusion, whereby Filipinos were being accepted as ‘good citizens of other countries’, but also as wives to improve the European race. Similarly, the poor in the Philippines was considered a necessary part of growing this global family as a way of mitigating against further
poverty. Gawad Kalinga’s vision, then, was one arguably in line with Beck’s (2006: 3) ‘cosmopolitan vision’, which he defines as ‘a global sense’ and a ‘sense of boundarylessness’. In Gawad Kalinga’s ‘cosmopolitan vision’, people would work together alongside one another based on Tito Tony Meloto’s own ‘global family’.

Gawad Kalinga’s ‘global family’ model reflects an attempt to create a cosmopolitan political project of belonging (Appiah, 2006; Beck, 2006; Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015; Robbins, 1998; Werbner, 2006). Beck and Sznайдer (2010) argue that cosmopolitanism is a framework that more adequately captures how one can belong to more than one cultural location simultaneously (see Liebelt, 2008; Werbner, 1999). In Glick Schiller and colleagues’ (2011: 400) critique of cosmopolitanism, they urge social scientists to consider the agency of social actors in cosmopolitanism in order to demonstrate how rootedness and openness ‘cannot be seen in oppositional terms but constitutes aspects of creativity through which migrants build homes and sacred spaces in a new environment and within transnational networks’. By focusing on the politics of belonging in particular (Yuval-Davis, 2011), this chapter seeks to answer the question posed by Calhoun (2003: 531) on “‘belonging’ in the cosmopolitan imaginary”: ‘can cosmopolitan theory value humanity not merely in the abstract, but in the concrete variety of its ways of life?’ (Calhoun, 2003: 532).

This chapter is divided into four parts. In the first section, I explore how Gawad Kalinga reframes belonging in the Filipino diaspora. I take the reader through a navigation of one member’s life story and migration to Australia in an effort to portray the importance of Filipino-ness as a cultural resource and the paradoxes of living as a Filipino abroad. While extant research on Gawad Kalinga has shown how the organisation capitalises on the non-belonging that second- and third-generation Filipino-Americans feel towards their ethnic origins, Gawad Kalinga also proves to be a substantial resource for first-generation Filipino migrants who have no intention to return.

Furthermore, Gawad Kalinga as a ‘global family’ allows its members to extend beyond diasporism through a subjective transformation of Filipino-ness. I explore how Gawad Kalinga reframes Filipino-ness on two bases. The first is to include rather than eradicate differences, particularly racial, generational, and class-based divides, producing an inclusive ideology. The second is to use this ideology to reiterate and reinforce a strong sense of national pride in being Filipino. Gawad Kalinga’s ‘global family’ model demonstrates how cosmopolitanism as a process can be used to intersect and thus reimagine nationhood (Beck & Levy, 2013). While social scientists have long argued that ‘there is no need to pit cosmopolitanism
against nationalism’ (Aguilar, 2014: 16), there is still a general lack of thick empirical evidence that demonstrates how cosmopolitanism and nationalism can or cannot work together. What often emerges instead is that nationalism is subsumed in favour of cosmopolitanism. For example, Delanty and O’Mahony (2002) conclude their extended volume on nationalism and its limits by arguing that nationalism will not succeed in contemporary conditions. Aguilar’s (2014) edited volume suggests a stronger bias in favour of nationalism and nationhood among Filipino migrants, even as he argues against a sense of unity or collectivity among overseas Filipinos (see Aguilar, 2015). Calhoun (2003) has most famously argued for nationalism by demonstrating how ‘nations still matter’. Instead of positing nationalism against cosmopolitanism, I demonstrate how Gawad Kalinga uses a ‘cosmopolitan imagination’ to transform relationships between self, other and the world (Delanty, 2006, 2009).

In the third section, I explore two key strategies that Gawad Kalinga uses to reinforce cosmopolitanism from below (Vertovec & Cohen, 2002). The Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm was created as a ‘cultural medium of societal transformation that is based on the principle of world openness’, a transformative hub where the global rich and the global poor are encouraged to set aside their differences and work side by side towards a shared cosmopolitan future (Delanty, 2006: 27). The Enchanted Farm reflects the organisation’s focus on community building and presents an example of ‘actually existing cosmopolitanism’ (Robbins, 1998). This space-making strategy demonstrates the importance of rootedness to cosmopolitan openness. With such a strategy, the farm reinforces Calhoun’s (2003: 544) argument that cosmopolitanism should be thought of as ‘a cultural position constructed on particular social bases and a choice made possible by that culture and those bases’ rather than a ‘humanist ideal’ (Kendall et al., 2008).

The second strategy I focus on is what the Executive Director of Gawad Kalinga has described as GK’s ‘core business’. In this section I explore how values transformation is not just levelled at the poor, who are usually the beneficiaries in the GK program — that is, those who receive benefits such as housing and education (see Kares, 2014). The strategy illuminates another key social actor: the social entrepreneur. I argue that the GK model is an instance of ‘actually existing cosmopolitanism’ because the transformation of nationhood requires an interaction with the (white, non-Filipino) other (Delanty, 2006).

In the final section, I demonstrate how Gawad Kalinga’s cosmopolitanism exposes the paradox that exists between rootedness and openness, particularly when contending with capitalism’s economic power. Gawad Kalinga’s cosmopolitanism
is based on the transformation of existing social hierarchies but not on its eradication. GK’s propagation of a ‘capitalist cosmopolitanism’ (Calhoun, 2002) reiterates the need to turn a more critical eye towards cosmopolitanism and its uses (Harvey, 2015).

**Transforming diaspora**

I first met Manolo, who wanted to be referred to as ‘Tito Manolo’, during Tito Tony Meloto’s trip to Perth. It seemed from conversations with Tito Manolo that he was involved with community activities among the Filipino population in Perth, having served a number of years as President of the local Filipino club. I asked to do an interview with him and we arranged to have one some months later.

Tito Manolo begins the interview with his migration to Perth. He tells me he was working as a full-time physical education teacher at the University of the Philippines in 1984. He describes the institution as ‘the biggest state university’ with over ‘60,000 students’. Tito was coaching at the University when he heard of a scholarship being offered by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID). He describes the scholarship as a fellowship for ‘Third World countries’. The president of the university had given the application to the director who was asking around for recommendations. Three candidates were selected, including Tito Manolo. Even though this occurred over three decades ago, Manolo remembers the other candidates clearly, one of them being a national athlete and a teacher, the other being a player on a team at the university for more than 20 years. Manolo compares his résumé with theirs and demonstrates with his hands that his was shorter than his competitors. But Tito Manolo was eventually selected:

> And when the director sent to the president, the president sent back the recommendations and put that number three, Manolo Salvadore, completed the requirement. That’s why, I don’t know why did they select me. The director gave me this recommendation, Manolo you lucky bastard, yea, you were selected. And that’s it. And I was, why me? I think it’s part of luck you know [laughs] why me? And that’s it. And that’s how I get the scholarship.

Tito Manolo arrives in Perth and studies at Edith Cowan University, previously known as the West Australian College of Advanced Education. Even though Tito had a degree in physical education, he realised that he had to undertake further study to convert his degree in Australia:
When they assessed me, they told me to study for two more years because of my Philippine education. They [the board] only assessed us as third-year students. To become a teacher you need four years¹.

He met his wife at the college. She was an Australian domestic student volunteering with overseas students. Tito Manolo was 28 and his wife 19 when they got married. He says: ‘You know why? Because she get pregnant [laughs]’. After Tito Manolo completed his diploma, he had to return to the Philippines. He said to his pregnant wife that hospitals were ‘too expensive in the Philippines, hospital there is very poor’. He convinces his wife to remain in Perth with her mother. She had their son two months after Tito Manolo’s departure. His wife later visited him in the Philippines ‘to get the sponsorship and everything’ and they ended up staying in the Philippines for five months. After Tito Manolo was awarded permanent residency, he returned to Australia with his wife and took up Australian citizenship shortly thereafter.

During the interview with Tito Manolo he refuses to look at the Philippines through rose-tinted glasses. In an interview with Tito Manolo’s brother, Romel, he had referred to the Philippines as ‘paradise’. Romel, whom Tito had sponsored shortly after he migrated to Perth, was busy preparing himself for retirement in the Philippines (see Chapter Four). In contrast to his brother, Tito Manolo has no such plans. He says that when people ask him if he would return to the Philippines to retire, he responds with a firm ‘no’:

> Why should I go back to the Philippines? Bloody, it’s shit there. I’m just telling the reality, you know. The Philippines right now, it’s survival. Majority of people there, it’s survival. ‘Cos when I go there every year it’s really the people there, more than half the people there, it’s really survival. They just eat, work, eat, work.

He contrasts life in the Philippines with his life in Australia, explaining that with the new knowledge he acquired of the Australian system, he is no longer ‘dumb’:

> I know Australia compared to Philippines. That’s why when I came here, ’84, first time I came to Australia. After few days I

¹ Tito Manolo was enrolled as a part-time student at the college, which is why he had to study for two more years.
clean my nose and before it’s still black, the dirt. After few weeks it’s white already. It’s clean everything, and that’s why I said to myself when I came here, it’s just like a blind person opening their eyes and seeing the difference. Because Philippines is here [hand towards the ground] and Australia is here [hand above his head] like I call it heaven and earth. Like langit ta lupa — lupa is the earth, and heaven is the langit. That’s the difference. Because when I came here it really lightened my life. When I learnt the system here — bloody, if you don’t have jobs, you get bloody support from the government. Hospital is free. Before we don’t have that HECS, ’84 it’s all free, you know.

Due to Tito Manolo having spent half of his life in Perth and half of his life in the Philippines, he still considers himself Filipino — even as he expresses no desire to return: ‘My life is, I’m a Filipino, more Filipino still. That’s where I grow all my roots’. This sense of rootedness cannot be underestimated, particularly during personal challenges. For example, when Tito Manolo suffered depression, he described the experience as being ‘difficult’ for him and his Anglo-Australian wife. He explains that his wife Jane is:

Australian, she’s not a Filipino same as me. It’s big difference.
Because like me, I went like a baby again. I feel like, really to care for me all the time, and because Jane is not feeling what I am feeling, it’s very hard to explain to her as well.

Tito Manolo’s story presents a complex view of living away from the homeland, a view that social scientists have attempted to capture with the term ‘diaspora’. ‘Diaspora’ is generally used to capture an emotional attachment to a homeland, therefore referring to a more de-territorialised form of belonging that can be differentiated from belonging to a nation-state (Cohen, 2008; Faist, 2010; Nititham, 2016). Safran (1991) has pointed out how the diaspora is also used to capture the notion of ‘homecoming’. Although Tito Manolo identifies himself as ‘Filipino-Australian’, he has no plans to return home. His narrative exemplifies Lewellen’s (2002: 167) argument that ‘diasporas can become quite settled and routinised’.

Nonetheless, this form of diasporic settlement and routinisation is rarely emphasised in Filipino migration. In Aguilar’s (2015) essay, he poses the question if the Filipino diaspora can be considered a ‘diaspora’. He mostly takes up with the ‘imagined and constructed collectivity within which the putative diasporan identity of Filipinos is embedded’ (Aguilar, 2015: 440). He points out that while OFWs maintain relationships with the Philippines as homeland due to their citizenship status, shared
diaspora consciousness, continued political participation, continued investment and interrelationships with co-ethnics, permanent émigrés do not (Aguilar, 2015). Thus, Aguilar (2015) disagrees with the idea that permanent émigrés like Tito Manolo can be considered diasporic as they generally take up citizenship in the receiving country and do not have a direct involvement with the homeland nor with their co-ethnics and compatriots elsewhere in the world.

Tito Manolo’s continued involvement with the Filipino population in Perth signifies how the ‘diaspora can offer a secure foundational culture’ (Lewellen, 2002: 167; see also Cohen, 1997, 2008). After his migration to Perth, he established associations among the Filipino population to reflect his love of sport, primarily basketball. He credits sport with helping him build his confidence, allowing him to become:

really easy to get with. I think that’s how I got that scholarship because when I went to that university, I was really friendly to all the university staff, faculties when we run and I think that’s one part of it — I’m easy to get along with.

He explains the reason for his continued involvement with sports: ‘When you’re involved with sports, you’re involved with lots of people’. This statement rung true when Tito Manolo needed to find a job in Perth to support his family. He met another Filipino named Paolo through their mutual involvement in Filipino basketball:

I met him here. When he learnt that there was Filipino basketball, he went there. And then we met each other and then he’s the function manager, and I told him: Pablo, I need to work because I have a family already.

Tito was then able to get a job in the hospitality industry, which enabled him to support his new family in Perth. His experience therefore corroborates with Tondo’s (2012) theorisation of the Filipino diaspora. Tondo (2012) refers to the Filipino diaspora as a source of social capital, resulting in a structure that resembled a ‘network of networks’. She also argues that her use of the diaspora is based on Werbner’s (2005) definition, which claims that diaspora is a form of ‘chaorders’ or chaotic social disorder, characterised by heterogeneity and constantly evolving.

In an effort to capture this ‘network of networks’, theorists have turned to the concept of transnationalism instead. Basch and colleagues (1994) first came up with the term ‘transnationalism’ to denote the creation of a single social field between ‘home’ and ‘host’. The authors developed this concept based on the lived experiences of Filipino immigrants in the United States (Basch et al., 1994). Parrenas (2001) used transnationalism as a meso lens to interpret how Filipino labour migrants interacted
with the macro processes of globalisation while simultaneously asserting agency. In Chapter Three, I followed Parrenas’s (2001) lead and used transnationalism as a conceptual lens to subvert the tendency to assume that a society is coterminous with the nation-state (see Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013; Levitt & Glick Schiller, 2004; Wimmer & Glick Schiller, 2002).

With regard to belonging and identity, however, social scientists have questioned if transnationalism can capture the complexities and dynamism that result from living in a single social field. Diane Wolf (1997: 457) discussed how second-generation Filipino youth in America experienced a form of emotional displacement ‘which situates them between different generational and locational points of reference’. Due to this complex positioning, Wolf (1997) argues that the hyphenated identity of being ‘Filipino-American’ results in more than a balancing act between the two countries or systems of the Philippines and America. Camroux (2008: 24) argues that transnationalism does not adequately convey a multilayered identity that includes not just nation-states, but also locality, region and the rest of the world (see Conradson & McKay, 2007; Espiritu, 2003; McKay, 2012). For example, Espiritu (2003) found that Filipinos in America would claim belonging as ‘Asian-Americans’, leading Aguilar (2014: 192) to argue that their ‘apparent transnationalism is a roundabout way’ for the subjects to claim belonging to the American nation-state. Tito Manolo’s positioning as an Asian rather than Anglo-Australian exemplifies this complexity. When I probed further on the difficulty he experienced during his depression, Tito Manolo gestures to me and himself when he says, ‘like us, it’s easier to talk with’. He explains that this easiness can be attributed to ‘character or attitude’. What Tito Manolo is revealing here is ‘a complex cultural and social intermingling’ between Asia, Australia and the Philippines (Cohen, 2008: 130). While there is no ‘cultural uniformity’, ‘some degree of unity’ still exists (Cohen, 2008: 130). Tito Manolo explains, ‘We are all the same human but we all have different upbringing’.

In an attempt to capture this cultural complexity among Filipino migrants, Cuevas-Hewitt (2010) turns to the concept of cosmopolitanism. He invents the label the ‘Fil-Whatever’ to demonstrate how Filipinos can be ‘simultaneously singular and common — singular albeit not at the expense of our commonality and common albeit not at the expense of our singularity’ (Cuevas-Hewitt, 2010: 122). His formulation reveals that cultural identity rather than being merely fulfilled or transcended ‘must be constantly invented and reinvented, activated and reactivated’ against a backdrop of the global other (Cuevas-Hewitt, 2010: 118). Cuevas-Hewitt’s (2010) theorisation of the ‘Fil-Whatever’ echoes Cohen’s (2008: 151) observation that those living in
the diaspora need simultaneously to hold to its ethnicity and/or religion and also establish transnational and intercultural ties in order to rise to the challenges of living in a multiplex social world.

Gawad Kalinga, then, exemplifies a response to the challenges of a complex world. Part of this challenge includes mobilising the ‘Fil-Whatevers’ like Tito Manolo (Cuevas-Hewitt, 2010). Tito Manolo had heard of Gawad Kalinga from a Couples for Christ group that came to Perth and began talking about a building project for the homeless. He was president of a local Filipino community organisation at the time and when he saw the project, he thought ‘Why not? We are lucky here’. He led the organisation to fundraise for GK and the club was able to raise money for the establishment of a Perth WA GK 777 Village in Tatalon, Quezon City. In addition to fundraising, he also travelled to the Philippines to build the houses in the village. Tito says:

I think we built I don’t know how many houses, it’s like apartments, three storey. And then we put in an arc, GK Village Perth, Western Australia. That’s what, I’m happy at least we have the West Australian community. And that’s it, that’s why I’m involved with GK.

Photos of Tito Manolo and the rest of the crew who volunteered for this housebuilding project were featured several times in print publications circulating among the Filipino population in Perth. In the GK Youth Ambassador WA Charity Quest and Outreach Program 2015–2016, photos of the housebuilding activity and details of the fundraising activities were republished. The author describes GK 777 as a movement that first began with the ‘goal of massive transformation of poverty-stricken areas in the Philippines’. The author goes on to describe how this movement later transformed into ‘a global movement, successfully enlisting the participation of multinational corporations and international organisations who shared the vision of building communities and transforming the lives of marginalised members of society’ (Perth WA GK 777 Village, 2016: 9). To understand how Gawad Kalinga allows its members to transform its project of nation-building from a national to a global one, I turn to Gawad Kalinga’s imagery of a ‘global family’.
A global family

After my interview with Tito Manolo, I was introduced to another longstanding member of the Filipino community: Uncle Ned. We agreed to meet for an interview. He wanted to know why I was researching the Philippines in particular, and I explained that I felt it was under-researched. He responded:

Well, the thing is, it’s growing. I was in the Philippines in March this year, in Manila. They saying, the Philippines, the economy grew by 8%. Higher than Japan, China. Australia grew by what? 3, 2, 3%? Indonesia 5% But the Philippines 8%. So it’s one of the fastest. That’s why you know, this guy — what’s his name? the reporter — he interviewed Meloto because he is trying to work out how the Philippines is becoming fastest growing.

Uncle Ned brings me copies of Philippines Independence Day programs, prepared over the years by the Filipino Australian Club of Perth Incorporated. He says they are a ‘good reference’ for me to have as they depict ‘Filipinos in Australia’. Uncle Ned points in particular to the history:

This is how the Philippines got its independence. You know, so many nations, how did the Philippines — how did Filipinos became an independent country? … in Australia the Aboriginals were ruled by the white people that came to Australia. But because they don’t have the heroes. They still ended up as Aboriginal Australians. In contrast, Philippines was dominated by so many colonial groups, like Japanese, the Americans, the Spanish. How — what happened to the country in such a way that it became an independent [colony]? This explains, this is an article that explains it. And this also mentions about GK, the program.

Uncle Ned thus draws my attention to heroes and their importance to the formation of Filipino nationhood. His focus on the importance of heroes to Philippine nationhood echoes Geertz’s (1993) essay on the ‘fate of nationalism in the new states’. He refers to the Philippines as a particular example of a new state that attempts to define a collective subject based on the contemporary global condition or what Geertz (1993: 240) refers to as the ‘spirit of the age’. In Chapter Two, I discussed the predominant elements of sacrifice, suffering and service that the Philippine nation uses to justify its labour emigration policies. This state-initiated form of nationalism was used to encourage labour emigration from the Philippines.
as part of the Philippines’ involvement in neoliberal globalisation, resulting in the Philippine state referring to their overseas Filipino workers as *bagong bayani* or new heroes (Encina-Franco, 2013, 2016; see also Ileto, 1998; Rafael, 1997).

Geertz (1993: 243) argues that nationalism built from what he refers to as the ‘spirit of the age’ tends to be ‘socially deprovincialising but psychologically forced’. In the case of the Filipino migrants I interviewed, this tended to be true. In Chapter Four, I discussed how Filipinos tended to disagree on what being a Filipino means, leading to an interviewee proclaiming that ‘nobody knows what a Filipino is’. Aguilar (2015) has pointed out that permanent émigrés cannot be considered part of the diaspora due to the homeland’s perception of the permanent émigrés as ‘traitors’, which stands in contrast to the homeland’s perception of the OFW as *bagong bayani* or ‘new heroes’ (see also Aguilar, 2014; Espinosa, 2017; Safran, 1991).

Gawad Kalinga, however, reworks the *bagong bayani* discourse in an effort to formulate a new cultural basis for belonging. This cultural basis rests on the mobilisation of ‘essentialist pride’ (Geertz, 1993: 252). The heroism that Gawad Kalinga professes is based on the idea that ‘Filipinos are very good people’. Tito Tony Meloto proclaims that the ‘Filipino is an asset wherever he is, and all the countries that receive Filipinos are winners’. The local representative for Perth believes that ‘caring’ is part of the ‘nature’ of Filipinos. The fact that she refers to Filipinos as ‘caring’ is to claim an inherent quality. Such a claim was further substantiated when Tito Tony Meloto referred to Filipinos as a ‘race’ when he once told his English son-in-law that ‘I want my daughter to marry you so that you can improve your race’. This statement was received with laughter and cheers. He then went on to say that Filipinos ‘are the best thing to the world’. A recent Filipino migrant to Perth also said that Gawad Kalinga was ‘maximising’ the fact that Filipinos ‘are the only race scattered all over the world’. GK’s reworking of this *bagong bayani* discourse thereby gives the ‘Fil-Whatever’ subjectivity (Cuevas- Hewitt, 2010) legitimacy, transforming what is a generalised mood into a practical force (Geertz, 1993).

Kares (2014) demonstrates how Gawad Kalinga was able to mobilise this discourse among second-generation Filipino-American volunteers. I witnessed similar instances during my fieldwork with Gawad Kalinga in Australia. For example, during Gawad Kalinga’s annual campaign, volunteers from all over the Philippines and around the world are encouraged to become ‘heroes with a heart’ (Adduru, 2016). A write-up for the Miss Philippines WA 2008–09 GK Charity Quest describes the candidates as:
heroes of the poor … because they are giving their precious time, exerting their best efforts using their talent for fundraising strategies and activities, offering even their own treasures. Their sacrifice is a blessing to the poor. (*Miss Philippines WA 2008-09 GK Charity Quest, 2016*)

Furthermore, the beneficiaries — the individuals that GK provides assistance to — are also considered heroes. Tito Tony Meloto urges people to discover the ‘genius of the poor’ in his speeches and writings. In his speech at the symposium and at the GK Enchanted Farm, we are shown a video about one of the formerly internally displaced people, a beneficiary-turned-volunteer for GK. He is hailed as one of the heroes who have now begun helping others:

> And so I would like to show you a video of a man who used to live like any Filipinos. He was a squatter similar to many Filipinos who live under a bridge along the railroad tracks. Along that track you know when you go to that part. Like those kids asking for money. But I don’t know if some of you know that we have transformed parts of Tacloban, and suddenly those kids are now beneficiaries. So really again it is the restoration of dignity for Filipinos who have been dehumanised by poverty, by lack of social justice and our part is to handhold them so that the Filipino living like an animal until he is 40 can start again, and he can walk on his own two feet and he can help other people to also help themselves.

One of the social entrepreneurs from the United Kingdom later referred to this individual as a ‘real living hero’ that could be found in every single community that he visited. What Gawad Kalinga is thus demonstrating is how ‘cosmopolitan processes are intersecting and potentially transforming the idea of the national itself’ (Beck & Levy, 2013: 5). In fact, GK’s reformulation of the *bagong bayani* discourse draws on the ‘cosmopolitan imagination’ (Delanty, 2009). Delanty (2006: 27) defines the ‘cosmopolitan imagination’ as one that ‘occurs when and wherever new relations between self, other and world develop in moments of openness’. He emphasises that the ‘cosmopolitan imagination’ best captures the ‘internal development processes within the social world’ (Delanty, 2006: 27). Rather than view cosmopolitanism as a condition, state or goal, he argues that cosmopolitanism should ‘be seen as a cultural medium of societal transformation that is based on the principle of world openness’ (Delanty, 2006: 27; see also Glick Schiller and Irving,
2015). His point can be used to ‘explore how exactly this malleability and contingency of nationhood evolves in a global context’ (Beck & Levy, 2013: 5).

GK’s global family model results from the Philippines’ involvement with neoliberal globalisation. During his speech at the symposium, Tito Tony Meloto pointed out that the Philippines is a victim of what he calls ‘elite globalisation’, whereby Filipinos have migrated to contribute their capital to other countries and whereby Filipinos are brought up to believe that they were ‘not good enough to come up with a world-class product’. To exemplify his point, he says that the Philippines imports 99 per cent of their dairy, 85 per cent of their cacaos and 95 per cent of their toys. Tito Tony Meloto then asks, ‘Why can’t we be producers at home? Why do we just have to be consumers?’ GK aims to reverse this by calling on other non-Filipinos ‘from other countries to help us develop our toy industry, develop our perfume, essential oils. Because we are so rich in terms of talent and creativity but we have to partner to be able to create a global market’. Gawad Kalinga advocates for a collaborative model that includes rather than excludes non-Filipinos and other sectors of society. It frequently describes this collaborative effort as a ‘Third Way’, a ‘middle way between the global rich and the global poor’, based on ‘love, sharing and caring’. In a GK Youth Ambassador brochure, GK summarises how this translates into practice:

GK invites and engages rich and poor, young and old, private and public sector, partners from the Philippines and other nations around the world to come together to leverage resources and make sure that the goodwill and actual impact on [the] ground is multiplied many times over. (GK Youth Ambassador WA Charity Quest and Program, 2015–16)

Gawad Kalinga embraces the idea that the ‘global other is in our midst’ (Beck, 2011: 1348). For example, GK’s idea of creating ‘one world’ is said to be based on a personal mission of the founder himself. Tito Tony Meloto commonly refers to his daughters, who are married to Westerners, during his conversations and speeches. One of his daughters is married to an Englishman and another to an American. Tito Tony Meloto jokes that his vision of GK as a ‘global family’ is that he wants to make America and Europe better for his children and grandchildren. GK is therefore marketed as a ‘platform for East and West to work together to have the best, so that we can become a global family’. He refers to this as the epitome of a ‘dual philosophy’:

where you connect with the good in every race. You connect with the good in every culture. We connect to the good in the rich. We
connect to the good in the poor. You connect to the good even in the worst criminals because there’s no human being who are evil. I like to share with you a future where no one is an enemy, a victim, or afraid. And that’s the legacy I leave to my children. And your children will also be a part of a world of my own grandchildren.

GK’s global family signifies an attempt to establish new forms of association in a ‘far-from cosmopolitan world’ (Rumford, 2013: 111). For example, Gawad Kalinga’s Youth Ambassador reflects on how participating in GK enabled him to realise his hope ‘that I can contribute to a movement that ensures that children such as those we met during the outreach may have a safer world to grow up in … a world of opportunities’ (Goerke, 2016). When I asked another member of GK at a social event if she considered GK to be a form of nation-building, she pointed out that a couple of youth members were Indonesian, proving her point that the organisation was ‘global’ in outlook and attitude; an international solidarity movement grounded in reality. In an interview with the representative for Perth I explained that I was ‘really interested in GK because it seemed very Filipino’. The representative responded that:

GK is Filipino — it is uniquely Filipino, but it is now starting to have an international influence as well. For example, GK Australia is intended to operate across two platforms, one that goes back to the Philippines and one that wants to take care of its outreach for Australians.

To exemplify, Tito Tony Meloto refers to Gawad Kalinga’s sharing of the GK template that was used to build a community for Aboriginal Australians in Dubbo, New South Wales. He describes this strategy as ‘being family’, where:

Australia helps us. We also will share the brightest Filipinos with Australians. It is not just Australians providing opportunities for them. But this is what we call creating a win-win situation. The same way that we get in the Philippines, if we get the rich and the poor to work together, we create wealth that will not leave anyone to remain poor.

He refers to this as a ‘win-win solution’ whereby Australians can see that ‘the Philippines is their hope in Asia and their partner’. GK’s ‘global family’ model can therefore be seen as a form of ‘human agency transforming the present in the image of a shared future’ (Rumford, 2013: 108–09; see also Delanty, 2009).
Gawad Kalinga’s reproduction of this ‘global family’ model is dependent on two key strategies. In the following section, I explore these strategies, focusing particularly on the Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm and GK’s values transformation program.

**GK Enchanted Farm**

The Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm, located in the Bulaclan region of the Philippines, was brought up several times over the course of doing fieldwork with GK. Potential social entrepreneurs interested in collaborating with Gawad Kalinga almost inevitably ended up at the Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm. The website describes the farm as a ‘platform to raise social entrepreneurs, help local farmers and create wealth in the countryside’ ([http://gk1world.com/gk-enchanted-farm](http://gk1world.com/gk-enchanted-farm)). During their trips to Perth, the social entrepreneurs described the Enchanted Farm as their new workplace and one of them even referred to it as his ‘new home’. In fact, during my tour of the Enchanted Farm, Tito Tony proudly proclaimed that the farm had become a tourist destination in its own right, surpassing El Nido and Boracay, two famous tourist destinations in the Philippines. To substantiate his point, he introduced us to Shirley, whom he referred to as a ‘wealthy Malaysian’, and a young French male who was also described as a ‘millionaire’. Thus, the farm serves as an important locale that connects the Philippines to the rest of the world.

GK Enchanted Farm symbolises a practice that was already being undertaken by Filipino migrants. McKay (2012) found that Filipino migrants were rooted within the village of origin rather than the nation-state; she argued that the village locale constituted a large part of the migrant’s response to the ‘global’. While the nation-state has neglected to mention such regionalism by reinforcing that there is ‘one Filipino’ — the labour emigrant who works away for sake of family and country (Aguilar, 2014, 2015; Encina-Franco, 2013, 2016) — Gawad Kalinga seeks to give this regionalism legitimacy. The local representative for Gawad Kalinga in Perth explains that:

In any Filipino community the people from the Visayas would band together because they speak the same language. They have a sub-culture of their own. The people from the northern part of the Philippines would have their own community. So, even in the Perth and WA scenario, you would have a Visayan organisation, meaning to say those from Central Philippines. You would have an Ilocano organisation, or some cultures or regions. To me, I
don’t really find anything wrong with that. It’s just that some people see it as disunity. I don’t.

This reference was commonly repeated by other supporters of GK. Tito Manolo says:

Yeah, different regions they have in America now. Now same in Sydney, that’s part of growing up. Because before they said, why so many community in Perth, why so divided? But that’s normal. That’s part of growing communities. Once you get bigger it breaks up. That’s normal instinct of human being. Not only Filipinos, all nationalities — Indian, Singaporean. Once you grow up, it breaks. But that’s part of growing up.

GK reproduces this existing practice through their strategy of ‘scaling’. When I asked Executive Director of Gawad Kalinga, ‘Kuya’ Luis Oquinena (‘kuya’ being Tagalog for older male relative, usually a cousin or brother) what he thought GK’s success is, he responded:

Well, I think GK is a model that works. The question is actually how to scale it. It’s not in my mind whether it works or not. The question is how to scale it. So, for example, when we started, we really needed to find what poverty is. And really look at how and develop a situation that was indigenous in the Philippines. It was nothing imported from another country as a template.

This strategy of scaling communities is used to symbolise the action of building something much greater than just the locale itself. GK’s strategy of community-building is described by Tito Tony Meloto as a ‘form of nation building’: ‘it’s really building communities and that’s how you build nations’. A ‘poverty-free world’ can then be achieved (http://www.gk1world.com/NewOurFounder).

Gawad Kalinga’s emphasis on community-building stands in contrast to Rumford’s (2013) formulation of cosmopolitanism. In Rumford’s (2013) theorisation of cosmopolitanism and belonging, he found that cosmopolitanism was typically a response to the restriction that globalisation enforces on its subjects. He thus interprets cosmopolitanism as ‘an escape from permanence and solidity’ (Rumford, 2013: 111). However, GK’s focus on building permanent communities does not reflect such an escape. If anything, its approach reinforces the importance of locality. For example, GK Perth cites the evidence of the community they helped rebuild as a symbol of their contribution to the homeland (Perth WA GK 777 Village, 2016). For supporters like Tito Manolo, such a symbol can be used to show how he has
roots in the Philippines even while no longer considering the Philippines ‘home’. For others, GK Enchanted Farm represents a ‘new home’. One prominent supporter of GK, Shirley Tan, refers to the Enchanted Farm as her ‘home’, ‘playground’ and ‘birthplace’ (Caruncho, 2017). She contrasts the farm with her actual birthplace of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, which has become ‘the fantasy, the transit lounge’ (Caruncho, 2017). Rather than presenting an escape from permanence, the Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm is meant to symbolise the actual existence of a ‘place where people contribute their passion, just to make the world better, just to make the world kinder, just to make the world safer’. As a result, the Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm demonstrates the importance of rootedness to cosmopolitan openness (Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015).

This community-building strategy has already been discussed in the extant literature on rooted cosmopolitanism. Cuevas-Hewitt (2010, 2016) found that individuals who belonged to postcolonial social movements were able to ‘become cosmopolitan’ due to their trans-localism. He defines trans-localism as ‘an imaginary in which a commitment to locality is retained, even as solidarity is forged elsewhere’ (Cuevas-Hewitt, 2016: 94). Cuevas-Hewitt (2016) describes this space-making strategy as a key feature of existing or rooted cosmopolitanism (see Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 401). As Delanty (2006: 37) explains, to speak of cosmopolitanism as ‘real’ is to focus on the ‘cultural models in which codifications of both Self and Other undergo transformation’.

The GK Enchanted Farm serves as one of these transformative hubs. By focusing on ‘scaling’, GK is able to demonstrate how the self, other and the world are transformed within a prototypical village model. Part of this method of scaling was to create a social hub that encompasses three dimensions: business, living and education. This three-pronged approach is meant to be about ‘building permanent communities’, leading GK not only to be about dreams and vision, but, more importantly, about social impact. The Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm thus substantiates GK’s claims that it is ‘more than a charity but an organisation that aims to build sustainable communities that will end poverty’ (Goh, 2012).

GK’s strategy of ‘scaling’ was to create an inclusive template that can be replicated across the world. Kuya Luis elaborates that this strategy of building one community at a time ‘is to make sure that we are copied. So the posture is not of exclusivity but of being more inclusive and of sharing the template, sharing the template of GK’. As a result of this inclusivity, GK has become a ‘global movement’ that can be found in parts of Indonesia, Cambodia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea and Australia. This globalising strategy is combined with a vernacularising element, reinforcing the
importance of the locale. Kuya Luis explains that when establishing communities in other countries, GK tries to ‘find a way to translate GK into their own language’. In Indonesia, GK is renamed Gerakan Kepedulian, which means Care Movement (Dimarucot, 2012). GK’s transformation to a global movement is strengthened through a process of vernacularisation that signifies a commitment to locality rather than its negation or transcendence (Cuevas-Hewitt, 2016). Thus, Gawad Kalinga substantiates Calhoun’s (2003: 544) claim that cosmopolitanism is less a transcendence of localism and parochialism and more ‘participation in a particular, if potentially broad, process of cultural production and social interconnection that spans boundaries’.

This commitment to locality is further reinforced through Gawad Kalinga’s housebuilding campaigns. When I asked one of my Filipino interviewees if she had heard of GK, she responded with, ‘They’re the ones helping building houses for the poor families in the Philippines’. At a meeting with the GK Perth Youth Ambassadors, three of the seven youth mentioned that they thought housebuilding was one of the key programs of GK. The local representative for GK Perth agreed and said that houses are important to community formation. During my visit to the Philippines with GK Australia, we visited one of the communities near Manila that GK helped build and were able to see the houses for ourselves. The houses were painted in vibrant colours that are meant to represent the rainbow, as walls are painted a mixture of vivid red, bright purple, radiant yellow and a cool blue. The centrality of their houses comes through in the annual Bayani Challenge, whereby volunteers from all over the Philippines and all over the world are invited to build houses for GK villages. Volunteers are given the equipment they need to paint these houses, mix cement and experience what it is like to build an actual house.

However, when I asked Kuya Luis how GK differentiated itself from other NGOs such as Red Cross and UNICEF, he responded that it is in their emphasis on values. Kuya Luis explains:

>You see GK as a housing group, right? But it is just one of many. If I define what the core business is, it is really values transformation. As I said earlier, we believe that poverty is a crisis in values that has economic consequences. The houses, everything, these are consequences of a crisis.

Kuya Luis identifies the problem that we are currently facing as a ‘purposeless life’. He presents GK as a ‘choice, a choice to live a life with a purpose, a choice to build a life not just for us, but also for the poor’. He describes GK as a ‘beautiful gift for humanity’ that is ‘not just for Filipinos, by the way’. Kuya Luis refers to GK as a
‘network of relationships’. He says that it is the ‘acts of caring that define us’, and he describes GK as ‘culture and aspiration’ and ‘more than an NGO’. Additionally, on a tour of the Enchanted Farm, our tour guide informs us that ‘the houses at GK are just a bonus. What we’re really about is building relationships with people’. Her speech emphasised ‘connection’, particularly in ‘connecting the mind and the heart’. Part of GK’s strategy, therefore, includes the mobilisation of emotions. One of the social entrepreneurs reports the difference between donating to charity and working with GK:

When you write a cheque, you don’t feel the joy of giving because you don’t see the result. But with GK, I saw the houses go up. I saw the people whose lives were transformed and what an amazing impact it had on them. (Wong, 2017)

What the social entrepreneur is reporting is the primarily relational ontological nature of cosmopolitanism (Delanty, 2012). Social scientists have doubted if cosmopolitanism can bring the metaphysical existential qualities so important to belonging (Calhoun, 2003; Kendall et al., 2008). As Hedetoft and Hjort (2002: xix) argue, ‘the global position, including its cosmopolitan virtues, is ideologically rather than existentially defined’. Engaging with the idea that cosmopolitanism is a set of competencies and skills (Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Lamont & Aksartova, 2002), Wang and Collins (2016: 89) have pointed out that ‘interacting with others relies on more than just pragmatic skills and knowledge of cultural difference but also how we feel about ourselves and the others we encounter’. Kares (2014: 191) has demonstrated how Gawad Kalinga’s mobilisation of affect have enabled Filipino-Americans to transform their shame around growing up as a Filipino in the United States, thereby bringing about a sense of belonging.

Similar accounts were reported by the non-Filipino social entrepreneurs who have made the Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm their new home. One of them refers to his involvement with GK as a ‘journey which challenged me, transformed me as a person’, and that continues to do so ‘the longer that I work and volunteer with GK’. Another social entrepreneur claims that his experience with Gawad Kalinga enabled him ‘to fall in love with Filipino people’, leading him to find a ‘family of a hundred million people … all over the world’. Furthermore, the social entrepreneur from Malaysia penned a piece entitled How the Philippines Taught Me to Love Malaysia (Tan, 2015). She cites Gawad Kalinga in general, and the Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm in particular, for teaching her ‘how to love myself in the right way by embracing a bigger family in the Filipinos, French, Americans etc. Especially my dear Malaysians’. Cosmopolitanism is reinforced as a dialectical process based on
‘a notion of peoplehood as defined by … the encounter with difference, both difference within the self and beyond the self’ (Delanty, 2006: 366–367).

Furthermore, Gawad Kalinga’s values signify an intervention into the Philippines’ colonial history. The values in Gawad Kalinga are said to be based on the revival of ‘old-fashioned Filipino philosophy’ to create a framework for ‘active citizen engagement in the process of improving their quality of life’ (Brilliantes & Fernandez, 2011: 19). These values are vernacularised using Tagalog and then translated into English. On GK’s website, there are five values that are emphasised throughout GK’s programs. Bayanihan translates into ‘I commit to challenge the impossible in solidarity with others’. Other tenets include Walang Iwanan, translated into ‘I commit to leave no one behind’. Una sa Serbisyo, Huli sa Benepisyo is explained as ‘I commit to serve rather than to be served’. Padugo, Tataya Ako is ‘I commit to bleed for the mission’. Finally, Para sa Diyos at Para sa Bayan is translated into ‘I commit to love God and my country’. Kuya Luis explains the significance behind these values: ‘There are a million and one good things that are being done every day. But they are in all directions. I guess the trick is how to facilitate that everybody has the same goal, does the same thing’. He exemplifies this using bayanihan, a philosophy based on ‘cooperativism’ (Brilliantes & Fernandez, 2011: 24). Kuya Luis explains how bayanihan translates into practice on the farm:

We have bayanihan. It’s basically bayan, bayani, bayanihan. Bayan is nation. Bayani is heroism. And Bayanihan is working together for the common good …

So in the GK template, so the corporation or partners fund the house, the landowner gives the land, government builds facilities, and then the poor himself, the family, helps build the house. And then we have volunteers that render labour as well. And engineers who design the house for free, and that’s what bayanihan is all about.

On Tito Tony Meloto’s tour, the social entrepreneurs who accompanied him spoke about bayanihan. The social entrepreneurs’ involvement was cited as an example of bayanihan in practice. Such a collaboration is intended to bring about the internal transformation of the ‘low self-esteem’ that Filipinos suffered from due to years of colonisation and subsequent brainwashing. Tito Tony Meloto proclaims that ‘we have no reason — the Philippines has no reason — to remain poor. But three hundred and fifty years of brainwashing that we are not white enough — now, that has made us feel that we are inferior. So we are the biggest consumer of skin whitener’. His
message is reinforced in the foreword he wrote in a book published by one of the social entrepreneurs:

Like Dylan, Tom and Fabien, more white men will come to the Philippines to partner with the poor to help end our poverty and to be in solidarity with their dark-skinned family. It is time to bridge our differences and build a future that is kinder and safer than it is today. (Graham, 2015)

Hence, what Gawad Kalinga is purporting to do is to transform the colonial narrative that has pervaded the Philippines nation. Rather than emphasise a shared national past, what Gawad Kalinga seeks to do instead is to emphasise a shared global future, producing ‘a shared normative culture in which Self and Other relations are mediated through an orientation towards world consciousness’ (Delanty, 2012: 44).

In the next section I explore how this world consciousness needs to be coupled with an understanding of neoliberalism. To understand how cosmopolitanism and neoliberalism may be combined, I return to the exploration of Gawad Kalinga’s ‘core business’: their values transformation program.

Values transformation

The founder of GK, Tito Tony Meloto, explains how Values Formation works. Before they can become what GK refers to as ‘beneficiaries’ — that is, those who wish to receive benefits like housing from GK — they have to be willing to put in ‘sweat equity’. That is their time in exchange for a house, accumulated roughly over a few months to a few years. This sweat equity is further combined with Values Formation that teaches beneficiaries the underlying values of GK, thereby including them in the global family that GK espouses. This course is described as ‘long-term’ and intensive, after which they may then be eligible for housing in what is referred to as a ‘GK village’. Tito Tony says that ‘when they [the beneficiaries] finally move in, they have to sign an agreement: no drunkenness, no domestic violence — we are particularly strict about men who beat up their wives — no gambling in the community’. These tenets were further emphasised when we were taken on a tour of GK’s headquarters. Our tour guide takes us to the compound where residents of the Enchanted Farm lived and tells us that no drinking or gambling was allowed among its residents.

In the extant literature on Gawad Kalinga, values transformation has been talked about mostly with regard to the beneficiaries. Brillantes & Fernandez (2011) use Gawad Kalinga as an example of ‘active citizen engagement’. Kares (2014: 195)
says that the ‘intensive three-month training’ that beneficiaries undergo ‘consists of a series of lectures and workshops on what constitutes appropriate behaviour in a GK village [and] is a requirement that all beneficiaries must fulfil’. Kares (2014: 195) quotes an interviewee who describes the program as one that changed their ‘bad habits’. She discusses how GK’s values formation course is a way of creating the ideal citizen (Kares, 2014). In my fieldwork with GK, I observed that values transformation was not only applicable to the beneficiaries, who are described as the poor in the Philippines, but also to those who work with the poor. The Executive Director of GK, Kuya Luis, explains that values transformation applies ‘not just to the poor, but also those who have, in life’. Tito Tony Meloto also points out that GK’s values transformation program could be the solution to the problem of depression in Europe (Meloto, 2013). What Kuya Luis and Tito Tony are referring to is another prominent social actor in the GK program: the social entrepreneur.

On his visit to Perth, Tito Tony brought two of his ‘protégés’, who were both non-Filipinos. One of them was French and described himself as ‘having no history with the Philippines’ prior to his encounter with Gawad Kalinga. He visited the Philippines as a student while doing his master’s degree in entrepreneurship. He says that ‘he wanted to do business that can have values at the same time. I wanted to make sure that I not only made profit but also created jobs, created social impact for communities’. He heard about Gawad Kalinga and decided to volunteer during the summer break. He went to the Enchanted Farm — a community meant to be an example of social entrepreneurship — and was taken under Tito Tony’s wing. He talked to mothers living at the Enchanted Farm who told him that for the past ten years garment factories had been closing down, resulting in unemployment in the area. Similarly, he found that ‘in many cases when the factory was burnt down, factory owners will get paid for the incident, take out the insurance, and put the factory up somewhere else. Best-case scenario the mothers just received $20 and went home’. He found it ‘unfair’ and thought: ‘What if I bring my business skills, I fund the sewing skills of the mothers, and we start a new company and we create job opportunities for all those mothers?’

The other protégé describes how he gave up his ‘dream job’ of writing for big international magazines and its accompanying lifestyle. He says:

> But deep down I knew I was living a bit of a lie. Because my articles were all about this idea of trickle-down growth, of the more benefit we get at the top, the richer people get at the top it’s actually going to trickle down to everyone at the bottom. And in the Philippines, of course, you have twenty million people living
on less than two dollars a day. Those figures haven’t really changed, despite over ten years and 45% economic growth. This was the same story everywhere I went; it was the same thing. I wanted to write a story, one that I could actually believe in, one that would really give me hope. One that I could ground on something. I started asking around.

He then met Tito Tony on one of his investigative trips to the Philippines. He was ‘quite intrigued, quite inspired’ by Tito Tony’s message on the ‘genius of the poor’, ‘miracle of solidarity’, and ‘loving the poor’, but says that ‘it wasn’t just his message’ that allured him:

It was actually the people like Fabian and the other young people more or less my age — Fabian’s a little bit younger than me — who were earning a lot less than me, did not have such an attractive glamorous lifestyle as I did and yet were still so committed to what they were doing. They were really living a life of purpose … I wanted to be what they were being. So I quit my job.

This social entrepreneur then decided to start up his own entrepreneurial venture, which he calls MAD or ‘make a difference’. His venture is meant to be an intervention in the trajectory of mobility flows to the Philippines as he says that his vision for MAD is that his ‘friends and compatriots in the UK and in Europe and in Australia’ can come to the Philippines and have a ‘similar journey’ to what he was ‘so fortunate to have’ in his time in the Philippines.

On Kuya Luis’s visit to Perth, he was accompanied by a social entrepreneur who originally hailed from France. The social entrepreneur prepared a PowerPoint presentation depicting how he had given up the French pursuit of success in exchange for what he felt was more sustainable and that allowed him to help others in the process. This social entrepreneur showed pictures of his old apartment and his involvement in the drama society, symbolic of his university student lifestyle in Paris. The presentation also depicted the global cities that he used to work in, which he used to contrast with where he was living now. He showed slides of himself at the Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm with a view of the farm from his room. The social venture that this individual had founded was related to organic chicken farming, an enterprise he had founded using the skills of a local chicken farmer in the Philippines.
Gawad Kalinga’s emphasis on social entrepreneurship is thus an intervention in the current neoliberal epoch. Kares (2014: 175) refers to Gawad Kalinga as a practice in ‘enlightened capitalism’. In her paper she outlines the global and national contexts that characterise Gawad Kalinga. Other social scientists have also characterised the contemporary period as ‘neoliberal globalisation’ (Castles & Miller, 2009; Lewellen, 2002). Globalisation is closely tied to the emergence of Western capitalism defined as:

an economic system of private ownership of property and the means of production; distribution is based on the profit motive and takes place within a free, or relatively free, competitive market in which supply and demand determine, or are supposed to determine, price. (Lewellen, 2002: 11)

Capitalism is said to be the practice that is guided by neoliberalism (Springer et al., 2016). In light of this, GK’s social entrepreneurship model can be understood as ‘market-driven phenomena’ (Harvey, 2005).

Ong (2006), however, points out that it may be more useful to view neoliberalism as a set of strategies. Ong (2006: 13) argues that social scientists can regard neoliberalism instead as ‘mobile calculative techniques of governing that can be decontextualised from their original sources and recontextualised in constellations of mutually constitutive and contingent relationships’. This recontextualisation comes in the form of a spectrum that can be thought of as ‘neoliberalism as exception’ and ‘exception to neoliberalism’. Viewing neoliberalism in this way, Ong (2006: 21) investigates how NGOs articulate with both state and market to create novel political systems to make claims on behalf of the politically excluded, such as migrant workers, trafficked individuals and asylum seekers. She observes how NGOs administer ‘normative mechanisms’ that depend on ‘circulations of migrant labour and the distribution of their exploitation’ (Ong, 2006: 21).

While NGOs like Migrante (see Chapter Five) create ‘exceptions to neoliberalism’ through their advocacy for non-citizens working as domestic workers and construction labourers in countries like Singapore, Hong Kong, Indonesia and the Middle East, GK seeks to address the transference of capital in neoliberalism. By enticing students from universities in developed countries to visit the farm, GK is exercising a neoliberal logic to bring forth a ‘win-win situation’. One of the social entrepreneurs from the United Kingdom refers to this as ‘what Tito Tony calls presence’, which is ‘the rich and the poor coming together to actually do something there, to partner together, to build, to learn from each other, to share experiences’. For the beneficiaries, that meant putting in their ‘sweat equity’ so that they could use
their labour to pay for their house. For the social entrepreneurs, they would contribute their intellectual capital. In a promotional video for the Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm, social entrepreneurs were interviewed to discuss their involvement with Gawad Kalinga. One of the men referred to Gawad Kalinga as ‘answering to the human condition in a holistic, sustainable kind of way’. Another referred to social innovation as ‘a worldwide solution to poverty’. Gawad Kalinga is further touted as a business that emphasises ‘optimum’ rather than ‘maximum profit’, therefore reinforcing itself as one of the ‘exceptions to neoliberalism’ (Ong, 2006).

Gawad Kalinga’s practice, however, also reinforces ‘neoliberalism as exception’. Ong (2006) uses the case of Singapore to demonstrate how expatriates are given privileges such as tax benefits to entice them to travel to Singapore for work, whereas labour migrants like domestic helpers have little to no rights or privileges. Gawad Kalinga uses a similar strategy. Even though values transformation is marketed as a program that is meant to benefit everybody, it seems that this concept is not unilaterally extended to everybody living on the farm. When we were shown the villas that Tito Tony Meloto stayed at, Lenny informs us that interns sometimes have parties there, ‘away from the eyes of the people’. In contrast to the interns on the farm, Lenny tells us that the beneficiaries living there are prohibited from drinking and gambling. Against this division between the global wealth and the local ‘poor’ is the idea that the beneficiaries are distinct from the internationals.

Furthermore, I felt like differentiated hospitality was extended to us more than once during the Bayani Challenge, which almost immediately set our party apart from the rest. During the orientation our group were singled out as ‘international guests’ and invited to lead the parade around the town. As members of GK Australia, we were considered privileged ‘international guests’. On the first day of the Challenge we were driven to the house-building site by a gentleman, Tito Romel, in his airconditioned four-wheel drive vehicle. Tito Romel offered us an invitation to ride in his vehicle while we were waiting at the school for the shuttle bus. At the end of the first day, we were offered a lift back to the school by another GK member in a similar kind of car while the other volunteers waited to catch a bus. The only Anglo-Australian in our team, Pascal, was also regularly singled out whenever we gathered in the school hall for events and activities.

On our second last day, Kuya Luis organised a private vehicle for our team to bring us to the ‘Taj Mahal’ of the Philippines, one of the most popular tourist attractions in Bacolod. We were also invited to dinner at the Mayor’s house. We feasted in lavish surroundings, a stark contrast to the village we had just left that afternoon. The event was fully catered for and we dined in an outdoor pagoda at the Mayor’s
house. Waiters served us chocolate cake and wine, as well as a smorgasbord of local and international fare. The room was full of whom GK considered VIPs: journalists, social entrepreneurs (the lady from First Harvest), Tito Bien, Tito Balthazar, Tito Tony, Kuya Luis. We were the only volunteers at the event. After this feast, we were taken to Bob’s Café — one of the sponsors of GK — by Tito Romel, where we waited to meet with Kuya Luis. Bob’s Café was a joint coffeehouse and Italian gelato booth — a picture of Western modernity.

Gawad Kalinga’s case illustrates the need for a critical perspective on cosmopolitanism. In fact, GK’s values transformation programme can be viewed as a reshaping of the ‘culture of poverty’ (Lewis, 1966) thesis within a global context. The ‘culture of poverty’ thesis is a concept coined by Lewis (1959, 1966) to exemplify how values play a significant role in perpetuating social inequalities across generations. This concept was subsequently criticised by social scientists for neglecting the extent to which individuals are implicated in social structures (Bourgois, 2003; Small et al, 2010; Stack, 1997). A similar argument can be found in the existing literature on Gawad Kalinga. For example, Kares (2014) shows how Gawad Kalinga reveals how GK focuses on individual rather than structural reasons for poverty. While the ‘Philippines poor must achieve citizenship status through increased productivity’, the ‘predominantly and relatively affluent visitors become national heroes, honorary Filipinos, and global citizens by virtue of their mobility and sentimentality’ (Kares, 2014: 196). She therefore demonstrates that GK is in fact a disciplinary project rather than a humanitarian organisation (Kares, 2014; see also Kares, 2015). While she focuses almost exclusively on the experiences of ‘Fil-Am volunteers’, I have used the ‘social entrepreneur’ figure to illustrate how GK is a disciplinary project built on a structure of global power. Even though GK’s values transformation presents a reflexive constitution of relationships and thus an alternative way of belonging to the world, its cosmopolitanism can be attributed to the ‘new global immigration policy context’, whereby those who are white, male and educated are seen to be ‘desirable migrants’ (Castles, 2000; Castles & Miller, 2009; Ong, 2005). Gawad Kalinga’s case thus points to the need to analyse cosmopolitanism alongside structural constraints of power related to globalisation and neoliberal capitalism.

Gawad Kalinga’s case further demonstrates how the analysis of cosmopolitanism needs to account for a focus on belonging rather than identity. In Chapter Two, I discussed the problem with referring to a ‘cosmopolitan identity’ as a set of attributes and traits mainly inspired by Hannerz’s (2004) description of an individual who engages with cultural difference and the oneness of the world. Although the social
entrepreneurs in Gawad Kalinga could be argued to have a ‘cosmopolitan identity’ 
(Skrbis & Woodward, 2013), focusing on their identity overlooks the extent to which 
their power is dependent on the reinforcement of social hierarchies. On GK’s 
website, Tito Tony Meloto declares that one of the key outcomes for GK is to uplift 
the poor so that they can be the ‘new middle class’ 
(http://www.gk1world.com/home). Kares (2014: 197) has pointed out that GK’s 
values transformation has become ‘a tool through and with which the country’s 
middle class has secured a social status distinct from that of the local elite and the 
working poor’. Beyond that, GK’s social entrepreneurs have also been able to secure 
a distinct identity that allows them to live an expatriate lifestyle. When I spoke to the 
entrepreneurs that Tito Tony Meloto brought with him to Perth, it seems that working 
with GK has afforded the social entrepreneurs opportunities to travel around the 
world. The social entrepreneurs were recently over in Melbourne and Sydney and 
one of them mentioned a recent trip to the United States. Another said that he was 
one of the ‘mascots of Tito Tony. So wherever he travels, I’m with him. I have the 
chance to meet CEOs, to meet corporate executives’. Luis refers to the social 
entrepreneurs as ‘live models of the concepts’ that Tito Tony Meloto speaks about, 
‘proof of concept, that what he is talking about is happening on the ground’. When 
I asked how the travel is funded, Kuya Luis replied:

Yeah, because they are entrepreneurs, sometimes whoever 
invites usually pays for them. Because we don’t have the funding 
to go to these places without — so usually whomever invites us 
sponsors the trips. Yeah, like when we went two weeks ago to 
Kuala Lumpur, there was a partner who invited us and paid our 
way. So when Tito Tony goes to Paris and Europe to speak, the 
schools pay for it. Some of the universities. But mostly, because 
France KLM is a partner, they give away free tickets. So, those 
are the — because they believe in GK. But of course France 
KLM, Air France, we built a village with them. They funded a 
full village in the Philippines. And after that they said what else 
can we do, and the internship was already gaining momentum 
and emerging in Paris, different business schools. So they 
decided to give, allocate so many tickets, round-trip tickets a 
year, for people going either from the Philippines to Paris, or 
from Paris to the Philippines. And then they added us into their 
mileage program, where a lot of their passengers will donate 
mileage to the GK. That is how they travel.
GK’s cosmopolitanism, dubbed as the ‘Third Way’ between the global rich and the global poor is thus one that is reminiscent of what Calhoun (2002) has described as a ‘capitalist cosmopolitanism’. Calhoun (2002: 890) argues that ‘cosmopolitanism … is now largely the project of capitalism’. While ‘such cosmopolitanism often joins elite across national borders’, ‘ordinary people live in local communities’ (Calhoun, 2002: 890). To exemplify Calhoun’s (2002) point, the local representative for GK Perth explains that Gawad Kalinga’s emphasis on building permanent communities is based on the idea that people ‘do not want to leave’. She explains by giving an example of Typhoon Haiyan:

OK, you are a fisherman. You have to be rehabilitated 10 km from your home now. Tough, and you’re going to say I’ll live in a tent. So why are people still living in tents, three years after Haiyan? Because they don’t want to move out to where it is safe.

She presents this as a ‘global problem’ that ‘is not just in the Philippines. It’s all over the world’. Therein lies a paradox that exists between rootedness and openness, particularly when contending with capitalism’s economic power: ‘deep inequalities in the political economy of capitalism … mean that some people labour to support others whose pursuit of global relations focuses on acquisition and accumulation’ (Calhoun, 2002: 890). What the local representative is pointing out is ‘capitalism’s economic power and its powerful embeddedness in the institutional framework of global relations’ (Calhoun, 2002: 890). GK’s values transformation thus reveals how:

the reality of contemporary globalisation — interconnectedness — must be seen as, in fact, a structure of power, a structure of global power, and therefore of global and transnational inequalities and conflicts rather than the basis of a benign cosmopolitanism. (Hall, 2008: 346).

Until cosmopolitanism seeks to address capitalism’s power, there can be no ‘cosmopolitan reality’ (Kendall et al., 2008: 403; see also Calhoun, 2010; Kendall et al., 2009; Rumford, 2013).

**Conclusion**

It has long been doubted if cosmopolitan openness — in the sense of openness to the world and an institutionalised global political consciousness (Woodward & Skrbis, 2012) — can bring the metaphysical qualities so significant to community-building. Hedetoft and Hjort (2002) point out that the nation continues to persist in the
individual’s imaginary as it carries a heavy, irrational substance of familiarity, constituted by ‘roots’. Similarly, Calhoun (2003, 2007, 2008) has continued to argue for the persistence of nations due to the abstract, liberalistic nature of cosmopolitanism — even in the ‘rooted cosmopolitan’ version that Appiah (1997, 2006) has most notably professed. Gawad Kalinga attempts to combine the irrational substance often associated with nationalism with this global sense and a sense of boundarylessness (Beck, 2006) through their emphasis on building small-scale local communities and creating ideal global citizen-subjects. Rather than taking cosmopolitanism as a given, this chapter on Gawad Kalinga unveils cosmopolitanism as a process derived from interactions between self, other and the world (Beck, 2006; Beck & Levy, 2013; Delanty, 2006). Rather than emphasising either rootedness or openness, I sought instead to answer the questions posed by Calhoun (2003: 532): Is cosmopolitanism too abstract an ideal? Can cosmopolitanism be found in the ‘concrete variety of ways of life’?

I showed how Gawad Kalinga reframed an existing national archetype in order to establish a new cultural basis for the permanent émigrés found within the Filipino diaspora. This reformulation was later extended to the rest of the world based on the founder’s own ‘global family’, transforming a private, abstracted sentiment into a ‘public possession, a social fact’ (Geertz, 1993: 232). Cosmopolitanism thus proved useful in reframing a complex way of living beyond the nation-state.

This form of cosmopolitanism, however, could not occur without the establishment of rootedness. I focused particularly on two micro dimensions of Gawad Kalinga’s cosmopolitanism in an effort to analyse the politics of belonging in ‘actually existing cosmopolitanism’. I focused firstly on how Gawad Kalinga’s space-making strategy allows one to ‘become cosmopolitan’ (Cuevas-Hewitt, 2016). This strategy, which Cuevas-Hewitt (2016) refers to as ‘translocalism’, demonstrates the importance of rootedness to cosmopolitan openness (Calhoun, 2003; Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Pollock, 2000). Gawad Kalinga’s localising strategies provide social actors with the opportunity to take part in ‘practices of meaning making in social situations’ (Woodward & Skriba, 2012: 132), thereby transforming cosmopolitanism from an ideal into a concrete reality. I further illustrate how GK’s values transformation program aims to reverse the Philippines’ colonial history by engaging with the ‘white’ other. A shared past is replaced by a shared cosmopolitan future. Neoliberalism in this instance becomes the exception as the practice of ‘enlightened capitalism’ (Kares, 2014) situates individuals within the world society rather than nation-state.
Nonetheless, such a strategy has also reinforced ‘exceptions to neoliberalism’ (Ong, 2006), affording the non-Filipino social entrepreneurs opportunities to travel the world while those rooted in local communities are geographically and socially left behind. An analysis of these strategies reiterates Pollock’s (2000: 616) argument that there is ‘dialectic between cosmopolitan and vernacular that creates them both’. More importantly, however, this dialectic needs to be situated within the context of capitalism’s power, thereby reinforcing the importance of turning a more critical eye to the use of cosmopolitanism (Calhoun, 2002; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015).

In the next chapter, I continue to foreground solidarity and belonging by presenting another Filipino migrant organisation for this thesis: Iglesia ni Cristo, a Filipino Christian church.
This Church is for everyone who heeds the call of God and embraces its faith — regardless of one’s race, nationality, cultural background, social standing, economic status, and educational attainment.

—Iglesia ni Cristo (INC) ([http://www.inc.com](http://www.inc.com)).

Due to the current affairs happening throughout the globe, the members of the Church of Christ have displayed an immense amount of effort in giving back to their community through the INCGiving project. The INCGiving Outreach Program will continue to provide a lending hand to those in dire need. In such a diverse community such as Canada’s, members of the Church of Christ stand as a whole in helping others despite cultural barriers.


**Introduction**

Melvin, Jun and Anna are members of Iglesia ni Cristo (INC), a global organisation that began in Manila in 1914 (Reed, 2001). I met up with Melvin and Jun and two other individuals whom I will collectively refer to as the ‘INC Youth’. Jun says:

> Our utmost priority is our membership of the church. You’ll know more once you visit the website. Have you given her the website yet? Give her the website. You’ll know more why, how we talk like this to you and the reason behind it. At least you can include that in your research.

At Jun’s urging I visit INC’s website. The church describes itself as a ‘global church’, comprising ‘at least 110 nationalities’ in ‘104 ecclesiastical districts in the Philippines and in 100 or more countries and territories in the six inhabited continents of the world’ ([http://iglesianicristo.net/eng](http://iglesianicristo.net/eng)). Their philanthropic programs are also extensive, as their members have conducted outreach programs that are open to members and non-members alike in Singapore, London, Africa, Canada, Australia and the United States. Due to their global reach and extensive philanthropic programs, INC can be described as a cosmopolitanism that ‘emphasises both tolerance towards difference and the possibility of a more just world order’ (Nowicka & Rovisco, 2009: 2).

While they are open to the world at large, INC’s collectivity and unity is centred on a universal Christian ideology. INC describes itself as a ‘Christian religion’ whose worship is centred on Lord Jesus Christ as reflected by the Christian Bible (INC, 2016). INC’s Bible-centred approach to Christianity is the key distinction that separates this denomination from other Christian or Catholic denominations (Cornelio, 2017b). Anna, who converted from Catholicism to INC, said that what
differentiates INC from Catholicism is that it reads texts from the Bible to illustrate specific themes. She distinguishes this practice from Catholicism, where the service is determined by the preacher. As such, one of INC’s regular devotional activities is Bible Studies. In fact, on the website, they regard the ‘Bible as Basis of Faith’. To illustrate the fundamental spiritual teachings that guide their worship, the website uses quotes from scripture, such as John 17:1, 2; 1 Cor. 8: 6.

The key concern in this thesis is to do with the relationship between national rootedness and cosmopolitan openness. A large part of analysing this relationship is reliant on a processual understanding of social reality. In Beck’s (2006) ‘cosmopolitan vision’, he considers cosmopolitanism as a process and as a religion. He asks if the relationship between religiosity and cosmopolitanism could ‘represent an attempt to find a synthesis or connection which is both transnational and rooted … in the particular universalism of “The Church”’ (Beck, 2006: 179). INC has most notably attempted to combine elements of Filipino nationalism and Christian universalism in its ideology. Cornelio (2017a) has described INC’s strategy as ‘religious worlding’, as the church attempts to establish an indigenous Christian church that will overturn the current core-periphery system. Could this synthesis in INC be regarded as evidence of Beck’s (2006) thesis on empirical cosmopolitanism?

Two key authors who have investigated the relationship between cosmopolitanism and religion appear to refute that global religious movements like INC can be used as examples to support evidence of ‘actually existing’ cosmopolitanism. In her call to go ‘beyond the ethnic lens’, Glick Schiller (2009) has emphasised that the universalism of fundamentalist Christian migrants, while globe-spanning and transnational in scope, should not be considered cosmopolitanism. Although their universalism unites Christian migrants with non-migrant counterparts, it divides Christians from all others (Hüwelmeier, 2011: 448). In a similar vein, Hüwelmeier (2011: 446) argues that while Vietnamese Pentecostals willingly traverse national and cultural boundaries within their global Christian network, their particular universalism does not result in openness to the world due to the church’s exclusion of non-Christians.

However, in her study of New Pentecostal Mission Churches, Krause (2011: 420) argues that one could view global religious movements as a unique way of engaging with global circuits due to the transposition and transportability of their ideas and practices in different cultural contexts, their aim to overcome locally bounded traditions, and their multilingual competencies. While she acknowledges that the aim of the New Pentecostal Mission Churches is not aligned with a cosmopolitanism in its abstract normative sense (see Nussbaum, 2010) because they do not propagate a
sense of boundarylessness (Beck, 2006: 3; Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013), the dynamics of their socio-political process can lead to moments of openness. This tension between their universalistic Christian ideology and these moments of openness ‘points to a broader theorisation between openness and closure’ (Krause, 2011: 421). Rumford (2013: 107) explains that such a theorisation allows researchers to view cosmopolitanism as a ‘strategy of connectivity resulting from … a particular form of ‘global closure’ and/or societal fragmentation’ (see also Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Wang & Collins, 2016; Wise, 2009). Like Krause (2011) and Rumford (2013), this chapter focuses on when and how global religious moments create simultaneously cosmopolitan moments and situations of rootedness.

The chapter investigates the possibilities and limitations of cosmopolitanism in an emergent global religious movement: Iglesia ni Cristo. In the first section, I investigate the historical beginnings of the church to demonstrate an understanding of its geopolitics and culture. Calhoun (2010) argues that such an understanding moves away from a Western, Eurocentric imposition of cosmopolitanism as a reworking of earlier theories of modernity (see McKay, 2012). Instead, the history of the church demonstrates a reflexive break from the colonial cosmopolitanism that was prevalent in the Philippines and characterises INC as an ‘anti-colonial cosmopolitanism’ that combines elements of both Filipino nationalism and Christian universalism (Van Den Veer, 2002). An ‘anti-colonial cosmopolitanism’ is best viewed as a ‘political strategy which draws upon resources of the imagination in order to constitute an alternative social connection between previously unconnected individuals’ (Rumford, 2013: 107).

In the second section, I investigate the ‘moments of openness’ (Delanty, 2006, 2009) that have led to INC’s explosion onto the world stage. INC’s global expansion can be attributed to two characteristics. The first is the global migration of Filipinos that coincided with the relaxing of nation-state policies in countries such as the United States and Australia. Second, their expansion was further dependent on ethnic parochialism brought on by the social environment in these countries. This evidence reiterates rather than reduces the role of the nation-state and its localities (Krause, 2011) in determining the limits of cosmopolitanism (Skrbis & Woodward, 2013). Further, these ‘moments of openness’ that have been crucial to INC’s global success substantiate the point that cosmopolitanism should be seen as an ‘intervention, or series of interventions, attempting to establish new forms of association in a far-from cosmopolitan world’ (Rumford, 2013: 111; see also Cheah, 2006; Hall, 2008).

The final two sections are based on interviews with members of INC in Perth. Using Werbner’s (1999) ‘global pathways’ framework, I trace the role that the church plays
in determining the many lanes and highways that its migratory members take. I explore the extent to which its members profess an openness to the world and their adherence to the church’s tenets. While the members I interviewed were aware of their responsibility to the world, they also acknowledged that their social networks were more closed off than open. What emerges is not a cosmopolitan openness to the world, but a ‘hierarchy that supports some moral positions and interests while discriminating against others’ (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015: 3).

**Anti-colonial cosmopolitanism**

Iglesia ni Cristo (INC) was officially established in 1914 in the Philippines by Brother Felix Manalo (Ando, 1969). To understand INC’s approach, one has to understand its historical beginnings. Like many Filipinos, Brother Felix Manalo was born and raised a Roman Catholic (Reed, 2001: 566). Reed (2001) describes Manalo’s childhood as turbulent and humble. He was born in a rural setting to devout Catholic parents (Reed, 2001). He received little formal schooling due to the disruptions caused by his father’s death, mother’s remarriage and the Philippine-American war (Reed, 2001). Despite his lack of formal education, Manalo was said to have a fascination with the Bible (Reed, 2001). However, his faith in the Catholic Church lapsed when he was once severely rebuked for studying the Bible in private (Reed, 2001). Manalo then turned to other Christian denominations for answers and to expand his biblical knowledge. He first joined the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1904, then the Presbyterian Ellinwood Bible Training School, Mision Cristiania, and the Seventh Day Adventists (Harper, 2001).

The presence of multiple Christian denominations in the Philippines indicates an early instance of a form of cosmopolitanism. In anthropology, cosmopolitanism is defined as ‘an orientation, a willingness to engage with the other. It entails an intellectual and aesthetic openness towards divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity’ (Hannerz, 1996: 103). By going to far-off lands, missionaries can be considered one of the earlier agents of cosmopolitanism as they would willingly engage with the ‘other’ in the empire to expand the interests of the modern nation-state (Van Der Veer, 2002). In turning a more critical lens towards this form of openness, however, Van Der Veer (2002: 165–166) argues that one ought to ask, ‘what intellectual and aesthetic openness entails and on what terms one engages with the other’. During periods of colonisation, for example, this openness and engagement with the ‘other’ was based on the premise of the ‘white man’ seeking to shape the ‘native’ into a suitable, Western version of a modernised individual (Van Der Veer, 2002). In his examination of current versions of
cosmopolitanism, Van Der Veer (2002) critiques, firstly, the process of translating and converting the local into the empire-as-universal, and secondly, the absence of religion in this cosmopolitanism-as-colonisation. He suggests that both the imperial and evangelical tenets of colonial cosmopolitanism can be interpreted collectively as the ‘white man’s burden’ (Van Der Veer, 2002).

Extant research on INC’s historical beginnings substantiate Van Der Veer’s (2002) point. Harper (2001) speculates that Manalo’s move towards establishing his own church could be attributed to the prevailing attitudes held among the predominantly ‘white’ missionaries towards Filipinos in the 1900s. During the Philippines’ period of colonisation, Filipinos regularly encountered missionaries from the West who sought to convert them (Tuggy, 1967). Historical research demonstrates that the Protestant missionaries in the Philippines would regularly compete with one another rather than build on a unified Protestant church (Clymer, 1986). These missionaries also held paternalistic and racist attitudes towards the Filipino people (Harper, 2001: 106). Clymer (1986: 65–72) notes that it was commonplace to rank the races and compare them in terms of intelligence and culture. Filipinos were generalised as a race and ranked towards the bottom of the Western missionary’s racial hierarchy (Clymer, 1986: 65–72). This was in spite of the diversity that characterised the Philippines, with the country being divided into several ethnolinguistic and ethnic groups (Aguilar, 2014). Missionaries from other Christian denominations regarded Filipinos in the same way. A Presbyterian minister was recorded as viewing Filipinos as ‘lazy’ while a Methodist considered Tagalog speakers to be ‘the most quarrelsome, the most restless race’ and wrote that ‘as a rule, all Filipinos drink’ (Tuggy, 1976: 67, 77). Seventh Day Adventists condemned the Filipino habit of smoking (Tuggy, 1976: 78). It was against this backdrop of colonial cosmopolitanism that Iglesia ni Cristo was established.

Brother Felix Manalo’s establishment of Iglesia ni Cristo as the ‘one true Church of Christ’ can thus be defined as what Van Der Veer (2002) has referred to as ‘anti-colonial cosmopolitanism’. Van Der Veer (2002: 174) argues that an ‘anti-colonial cosmopolitanism’ is best viewed as a complex story connecting different characters and which shows global connections that are to be distinguished from world capitalism or modernity as typically conceived. This anti-colonial cosmopolitanism is best thought of as a contextual one, a counter image that seeks to disrupt existing hegemonic processes (Beck, 2006). The hegemonic process in Iglesia ni Cristo’s case was the colonisation of the Philippines and the lack of a unified structure. Manalo established his counter-hegemonic church using two strategies. The first was to use the Bible as the central symbol of Christian universalism (Harper, 2001). The
second was to transform what was traditionally an American Christian nationalist ideology into a Filipino one (Cornelio, 2017a; Harper, 2001).

Brother Felix Manalo established his church based on a prophesy mentioned in the Bible’s Book of Isaiah, where a ‘ravenous bird from the East’ would be ‘the Man that would execute God’s counsel’ (Roperas, as cited in Ando, 1969: 335). Another phrase in Revelation points to ‘another angel rising out of the east’, referring to Felix Manalo as founder of INC, and that the ‘four corners of the earth’ are the Philippines (Roperas, as cited in Ando, 1969: 335). The call to unite the Filipinos based on this Filipino version of Christianity was used to counter the racism Filipinos experienced, whereby they were considered the ‘degraded people’ who needed to be subjected to American values and societal arrangements (Tuggy, 1976: 72, 155–56).

INC’s national success can be attributed to two conditions. Firstly, the church’s expansion throughout the island was due to its ability to provide both material and spiritual welfare, replacing old socioeconomic systems. When INC was first established by Brother Felix Manalo, there was much social unrest and conflict due to changes in the landlord and tenant relationship (Ando, 1969). Many individuals were relocating from the provinces to the cities, leading to a breakdown in the traditional social organisation, which was heavily dependent on families and kinship (Ando, 1969). INC was able to expand their congregation due to their success in replacing these absent socioeconomic systems for these displaced migrants (Cornelio, 2017a). INC engaged in a large-scale agricultural development project that established a colony of 600 acres of land in a province to accommodate tenants from nearby provinces who had been expelled from their lands by landlords (Ando, 1969: 342). Similarly, they implemented a mutual aid system and created a job agency for the internally displaced (Ando, 1969). In the event of disasters, aid was also provided to victims (Ando, 1969: 343). In addition, through their devotion to the word of God, as told by the Bible, Iglesia members were promised ‘God’s promised eternal life’ and their entry into the ‘Holy City’ (https://iglesianicristo.net/eng/beliefs).

Secondly, Iglesia’s Filipino Christian approach gave greater weight and meaning to the forced internal displacement of Filipinos. Although the church was officially established in 1914, membership numbers did not increase until World War II (Reed, 2001). According to Reed (2001: 571), the systematic dispersal of refugees during the war resulted in an ‘opportunity in disguise for the Iglesia Ni Cristo’. Brother Felix Manalo and his ministerial staff took advantage of this mass migration into the provinces and launched a campaign to evangelise all sectors of the island (Reed, 2001: 571; Tuggy, 1967: 67–68, 87–89). During an interview with one of the
pioneering members of Iglesia, one member reported being struck by Brother Felix Manalo’s preaching (INC Media, 2017):

Manalo said, ‘No one will help you but God. If you do not know how to pray who will help you?’ He also said, ‘Remember this, God did not only create us, but he also elected us. Do you know what your election means? He called you inside the Church [Iglesia].’

INC did not only appeal to Filipinos. The period after World War II brought on the arrival of American navy personnel, which reinforced INC’s appeal as a valuable material and spiritual resource, even for non-Filipinos. A non-Filipino pioneering member reports being ‘amazed at the unity, how they love one another, when I’d heard and read about their sacrifices and how many have died for the Church’ (Iglesia ni Cristo Media, 2017). Reed (2001: 595) notes that confessional letters from American and European converts since the early 1970s were recorded in INC’s newsletter, Pasugo. Most of the early converts were American sailors and airmen stationed at two key US military bases in the Philippines (Reed, 2001). This combination of Christian universalism and Filipino nationalism proved to be accessible even to non-Filipinos and gave them a novel symbolic frame and a stable backdrop to what was a destabilising terrain for Filipinos and non-Filipinos alike (Geertz, 1993; Weber, 2003 [1958]).

This national expansion progressed on a global trajectory during the advent of neoliberal globalisation. As nation-states began to relax their borders in the hope of national expansion, INC’s strategy went from national to global. Following Brother Felix Manalo’s death in 1963, his successor and son, Brother Erano G. Manalo, took INC’s mission into the ‘Far West’ (Reed, 1990). As early as 1948, Brother Felix Manalo had amended the Articles of Incorporation to allow for propagation abroad (see Elesterio, 1977: 130). Although a small group of INC members working as contract workers for the United States Navy established a brethren in 1960, the expansion of INC did not begin in earnest until the US Immigration Act of 1965. The implementation of this new policy in 1965 ended a race-based policy and allowed for increased numbers of Filipinos to migrate to America either permanently or temporarily (Basch et al., 1994). Mirroring his father’s internal campaign, Brother Erano G. Manalo made use of the increased number of migrants by bestowing on them a ‘cosmopolitanism with a moral mission’ (Van Der Veer, 2002: 165). As evidence of INC’s global expansion, group photos in anniversary issues celebrating INC’s overseas mission displayed a multi-ethnic composition (Sarmiento, as cited

The US Immigration Act of 1965 was not the only event that catalysed the global expansion of INC. In a video on the history of INC Australia, a member interviewed one of the pioneering members of the Australian branch. The pioneering member reported that:

We started gathering in 1976 actually. Previous to that there were two groups who were having their community prayer and they didn’t know each other until then. There was a letter to Brother Eduardo at the time requesting a prayer group. And we had the first worship service in YMCA in Sydney, and there were only very few of us. There were only less than 20 at the time. Now when you look back what’s happening since then, it’s just great and emotional … It’s quite emotional. Remembering what happened 40 years ago when there were very few of us and now thousands of brethren are here having this great celebration. I just could not imagine that it was gonna be like this.

INC’s establishment in Australia thus coincided with the abolition of the White Australia policy and the official acceptance of a multicultural Australia (Hage, 2000). This political move was dubbed a watershed moment that sought to erase the Australian sovereign nation as a ‘white nation’ (Jayasuriya, 2006; Jupp, 2002). Unlike earlier immigration policies, which had made ‘race’ a determining factor for citizenship and entry, Prime Minister Whitlam’s multicultural policies were legislated to eradicate ‘race’ from Australia’s immigration and citizenship policies (Ang, 2001). This political move opened Australian borders to Asian immigrants, who were previously excluded under the White Australia policy (Jayasuriya, 2006), paving the way for the official establishment of an INC branch.

I argue that INC’s geopolitics and culture are best understood as a form of anti-colonial cosmopolitanism. Van Der Veer (2002) refers to anti-colonial cosmopolitanism as a kind of cosmopolitanism that has anti-colonial rather than colonial consequences. He argues that this form of cosmopolitanism can include both nationalist and cosmopolitan elements by drawing on the example of ‘Hindu spirituality’ (Van Der Veer, 2002; see also Van Der Veer, 1994). Brother Felix Manalo established his church as a response to the prevalent attitudes held among the predominantly ‘white’ missionaries’ towards Filipinos in the 1900s. Christian universalism and Filipino nationalism were linked in an effort to grant its leadership and members legitimacy (Ando, 1969; Geertz, 1993; Weber, 2003 [1958]). This anti-
colonial cosmopolitanism was later used to engage with other non-Filipinos. Anti-colonial cosmopolitanism is defined in this instance as a ‘political strategy which draws upon resources of the imagination in order to constitute an alternative social connection between previously unconnected individuals’ (Rumford, 2013: 107).

With the advent of neoliberal globalisation, INC has been able to expand their membership bases and take their anti-colonial cosmopolitanism to the rest of the world. In the next section, I explore how INC attempts to institutionalise a global political consciousness.
In the preceding sections, I argued that the Iglesia Ni Cristo is a cosmopolitan political project of belonging due to the deployment of its anti-colonial cosmopolitanism. I use the term ‘anti-colonial cosmopolitanism’ to illustrate firstly the contexts that had arisen around its establishment, and secondly to convey its anti-colonial political message that underlies its combination of Christian universalism and Filipino nationalism (Krause, 2011; Van Der Veer, 2002).

While their practices may reflect a cosmopolitan political project of belonging, as members of the church are encouraged to engage with non-members, their church is one that is firmly built on a shared belief in God as the Lord Jesus Christ. INC describes itself as a ‘Christian religion’ that worships God through the Bible as the primary medium. Members refer to themselves as:

a church for everyone who will heed the call of God and embrace its faith — regardless of his or her nationality, cultural background, social standing, economic status, and educational attainment.

As such, even though INC professes to move beyond ethnic, national or cultural boundaries, their anti-colonial cosmopolitanism is still strongly centred on a commitment to Christianity. Cornelio (2017a: 175) describes INC as a ‘non-Trinitarian Christian Church’. Earlier researchers have mentioned that the INC is an anti-Roman Catholic religion (Ando, 1969; Tuggy, 1976). That said, INC’s version of Christianity is not Christianity in its universalistic sense, but a Filipino Christianity. Cornelio (2017b) observes that what INC is seeking to establish through their global networks is the Philippines as the new global centre. Examining this political project of belonging thus requires an engagement with the ‘persistence of nationalism as a normative force within the field of uneven globalisation’ (Cheah, 2006: 486). Nationalism is used here to refer to the devotion and willingness to sacrifice for the nation and is one that is typically used to refer to a specific territory (Camroux, 2008; Yuval-Davis, 2011).

In the extant literature on cosmopolitanism, this tension is never fully resolved (see Beck & Sznaider, 2010; Calhoun, 2003; Skey & Antonsich, 2017). Clifford (1998) refers to this tension as ‘mixed feelings’. Aguilar (2014) argues that, in the case of Filipino migration, there is no need to pit cosmopolitanism against nationalism. His research on Philippine nationalism, however, suggests that he favours the latter over the former (see Aguilar, 2014). Beck (2006) points out that empirical cosmopolitanism can lead to nationalism that will allow individuals to progress
towards an institutionalised global political consciousness. He cites the European Union as an example of what an institutionalised global political consciousness may look like (Beck, 2006).

Using the European Union as an example of an institutionalised global political consciousness has raised criticisms. Firstly, such an example reinforces the Eurocentric nature of modernity (Calhoun, 2010; McKay, 2012). Additionally, Rumford (2013) has argued that citing the European Union as an example of cosmopolitanism may be premature, given the conflicts and paradoxes inherent within the institution. In an effort to explore the tension between cosmopolitanism and nationalism, I seek instead to examine the process that undergirds institutionalising a global political consciousness. As Rumford (2013) has argued, extant empirical research on cosmopolitanism has tended to emphasise ‘openness’ in accounts of cosmopolitanism, leading to what Philip Schlesinger (2007) has referred to as the ‘cosmopolitan temptation’. This section moves away from the ‘cosmopolitan temptation’ by examining the geopolitics that have given rise to the establishment of Iglesia as we know it today.

When INC first expanded globally, Brother Erano Manalo would travel to the destinations where Filipinos had migrated to. There were three factors that aided INC’s global expansion. Firstly, Reed (2001: 584) observes that ‘the younger Manalo faced circumstances in the Far West similar to those encountered by his father in the Philippines immediately after World War II’. Brother Erano Manalo found that INC members were ‘anxious to organise prayer groups and serve as uncommissioned missionaries’ on their sojourns overseas (Reed, 2001: 584). This was even the case with former members, as Brother Erano Manalo found that ‘many lost brethren still [longed] for the spiritual nurturing and promised salvation of a caring INC community’ (Reed, 2001: 586). Secondly, as many Filipinos suffered from social uncertainty, social isolation, difficulties in the process of acculturation, and the lack of comfort in what were usually non-Filipino Catholic parishes and Protestant churches, INC was able to convert many of these migrant Filipinos (Reed, 2001: 587; see also Basch et al., 1994). Finally, the centralised structure built by Brother Erano Manalo lent a certain religious authority to its global membership. Reed (2001: 589) describes the ‘leadership’s interpretation of the Bible and understanding of Christ’s message to humankind’ as a unified message that is disseminated to both its informal and formal congregations. Their global reach is not to be underestimated, as reflected by the recent promotion of INC head Eduardo Manalo to President Rodriguez Duterte’s envoy for Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) Concerns (Ranada, 2018).
The centralised structure, global dispersion of its membership, and recruitment of Filipino migrants allows INC to exhibit a ‘cosmopolitan outlook’ (Beck, 2006). Beck (2006: 3) defines ‘cosmopolitan outlook’ as a ‘global sense’ and a ‘sense of boundarylessness’. Most notably, the church has done so through their INCGiving program (incgiving.org). In one of their posts entitled *A Welcoming Hand*, Roque (2017) discussed an INCGiving outreach program for newly arrived refugees in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Roque (2017) mentions the efforts of volunteers who gathered donations given by the brethren of the Local Congregation of Winnipeg weeks before the Outreach event. The author also talked about how INCGiving volunteers prepared relief bags containing non-perishable foods and winter clothes (Roque, 2017). Roque (2017) concludes the article by stating:

The INCGiving Outreach Program will continue to provide a lending hand to those in dire need. In such a diverse community such as Canada’s, members of the Church of Christ stand as a whole in helping others despite cultural barriers.

Another program launched by INC aims to build and promote stronger relationships between the INC and neighbouring communities (VanSchaemelhout, 2014). VanSchaemelhout (2014) reports on the *My Countrymen, My Brethren* outreach program in Carson, California. She explains what programs such as the one in Carson include:

licensed health-care professionals administer free health screenings, flu shots, and dental services. Interactive booths for the young and old, as well as blankets, clothing, school supplies, perishable and non-perishable goods that include groceries are amongst the various items made available to the community — all for free!

The event in Carson was further attended by Carson Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore and city commissioners, bestowing a sense of legitimacy on the program. Such events were part of the INCGiving Project, where volunteers are encouraged to ‘share their faith through acts of kindness’ with the individuals in countries around the globe through ‘outreach initiatives, volunteer efforts and philanthropic contributions … to make a positive social impact by offering time and resources for the well-being of those in need’. As evidence of this worldwide initiative, the blog on the website features several such examples of instances taking place all around the world. For example, Ragat (2017) blogged about their INCGiving activity that volunteers hosted for elders of Ren Ci Hospital and Nursing Home in Singapore. In London, volunteers organised a Teacher Appreciation Day for their teachers (Sison,
Additionally, volunteers also participated in a local initiative in Brimbank, Melbourne, a campaign organised by Brimbank Council to commemorate Australian’s National Tree Day (Aragon, 2016). In all the aforementioned instances, INC Giving events were organised by members of an ecclesiastical district. The organisation of such events meant that INC members had to have an understanding of the needs of the locality within which they live. Through such campaigns, INC is thus presenting evidence of a ‘cosmopolitanism from below’ – that is, a negotiation of ethnic diversity within local neighbourhoods that aims to contribute to global justice and human dignity in various parts of the world (Hüwelmeier, 2008, 2011).

Another way that the church is able to profess a ‘cosmopolitan outlook’ (Beck, 2006) is through their INC radio channel. I watched an episode of INC Radio Australia shared by Melvin on his Facebook page. The link took me to INC’s YouTube channel. Unlike its title, it could be considered more a video log or ‘vlog’ rather than a ‘radio channel’, as the video contained live recordings of broadcasters and guests as well as recorded videos. The general introduction showed glimpses of various events happening around the world and reflected the global scope of Iglesia. The broadcasters also opened the live recording with ‘Good afternoon, good evening, good morning, wherever you are’. Even though the recording was broadcasted from Sydney, it seemed that the hosts were expecting viewers from all across the world. One of the segments was used to showcase an INC event conducted by brethren in Batangas. The representative of the group, Brother Adam, says that they were nervous as it was their ‘first time doing this kind of thing in front of the whole world’.

When the INC Radio hosts asked the group if they wanted to do a shout-out to anyone in particular, Brother Adam says in English:

> I would like to greet my family in Dubai, if they are watching right now or maybe they’re at work. Also to my brethren in Dubai my old friends over there, if you guys are watching, so hi, hopefully I can meet you kind of soon. And also different kinds of friends from Italy, from the US, from Canada, my old friends. And also, one of my friends from New Zealand. And also, I have some few friends over there in Australia.

Brother Adam’s speech can be interpreted as a performance of the cosmopolitan disposition. Firstly, he was able to successfully switch between English and Tagalog. This form of ‘code-switching’ is a form of cosmopolitan disposition that reflects ‘various cultural-symbolic competencies’ (Skrbis & Woodward, 2007: 732). Brother Adam’s ability was contrasted with the other members of the group, who spoke mainly in Tagalog. He was also able to demonstrate his engagement with various
regimes of mobility, such as Italy, Canada, Dubai and New Zealand. Brother Adam was able to demonstrate his ‘agency of power’ (Ortner, 2006) that accompanies multiple migrations (Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013). Finally, by mentioning his cross-cultural friendships around the world, he was further demonstrating the ‘inclusive valuing of other cultural forms whose origin is outside one’s home culture’, thereby reinforcing his cosmopolitan competency (Skrbis & Woodward, 2007: 732).

Technology plays a large part in the creation of Beck’s (2006) ‘cosmopolitan vision’, but its mediation is not the key focus here (on the relationship between technology and cosmopolitan openness, see Delanty, 2009; Turner et al., 2011). Instead, what I wish to draw attention to is the role that INC, as a cosmopolitan political project of belonging, plays in the lives of its global membership. Through the establishment of its INC Giving program and INC Radio channel the Church’s members are able to perform a ‘cosmopolitan proficiency’. INC thus provides for its members a platform where they can become the ideal cosmopolitan subjects, as these campaigns allow them to profess a universal concern for the non-intimate other and a respect for legitimate differences (Appiah, 2006). At the same time, the institutionalised political consciousness endows a feeling of belonging ‘to’ the globe. Hedetoft and Hjort (2002: xviii) argue that:

‘Belonging’ requires, as far as identity goes (rather than vaguer and more noncommittal attachments), territorial and historical fixity, cultural concreteness, and ethnic exceptionalism, in addition to the existence (at least potentially) of a political superstructure with which one can identify and which is the provenance and safeguard of passport, citizenship, and a sense of communal solidarity.

By encouraging INC members to foster relations with their local communities and establish brethren in adopted localities, INC is in fact fostering a cosmopolitanism that may be mistaken for nationalism in its ‘territorial and historical fixity’ (Hedetoft & Hjort, 2002: xviii). But, as I have shown here, this form of territorial and historical fixity is not national but consists of an interplay of both the global and the local. INC Giving and INC Radio imitate a global, boundaryless approach due to the coordinated orchestration of several different events. Similarly, its execution on the ground is dependent on the local INC members’ knowledge of their adopted neighbourhoods and these members’ response to their neighbourhoods’ needs. What INC is doing instead is an ‘agency of (cultural) projects’ (Ortner, 2006: 145; see also Graeber, 2001, 2013). Ortner (2006: 147) refers to this as ‘people playing, or trying
to play, their own serious games as even more powerful parties seek to devalue and even destroy them’. The tension that has arisen from nationalism and cosmopolitanism may have arisen due to what Calhoun (2003) has pointed out is a lack of understanding of belonging ‘to’ the cosmopolitan imagery. Therefore, I have presented this institutionalised global political consciousness more in the Andersonian sense of an ‘imagined community’ (Anderson, 1991). As I will demonstrate in the next section, what eventuates from the manipulation of space and time in the case of this ‘imagined community’ is a sense of belonging ‘to’ the globe.

**Global pathways**

In her article, Werbner (1999) demonstrates how cosmopolitanism can be used to analyse the multiple subjectivities that arise from maintaining transnational lives. Werbner (1999) uses the imagery of ‘global pathways’ to denote the multiple highways and various lanes that accompany mobility. In this section I adopt Werbner’s (1999) ‘global pathway’ model to illustrate how INC as a cosmopolitan political project of belonging is a product of increased labour migration from the Philippines and has emerged as an existential answer to the emotional turmoil and instability associated with migration.

**INC Youth**

Jun first migrated to Christchurch, New Zealand in 2008. She had graduated with Honours in nursing. She says that when she commenced her nursing degree, nurses in the Philippines were like ‘mushrooms’ as everyone in the Philippines was taking nursing. Jun explains, ‘So by the time I finish, everyone wants to have experience in the hospital but there’s not enough hospitals, there’s not enough slots’. As a result, Jun found that she had to volunteer herself in the hope of being employed as a nurse. Before she was able to find paid employment, Jun worked in a call centre just to earn some money. Even after employment as a nurse, she found that her 7,500 PHP monthly salary was not enough even to buy essentials for herself. She says ‘that was my wakeup call. I couldn’t even give my mum a gift with my salary or take her out to buy her something, and then I saw it’s not good’.

She heard about New Zealand from one of her friends at work. Jun says she had no idea what to expect from working abroad in New Zealand. In fact she was ‘actually eyeing United States’. In preparation, Jun had taken the qualifying exam to work in the United States but found out that there was a long waiting list due to the recession in 2008. After three months, her friend told her that he was going to New Zealand. Jun says, ‘I was, like, woo, that quick’. Her friend had passed Jun’s number to the
agent and she attended the same seminar and booked a flight to Christchurch, New Zealand, under a visitor’s visa. Jun recalls breaking the news of her migration to her parents. She had told them that she was going to New Zealand on a student’s visa as she ‘did not want them to get worried’. She was the first in her family to migrate overseas.

Jun did not know anyone in Christchurch. She says that she had prepared herself that migration would ‘be really difficult’, but there were unexpected challenges that she felt she had to face alone. Jun said she had trouble converting her visitor’s visa to a working visa. She had a ‘hard time proving to the nursing council in New Zealand’ that she was a qualified nurse as her qualifications in the Philippines were only considered an undergraduate nursing degree, and she had to take an exam in English in order to convert her qualifications. Before her registration was approved, Jun studied aged care so that she could get employment and convert her visa, thereby extending her stay. She only became qualified as a registered nurse in New Zealand after 2009.

Furthermore, Jun was unaware of the topography of New Zealand and how drastically different it was from the Philippines. She thought there would be jeepneys for her to commute easily between places but later learnt that she had to catch buses at the bus stop and walk from the bus stop to any destination. She describes how it was when she first migrated there:

> Every night I cried, every night. It’s like you’re, it’s like you’re in the room with your roommate, your roommate talks on the phone, you got a shift the following day, it’s so cold, you got no food, you have to wake up even if you’re sick, you have to nurse yourself. All those things.

Then there was the lack of funds that was exacerbated by her status as a visitor-visa holder. She had only brought 2,000 USD to cover her living expenses:

> That’s for everything already, my food, my accommodation I have to pay, it’s not free. So I have to squeeze in like everything — scrambled eggs, everything scrambled eggs. ’Cos I cannot eat outside on a budget like this.

During the period between her visa conversion and her gaining employment as a nurse, INC proved to be a necessary anchor for Jun. She describes how it is to belong to the church:

> When I arrived in Christchurch, I don’t know anyone. So that’s why I’m telling you the church where we belong — um that’s
the only address that I know and the contact number. So I rang that number and I introduced myself by saying that I’m from the Philippines and asking where the church is located.

I cried as soon as I saw the people in the church. I cried ’cos I said I feel safe already. It’s like I don’t trust anyone until I really know them or if like they’re from church. It’s like when we go to church, we treat each other as brothers and sisters. We see each other and when we go from one place to another, we wouldn’t get lost.

Within the church she said she met people that were ‘really kind’ who were able to find her odd cleaning jobs so that she could earn money while studying. Through the church, Jun was able to make more friends. She was able to expand her social network in New Zealand, as a youth event allowed her to meet other church members living in Auckland. The expansion of her social network later proved fortuitous for her. An earthquake in Christchurch prompted the closure of the hospital she was working at. Jun says:

It’s like, OK after all our patients have been transferred, what now for me? ’Cos, I live in the CBD itself, and you’re not allowed to go in, and I live on my own in a self-sustained studio. You’re not allowed to go in. It’s like, what is it now for me? And my car got stuck, so I biked. I borrowed a bike off one of my boss so I biked and I was crying, I was crying while in the rain and I don’t know where to go.

The church played a salient role during the immediate aftermath of the Christchurch earthquake. Jun details how one of the ministers rang every member and gathered them in one place and provided them with emergency shelter, clothes and underwear. Jun proclaims that ‘I had a really good job in Christchurch if not for the quake, I wouldn’t leave it. ’Cos my boss is good, the company is good’. After the earthquake, however, Jun said she ‘had to move’ as her workplace closed and ‘everyone was moving away’ and there was an ‘aftershock everyday’.

Jun decided to move to Hamilton, Auckland. She had met Melvin and his brother Norman at a youth event organised by the church in New Zealand. Unlike Jun, Melvin and Norman had migrated as dependents on their parents’ visas. Their parents had a small business selling ‘ready-to-wear stuff, like clothes, fashion, from China, from Thailand, from Hong Kong’. Then Shoe Mart was established in the province that they were living in and small businesses like the one that their parents
had were shut down. Norman explains that their parents ‘had no idea anything about overseas. ’Cos they were close-minded as well, they were so close-minded — oh we’re gonna grow up here, we’re gonna get old here in the Philippines only, so abroad or overseas was not in their mind’. But after their small business collapsed, their parents decided to take a chance and ‘see what life is like abroad’.

Initially, their father intended to go to Japan and work on a farm. He studied the Japanese language in preparation, but the offer fell through. Then a man introduced Adelaide, Australia, and ‘basically my parents trusted that person’. The man began asking for money ‘because he said he’ll be like a liaison, like a recruitment agency’. The man told them that Australia and New Zealand were a 45-minute train ride from one another. The man brought their parents to New Zealand where his parents were promised a train ride to Adelaide. Norman says that ‘They were waiting, they were waiting. When they got to Auckland in New Zealand, they were like, when are we going to Australia, to Adelaide? And then the man admitted that, no, no Australia. You’re staying here’. Melvin says his parents ended up getting ‘stuck’ in New Zealand.

Melvin and Norman’s parents decided to settle in New Zealand as there was nothing left in the Philippines. Their parents had already ‘sold their house and car’ and the business and stock had all been sold, leaving nothing to return to. In addition, their parents had borrowed half a million Philippine pesos from their mother’s father. Melvin and Norman were still in the Philippines as well, and their parents wanted to bring them over. Their parents told them that they could not live without Melvin and Norman and that they wanted the ‘family to be together’. So ‘for the sake of getting a job and getting settled in New Zealand’, Melvin’s father got a job that paid $17 an hour and Melvin’s mother got a job in a hospital as a kitchen assistant.

The decision to migrate from New Zealand to Australia was ‘unexpected’. They were ‘eyeing Australia’ as they ‘were seeking more experience’ and wanted to ‘earn more’. Jun says that ‘in New Zealand, yes if you want a laid-back life, if you want a very simple life with starting a family, you stay there’. She says that the pay is ‘not much’, but it suited the lifestyle there. Jun explains that the pay in New Zealand was not enough to fulfil familial obligations. Jun’s parents and siblings still lived in the Philippines. She explains that she had heard Australia was the place to go to ‘if you’re like got family back home to send money to and you want some extra and you wanna save’. Jun had initially applied for a job in Melbourne, but she could not attend the interview, so the opportunity fell through. Then her brother, who is also an INC member, migrated to Perth and asked her to visit.
Melvin and Norman described how they did not want to migrate to Australia. Norman says that they were both settled in New Zealand as a family. They said that they joined Jun on her visit to Perth as they ‘just wanted to see Perth, just wanted to see Australia’. It was Melvin’s mother who urged Melvin and Norman to look for a job and not to return home. While in Perth, Melvin and Norman, who were both New Zealand citizens, found jobs in aged-care homes. Although they were both qualified nurses, Melvin said that it was easier to find a job in aged-care homes as ‘hospitals were quite full’. Jun eventually resigned from her job after helping Norman and Melvin’s parents with their move to Australia. Jun applied for regional positions in aged-care homes in the hope of getting sponsorship for a work visa and eventually found employment in an aged-care home in Mandurah.

There are three factors that played a role in influencing their global pathways. The first is the nation-state. Instead of experiencing what Beck (2006) has referred to as the ‘second age of modernity’, where nation-states no longer matter, the youth felt the influence of the nation-state while navigating the many highways and lanes. Jun found she could not convert her qualifications easily in New Zealand and her registration was rejected twice. She later had to sit for a qualifying exam in English. Prior to migrating to Australia, she initially had a job offer at Fremantle Hospital, but found that her permanent residency status in New Zealand did not transfer to Australia and she had to apply for a working visa or obtain Australian permanent residency. Jun eventually had to hire an agent to help with the application process.

Additionally, Melvin and Norman’s insistence on wanting to remain in New Zealand could be related to their own encounters with the global hierarchy of destinations that Filipino migrants are subjected to, albeit in a roundabout way. Liebelt (2011) has pointed out that there is a global hierarchy of destinations that compels Filipino migrants to travel ‘on and on’ rather than ‘back and forth’. When Melvin and Norman were describing how they did not want to migrate to Australia, they also brought up an instance of how they were accused of entering Australia through a ‘backdoor’ by going to New Zealand first. As the brothers had New Zealand citizenship status, they were able to find secure employment faster than other Filipinos who were migrating on other pathways. Melvin and Norman both said that they felt ‘offended’ when they heard the expression. This encounter points to an implied subjugation that Filipinos feel with regard to their national identity and their subsequent mobility.

The second factor was their personal networks. Jun decided to migrate to Perth as her brother had migrated in 2012. I asked why they chose an area 30 minutes away from Perth. Jun says that it was because when they first came here, they had stayed
with her brother who lived in this area. Her brother had also found a church nearby so they decided to settle. Norman nods and says ‘he [Jun’s brother] is our network, our first network when we came here. Her brother. So he introduced us to the members here and then it started from there’. When Norman and Melvin first migrated to Perth, they were accommodated by local church members.

Finally, the church played a large role in determining these global pathways. The youth explain that ‘our church wouldn’t allow you to go to a place without a worship service’, which means that the church excludes places in Iraq and the Middle East. Additionally, church members are not allowed to work as seamen as they are unable to attend to church. Melvin explains that their jobs have to be ‘close to a church and somewhere you can drive. Even a long drive is fine as long as you can go to church’. He was hasty to add that ‘but not all Filipinos are — obviously, I’m sure you know that. But our environment is more like in the church. But not all Filipinos are like us. There are some who are still like normal people outside’.

They describe their way of life as a ‘Christian way of life’, which is a way of ordering their time outside the work and the house. Jun explains that trips to McDonald’s are a:

main outlet in the routine of work–house. This is where we go. We party at birthday parties, but not like the young ones same as our age. We don’t do that. We go to church, sing in the choir, we have gatherings. We’re pretty much involved in the church and we are active. So we don’t have vices. Our vices is like this — eating. Eating out after church service. You will see some of the youth here sometimes.

Melvin adds that they ‘don’t drink alcohol’. Their Christian ‘way of life’ is meant to incorporate a social world that allows its members to transcend nationality. Norman explains:

You know how we’ve been talking about Filipinos? It’s sort of like yes, we are Filipino, but our way of living is that we’re just members of that church and then we’re Filipino, then we’re Kiwi, then we’re Australian. Even when you meet an Australian church member, they’ll say that they’re church members first, then they’re Australian. Same with the Americans.

As an important social mechanism then, the church allowed the youth to make a life for themselves outside their birthplace, allowing them to establish transnational and intercultural ties in order to rise to the challenges of living in a multiplex social world.
They say that they do not want to return to the Philippines as they are ‘not used to it anymore’. Their Filipino Christian way of life has provided a way of life that is not determined by territory. During the interview, they discuss their future trajectories conversationally. Melvin says he would like to return to New Zealand. Jun says she is contemplating moving to Sydney. They explain that ‘in every country there is’ an INC branch, allowing them to ‘easily get in contact’. Jun says, ‘That’s why when we go overseas, we just contact the main office and find out where the location of the church is’. The result is that when they meet strangers in another country ‘you sort of like, when you know them, you belong straight away. You don’t feel left out or anything’. The church thus becomes part of its members’ political strategies, as the church provides its members ‘resources of the imagination’, allowing them to ‘constitute an alternative social connection between previously unconnected individuals’ (Rumford, 2013: 107; see also Delanty, 2006, 2009). Such a strategy is what allows its members to transcend ethnic, national and racial parochialism.

Despite their awareness of the church’s cosmopolitan ideology, the youth admit that they do not socialise with many non-Filipinos. Jun adds, ‘And the members are not just Filipinos. There are Australians, Kiwis, different nationalities. It’s a diverse church. It came from the Philippines and it’s spread around the world. And we don’t stereotype and we just go with our own Filipinos. It just so happens that we do’. In fact, the network that they form can be described as endogamous. Norman’s girlfriend is Edita, a recent Filipino migrant to Perth studying nursing at Curtin. He met Edita through Jun, whose brother had married Edita’s sister. They describe themselves as an internally diverse group, as Edita is from another province in Visayas and speaks a different dialect to the other three youth who are from the Luzon region. The importance of INC’s anti-colonial cosmopolitanism to their social lives arose when the youth were explaining Filipino-ness.

Melvin discusses an article he had read that claimed that there were ‘no Filipinos’ because Filipinos comprised a mixture of many different elements, such as Spanish and American. Jun agrees and says:

Our looks are mixed, my grandparents are half. Look at our surnames. My surname is like half Chinese, half Spanish. And then my grandma is Spanish, like the skin. They said the original Filipinos are the ones with curly hair.

Edita jumps in and says:
Curly hair and black skin. It’s like the same as Indonesians because before the history is like there’s a bridge from Indonesia and Philippines and they were the first ones to get there.

Norman refers to them as ‘the native Filipino, the aboriginal Filipino’. Melvin describes them as being ‘4 feet tall with curly hair and dark skin. They still live in the mountains’. Melvin shows me a photo. Jun says they are referred to as ‘Igolot’ and claims ‘that is how they look like’. Edita says they are ‘the same as here’ and Melvin agrees. He explains: ‘It’s like the Australian aboriginal. I think they [aboriginals] are all the same and it’s like the Europeans came in’. Norman proclaims that Filipino is ‘just a mixture of everything, from Asia, to Europe — everything’.

The youth were curious to know if I had spoken to other Filipinos yet. I explained that I had only interviewed four other Filipinos as I had only just started fieldwork. Norman says, ‘We’ll teach you some negative traits’. Melvin interjects with the manayan habit and Jun explains ‘It’s like later, I’ll do it later’. Edita says, ‘And we’re always late. Filipino time, we’re always late’ and Melvin asserts that is ‘something you have to know’.

They also asked what religion or faith I was in and I responded that I was agnostic. As if affirming my non-Filipino status, Norman responded that ‘98%, 90% of Filipinos are Catholics’. Edita reinforces with ‘Filipinos are very religious and we are known for that’. Norman says, ‘But us, we’re not Catholic. Just to get that straight’. Edita interjects with ‘We’re the same, like. We’re all Christians, but it’s different churches’. Given that we were on the subject of Catholicism in the Philippines, I asked if they knew about the regional saints. Jun answers: ‘That’s in the Philippines. They believe in all those’. Norman nods and answers that there are different provinces and different saints, while Melvin emphasises, ‘We don’t have saints in our church’. Norman adds, ‘I think the Filipinos learnt that from the Spanish’ and Jun traces that back to the Spanish colonisation and its influence on the language and the festivities.

Our discussion on Filipino traits — albeit negative ones — and on Filipino-ness as a ‘mixture’ echoed the previous discussions I had had with other Filipino migrants. In the case of the youth, however, the difference was the role that the church played in transcending nationality. When they were talking about the manayan habit, Norman says that ‘Filipino time’ does not apply to the church. Melvin says that ‘if the service is at seven o clock then you have to be there at six-thirty or six o’clock’. This was in spite of the fact that Norman had described ‘Filipino time’ as a rule of thumb when he was in school. I asked why ‘Filipino time’ was different to church
time. Jun answers that ‘If you devote the time it should be like that because you’re not meeting with friends. You’re meeting God’.

In addition, in their case, INC’s anti-colonial cosmopolitanism allowed them to bridge internal differences. They describe themselves as being of different dialects. Jun explains that she is from Pampangas and her dialect is Pampangan. She describes her dialect as being ‘more like Malay’. She gives an example: ‘With Malaysians, they call their rice “nasi”, “nasi goreng”. So ours we call it “nasi”’. Melvin interjects and asks what ‘nasi’ is. Jun translates ‘nasi’ into ‘kanin’ and explains ‘that’s what we call our nasi in our dialect’. Additionally, Jun says that she is used to doing ‘manot’, described as a manner of greeting an older family member or relative that is interpreted as a ‘sign of respect’. Melvin, however, says that he was not used to it, but does it when he meets Jun’s parents.

Their membership of the church, then, is not only one that can deal with differences between nation-states but with differences between regions in the Philippines. INC’s anti-colonial cosmopolitan ideology also provides the youth with a framework of their own terms and their own categories of value, where God comes first, and nationality and regional differences are subsumed under God (Ortner, 2006). Such a framework has emerged to fill the lack of unity observed within the Filipino as a ‘diaspora’ (Camroux, 2008). Aguilar (2002a: 18) has cautioned against referring to Filipinos overseas as a ‘diaspora’ because its population is ‘rife with internal differences and contradictions’. He argues that the term ‘diaspora’ does not quite capture this complexity (Aguilar, 2015). The unity that he describes as missing from a ‘Filipino diaspora’ is what reinforces the youth’s adherence to INC’s anti-colonial cosmopolitanism.

Sis Anna

Sis Anna, ‘Sis’ being short for sister, is a recent convert to Iglesia Ni Cristo. Unlike the youth, who were already INC members before they left the Philippines, Anna only converted when she left the Philippines and migrated to Singapore. Anna was raised as a Roman Catholic from birth. She describes her parents as ‘strict Roman Catholics’. Their daily lives in the Philippines were routinised with Catholic practices, such as praying the rosary at 3 pm every day, saying grace before meals, attending church every Sunday and praying before an altar in the house.

Anna migrated to Singapore when she saw a newspaper advertisement recruiting nurses to work at National University Hospital (NUH). She was working as a nurse
in a public hospital in Manila earning 10,000 pesos a month but wanted to try something new. Her parents were hesitant about her leaving. Their doubts were due to recent media reports in the Philippines that mentioned 50 Filipinos being squeezed into one small apartment and Filipino women going to Singapore to work as domestic helpers. Her parents told her there was no need for her to migrate for work, but Anna was insistent:

I didn’t know what to expect. My dad thought I’d be a maid in Singapore [laughs] because most of the Filipinas go there and work as household help. There are many of those agencies so I really didn’t know. I didn’t know. I was, like, maybe it’s legitimate maybe it’s not. I mean, what is the worst thing that could happen? I really wanted to see Singapore. I really wanted to work there. Of course I researched. There are actually government-accredited agencies. So Department of Foreign Affairs, they have a list of agencies that are legitimate that are registered to them, so you can check it out. And then I also search for NUH, if it’s really existing and if they’re hiring. So good enough, they have their website.

The hospital signed Anna up on a temporary contract, working 42 hours a week and eight-hour days, five days a week. She describes the importance of migrating with an agency:

To get an apartment in Singapore you have to be working for at least a year I guess for you to rent. You cannot just rent because it’s regulated. You have to show the owner that you are working, your visa, your pass, you have to pay a bond. Which is good, they have to make sure their property is taken care of. If it’s not because of the agency we wouldn’t be able to rent a place on our own.

She describes the condominium as ‘beautiful, with three big rooms’. She was accommodated with nine other Filipino female migrants who were also going to be working as nurses at National University Hospital. Anna says she did not mind sharing with nine other people as she was on her own at the time. She describes their room-sharing arrangement as a ‘good way of helping [us] settle because normally if you’re just new to the country you don’t know where to start really’. She describes her Filipina housemates as clean and easy to get along with and says that she was ‘blessed that I was partnered with two good Filipinas and we’re still friends. They’re still in Singapore so we still contact each other’.
Anna describes Singapore as her ‘second home’, having lived there for five years. She said she liked how Singapore was technologically advanced and fast-paced. Anna enjoyed her work at the hospital, as she felt the environment was really supportive, and the training they provided her was beneficial. National University Hospital sent her for ‘advanced schooling’ so that she could be promoted and she worked in an isolation ward. Anna also liked the fact that Singapore was only a short plane ride from Manila, making it convenient for her to return to Manila for visits. Anna would typically return to the Philippines every six months to a year.

Before her migration to Singapore, Anna was already in a relationship with an INC member. She met Dino when they were vacationing in the Philippines. They were neighbours in their vacation homes. Anna was still in high school and Dino was in college. Anna was initially hesitant about dating him as her parents were strict Roman Catholics and Dino’s family were Iglesia. Anna refers to Dino as a handog, an expression used to convey the fact that Dino was born into the church (Harper, 2001). Her attitude towards INC changed after the unexpected death of her parents. Her parents died when the boat they were on capsized while the family were holidaying in Batangas. Anna felt lost and guilty after their deaths and was looking for guidance. She describes the loss of her parents as a ‘struggle’ that she battles with even now. She decided to explore INC and told Dino that she was interested in joining the church. Dino found a church service near her workplace in Singapore and Anna decided to join.

Anna credits both INC and her workplace for helping her during her struggle. Although she was employed on a temporary contract, the National University Hospital did not terminate or suspend her contract when she had to return to the Philippines for two months to sort out her parents’ affairs. Nonetheless, it seems that INC played a more pivotal role in organising Anna’s social life. Anna credits INC’s mandated twice-weekly attendance of service as a pivotal part of her healing. She contrasts INC with her experience of Catholicism. Anna explains that after Catholic mass, people would typically just leave, resulting in little social interaction. INC members, on the other hand, would usually make time for social activities after the service or meet up with one another beforehand. There were also curricular activities associated with the church, such as singing in the choir and working in the Office. Sometimes after service, INC members would visit one another’s houses to gather and share food. This proved to be the push out of the house that she needed during her time of grief.

Anna married Dino and moved to Perth, Australia, to be with him. Dino had visited Singapore when Anna was working there, but he did not like the pace as much. They
both felt that Singapore was not suited to family life. Dino was a civil engineer who
had worked in Korea and Saudi Arabia. Sis said that Dino felt Perth was a suitable
place to raise a family as it was convenient, accessible, safe, secure and comfortable.
He had first worked in Perth in 2008 but had to leave when his contract was
terminated due to the recession. He had also managed to secure permanent residency
as he was sponsored by the state. It would be Anna’s first time in Australia.

INC played an important role in helping Anna and Dino settle in Perth. After renting
a house in the Kwinana area, Dino rang the church to find out where his local branch
was. He then found another INC member who was looking for a room, and Dino was
able to rent a room to him. Through the local branch, Dino and Anna were able to
form a circle of friends. Even though they no longer live in the area, they drive to
the same branch every week to catch up with their friends. Anna describes these
home visits as a way of building trust, as members can see how one another lives
and see each other’s homes. Anna explains that if they had still lived in the area,
there would be a sense of local community, as friends would just call each other up
at dinnertime and ask what they were cooking and invite themselves over while
bringing plates of food or produce from the garden. Sis recently bought an
investment property in Bertram, which she rents to other INC church members. The
property is near the Rockingham branch, so she tells me that she can see it whenever
she goes to church service every Sunday. These members are also her friends, who
regularly invite her and Dino to the house for social gatherings. Anna jokingly says
that these gatherings are like their ‘house inspections’. Through INC’s localised
services, Dino and Anna have been able to expand their social networks.

Unlike the youths, Anna refers to INC’s programmatic ideology as one that is ‘up to
you’ rather than ‘forced on you’. She says that, contrary to popular belief, tithes to
the church are not mandatory (Cornelio, 2017b). She describes work as just ‘second,
as our work becomes second and our faith is really important’. She says that it is not
a requirement but a preference that they ‘go to a certain place with the church’ so
that they can attend worship service and fulfil their duty. As part of this duty, INC
members were expected to ‘spread the word of God’. As a result of this
responsibility, Anna says that there are many non-Filipinos in the branches that Anna
and Dino have attended in Singapore and Australia. Anna says there are
Singaporeans, Americans and Australians in the INC.

Despite the fact that Anna says there are many non-Filipinos in the church in
Singapore and Australia, it seemed that Anna and Dino’s experience with the church
was more ethnically parochial than cosmopolitan. Anna describes how INC
members would drive six hours to Albany, Western Australia, to gather with other
INC members. I asked if there were many non-Filipinos at these gatherings, but Anna responded that they were mainly Filipinos who had to go there for work but were still gathering informally as INC members and were looking to establish an official branch there.

Her experience at work, however, is a different story. Anna says that at her workplace, the nurses are encouraged to bring food to share with their co-workers. Anna particularly enjoys the food that her Indian colleagues bring to work, especially pratha. Anna also has Chinese colleagues who have told her all about Shanghai, which Anna hopes to visit one day. She also says that she likes talking to her Indian colleagues who are now Australian but who worked in London and other parts of the United Kingdom before migrating. She wants to gain knowledge about other healthcare systems and learn about nursing in other countries. However, Anna says that she is intimidated by her white colleagues even though she is perfectly proficient in English. She says that she has trouble understanding the Australian accent and its colloquialisms. She also describes her Australian colleagues as having a lack of gratitude as she noticed they complained about their work. But she says that her faith gives her hope and security ‘knowing that there is someone up there’. Anna explains the ‘idea of having religion’:

It’s just the idea that we don’t own this place. Somebody made it. There’s a creator; it wouldn’t happen before Him. So everything that we have we owe to him. We have to acknowledge it; that’s why we pray. We have to give thanks because we don’t own anything. It’s from Him so we have to be thankful. There’s more to life. It’s not just working or not just enjoying; it’s more to life than all those things. Especially if you have a lot of struggles in terms of financial, family arguments it will be resolved with His help, something like that.

This idea is reinforced in three ways: by her occupation as a nurse, her travels overseas and her parents’ deaths. Anna says that when she was studying as a nurse and studying the human body, she saw how amazing the human body is. Her amazement at the human body reinforced her belief that ‘there is someone in control of us’. When she travels and ‘see beautiful places’, she is reminded of the fact that ‘somebody created this and this beauty. It can’t be created by man so there is someone up there’. Her parents’ deaths defined her and made her realise, ‘Oh there’s someone really higher, higher to us’. Even though she encounters death at work every day, she ‘didn’t realise how serious death was’ until her own experience with death. Anna refers to the loss of her parents as an ‘eye-opening experience’.
Anna’s conversion to INC was then a matter of combining those ideological and existential elements that are necessary for an individual to belong (Hedetoft & Hjort, 2002). For one, INC was viewed as a continuation of Anna’s Catholic upbringing, where she was expected to give thanks to God. These existential answers only became more urgent after a personal encounter with death.

She contrasts her unshakeable belief in God and her lesson in practising gratitude to the ‘Australian way’:

I mean here they have everything, they have everything. They think that the world owes them, that everything should be given to them for their comfort, not knowing where everything comes from, and if there’s a creator. Sometimes they complain a lot. I mean we have less in the Philippines and we’re happier and here everyone is very critical. I respect that it’s just a point of comparison, I guess. But I’m happy knowing I grew up in that situation now and I appreciate what’s going on, and I feel happier. I learnt to be grateful.

Anna is thus demonstrating an individual agency with regard to using INC’s anti-colonial cosmopolitan ideology. Van Der Veer (2002) refers to anti-colonial cosmopolitanism as a kind of cosmopolitanism that has anti-colonial rather than colonial consequences. The pursuit of INC’s ‘cosmopolitanism with a moral mission’ (Van Der Veer, 2002) has allowed Anna to overturn her sense of intimidation in relation to her non-migrant colleagues and view them in a way that is more aligned with the ‘culturally meaningful goals and ends’ (Ortner, 2006: 153) of Iglesia. Other authors have discussed how Filipinos have a ‘colonial mentality’, which could explain the intimidation that Anna reported feeling around her ‘Australian’ colleagues (see Tondo, 2012). Colonial mentality is known as a sense of inferiority between the ‘Asian’ Self and the ‘White’ Other (Roces, 2003). An anti-colonial cosmopolitanism that combines the ideological, material and emotional aspects of belonging means that members can readily draw on these resources and deploy them in a gamut of ways in their everyday lives.

**Conclusion**

As I mentioned at the start of this chapter, Krause (2011: 430) has argued that, while churches like INC and the Ne Pentecostal Church may not be considered ‘cosmopolitan’, social scientists need to acknowledge the ‘divergent agendas and interests’ behind such ideological movements in order to take the call for multiple cosmopolitanisms seriously. This chapter has sought to do so by considering its
historical beginnings, its global outreach, and the process of institutionalising a
global (Filipino Christian) political consciousness (Beck, 2006).

As Hedetoft and Hjort (2002: xix) argue, while we might identify ‘traces of an
ideology of belonging to the globe, based on programmatic ideas of global
responsibility’, the point of departure is still a ‘firm rootedness in a specific national
identity’. The authors’ point can be used to engage with Beck’s (2006)
‘cosmopolitan vision’, which Beck (2006) regards as an institutionalised global
political consciousness (see Beck & Sznaider, 2010; Cheah, 2006). While I do not
agree that INC members are technically rooted in a ‘specific national identity’, they
are most certainly guided by a universal Filipino ideology, one that they can refer to
as Iglesia Ni Cristo. What I sought to ask instead is, do the members’ enclosed
networks reinforce the existential limits of cosmopolitanism as an ideology? Is
cosmopolitanism, even in its collective, ‘vernacularised’ form, like INC, ‘too
abstract’ an ideal to be realised and made relevant in the everyday lives of non-elite
migrants? (Calhoun, 2003; Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013).

The significance of INC’s anti-colonial cosmopolitanism to its success, firstly,
within the Philippines nation-state and later on the global platform, suggests that
cosmopolitanism in its vernacularised form is useful to a large extent. I have
demonstrated how INC members’ navigation of ‘global pathways’ (Werbner, 1999)
was brought on by conditions that were described as unexpected and sudden. Their
experience on these global pathways also brought its own pitfalls, as they
encountered exploitation, vulnerabilities and unexpected catastrophes on their
journeys abroad. Belonging to a cosmopolitan political project like Iglesia Ni Cristo,
then, helped them cope with such challenges in their recent history of migration, in
the experience of settling into a new country, and in developing future trajectories.

In the course of demonstrating how this cosmopolitan political project of belonging
features in the lives of its members, I have sought to engage with Calhoun’s (2003:
532) question: ‘Can cosmopolitan theory value humanity not merely in the abstract,
but in the concrete variety of its ways of life?’ In the case of the members I
interviewed, this cosmopolitan political project of belonging provided them a
boundary-transcending imagination that allowed them to transcend social and
symbolic cultural boundaries.

However, its limits were largely defined by the contexts within which it is situated,
pointing once more to the importance of situating cosmopolitanism within a specific
time-space (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015). Such a situated view reinforces
Delanty’s (2006, 2009) argument that cosmopolitanism depends on ‘moments of
openness’. Such an analysis proves present cosmopolitanism to be a ‘product of
subjective experience’ (Rumford, 2013: 111) rather than a matter of ‘actually existing’ social reality (Beck, 2006).

However, what emerged from the interviews with the members of INC in Perth was not the transcendence of all social ties, but a reorganisation of their social networks. Despite the openness that INC professes, the networks of its members resembled closed transnational webs rather than an open, cosmopolitan group that is meant to be emblematic of ‘a global sense’ and a ‘sense of boundarylessness’ (Beck, 2006: 3). Their members’ prioritisation of allegiance to the Christian church meant that they privileged the Christian way of life above all else, excluding non-Christians like Muslims and even other Christians like Roman Catholics from their social circle. So while its members are able to go ‘beyond ethnicity’ (Glick Schiller, 2009; Hüwelmeier, 2011), their ‘other’ had merely become the non-Christian and the Catholic rather than the non-Filipino other. Glick Schiller (2009) and Hüwelmeier (2011) would thus argue that INC, like the New Pentecostal Churches elsewhere, should not be considered cosmopolitan. Calhoun (2003) has critiqued the lack of understanding of belonging in existing theories of cosmopolitanism in the social sciences. He argues that current understandings of cosmopolitanism have a poor understanding of the ‘organisation of collective action’ (Calhoun, 2010: 605). I argue that this poor understanding results from a lack of research on the tension between ideological and existential belonging brought on by the absence of culture in analysis of cosmopolitanism. While INC provides its members with an ‘ideology of belonging to the globe’ (Hedetoft & Hjort, 2002: xix), it more importantly provides them with fixed anchor points that allow them to adapt to the experience of migration as a process that consists of uprooting and re-grounding (Ahmed et al., 2003). The transcendence of their attachment to the Philippines as nation and to their regional localities has merely been replaced by an anti-colonial cosmopolitanism that combines Christian universalism and Filipino nationalism (Geertz, 1993; Van Der Veer, 2002; Weber, 2003 [1958]). What emerges is a valuable resource that has proven useful in bridging differences and creating solidarity for a de-territorialised population that possesses limited unity.
8 CONCLUSION

… it is impossible not to belong to social groups, relations, or culture.

… intercultural exchanges do occur even if these are beyond quantification and have been largely understudied: migrants adapt to the foreign context and in the process influence the individuals and groups with whom they associate, even as they too are altered.
— Filomeno V. Aguilar, Migration Revolution: Philippine nationhood and class relations in a globalised age, 2014: 7.

Introduction

This thesis aims to ‘contribute to the growth of a critical and situated cosmopolitanism’ (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015: 6). It does so by investigating the lived experiences of ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Australia. Existing research has demonstrated that Filipino migrants’ lived experiences have become more interconnected with the advent of neoliberal globalisation, resulting in the need to situate their lives and actions not just within the nation-state in which they live, but simultaneously with the Philippines and the rest of the world (Espiritu, 1996, 2003). However, while research on ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Australia has examined the micro dimensions of their lived experiences (e.g. Aquino, 2018; Espinosa, 2017), recent research has not highlighted the extent to which ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Australia form domains of commonality with one another, nor has research pointed out where and how ‘overseas Filipinos’ have situated themselves in relation to non-Filipinos. These points are significant given the transformation of social dynamics to the Philippines-born population in Australia, as a result of a new wave of Filipino immigrants whose social locations are said to be distinct from those who migrated during the 1980s and 1990s (Caspersz, 2008; Penafiel, 2015; Siar, 2014). Furthermore, researchers have argued that neoliberal globalisation has created a new social order, resulting in the need to analyse the ‘emergence of transnational communities, multiple identities and multi-layered citizenship’ (Castles, 2002: 1145; see also Amelina & Faist, 2012; Faist, 2000; Soysal, 2000).

In an attempt to theorise these social dynamics, researchers have turned to the concept of cosmopolitanism. Social scientists have used cosmopolitanism to explain a particular mode of self-transformation to engage with difference and with the idea of a ‘oneness of the world’ (Nowicka & Rovisco, 2009: 3; see also Beck, 2006; Beck & Sznaider, 2006; Skrbis et al., 2004; Skrbis & Woodward, 2007). This concept is used by social scientists to destabilise natural ethnic absolutisms, recognise ‘worldly productive sites of crossing’ without trivialising the ‘complex unfinished paths
between local and global attachments’, and emphasise ‘encounters between worldly historical actors willing to link up aspects of their complex, different experiences’ (Vertovec & Cohen, 2002: 7; see also Calhoun, 2003; Clifford, 1998; Hall, 2000, 2008; Robbins, 1998; Werbner, 2008). More specifically, cosmopolitanism has been acknowledged as being more suitable for investigating the ways in which individuals respond to the challenges brought on by neoliberal globalisation, including building social ties with co-ethnics and non-nationals to engage with local, transnational and global structural forces (Beck, 2006; Beck & Sznaider, 2006; Inglis & Robertson, 2011; Rumford, 2013).

Given the Philippines’ involvement in processes of neoliberal globalisation, it is no surprise that Philippines Studies scholars have begun to frame the ‘overseas Filipino’ experience using a cosmopolitan lens. In her study of Filipino migrants working as domestic workers in Israel, Liebelt (2008, 2011) demonstrates how Filipino labour migrants build commonalities with their non-Filipino employers and develop complex subjectivities that enable them to traverse global pathways. Similarly, Cuevas-Hewitt (2016) turns to the concept of cosmopolitanism to explain how Filipino immigrants in America are redefining the notion of what it means to be Filipino. He invents the label the ‘Fil-Whatever’ to demonstrate how Filipinos can be ‘simultaneously singular and common — singular albeit not at the expense of our commonality and common albeit not at the expense of our singularity’ (Cuevas-Hewitt, 2010: 122). His formulation reveals that cultural identity, rather than being merely fulfilled or transcended, ‘must be constantly invented and reinvented, activated and reactivated’ against a backdrop of the global other (Cuevas-Hewitt, 2010: 118). Cuevas-Hewitt’s (2010) theorisation of the ‘Fil-Whatever’ echoes Cohen’s (2008: 151) observation that those living in the diaspora need simultaneously to hold onto their ethnicity and/or religion and also establish transnational and intercultural ties in order to rise to the challenges of living in a multiplex social world.

Despite its growing popularity in Philippines Studies and cosmopolitanism research, social scientists have criticised cosmopolitanism researchers for reinforcing a binary of difference through its rejection of ethnic separateness and national transcendence (Aguilar, 2014; Calhoun, 2003; Cuevas-Hewitt, 2010) and for valuing individual freedom over collective solidarity (McKay, 2012; Lu, 2013), resulting in a poor understanding of how cosmopolitanism operates in practice (Delanty, 2006, 2006a; Glick Schiller & Salazar, 2013; Skrbis and Woodward, 2013). Due to this poor understanding, nationalism and cosmopolitanism are polarised rather than reconciled.
in extant research, even as they are touted as necessary bedfellows (Beck & Levy, 2013; Delanty, 2006a).

In response to the critique of cosmopolitanism’s abstract, individualised nature (Lu, 2013; McKay, 2012), this research draws on the understanding of cosmopolitanism as an inherently relational ontology between self, other and the world (Chapter Two; Delanty, 2009). Using this framework, this research finds that Filipino migrants experience a problematic relationship between the self and the world (Chapter Four; Delanty, 2006). The fact that the self and the world does not indicate an unproblematic relationship means that the relationship between self, other and the world in cosmopolitanism needs to be reconsidered (Delanty, 2006, 2009). Rumford (2008, 2013) argues that this relationship should be expanded to include the idea of ‘community’ (see also Glick Schiller et al., 2011). He argues that the self, other, and world relationship assumes that the individual can access ‘the world’ easily and with the same amount of power (see also Glick Schiller, 2015). To include understandings of power and agency in cosmopolitanism theory, this research draws on a politics of belonging framework (Yuval-Davis, 2011), thereby extending the parameters of cosmopolitanism as a relational rather than abstract, individualised ontology (Delanty, 2006, 2009).

To contribute to the debate on the relationship between nationalism and cosmopolitanism, this thesis focuses on the politics of belonging to collective domains of commonality based on ‘simultaneous rootedness and openness’ (Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 400; see also Appiah, 1997, 2006; Werbner, 2006, 2008). This research draws on the understanding of rootedness as one that can be used to define claims to symbolic ethnicity and long-distance nationalism (Glick Schiller, 2015; Glick Schiller & Fouron, 2001). Cosmopolitan openness is defined as the engagement with difference and openness to the world (Delanty, 2006, 2006a, 2009, 2012; Woodward & Skrbis, 2012). This thesis explores the possibilities and limitations of ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’ by investigating three Filipino migrant organisations: Migrante WA (Chapter Five), Gawad Kalinga (Chapter Six), and Iglesia ni Cristo (Chapter Seven). The key questions that this research seeks to address are: Can national rootedness and cosmopolitan openness coexist in the lived experiences of Filipino migrants? If so, how does this coexistence play out, and what are the possibilities and limitations that arise from navigating this coexistence?

Through its focus on collectives rather than individuals, the findings of this research have revealed the possibilities of ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’ (Appiah, 1997, 2006). Firstly, this findings in this research reveal why national rootedness and cosmopolitan openness are not mutually exclusive. Drawing on a politics of
belonging framework (Yuval-Davis, 2011), this research has illuminated the agency of social actors, demonstrating how social actors can deploy national rootedness and cosmopolitan openness simultaneously for different purposes (Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015). These purposes are established through the interactions between self, other and the world, which translate into what social scientists may identify as the cosmopolitan imagination (Delanty, 2006, 2009). The divergent ‘cosmopolitan imaginaries’ (Calhoun, 2003; Castoriadis, 1987) espoused by these migrant organisations reveal that cosmopolitanism ought to be viewed as a ‘product of subjective experience’ that emerges from ‘the need to open up new possibilities for human sociality’ (Rumford, 2013: 111).

Secondly, this research reveals how the cosmopolitan imagination is translated into practice by social actors to become a domain of commonality (Delanty, 2006, 2009, 2012). This research demonstrates that the transformation of the self, other and the world are dependent on ‘public systems of symbols, meanings, texts and practices, that both represent a world and shape subjects in ways that fit the world as presented’ (Ortner, 2006: 116; see also Geertz, 1973). In demonstrating how self, other and the world are constructed, this research has shown that rootedness might be cultural, but not always national. Although all three migrant organisations drew on ethnonational understandings, their sources of rootedness were much broader than that, as ethnonational subjectivities were transformed to allow members to see themselves as belonging to the world rather than to a specific nation (Camroux, 2008; Yuval-Davis, 2011). This thesis, therefore, disrupts the assumption commonly made by critics of cosmopolitanism that the nation is the ‘natural and rational form of socio-political organisation’ (Fine & Chernilo, 2004: 36; see also Anderson, 1991; Beck & Levy, 2013; Calhoun, 2002, 2003, 2007, 2008; Hedetoft & Hjort, 2002; Smith, 1990).

Finally, this thesis has presented the limitations of ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’ (Appiah, 1997, 2006). The findings from this research show that the global expansions of these migrant organisations and their subsequent cultural transformations are contingent on the reinforcement of social hierarchies. Furthermore, as the lived experiences of the individual members are still circumscribed the rules and regulations imposed by nation-state governments, this research follows in the footsteps of other social scientists who regard cosmopolitanism as a ‘fragile and incomplete political settlement’ (Kendall et al., 2008: 414; see also Rumford, 2008, 2013).

Through these findings, the research illuminates a pluralistic view of cosmopolitanism that recognises the significance of rootedness to belonging (Glick
Schiller et al., 2011; Hannerz, 2004, 2006). I conclude this thesis by contextualising these key findings within the field of Philippines Studies and cosmopolitanism research. I then conclude by outlining the limitations of this ethnographic account as well as offering suggestions for future directions.

**Philippines Studies and cosmopolitanism research**

As noted in Chapter Two, the academic literature on Filipino immigrants has mostly focused on the United States. However, as Johnson and McKay (2011: 183–184) have pointed out, the majority of ‘overseas Filipinos’ — half of whom are settled on a more permanent basis — reside outside of the United States, work in a wide variety of occupations, and experience substantive social, cultural and material processes and relationships that are not limited to or defined by migrants’ working relationships. Within this context, Australia is no longer an insignificant node in the global migratory pathways of overseas Filipinos. Due to Australia’s permanency pathway, Australia is considered one of the preferred destinations for settlement (Amrith, 2017; Liebelt, 2008, 2011). Additionally, Australia is currently one of the top four destinations for Filipinos looking to migrate permanently (CFO, 2017). Despite the growing numbers of Filipinos in the country, Australia has generally been on the periphery of scholarly activity in Philippine Studies. Its peripheral location may be because the Philippine-born population is scattered and unevenly distributed across Australia, making the population difficult to research ethnographically. Furthermore, it may be attributed to the fact that most academic work on ‘overseas Filipinos’ has either focused on domestic and care worker migrations (e.g. Huang et al., 2012; Lopez, 2012) or permanent settlement in the United States that has historicity dating back to the American colonial period (e.g. Choy, 2003; Ignacio, 2005). By focusing on the lived experiences of Filipino immigrants in Australia, this thesis contributes to filling this empirical gap.

As mentioned in Chapter Three, social scientists have repeatedly called for more qualitative research to be conducted on cosmopolitanism (Calhoun, 2010; Turner et al., 2011; Woodward, 2014). Delanty (2009: 16) has pointed out that the empirical dimension in cosmopolitanism theory is relatively weak (see also Roudometof, 2005, 2012). In her critique of cosmopolitanism theory, Glick Schiller (2010) has also argued that ‘ethnographic thickness’ is needed to understand the key players behind cosmopolitanism and their role in creating emergent communities. Beck and Levy (2013: 24) have pointed out that ‘the cosmopolitan turn in the social sciences requires a new kind of middle-range “descriptive social theory”’ that will expand the empirical dimensions of cosmopolitanism research. In response to this call, this research draws on qualitative research methodologies and methods to collect and
analyse the data, such as interviews, multi-sited ethnography and grounded theory (see Chapter Three). As an ethnographic account of cosmopolitanism, this thesis thus contributes to extending the parameters of cosmopolitanism research.

In response to the critique made by social scientists that cosmopolitanism values individual freedom over collective solidarity, this research draws on the understanding of cosmopolitanism as an inherently relational ontology between self, other and the world (Chapter Two; see also Delanty, 2006, 2009, 2012). This research extends this understanding further by using a politics of belonging framework, a framework that prioritises the process of boundary maintenance (Favell, 1999; Yuval-Davis, 2011; Yuval-Davis et al., 2006). A focus on the process of boundary maintenance in cosmopolitanism research is significant as it allows the researcher to move away from the imposition of normative definitions onto our subjects or privileging a ‘narrowly conceived and idealistic type of cosmopolitanism based on educated, middle-class forms of cosmopolitanism’ (Skrbis & Woodward, 2013: 26; see also Skovgaard-Smith & Poulfelt, 2017). Instead, the findings from this research have illuminated the agency of social actors, demonstrating how social actors can deploy national rootedness and cosmopolitan openness simultaneously for different purposes (Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015).

For example, in Chapter Four, I demonstrated how Filipino immigrants draw on the particular universalism of Filipino Catholicism to ‘root’ themselves in a new country. Through its celebration of the familial unit as ritualised in the Santo Nino festivities, Filipino Catholicism captures the Filipino migrant’s claim for cultural difference and affords a participatory dimension for a collective rather than solely individual identification (Chapter Four; see also Tondo, 2012). At the same time, the universalising basis of Catholicism affords Filipino immigrants a less problematic connection between self and ‘the world’, a contrast to the problems that they experienced when navigating the border regimes as individuals. In Chapter Four, I show that Filipino migrants felt discriminated against when crossing nation-state borders due to the stereotypes and stigmas enforced on them by the Philippines’ implication in the global market. One of the participants, however, draws on the universalising basis of Filipino Catholicism to reimagine the problematic relationship between self and ‘the world’ by framing their global migration as a religious mission to give care to ‘the other’ (Delanty, 2006, 2009, 2012).

In Chapters Five, Six, and Seven I continued to show how different purposes are established through the interactions between self, other and the world (Delanty, 2006, 2009, 2012). In Migrante, international class-based solidarity is seen as a necessary antidote to the global issues caused by neoliberal globalisation. Similarly,
in Gawad Kalinga, a ‘global family’ comprising of the global rich and global poor is presented as a ‘win-win’ solution to social issues such as international poverty and world hunger. Finally, in Iglesia ni Cristo, an anti-colonial Christian ideology allows its members to see themselves as contributing to global justice and human dignity in various parts of the world (Hüwelmeier, 2008, 2011). Collectively, these organisations demonstrate that cosmopolitanism ought to be viewed as a ‘product of subjective experience’ that emerges from ‘the need to open up new possibilities for human sociality’ (Rumford, 2013: 111). The examples found in Chapters Four, Five, Six and Seven thus present cosmopolitanism as a ‘strategy of connectivity resulting from … “global closure” and/or societal fragmentation’ (Rumford, 2013: 107). This research, therefore, begins to fill a gap in the knowledge of the ways in which Filipino immigrants exercise their agency against global, rather than solely national or transnational, macrostructural forces in a collectivised rather than individualised manner.

All three organisations further demonstrate that self, other and the world are not mutually agreed upon entities but are created through processes of cultural transformation. For example, in Chapter Five, I explored how Migrante creates a particular domain of commonality by teaching members a ‘new vernacular historical culture’ (Smith, 1990: 65). In a session known as Realities de Migracion Philippines or RMP, Migrante members learn about Wallerstein’s (1974, 1980) world systems theory, whereby ‘the world’ is unequally connected, resulting in a dichotomy between developing and developed countries. Due to this construction of ‘the world’, Migrante members are encouraged to identify as the global proletariat through participation in events like the International Workers’ Day rally, engagement with other social justice groups and workers, and collaboration with those who originate from countries who are similarly oppressed by the current world system (Wallerstein, 1974, 1980).

In Chapter Six, I demonstrated how Gawad Kalinga creates a particular domain of commonality by embracing the idea that ‘the global other is in our midst’ (Beck, 2011: 1348). Due to the founder’s belief that the Philippines is a victim of what he calls ‘elite globalisation’, he urges Filipinos to work with other non-Filipinos to create a ‘better, kinder world’. Through localising strategies such as Gawad Kalinga Enchanted Farm, Filipinos and non-Filipinos alike can partake in a cultural process that they refer to as ‘values transformation’, a process that aims to transcend the self-other divide and bring about ideal global citizens (see Kares, 2014).

In Chapter Seven, I investigated how Iglesia ni Cristo combines Christian universalism and Filipino nationalism to create a particular domain of commonality.
Iglesia ni Cristo’s global success can be attributed to the fact that the organisation bestowed on their members a ‘cosmopolitanism with a moral mission’ (Van Der Veer, 2002: 165). Members are encouraged to share their Christian faith with the rest of the world through their participation in philanthropic programs like the INCGiving program (incgiving.org), whereby members can take part in the negotiation of ethnic diversity, the promotion of global justice and the restoration of human dignity (Krause, 2011).

Taken together, the findings from these migrant organisations demonstrate how the cosmopolitan imagination is translated into practice by social actors to become a shared domain of commonality (Delanty, 2006, 2009, 2012). This translation emerges from the transformations of self, other and the world based on shared cultural understandings, or what Ortner (2006: 116) refers to as ‘public systems of symbols, meanings, texts and practices, that both represent a world and shape subjects in ways that fit the world as presented’ (see also Geertz, 1973). These shared cultural understandings, however, are not necessarily centred on the devotion and willingness to sacrifice for the nation nor are they centred on a specific territory (Camroux, 2008; Yuval-Davis, 2011). Gawad Kalinga’s shared cultural understandings is based on the idea of a ‘global family’, whereby translocalising strategies are used to create small-scale communities that can be replicated all around the world (see Chapter Six). Similarly, in Chapter Seven, members of Iglesia ni Cristo’s Filipino Christian way of life is used to imagine a type of belonging that is not confined to a specific territory. The only exception is Migrante, which believes that part of the solution to creating a just and equal global society can be found within rather than outside the nation-state (see Chapter Five). As a result of their sensitivity to being the subaltern, Migrante members draw on their national heroes to frame the change that they wish to see (see Chapter Five; Rodriguez, 2013). This thesis thus argues that while rootedness may be cultural, it does not have to be national. This thesis, therefore, disrupts the assumption commonly made by critics of cosmopolitanism that the nation is the ‘natural and rational form of socio-political organisation’ (Fine & Chernilo, 2004: 36; see also Anderson, 1991; Beck & Levy, 2013; Calhoun, 2002, 2003; Hedetoft & Hjort, 2002; Smith, 1990).

A processual understanding of cosmopolitanism also illuminates another side to the cosmopolitan story. Firstly, this research shows that the global expansions of these migrant organisations and their subsequent cultural transformations depends on the reinforcement of social hierarchies. Migrante’s emphasis on a particular ‘global proletariat’ archetype is based on the reproduction rather than transformation of gendered norms (see Chapter Five). Mabel’s reinforcement of gendered norms
among the workers suggest an attempt to create a middle class, rather than proletariat, social basis, thereby suggesting the instability of Migrante’s global class-based consciousness.

Similarly, in Chapter Six, I explored how the concept of ‘values transformation’ was not unilaterally extended to all members of Gawad Kalinga. While the beneficiaries of Gawad Kalinga are prohibited from drinking alcohol and gambling, international interns living in the same compound are allowed to have late night parties that involved liquor. Furthermore, while Gawad Kalinga afford non-Filipino social entrepreneurs opportunities to travel the world, those living in local communities are geographically and socially left behind. This arrangement results in the fortification rather than eradication of social hierarchies.

Finally, in Chapter Seven, I investigated the politics of belonging to Iglesia ni Cristo. While members of Iglesia ni Cristo are aware of the church’s cosmopolitan ideology, they also admit that they do not socialise with many non-Filipinos within the church. Despite the openness that INC professes, the networks of Iglesia ni Cristo’s members resemble closed transnational webs rather than an open, cosmopolitan group that is meant to be emblematic of ‘a global sense’ and a ‘sense of boundarylessness’ (Beck, 2006: 3). Moreover, their members’ prioritisation of allegiance to the Christian church mean that they privileged the Christian way of life above all else, excluding non-Christians like Muslims and even other Christians like Roman Catholics from their social circle. Collectively, the findings from these organisations reveal the reorganisation, rather than transcendence, of social ties and moral hierarchies, thereby pointing to the ‘anxieties, contradictions and disparities in power’ that arise from cosmopolitan projects and claims (Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015: 6).

The findings in this research also exemplify the limits to the political power of ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’ (Appiah, 1997, 2006; see also Glick Schiller et al., 2011: 400; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015; Werbner, 2006). In Chapter Four, I demonstrate how Filipino migrants construct ‘the world’ as a series of multiple-border regimes, thereby indicating that the relationship between self, other and the world is not an unproblematic one. Despite the fact that the organisations included in this research use a ‘boundary-transcending imagination’ to develop a global solution to global issues, thereby allowing Filipino migrants to see themselves as belonging to the world, ‘the world’ is still characterised in terms of nation-states (see Chapters Five, Six, and Seven). This experience appears most obviously in the lives of individual members, who found that their lives were still constrained by the rules and regulations imposed by nation-state governments. For example, in Chapter Seven, I demonstrated how, although Iglesia ni Cristo was able to mitigate some aspects of
the migratory experience for Jun (one of the INC youth I interviewed), they were unable to assist her with more political and pragmatic matters, such as converting her visitor’s visa to a working visa when she was in New Zealand or finding an employer to sponsor her for work in Australia. In one way then, this research has shown how cosmopolitanism is a ‘fragile and incomplete political settlement’ (Kendall et al., 2008: 414). The fragility of cosmopolitanism may be attributed to the fact that none of these migrant organisations could completely match the power of the nation-state. This research, therefore, hesitates to associate cosmopolitanism with the herald of a post-national social order and instead recognises that, until cosmopolitan political projects are politically on par with the nation-state, there can be no ‘cosmopolitan reality’ (Calhoun, 2010; Kendall et al., 2008, 2009; Rumford, 2013; Skrbis & Woodward, 2013).
Limitations and future directions for research

As quantum physicist Werner Heisenberg (1958: 58) once said, ‘We have to remember that what we observe is not nature itself, but nature exposed to our method of questioning’. This thesis is a partial ethnographic account of the ways in which Filipino immigrants situated within an isolated locality respond to global issues and to processes of neoliberal globalisation. I conclude the thesis by addressing the limitations of this ethnographic account and offering future directions for research.

The thesis’s main focus is on the relationship between rootedness – defined as claims to symbolic ethnicity and long-distance nationalism (Glick Schiller, 2015; Glick Schiller & Fouron, 2001) – and cosmopolitan openness, that is, the engagement with difference and openness to the world (Delanty, 2006, 2006a, 2009, 2012; Woodward & Skrbris, 2012). To engage with the debate on the relationship between nationalism and cosmopolitanism (e.g. Aguilar, 2014; Beck & Levy, 2013; Delanty, 2006), this research focuses on domains of commonality that combine national rootedness and cosmopolitan openness to allow members to see themselves as belonging to the world (Appiah, 1997, 2006; Glick Schiller et al., 2011). Consequently, other domains of commonality based on other social locations were not explored to a large extent. As mentioned in the second chapter, the Filipino population in Australia is a diverse one, consisting of gender, regional and class-based divisions. As such, future research can explore the relationship between any one of these social locations and its influence on cosmopolitan openness.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the Philippine population is scattered and unevenly distributed across Australia. Thus, although this research contributes to filling an empirical gap, it acknowledges its geographic limitation. Hence, comparisons with Filipinos living in other Australian cities will be beneficial in engaging further with the debate on nationalism and cosmopolitanism (e.g. Aguilar, 2014; Beck & Levy, 2013; Delanty, 2006) among the burgeoning Filipino population in Australia.

To the best of my knowledge, research on the Philippine-born population in rural parts of Australia is also largely underexplored (see Roces, 2003 for an exception). More comparative qualitative research on the Philippine-born population in rural parts of Australia versus the Philippine-born population in urban areas may illuminate the extent to which a rural or urban context influences Filipino immigrants’ responses to global issues, thereby contributing to the growth of a critical and situated cosmopolitanism (Glick Schiller, 2015; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015; Yuval-Davis, 2011).
Additionally, as mentioned in Chapter Three, this research is limited by the logistics of doing multi-sited ethnography. A more extended multi-sited ethnography on Filipino migrants living in other countries will be beneficial in developing a more extensive understanding of the ways in which nation-state contexts influence the creation of particular domains of commonality based on ‘simultaneous rootedness and openness’ (Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015).

A more immersive multi-sited ethnography of the other branches of the Filipino migrant organisations will also be useful for investigating the global presence of the organisations included in this research. While Gawad Kalinga has received more academic focus (see Kares, 2014, 2015; Villanueva, 2010), possibly due to its exposure on social media, other migrant organisations such as Migrante and Iglesia ni Cristo have received less attention in the academic literature. An in-depth study of Migrante and Iglesia ni Cristo will thus be valuable not only in contributing to expanding knowledge of Migrante and Iglesia ni Cristo, but also in yielding greater insight into the relationship between degrees of rootedness and cosmopolitan openness (Hannerz, 2004, 2006). Moreover, more in-depth research with individual members will be useful in investigating more comprehensively the extent of each migrant organisation’s influence over their lived experiences and elucidate more extensively members’ lived experiences of ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’ (Appiah, 1997, 2006).

Furthermore, in keeping with anthropological and sociological tradition, this research draws mostly on qualitative research methods, such as interviews and participant-observation. The research sample is thus limited due to its emphasis on depth rather than breadth. Although Farida Fozdar suggested that I include statistical data from organisations to elucidate the scope of their non-Filipino membership, thereby yielding a more rigorous understanding of the extent of their cosmopolitan openness (Woodward & Skrbis, 2012), such statistical data was notably lacking. More quantitative research can thus be undertaken to determine the ethnic composition of its members and thereby determine more accurately the extent to which these organisations may be considered cosmopolitan political projects (Ortner, 2006; Yuval-Davis, 2011).

Due to my own positioning as a researcher of non-Filipino background, this research focuses entirely on publicly established organisations. As a result of this focus, this research has neglected to investigate if and how social actors situated within other informally established social networks deploy national rootedness and cosmopolitan simultaneously and for what purposes (Glick Schiller et al., 2011; Glick Schiller & Irving, 2015). Michael Pinches suggests that a comparative analysis between these
migrant organisations and more informally established networks would have been useful in drawing out contrasts and contraindications between ideologically determined forms of ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’ and the types of ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’ that have emerged from more spontaneous social interactions (Appiah, 1997, 2006; see Wise, 2009). Michael’s suggestion is a line of inquiry that I am hoping to pursue after the PhD.

Although this thesis draws on the media to research the ‘cosmopolitan imagination’, I did not explore to a large extent the role of the media in creating these ‘imagined communities’ (Anderson, 1991; Delanty, 2012). In Chapter Seven, I acknowledge that technology plays a large part in Beck’s (2006) ‘cosmopolitan vision’ and in Delanty’s (2009) ‘cosmopolitan imagination’ (see also Turner et al., 2011). Further empirical research is needed to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the role of the media in expanding the cosmopolitan imagination (see also Beck & Levy, 2013).

During the course of my fieldwork in Australia, I encountered several Filipino priests within the Catholic Churches of Perth. A priest at one of the sermons I attended also mentioned how more Catholic priests are expected to arrive from the Philippines. These migratory journeys prove to be the impetus for national rootedness, as one of the Filipino Catholic priests proclaimed that he did not celebrate Santo Nino until he arrived in Perth (see Chapter Four). Another Filipino priest was invited to lead a general Catholic mass to honour Mary Jane Veloso’s stay of execution (see Chapter Five). However, these moments were fleeting and brief, and I was unable to carry out a more comprehensive investigation into their politics of belonging as an ‘overseas Filipino’ (Yuval-Davis, 2011). Further investigation into Filipino priests (and nuns – although they were less noticeable in the field) will extend this research’s scope on ‘overseas Filipinos’ in Australia. Given the Filipino priests’ implication in the global networks of the Catholic Church, further investigation may be beneficial for uncovering if and how Filipino priests engage in ‘rooted cosmopolitanism’ (Appiah, 1997, 2006), thereby contributing to existing knowledge on global religious movements (see Chapter Seven; see also Hulwelmeier, 2011; Krause, 2011).

To conclude, I would like to return to Calhoun’s (2003) critique of the lack of understanding of belonging in cosmopolitanism research. I argue that this poor understanding is the result of ‘an escape from culture into the realm of the universal’ in cosmopolitanism theory (Calhoun, 2010: 597). I have argued that culture adds the existential, social and collective dimension that is so crucial to belonging (Durkheim, 2008 [1912]; Fozdar et al., 2009; Weber, 2003 [1958]). While the migrant organisations provide their members with an ideology of belonging to the globe, they
more importantly provide their members with a cultural context from which to reimagine the world — and thus, their place within it.
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Appendices
## Appendix A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Residency status and history</th>
<th>Region of Origin</th>
<th>Current location</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jovita</td>
<td>Newly arrived immigrant, recently married to Australian. Visited New Zealand for a teacher’s training course (similar to Montessori), been to India for similar reasons.</td>
<td>Manila, NCR</td>
<td>North of river (NOR), Perth Metro</td>
<td>Catholic church. Formerly an activist.</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amy</td>
<td>1.5 generation, arrived in Perth when she was 12 and was adopted by her stepfather</td>
<td>Davao, Mindanao</td>
<td>South of river (SOR), Perth Metro</td>
<td>Catholic church</td>
<td>Works in an administrative role for a mining company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriel</td>
<td>1.5 generation, arrived in Perth when he was 10 and was later adopted by his stepfather</td>
<td>Cebu</td>
<td>SOR, Perth Metro</td>
<td>Formerly sports associations. Previously a Catholic churchgoer</td>
<td>Tradesman in a factory/distribution company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INC Youth</td>
<td>Melvin and Norman (brothers): 1.5 generation, arrived first in New Zealand and later family moved together to Perth. Jun: 1st generation, arrived first in New Zealand for work and later moved to Perth.</td>
<td>Various regions within NCR, Definitely Luzon</td>
<td>SOR, Perth Metro</td>
<td>Iglesia Ni Cristo</td>
<td>Healthcare workers - brothers are in aged care. Jun works as a nurse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myrna</td>
<td>Arrived in Melbourne in the 1980s, when she married a fellow Australian whom she’d met when he was on an exchange programme to Philippines.</td>
<td>Manila, NCR</td>
<td>Melbourn e</td>
<td>Migrante, Gabriela</td>
<td>Works in a women’s refuge shelter in Melbourne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph</td>
<td>1.5 generation, was one of the first to arrive in Perth on his father's 457 visa, who was sponsored by a mining company. Lived in Kalgoorlie (rural region of Western Australia) for most of his childhood and adolescence years.</td>
<td>Manila, NCR</td>
<td>Perth. Was just about to move to Sydney for work.</td>
<td>Formerly of the Catholic church.</td>
<td>Works for a large multinational technology company</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruth</td>
<td>S-pass</td>
<td>Davao, Mindanao</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>Catholic church</td>
<td>Is in a managerial role at</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Passport</td>
<td>Place of Birth</td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Additional Details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaine</td>
<td>S-pass</td>
<td>Cagayan city in Davao, Mindanao</td>
<td>Catholic church</td>
<td>Works for a furniture company. Is in sales</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Len and Nelly</td>
<td>Foreign domestic worker’s pass. Len worked in Hong Kong for over a decade before Singapore.</td>
<td>Davao, Mindanao</td>
<td>Catholic church</td>
<td>Domestic helpers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cesar and Anna</td>
<td>S-pass – both applied for PR in Singapore but was rejected</td>
<td>Anna: Manila, NCR Cesar: Manila, NCR - wife from Davao</td>
<td>Catholic church, but not very active</td>
<td>IT workers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bea and Darlene</td>
<td>S-pass - would apply for PR if given the chance</td>
<td>Bea and Darlene originate from the same town in Luzon</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hospitality workers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gia</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>Manila, NCR</td>
<td>Active Catholic church member</td>
<td>Hospitality workers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tito Manolo</td>
<td>Australian citizen, which he obtained after marriage. Married to an Australian woman whom he met when he was a student in Perth.</td>
<td>Manila, NCR - but mother is from Panganisan region</td>
<td>Gawad Kalinga, Filipino Australian Club of Perth, sport associations</td>
<td>Aged care worker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle Cyril</td>
<td>Australian citizen. Came to Australia under 457 visa. Worked in the Middle East before Perth.</td>
<td>Manila, NCR. Formerly from Batangas</td>
<td>Gawad Kalinga, Filipino Australian Club of Perth, Catholic church</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle Nelson</td>
<td>Australian citizen. Came to Perth on a working visa back in the 80s/90s. Worked in America.</td>
<td>Manila, NCR. Parents formerly from Davao, Mindanao, and Nestor informs me that they used to visit Davao at least once a year when he was a child.</td>
<td>Gawad Kalinga, Filipino Australian Club of Perth, Order of the Knights of Rizal, Catholic church</td>
<td>Businessowner, retails trucks for a living.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Nationality</td>
<td>Details</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romel</td>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>Australian citizen. Was sponsored by his brother (Tito Manolo). Is in the process of sponsoring one of his nephews. Worked in the Middle East prior to this, where he met his wife.</td>
<td>Manila, NCR, NOR, Perth Metro</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncle Benedict</td>
<td>Australian citizen</td>
<td>Australian citizen, came to Perth on 457 visa as a mechanic. Was recruited by Toyota to work in Taiwan before Perth. Brought his family over.</td>
<td>Visayas, SOR, Perth Metro</td>
<td>Mechanic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eva</td>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>Australian citizen, came to Perth on 457 visa as a horticulturalist. Wishes to sponsor her brothers over.</td>
<td>Cordillera region, NOR, Perth Metro</td>
<td>Aged care worker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith and Jerome</td>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>PR, came to Perth after obtaining PR.</td>
<td>Manila, NCR, Applecrosss, Perth Metro</td>
<td>Catholic church, although Jerome’s father is of Bahai faith.</td>
<td>Faith works in an administrative role for a trade union. Jerome is in logistics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sis Anna</td>
<td>Australian</td>
<td>PR, came to Perth after her husband obtained PR. Previously worked in Singapore, while her husband was working in Korea and Perth.</td>
<td>Manila, NCR, Perth city</td>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>Iglesia ni Cristo, formerly Catholic church.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOR** refers to the Northern Region, **Perth Metro** refers to the Perth Metropolitan Area, **Migrante** is a movement for Filipino workers, **Filipino Australian Club of Perth** is a cultural and social organization for Filipino Australians, and **Catholic church** is the Catholic Church.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Information</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tita Corin</td>
<td>Australian citizen, came to Perth with her husband when he was sponsored on a 457 visa.</td>
<td>Manila, NCR</td>
<td>Catholic church, Filipino Australian Club of Perth, Gawad Kalinga</td>
<td>Full-time volunteer, founder/publisher of a local Filipino Australian magazine.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuya Luis</td>
<td>Philippine National, but travels around frequently to promote Gawad Kalinga.</td>
<td>Bacolod, Visayas</td>
<td>Gawad Kalinga, formerly Couples for Christ.</td>
<td>Executive of Gawad Kalinga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B

Abridged list of Filipino migrant organisations in Perth

Damayang Filipino Incorporated

Filipino Association in Banksia Grove, Incorporated

Filipino Australian Club of Perth Incorporated (FACPI)

Filipino Australian Club, Cockburn Incorporated

Filipino-Australian Masonic Club of Western Australia, Incorporated

Filipino Australian Multicultural Association Incorporated (FAMAS)

Filipino Australian Skilled Tradesmen Incorporated

Filipino Australian Society of Engineers (FASE)

Filipino Australian Sports Association (FASA)

Filipino Business Club of Western Australia

Filipino Community Council Western Australia (FCCWA)

Filipino Dancers Rockingham

Filipino Communities Council of Australia Incorporated (FILCCA)

Gawad Kalinga Australia (GK)

Mandurah Filipino Sports Club Incorporated

Mandurah Oz-Fil

Migrante Western Australia (WA)
South West Filipino-Australian Association

Perth Filipino Community Symposium

Philippine Educational Theatre Artists of Western Australia Incorporated (PETAWA)

Perth Pinoy-Australia Sports Club Incorporated (PePsci)

Pinoy at St Mary’s Cathedral

Tagalog School of Perth