

THE NEW FRONTIER OF COLONIALISM: EXPLORING TOURISM RHETORIC IN  
THE PHILIPPINES

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A thesis submitted to the faculty of  
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Master of Arts

In

Communication Studies

by

Julie Anne Olive

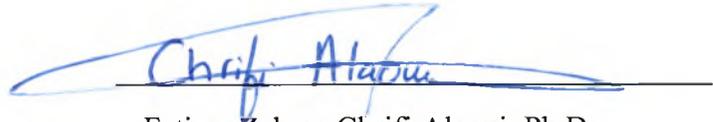
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CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

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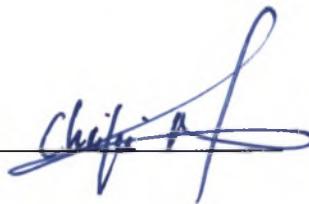
THE NEW FRONTIER OF COLONIALISM: EXPLORING TOURISM RHETORIC IN  
THE PHILIPPINES

Julie Anne Olive  
San Francisco, California  
2019

The Republic of the Philippines has a tumultuous history, wrought with nearly 400 years of Spanish colonization, and in the early 20th century, U.S. imperialism and occupation. Colonialism & imperialism leave cultural remnants behind long after foreign rule has passed. In this thesis, I explore how the complex concept of national identity is communicated in the advertisement campaign entitled “It is More Fun in the Philippines” through use of critical rhetorical analysis, framed by postcolonial theory, tourism discourse theories, and Orientalism. This research describes the complexity and nuance of the Philippine’s postcolonial cultural location as they appear in the chosen artifact, which has the power to influence the construction of national identity for Filipinos at home and abroad. Future communication scholarship can benefit by considering these constructions when unpacking Filipino identity and history.

I certify that the Abstract is a correct representation of the content of this thesis.

Fatima Z. Chirif Alaoui  
Chair, Thesis Committee



05-22-2019  
Date

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## **Chapter One: Introduction**

### **Background & Positionality**

It is with great excitement that I present the culmination of three years of passionate research here at San Francisco State. This thesis represents my commitment and core aspirations as an academic and as a Filipino American scholar. This work contributes to the varied and inspiring works within the Communication Studies and Filipino American Studies disciplines. This thesis critically analyzes the complexity of identity construction as it applies to the Philippines and Filipinos. This work not only aids in expanding my knowledge but ultimately and most importantly this work educates the reader about Filipino history and its lasting impacts which are all too often left out of many academic and cultural spaces.

My investment in this area of research is the result of a lifelong endeavor to understand what being a Filipino means to me, but also, to others in the community. Being raised in a multiethnic, diasporic, Filipino American household, the tensions of finding the balance between either identity have at times, confused, angered, frustrated, and even defeated me. When available, the discourse about Filipino history that has come into my point of view has been one-sided, only ever leaving me with fragments of a more complex whole. Growing up with a community formed from two seemingly different worlds left me with gaps in the stories I heard, and a desire to find out more about the things I never learned from family or history books.

Therefore, when I was accepted into San Francisco State's Communication Studies Master's program, I took the opportunity to begin a journey mapping identity and identity construction through different methods of research. It is during these years that

my fascination with the relationship between mediated images and identity formed. I also read works from Filipino American scholars across academic fields, such as the late Dawn Mabalon, Anthony Ocampo, Allyson Tintiangco-Cubales, E.J.R David, and Kevin Nadal, whose works address a broad spectrum of issues which Filipinos and Filipino Americans face. A main theme in Filipino American scholarship is the complexity of Filipino identity and culture due to centuries of colonialism in the Philippines. These works inspired my own journey as an academic, and the questions posed and wrestled with by those who have shaped the Filipino American community are where the work for this thesis began.

It is crucial to note here that the social location of Filipino Americans, specifically second-generation Filipino Americans like me, is different in many ways to the social location of Filipino natives. It is estimated that 5 million Filipinos have migrated and reside outside of the Philippines in countries such as the United States, Canada, Japan, and Australia (Santiago, 2019, para.1). The population of multiracial Filipinos and folks with Filipino lineage are not included in this estimate but are an important part of the diasporic Filipino population. As a second-generation Filipina in the United States, I have a strong connection to my culture and a fierce dedication to my community. However, I must acknowledge that as an academic, as a United States citizen, and as a Filipino-American, I experience a level of privilege and opportunity that many other members of the Filipino community across the globe do not have. In this thesis I specifically discuss the way that Filipinos are portrayed within an advertisement designed to market the Philippines to a western audience. Without caution, it could be interpreted that because I was raised and live in the United States and am writing from a western background, that I

do not have legitimate insight or rightful understanding of different forms of the Philippines or Filipino identity. I recognize that my location socially and physically bears meaning on the arguments I put forth in this project, and that in the words of Linda Alcoff's (1994) foundational piece, I "... cannot make an epistemic evaluation of the claim without simultaneously assessing the politics of the situation" (Alcoff, 1994, p. 5). The analysis, recommendations, and contributions of this work are for a specific group of people and is not my attempt at directing or advising those who reside in the Philippines on what is best for them. However, it is important to note that it is within this contested space that theoretical and political negotiation is often fruitful. This work is for the Filipino American community, as well as the broader western academic audience so that we may better critically analyze the rhetoric that has been influenced and created by the west about Filipinos. These foci are not to avoid the important inclusion of perspective and voices from Filipinos who do not share the same social locations, but to insist that doing so would be an entirely different project with different goals. This thesis may be thought of as a part of a larger puzzle which researches Filipino identities of many locations.

I embrace the conscientious task of speaking with Filipinos who do not share the same privileges I have, and not for them (Alcoff, 1994). I do this while refusing to retreat from my political responsibility to make visible the issues that Filipinos face. It is also my political responsibility to expand the representation of Filipino American scholars within academia. In this specific case, the issue discussed is tourism. This work offers an opportunity for introspection, dialogue, and action for the reader to consider as they navigate throughout the modern world and all its complications. I specifically offer this

work to my fellow members of the Filipino American community who seek more understanding about our identity. I recognize that separation from our original homeland can come with complications and curiosity, both of which I hope this work aids in your understanding of.

The first event which led to the conceptualization for this project happened in late 2016, when my grandmother, or Lola as I have always known her, fell ill while she was visiting her grandchildren in Manila. My sister and mother could travel to Manila to see her and help her during her recovery, but because I was in the last days of my first semester of graduate school, I could not afford to miss ten days of class on a last-minute notice. Out of my disappointment grew a desire to turn to whatever mediums I could to encounter this place where my family lived, and that I had wanted to visit for years as well. Narratives about what the Philippines was like were not readily available to me growing up; in fact, they were purposefully not discussed. I know now that this is due to the many intersecting effects of colonialism, as I will discuss. After my sister and mother left, I turned to the internet in hopes to soothe my unmet wishes and overall curiosity. I typed the keywords "Philippines travel" into the YouTube search bar, and thousands of videos showed up in the results. White Americans and Europeans posted most of the videos I came across. Curious, I clicked on a video with over 14 million views, entitled "Anak."

This video advertisement<sup>1</sup> depicted a single white man traveling into a valley in the Philippines named the "Enchanted River Valley." In the advertisement, he is brought onto the small island by fisherman, on a traditional canoe. Upon arriving at the

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<sup>1</sup> DOT Anak <https://youtu.be/4Ted014d8Ls>

destination, the traveler finds a woman and three children playing near the river. He passes an old man, adorned in a large rice patty hat and fishing on the banks of the river. The scene is stunning, as is the stark contrast between the traveler and native people he encounters. The camera pans above the waters so the viewer can see that the water is so clear, you can see to the bottom of the ocean floor, 30 feet deep. The woman beckons the traveler and offers him "ube" wrapped in a banana leaf, a traditional Filipino dessert made from purple yam. She tells the traveler, "The fish are eating, so should you, anak." As he takes a bite of the dessert, he turns to the fisherman and asks him what "anak" means. He answers, "Anak means my child." At this point the traveler looks back upon the woman dressed in traditional Filipino folk dress, and gazes admiringly. The scene ends with a quote flashing across the screen, reading: "When you're with Filipinos, you're with family."-Jack Ellis, traveler (Tourism Philippines, 2017).

This advertisement intrigued me for multiple reasons. Primarily because it was the first media of its kind/genre I had seen. Secondly, the scenery and production of the advertisement looked nothing like the Philippines I had been raised to understand through stories and home photos. Admittedly, because I had never actually traveled to the Philippines, the knowledge in my mind was limited and looked nothing like this depiction of a vacation destination.

This 60-second clip belongs to a series of video advertisements in the ad campaign from the Philippine Department of Tourism called "It's More Fun in the Philippines," which began in 2013. On the Department of Tourism's YouTube channel, each one of the video advertisements, varying in length from 15 seconds to 5 minutes, has anywhere from 500,000 to over 20 million views as of December 2018. According to

the Philippine government website's homepage, this advertisement campaign is responsible for bringing in 4.7 million visitors from 2013-2015<sup>2</sup>. Encountering this online campaign led me to consider what the construction of these advertisements communicated explicitly and implicitly about the people represented in them. This first consideration was concretized as a possible way forward for research the following semester. In the Spring of 2017, I was fortunate enough to be introduced to the works of Edward Said, specifically *Orientalism*, in our Gender & Communication seminar. This was the second event which influenced my decision to embark on this research: to find a connection between the dynamic concepts within *Orientalism* and the discourse created by these specific artifacts.

This project is not only a personal endeavor for curiosity, however. It is important to note here that while the entry point for this research comes from a personal place, the scope of this research reaches beyond my desires to understand Filipino identity construction. The tourism industry employs approximately 5.2 million Filipinos in the Philippines, and that number will continue to grow (Perez, 2017, p. 3). Inbound tourism is incredibly vital to the Philippines economic growth. Therefore, it is a logical extension to research the rhetorical strategies used to persuade travelers to visit the Philippines as they are an essential part of inbound tourism. Another important consideration is that analyzing tourism discourse offers a multitude of possibilities for study. For example, scholars can investigate in which contexts these rhetorical strategies are the most successful, whom the advertisements target, whether they repeat or draw from past rhetorical patterns, gain insight into values held by Filipinos, values desired travelers, and

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.ph/about-the-philippines>

possible prototypes and stereotypes represented in the ads. Overall, examining the discourse and rhetorical strategies from tourism rhetoric offers an opportunity to deconstruct and understand this lucrative industry more in depth, particularly from a perspective which has/is often ignored (Hung, 2017). Analyzing the discourse through a critical lens, in the proper historical context, can also help scholars, researchers, and Filipino/Americans alike understand the complexity that exists within formerly colonized nations and in the identities of colonized subjects.

The Republic of the Philippines has a turbulent history, wrought with more than 300 years of Spanish colonization, and in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, 50 years of U.S. imperialism and occupation (Pomeroy, 1992). However, only part of colonialism & imperialism's goals is executed through military action, economic exploitation, and occupation of foreign lands. In the case of the Philippines, colonialist and imperialist discourse – another necessary tool for successful occupation is a remnant that inextricably continues to be embedded within almost all aspects of Filipino culture (Gutierrez, Gutierrez, & Tiongson, 2006). This thesis encourages a more in-depth, clearer understanding of these cultural remnants through critically examining the rhetorical choices within the advertisement entitled "Anak."

This introductory chapter describes the purpose of this study. Next is the statement of the problem, which positions this thesis as critical postcolonial work, which is lacking in communication scholarship, specifically from a Filipino American perspective. After this, my research questions are stated and described.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Communication Studies have an enormous amount of scholarship that explores the concept of identity and identities. There are also several studies which explore tourism rhetoric and discourse. However, within these studies, discussions about tourism knowledge from a critical point of view are lacking. Even fewer question the source of the knowledge epistemically, leaving much of the research in a Eurocentric realm, without any reflexivity or inclusion of multiple points of view (Wijesinhe, Mira, & Culala, 2018). Essentially, most tourism scholarship comes from white, educated, industrialized, wealthy, and democratic cultures which often fail to see outside the bounds of their privilege (Wijesinhe, Mira, & Culala, 2018). The existing research prioritizes production value of tourism rhetoric over critical research, focusing on what produces commercial success over social or political questions. This thesis pushes these boundaries to prioritize social and political questions in the hopes of working towards problematizing tourism discourse as an extension of Orientalism, promoting a narrow version of Filipino identity.

It is necessary to consider tourism discourse through a critical lens over a commercial or marketing perspective, especially for a group of people such as Filipinos/Filipino Americans, whose histories have been silenced and erased in western spaces for nearly a century (Ocampo, 2016). By “silenced” and “erased,” I mean that the true history of violence that the United States has enacted upon the Philippines is often glossed over in the U.S *and* Philippine history books, or not discussed at all. Much of

Filipino culture centers western and eurocentric values because of the legacy and influence of colonialism (Brody, 2001).

By examining tourism discourse in the Philippines, we further understand and criticize the composition of the tourist gaze specific to Filipino culture (Urry, 1990). Scholars who study tourism discourse, especially in the United States, have centered much of their research on Hawai'i and other Pacific islands, centering their work on the leisurely motivation of the traveler. While this foundational work is very important, more research is needed specifically on the Philippines in tourism studies. To give a voice to the Philippines and Filipino scholarship requires input not only from Filipino American scholars but from critical perspectives that seek to question Eurocentric epistemologies and viewpoints (Chambers & Buzinde 2015). Tourism discourse contains many important points of contact for both the creators of the rhetoric, but also those who consume it. By looking at this specific ad, which is a part of the larger campaign "It's More Fun in the Philippines," we can compare rhetoric already studied and analyzed in the field, and thus understand further how the profound impact of colonialism remains of central importance in tourism rhetoric.

National, ethnic, and cultural identities in a post-colonial world are demonstratively complex. The burden of unpacking and complicating the construction of these identities is an important task which serves to expand the field of Communication Studies. Many influences have shaped and reinforced these identities, including colonialism, dominant tourism discourses, and rhetoric. This research is significant because it investigates the complexity and nuances of the Philippine's postcolonial cultural location as it is constructed in current discourses. This is significant due to the continued political and

military relationship between the Philippines in the United States. (Ileto, 2005).

Garnering an identity that decentralizes the Philippine's relationship to the United States is yet another essential part of the work of research and discourse about the Philippines and the Filipino identity. Connecting Orientalism and postcolonial theory with how identity is created through rhetoric and discourse helps us explore the impact of these confluent factors and can garner an understanding of what it means to negotiate power and identity in a world that has marginalized Filipino history and perspective.

As a Filipina American, I hope that through this research the reader gains a more accurate understanding of the complex layers that influence what it means to be portrayed as a Filipino in the 21<sup>st</sup> century by investigating the ways that Filipinos negotiate and display identity(is) within a broad system of globalism and western influence. This work contributes to the fight against the miseducation of the Filipino, as well as the harmful lasting impacts of colonialism (Constantino & Mézáros, 1978).

Therefore, to properly examine the previously discussed problems this thesis answers the following research questions:

RQ 1: What rhetorical strategies does the commercial "Anak" use to construct the "ideal" Filipino identity?

RQ 2: Does the artifact re-inscribe, reproduce, and "Orientalize" Filipinos and the Philippines?

A review of literature follows which contextualizes and historicizes in its first section *Foundations of (Filipino) Identity* then introduces foundational postcolonial theory as it applies to the Philippines. *Speaking Taglish* describes the complexity of the Filipino identity concerning the concept of Homi Bhaba's hybridity. Lastly, the review of

the literature concludes with a section discussing why investigating tourism discourse is an important job for communication studies, in *The Case for Tourism Discourse*.

#### **Foundations of (Filipino) identity.**

"Filipinos have spent 300 years in the convent, and 50 years in Hollywood." This quote is a humorous and common phrase among Filipinos. The phrase, of course, referring to Philippine's long history with colonization first by Spain, then by the United States in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This phrase represents much more than a colloquial reference to Philippine's history. It speaks to the unique experiences and histories which influence what it means to be a Filipino; to the essential historicizing of Filipino identity within the frameworks of colonialism and imperialism.

It is crucial to more broadly understand the definition of colonialism, especially as it applies to the Philippines. Colonialism is the practice of domination involving the subjugating of one people by another using religious, military, and political force (Kohn & Reddy, 2017). Colonialism and imperialism are different but often happen in the same places. Historically, colonialism and imperialism are closely related, but it is essential to understand the difference between them. Colonialism is typically thought of as a settler-based phenomenon, whereas imperialism is more commonly associated with political force and power from a distance through economic and political means. In the case of the Philippines, both colonialism and imperialism are a central part of the nation's history and culture as it is for many colonized countries. Citing different instances of colonialism helps better conceptualize colonialism and its lasting impact. For example, Spain colonized much of North and South America in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries, and because of this, numerous cultural influences are remaining such as Spanish language use,

religious values, and cultural practices (Kohn & Reddy, 2017). Colonialism involves a complete invasion of a different group of people and is one of the most important shaping factors of many cultures today. There are many functions and systems which are a part of colonialism, one of the most important of them being the system of whiteness.

It is critical to discuss and unpack whiteness as it relates to colonialism, as it is a part of colonialism's influence and impact. Alfred Lopez (2005) discusses the multiple views of whiteness as different scholars have critically conceptualized it. Lopez states that some such as Henry Louis Gates and Kwame Appiah desire the elimination of racial categories entirely, while others such as Dire, Ross, Chambers, Nakayama, and Krizek argue for the explicit naming of whiteness in order to critique how whiteness perpetuates its power. Both schools of thought agree that the racial category of "white" is a social construct designed to perpetuate racial hierarchy with whiteness at the top, associating whiteness with intelligence, wealth, superiority, but most of all normalcy (Lopez, 2005, p. 2). Whiteness evades specific definition, (Nakayama & Krizek, 1995) which is part of its power and lasting cultural impact—if we think of whiteness as the "default," everything and everyone else becomes an "other." European colonialism was a white, explicitly and implicitly, racist endeavor to subjugate and take advantage of colonized nations labor, land, and capital (Lopez, 2005, p.3). Whiteness is an inseparable factor in European, and by extension, U.S. colonization. Therefore, understanding that whiteness is an inseparable part of colonialism is necessary to grasp the full impact of colonization in the Philippines. In other words, colonization is an amalgam of different systems and tools working together to subjugate a group of people, and whiteness is one of the central tools.

Colonialism & imperialism are inextricably sewn into the fabric of Filipino history and identity. It is even in the name we use today—what was before colonization a nameless collection of islands (according to western standards of discovery) with hundreds of different tribes and settlers from across Southeast Asia and the Pacific, became and remains the Republic of the Philippines after Spain's King Philip (Gutierrez, Gutierrez, & Tiongson, 2006). With such history comes a unique combination of aspects to create identity. While Spain colonized most of North and South America, the Philippines was the biggest geographic and populous by far of only four countries in Asia to be colonized by Spain, giving the country roots spanning from Europe to Guam (Pomeroy, 1992).

The questioning and interrogating of the complexities of what defines Filipinos has been the most dominant theme of Filipino cultural scholarship over the past 25 years. While Filipino scholarship has many influences, much of its foundation is grounded on Edward Said's arguments in *Orientalism* (1978). Through investigating the intersections of meaning and influence of tourism rhetoric, the “binds” which hold the advertisement campaign together can be better understood, as well as their impact on how Filipino identity is communicated and valued in Filipino culture at home and abroad. Through connecting relevant scholarship on the constructions of postcolonial theory, Filipino identity, the connections between whiteness, hybridity, and colonialism create the argument for the importance of tourism discourse. Specifically, this research answers whether or not “Anak” re-Orientalizes, re-colonizes, and reinstates an oppressive and limiting version of Filipino identity through tourism rhetoric.

Perhaps one of the most influential writings of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was Edward Said's *Orientalism*. Said used the term to describe a former field of study which considered those who studied the 'Orient,' but also argued that the phrase represented an entire body of discourse about the 'Orient.' This discourse was foundational to the "Othering" that the West had done and does to the 'Orient,' or the "Eastern" world. While his works largely explored the themes and stereotypes which applied to the middle east, the concepts described in *Orientalism* have also been applied to virtually any context in which colonization has taken place by western and/or European forces, as *Orientalism* should be thought of as an entire discourse of its own (Said, 1978). Said argues that it is because of the binaries created within *Orientalism* that the West was able to affirm and center its own identity as superior.

Working in concert with *Orientalism*, David Spurr's "The Rhetoric of Empire" (1993) worked within the framework of *Orientalism* to assess the specific rhetorical practices used within literature written about the "Orient" in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Spurr's focus was to categorize specific Orientalist and colonialist rhetoric, grouping specific literature under themes such as "surveillance rhetoric," "aestheticizing rhetoric," "debasement rhetoric," and "eroticization rhetoric" to name just a few of the categories explored in this work (Spurr, 1993). Most interdisciplinary tourism knowledge which has been produced and is funded today focuses mainly on marketing and commercialization, as this kind of work is valued within the system of capitalism (Wijesinghe, Mura, & Culala 2018). Only recently have the lenses of *Orientalism* been applied to tourism discourse, and even more rare in the context of tourism to the Philippines.

Orientalist and colonial discourse can be observed in early 20<sup>th</sup> century writings and mass media about Filipinos and the Philippines. Understanding the historical construction of the Filipino is vital foundational work that must be done to consider its possible influence on today's tourism discourse. One of the most instrumental pieces which historically helped to shape the U.S.-Philippine dynamic and even influenced U.S. foreign policy was Katherine Mayo's *The Isles of Fear: The Truth About the Philippines*, published in 1925. Joseph and Kavoori (2007) used Spurr's framework of colonial discourse to locate key themes within Mayo's work which align with and produced Orientalist rhetoric about the Philippines. In Mayo's work, which in this case reflected her time spent in the Philippines, she describes the Philippines and Filipinos in traditionally Orientalist ways, othering and stereotyping the "unclean, lazy" Filipino and asserting that the U.S. had a "moral obligation" to "save" the Philippines and Filipinos from themselves (Mayo, 1925). Such rhetoric is placed under two main categories of Spurr's rhetorical definitions, the first being "debasement rhetoric."

Debasement rhetoric contains themes such as racist tropes and associating the subject of study or observation with "filth and defilement." Mayo's assertions that Filipinos are lazy, gullible, and untrustworthy are all examples of what Spurr describes as debasement rhetoric. The second category, and most important in the case of imperialism is "affirmation rhetoric." Affirmation rhetoric can be thought of as "the white man's burden." It is most influential in this case because this rhetoric offers justification for imperialism and colonization, and the centering of whites and whiteness as the superior "race." Mayo employs this category by arguing that the United States should stay in the Philippines and help establish a democratic government in the name of "democracy and

decency,” also a way to rhetorically subvert Filipinos, centering and hierarchizing whiteness. This was a powerful and influential piece of literature which is an example of Orientalism at work in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

During this time in history, there were hundreds of magazines and newspaper articles written about the Philippines, most of which depicted Filipinos as barbaric, wily, violent, and belligerent, emphasizing disease and poverty (Espiritu, 2003, p. 110). Another important theme central to these types of debasement rhetoric align with traditional racist anti-black rhetoric. According to Yen Le Espiritu,

White American soldiers in the Philippines used many of the same epithets to describe Filipinos as they used to describe African Americans, including ‘niggers,’ ‘black devils,’ and ‘gugus’...If we positioned Filipino/American history within the traditional immigration paradigm, we would miss the ethnic and racial intersections between Filipinos and Native Americans and African Americans as groups similarly affected by the forces of Manifest Destiny. (Espiritu, 2003, p.112)

The photograph below is from the front page of an 1899 edition of *The Boston Sunday Globe*, a newspaper. It is also a precise example of how whiteness works as a strategic rhetoric (Nakayama & Krizek, 1994) within different systems to rhetorically subject and degrade nonwhites, thus sustaining a racial hierarchy. Epifanio San Juan (1996) cites this as another example of debasement and affirmation rhetoric common at the time. The graphic draws upon similar anti-black and anti-indigenous American tropes, arguing that U.S intervention would mean the Filipino could exchange the “war club with a baseball

bat,” and also stating “his old habit of running amuck will aid greatly on the football field.”



*Figure 1.* A news clipping from *The Boston Sunday Globe*, 1899. Retrieved from: The Philippine temptation: dialectics of U.S.—Philippines literary relations by E San Juan Epifanio

These depictions of Filipinos in the media emphasized a lack of civilization, “odd customs, and contaminated blood” (Brody, 2001, p. 63). While this rhetoric is also categorized within Spurr’s colonialist rhetorical descriptions, these media depictions are also in alignment with Said’s assertion that Orientalist discourses serve imperialist purposes. While these explicitly racist tropes of Filipinos may not be used or seen in today’s tourism discourse in the same manner, it is crucial to note that these historical works were incredibly powerful and influential, and the effects of such discourse are not merely erased from history, they simply change shape (Constantino, 1978). Orientalism,

colonialist discourse, and their influence on depictions of the Philippines and Filipinos from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century prove to be a foundational standpoint to understanding issues surrounding the development of the Philippines as a nation and 21<sup>st</sup>-century Filipino identity. While much of the discourse of today does not initially appear so vividly racist, stereotypical, or violent, the next section will interrogate how colonialist discourse continued to be a prevalent theme far into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as investigate how this discourse affected constructions of Filipino identity.

Colonialism has insidious goals to completely change the physical and cultural landscape to benefit the colonizer. In the case of the Philippines, after a combined 350 years of colonization, to say that colonial mindset is an influence on Filipino identity is a vast understatement. How Filipino's view themselves as well as how the rest of the world views Filipinos is undeniably linked to the historical relationship with the United States and with colonialism (Nadal, 2009). Renato Constantino describes this struggle as the struggle for identity and consciousness (1978). His work connects the remnants of Spanish colonialism to U.S. colonialism, stating that "The Spanish legacy of ignorance made it easier for the Americans to carry out their process of mis-education" (Constantino, 1978, p. 36). This legacy of ignorance is a central theme to Constantino's research, connecting Filipino identity to the concept of "consciousness," relating Filipino identity to a historical lack of awareness of Philippine's history with colonialism and imperialism. This lack of consciousness, as Constantino argues, led to an "Americanized consciousness" in the early to the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, (Constantino, 1978, p. 65) in which Filipinos admired, adored, and aspired to be associated with and act like, all things

American. This, of course, was made possible by the exploitation of an already colonized country and the elimination of many resistance groups and movements.

The Philippine-American war is said to have left anywhere from 500,000 to 1 million Filipinos dead at the hands of the United States military, although numbers are contested due to the systemic erasure of historical evidence on behalf of the United States war effort (Constantino, 1968). Efforts to erase historical evidence are seen in Iletto's (2005) assessment of President George W. Bush's rhetorical strategies during the Iraq invasion. In Iletto's research, he highlights the phrases in President Bush's speech to Filipino congressional leaders in efforts to gain support for the war effort. Iletto states that the President used phrases such as "joint struggle" and compared past Filipino struggles with colonization to current "tyrants and oppressors" in Iraq. Bush then proceeded to describe three major wars that the Philippines fought. Iletto points out that Bush chose not to mention the Philippine-American war, which Iletto argues paints an incomplete picture—one that purposefully erases the experience of the Filipino-American war from cultural memory for both the United States but especially the Philippines, to gain support for the invasion of Iraq (Iletto, 2005). This may seem irrelevant to tourism discourse at first, but it is important to note that all instances of attempted erasure or selective memory have the potential to affect current discourse harmfully (Pomeroy, 1992).

This strategy is almost a century old and is described in Constantino's writings as harmful myths which deeply ingrained a sense of American exceptionalism and a sense that Americans were "friends to the Filipinos" into the Filipino consciousness. The rhetorical strategies linking America to independence, economic freedom, and power had and have long-lasting effects on Filipino identity, making it such that Filipino identity for

the past century has been linked to an exclusive relationship to the United States (Constantino, 1978). This relationship has become embedded into the fabric of Filipino identity and is theorized and explored in the next section which covers Filipino perspective and hybridity.

### **Speaking taglish.**

Homi Bhabha's concept of hybridity (1994) is an extension and argument expanding upon the binaries found within Said's *Orientalism*. Bhabha broadly argues that because Orientalism creates static binaries of oppressor and oppressed, colonizer and colonized, essential identities which lie in the "in between," such as those whose identities are from two or three or four different backgrounds, are left out of the construction of identity (Bhabha, 1994). Hybridity is a name for a "strategic reversal" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 113) of binary and power related identities, asserting that an individual can subvert an oppressive colonial system by identifying with two or more cultures and identities, thus disintegrating and pushing against the notion of homogenized culture linked to identity-based hierarchies. Hybridity, according to Bhabha, "... intervenes in the exercise of authority not merely to indicate the impossibility of its identity but to represent the unpredictability of its presence" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 114). If hybrid identities are comprised of a mixture of different cultural backgrounds and power dynamics and refuse to take part in the binary oppositions which Orientalism creates, then the Filipino identity certainly fits into this category evidenced by the very name of "Filipino."

For Filipinos, hybridity is not only an act of resistance or subversion from categories such as colonizer/colonized. Having a hybrid identity was and is an act of necessity and survival, and historically is exemplified by numerous events and accounts.

For example, Jose Rizal, one of the most famous figures for the Filipino nationalist movement in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, famously wrote about the pleasures of being mistaken for a Japanese man on a trip to Paris in 1882 (Rafael, 2000). The story goes, that Rizal was touring a museum in Paris with a group of distinguished world leaders when the group stopped at a Japanese painting. The other European leaders then asked him to explain the painting to them, and Rizal complied, crafting a false story on the spot, thoroughly enjoying and relishing in the thought of being mistaken for a non-Filipino.

That Rizal could imagine himself to be Japanese, even momentarily, attests to the fictionality and malleability of national identity...Rizal appears to be saying that he could have been Japanese—as in fact, most Europeans thought he was—which meant that he need not merely be a colonized subject of Spain. (Rafael, 2000, p. 107)

Hybridity and its relationship to Filipino identity are not only culturally passed down, but officially regulated, as is referenced in the story above, but also through systemically elected officials. More examples of this hybridity include the percentage of government officials who are and historically have been mestizo/a<sup>3</sup>, that the official languages of the Philippines are English and Tagalog, and not exclusively native languages such as Ilocano, Hiligaynon, Cebuano, or Pangasinan. Hybridity has deep roots in colonialism and come from the ambivalence of the colonizer. This construction of hybrid identity works by concentrating the symbolic capital, such as language, affinity for western

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<sup>3</sup> mestizo person is a person of mixed race, and in the context of the Philippines are often higher in the social hierarchy and associated with being lighter in skin tone.

ideals, etc. necessary for the projection of nationhood (in this case any attributions which are close to whiteness) in the hands of those in power. The people in power have historically been linked to the revolution against Spain and war against the United States, and often worked hand in hand with the United States regime (Rafael, 2000). So, hybridity is more than a cultural remnant—hybridity for Filipinos is a systemic part of the construction of their own identity.

Filipino identity is a colonial conception. There are no "indigenous Filipinos." Although there are indigenous tribes and peoples who lived on the same land which we call the Philippines Spain gave today, such as the Moro, Igorot, and Malay people, the name and homogenized category of "Filipino" comes from Spanish colonial times as a signifier of power. To be 'Filipino' signified a certain class of people with a connection to Spain, whose King Philipp originally colonized the land (Contantino, 1978). Linking Bhabha's concept of hybridity to Filipino identity is essential to understanding how Filipinos relate to their identity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To be Filipino, to think of the connection to the nation of the Philippines is in itself a hybrid act because national identity is based on the past relationship to colonization. Tracing individual, familial Filipino roots will eventually lead any modern-day Filipino to many spots on the world map practically but also lead to a long historical list of a multitude of cultural influences alongside indigenous history. To be a Filipino is to have and perform a hybrid identity by default.

Hybridity is a complex and fluid theory which can at times, be challenging to pinpoint and describe. The next section of this paper formulates an argument for the

relevance of tourism rhetoric as a site where identity can be discovered, including sites for the exploration of hybridity and Filipino identity.

**A case for tourism rhetoric.**

Before the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, traveling (not yet "tourism") was an opportunity afforded through employment or discovery. Rarely was the desire to travel associated with leisure and extravagance (MacCannell, 2013, p. 12). It was only in the aftermath of World War II that traveling, and tourism became entire industries of their own. Many lower and middle-class citizens in the United States and Europe (mostly white males) traveled across the world to fight in World War II. Ironically, this international opportunity is what prompted an exponential increase and creation of the industry known as tourism. After the war ended, the economic benefits of war and international relations remained, and thus, an industry was born.

As this industry has grown in the past 75 years, so have the cultural ramifications of this practice and performance of tourism and traveling. Traveling and the conceptualization of what this means for different people and cultures carries with it kind of culture based on the tourists and traveler's desire. Williams (1998) states that Travel Culture is "...a field primarily of anthropology and sociology, but also a perspective on history, a metaphor for the human psychological 'passage,' and when human beings are looked at in aggregate, rather than as individuals, it is a philosophy or metaphysics" (Williams, 1998, p. 13). This argument claims that through studying the motives of people who travel or are a tourist across the world, we may gain insight to specific cultures which these people travel to, as well as what the motivations are for different groups of people to travel and "consume cultures" (Desmond, 1999, p. 117).

This assertion supports and expands how Orientalism and postcolonial theories can be applied practically onto the philosophies of traveling. If travel culture is a perspective of history as Williams states, then scholars who wish to understand different cultures concerning their past with colonialism can and should look to the practice of travel and the artifacts involved with travel and tourism as sites of important cultural communication. Tourism is more than entertainment and leisure. Through the study of tourism and travel rhetoric, scholars can discern the essential parts of any culture which are valuable to the tourist, but also to the destination which they belong (Desmond, 1999).

While the field of studying travel is vast, the literature which unpacks travel and tourist rhetoric is only just emerging as a major field of academic investigation. Studying travel in the academy has, historically, been through the lens of anthropologists and ethnographers who wish only to observe and describe communication phenomenon of any given culture "objectively," and not with the desire to ascribe meaning or to critique these cultural differences or observations (MacCannell, 2013). Historically, this research has used rhetorical strategies which focus on difference, and the "other," to ascribe difference and explain the researcher. This is a practice which aligns with Orientalist rhetoric because to claim objectivity by pointing out the difference is to admit that there must be a "starting point" for the researcher, or something that is *not* the "other" to describe any given phenomenon. Frequently, these differences carry Orientalist themes.

This academic practice is translated onto the experience of modern tourism. As Desmond states, "Many, many people are willing to pay a lot of money to see bodies which are different from their own, to purchase the right to look, and to believe that

through visual consumption they have come to know something that they did not before” (Desmond, 1999, p. 8). Tourism as an industry relies and thrives on the same belief in the “objective” traveler that traditional anthropologists and ethnographers have relied upon to create and justify their research. Essentially, tourism rhetoric centralizes ideas of the “Other,” and the industry of tourism profits from marketing difference and specific desirable identities to different parts of the world. Most tourism rhetoric investigates what appeals to western, white, male travelers and why that is so.

Desmond’s argument that travelers and tourists desire the consumption of new knowledges is where the connection between identity and tourism rhetoric can be investigated. While there are varied kinds of tourism, such as cultural tourism, heritage tourism, adventure tourism, and even gastronomic tourism (Berger, 2013, p. 4), all tourism relies on marketing or emphasizing some form of authenticity which is unique to any given destination (Desmond, 1999). Authenticity is one of the essential concepts in the study of culture and tourism rhetoric. Authenticity as it applies to cultural studies and travel studies can be understood as any specific material or embodied difference. The concept of authenticity is central to the success of the tourism industry. If there is no authenticity or authentic experiences to be found within a culture which differs from the travelers, why would a person want to exert so much effort, time, and financial investment into traveling? Berger (2013) argues that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is not really tourism or the desire to see places that are unfamiliar to the tourist that is the world’s “#1 industry,” but the desire to consume different authenticities and reaffirm one’s sense of self and identity—in this case, white, western identity, that is the world’s most lucrative

business. This desire undoubtedly stems from the same binary oppositions and rhetorical constructions present in centuries of discourse within Orientalism.

The study of travel cannot be a collection of material and embodied experiences, however. If this were the case, tourism studies would be arguably seen as a continued, or expanded, version of Orientalist rhetoric, and from the critical perspective, would continue to enact violence and perpetuate imperialism. As MacCannell states, “tourism is not just an aggregate of merely commercial activities; it is also an ideological framing of history, nature, and tradition; a framing that has the power to reshape culture and nature to its own needs” (Desmond, 1999, p. 17). In this way, McCannell’s definition of tourism is the justification for choosing tourist rhetoric as a site of identity in the Philippines.

For these reasons, the study of travel and tourism rhetoric is essential to the question of Filipino identity in this research. The Philippines has not been a "typical" extravagant tourist destination for very long, relatively speaking, and has been regarded a developing nation by the west for the better half of the last century, likely due to the nation’s relationship to the United States. It is through understanding staged authenticity that we can learn to understand and theorize what Filipino national identity is and means. Staged authenticity (MacCannell, 2013) is the idea that within tourism, travelers and tourists mostly come into contact with a form of intentionally crafted and historically situated version of culture which may or may not fully and accurately represent that culture. Analyzing tourism rhetoric which investigates how and why the Filipino Department of Tourism creates their own staged authenticity is essential to highlight in their versions of staged authenticity which appear in their advertisements from the Department of Tourism. This research investigates what constitutes that staged authenticity and identity

for Filipinos, as well as the ramifications of these discourses for Filipinos. By delving into the theories and constructions of tourism and travel as they pertain to the Philippines, this research identifies the complexities of Orientalism and postcolonial theory as they pertain to the Philippines and the way that Filipino identity is constructed in the commercial “Anak.”

The next chapter discusses the theoretical framework chosen to aid in the analysis of “Anak.” A specific contextual application of colonialism and imperialism in the Philippines is offered, as well as descriptions and applications of postcolonial theory, Orientalism, and the tourist gaze. Next is a discussion of rhetorical criticism, the chosen methodology in which “Anak” is discussed, followed by a description of the method and design used in the thematic choices in the forthcoming analysis.

## **Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework & Methodology**

This chapter first identifies and then briefly summarizes the theoretical traditions which frame this thesis. First, I discuss the origins and core concepts of postcolonial theory, as well as why it is an appropriate theoretical framework for this thesis. Next, I describe why and how the work of Edward Said's *Orientalism* applies to the chosen artifact. Then, this chapter will overview the importance of having a critical perspective while studying tourism discourse and rhetoric, explicitly describing the phenomenon of the tourist gaze. Finally, a discussion of the relevance and importance of my chosen methodology, rhetorical analysis, as well as the strategies which influenced thematic elements

### **Colonialism and Imperialism in the Philippines**

To accurately define postcolonial theory as it applies to this thesis, it is crucial to more broadly understand how colonialism as it applies to the Philippines. Before Spain colonized the Philippines, it was not one unified nation-state. For thousands of years, different groups of people migrated to the archipelago via boats from India, Thailand, the Arabian Peninsula, China, Japan, and various Polynesian islands (Gibson, 2002, p. 777). Portuguese colonizer Ferdinand Magellan in 1521 recorded the first European contact with the archipelago. Thirty years later, after Magellan's death by Mactan<sup>4</sup> forces, Spain sent the viceroy of Mexico to invade Cebu with unmatched military force, and thus began 300 years of colonization by Spain. Colonization is a means of obtaining power and resources using various forces. Spanish colonizers invaded the Philippines with Spanish military force as well as cultural forces like the Catholic church. For three centuries, the

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<sup>4</sup> Mactan is an island located in the southern region of the Philippines.

newly named archipelago of the Philippines was a Spanish colony, entirely governed and infiltrated by Spanish rule (Gibson, 2002).

By 1898, many political situations had changed in the world. The most relevant of them was that the United States was a new global power, looking to defeat Spain in the Spanish-American war, effectively replacing the power in Spanish colonies such as Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippines. Before the U.S landed in the Philippines to help them fight the Spanish, the Philippines had already begun their fight for independence, largely defeating the Spanish on their own. U.S. recognition of this hard-fought independence was expected but was returned with an exclusion from the Treaty of Paris, which ended conflict among Spain's other colonies. Spain sold the Philippines to the U.S. in the Treaty in exchange for \$20 million, and as could be expected, this was not received well by the Filipino forces who had already declared independence from Spain. This event marked the beginning of the Philippine-American war, which would eventually end after four years of brutal guerilla warfare, claiming upwards of 1 million Filipino lives at the hands of the U.S. military (Pomeroy, 1992).

The differences between the way that Spain implemented political power over the Philippines and the U.S implemented power are very similar but warrant some differentiating. Like Spain, military force was (and remains) present in the Philippines two large U.S Naval bases. Many protestant Christian organizations were government funded to travel to the newly annexed land to proselytize and educate the native people. Unlike Spain, the U.S. did not permanently move any population to the Philippines, as their aim remained economical and political. The choice to annex the Philippines was not a popular one, either. Many anti-imperialists criticized the U.S for this move, which is

another reason why full colonization did not occur. For another 50 years, the United States would govern and rule the Philippines through military force and political influence. It was not until the Tydings-McDuffie Act<sup>5</sup> was passed in 1935 that the Philippines finally began a road towards full independence, and slowly pulled away from U.S. imperial rule, which finally happened on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1946 (Gibson, 2002, p. 778).

Understanding the specific history of the Philippines is crucial when discussing postcolonial theory as it relates to this thesis, because essentializing groups experience with colonization without strategy can lead to dangerous assumptions and erasure of important aspects which help scholars to better understand racism, power, globalization, and geopolitical relations in specific contexts, but also worldwide. Postcolonial theory is not just the study of historical events after colonialisms "end," however, but a practice of unpacking and understanding interconnected events which influence cultural discourses and communication.

### **Postcolonial Theory: Orientalism & the Subaltern**

Postcolonial theory is dense, and at times difficult to grasp because of the broad reach of the practice of colonialism and the many theorists who contribute to the field. I find it helpful to use a communication studies scholar whose work has come in the wake of the creation of postcolonial theory, Raka Shome. Postcolonial theory defined by Shome (1998) is a practice of critically analyzing the impact of colonialism throughout history, working towards challenging and revealing Euro-centricity in western discourses, whether in academia or public debate (Shome, 1998, p. 41). Postcolonial theory is

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<sup>5</sup> The Tydings-McDuffie Act, also known as the Philippine Independence Act, was a U.S. federal law which stated that the Philippine colony would work towards independence over ten years.

influenced by post-structuralist and critical thought which pushes us to ask questions about power in order to understand better colonialisms lasting impact. For example, who benefits the most from colonialist rhetoric? Who is creating knowledge and what do those pieces of knowledge reinforce? Postcolonial theory is an ongoing journey towards understanding the shifting impacts of colonialism on the affected populations.

For this thesis, I am focusing my analysis based on two foremost theorists' central contributions to postcolonial theory: Gayatri Spivak's "Can the subaltern speak?" (1988) and Edward Said's "Orientalism" (1978). Both pieces of work are foundational texts in the field of postcolonial theory with many contributions. This thesis focuses on both theorist's critique of western knowledge production concerning what Spivak calls the subaltern and Said calls the Orient.

Central to this research is *Orientalism* by Edward Said (1978). Aside from being one of if not the foundational text of postcolonial theory, *Orientalism* is also a framework which draws meaningful connections between knowledge production, colonialism, and Eurocentric biases within the academy and cultural discourse. Said's work is based on his observations and critique of the western academic field which concern cultures of the 'Orient,' which traditionally referred to cultures in the Middle East, North Africa, and South/East Asia. The opposite phrase, Occident, refers to the "West," or Europe and the United States. According to Said, "the relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony..." (Said, 1978, p. 5). Said argues that western knowledge's presumption to be "pure" knowledge about the Orient automatically creates a divide between "us" and "the Other" a binary which has the purpose of affirming the West's own identity as superior. This

assumption permitted western knowledge to be the stakeholder on "truth" for cultures and peoples which they could remain "objective observers." There are multiple layers to this dynamic, but the first one can be seen plainly in the names given to the West and the East by colonizers. Beyond just being a descriptor, "Occident," refers to the part of the sky where the sun sets, and "Orient," refers to the part of the sky where the sun rises, the East. The symbolism here represents the West--Europe and the U.S--as a forward-thinking, future-oriented culture, and the "Orient" as uncivilized, exotic, outdated, and barbaric. This Orientalist binary between East and West is one of the main themes expressed in "Anak" analyzed in Chapter 3.

While Said's (1978) work focuses mostly on western knowledge produced about the Middle East and does not primarily discuss knowledge produced about East Asian or South/East Asian countries, the principles of what constitutes as Orientalism is relevant to the Philippines' history with colonialism and the West, both with Spain and the United States. Said argues that Orientalists, a name for people who studied the Orient, maintained their power through "flexible *positional* superiority" (Said, 1978, p.7) meaning that those who created the knowledge about the Orient occupied as many influential positions of power possible which would be relevant to disseminating and creating knowledge about the Orient/al.

The scientist, the scholar, the missionary, the trader, the soldier, was in, or thought about, the Orient because *he could be there*, or could think about it, with very little resistance on the Orient's part. Under the general heading of knowledge of the Orient, and within the umbrella of western hegemony over the Orient during the period from the end of the eighteenth century, there emerged a

complex Orient suitable for the academy, for display at a museum, for reconstruction in the colonial office, for theoretical illustration in anthropological, biological, linguistic, racial, and historical thesis about mankind and the universe.

.. (Said, 1978, p. 7)

Said argues for and necessarily situates Orientalism in the realms mentioned above, arguing that these positionalities occupied by western thought then, in turn, create discourse based on western constructions of the Orient. This rhetoric then spills out into the knowledge that is produced in the academy, literature, art, and culture. *Orientalism's* arguments are core components of postcolonial theory, giving way for us to examine culture through this critical lens.

The other chief work I employ in this theoretical framework is Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. One of Spivak's central arguments in "Can the subaltern speak?" (1988) concerns the problematic nature of western knowledge production about the subaltern. Spivak defines the subaltern as people, (mainly women), with no access to institutional power or social mobility. What she calls the 'subaltern' may or may not apply to the Filipino condition depending on the specificity of the subject. What does remain applicable from her arguments to this context is her argument regarding the western academic's inability to speak about the Other without enforcing western consciousness upon her.

Spivak (1988) cites the outlawing of the Hindu rite of *Sati* by the British as an example of and metaphor for this inability to 'speak.' One of the most commonly cited phrases from this text is when Spivak describes this act as "white men saving brown women from brown men" (Spivak, 1988, p. 92). Spivak uses the phrase *brown women in*

a dual way to not only represent actual brown women but to represent a culture which is made into an automatic subject, who cannot speak on behalf of themselves because the colonizer made their cultural traditions a crime. All arguments made to outlaw *Sati* portrayed brown women as victims of their own culture, which in turn justified British rule because its justification for imperialism was "saving" brown women. This can also be read as an argument about the way that western discourse operates; by framing *Sati* as a barbaric crime, instead of what Spivak labels a superstition (which all cultures have), imperialism and colonialism become justified in the same way that western knowledges about the Other are justified. By situating the Other, the subaltern, or the Orient as entirely different and backward from the West, they become an object of study.

Ultimately, the answer to Spivak's question, "Can the subaltern speak?" is no, she cannot. She cannot speak for herself if the language she is expected to speak is not her own in the first place. Here Spivak does not mean a literal difference in languages, but the unequal values given to different knowledge production in the West, a core tool used in the colonization of the subaltern, and a fundamental concept in postcolonial theory. This thesis utilizes this argument and applies it to tourism rhetoric and discourse, and more specifically, the construction of the tourist gaze.

There are significant similarities between the justifications for Indian colonization from the British, and the U.S. colonization/imperialism in the Philippines. A primary similarity comes from the work of Katherine Mayo (1925). Mayo, cited earlier in Chapter 1, was the author of *Mother India* and *The Isles of Fear: The Truth About the Philippines*. She makes similar arguments in favor of colonization of both the Indian and Filipino populations. Mayo published her work about the Philippines two years before her

publication of *Mother India*. Both works made similar arguments about colonized peoples, using rhetoric which othered and stereotyped the colonized subjects as lacking civilized value systems, drawing on familiar binary arguments which affirm the West's superior positionality. Mayo's usage of descriptions such as "unclean, lazy" Filipinos contributed to the justification of U.S. imperialism, supporting the idea that the West had a "moral obligation" to "save" the Philippines and Filipinos from themselves, similar to Spivak's usage of the phrase "white men saving brown women from brown men." Similar to Said's argument about western knowledge monopolization, Spivak's assertion that the subaltern cannot genuinely represent themselves or 'speak' without reinforcing colonialism expands upon Said's argument for Occidental vs. Oriental binaries.

### **The Tourist Gaze**

This thesis draws from postcolonial theory and *Orientalism* and intersects both bodies of work with tourism scholarship regarding the construction of the tourist gaze. By doing this, we can better understand the role of the tourist gaze in the maintenance of cultural norms and identities within the advertisement chosen for analysis in this thesis.

Research about tourism and leisure from a sociological and communication standpoint is a unique subject within the academy. Critics argue that the relevance of such research in a world filled with more pressing issues is a misuse of resources (Urry, 1990, p. 2). After all, who does this research benefit but the scholars who research leisure, who tend to be biased towards Eurocentric thought? The exact possibilities are much more extensive than they are currently, but unfortunately, scholarship about tourism discourse and rhetoric often lacks perspective and contribution from nonwhite,

nonwestern, and nontraditional scholars, likely due to its connected roots with Orientalists.

Foundational work by Dean MacCannell (2013) and John Urry (1990) provide contemporary research with useful starting points to analyze tourism discourse and rhetoric, furthering our understanding of why people desire to travel and what the act of travelling fulfills. In this thesis, I assume this foundational work on tourism and leisure as useful, but only by using it through a critical lens. By doing so, we open up a world of possibility in the subject area of not only tourism research but postcolonial and critical theory.

To more fully grasp Urry's theory of the tourist gaze, it is helpful to first briefly explain where the concept of the 'gaze' originates as well as provide a brief example so that we can situate it within the context of tourism. Jacques Lacan, a famous psychoanalyst and literary critic used the phrase 'the gaze' to describe the moment when an infant looks in the mirror for the first time and can differentiate between themselves and their caretaker. According to Lacan, the 'gaze' helps us understand our own identities in relation to the other (Evans, 1996). Perhaps one of the most popular variations/applications of the gaze comes from Laura Mulvey's 1975 essay *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, where she described the phenomenon as it relates to heteropatriarchal depictions of women, calling it the male gaze. The male gaze is seen throughout culture in which portrayals of women emphasize them as sexual objects which serve the purpose of pleasing the male 'gaze.' A broad example of this might be when a woman is pictured in an overtly sexualized manner for an advertisement for a product as benign as a cheeseburger. Eventually, pieces of rhetoric such as this one in

endless contexts impact the way that people construct the idea of a woman because images of women are constantly being repeated to us as sexual objects, thus creating a 'male gaze.'

There are a handful of different 'gazes' or applications of the theory of the gaze across various fields of study. Many of these offshoots prove useful in critical studies, yet the tourist gaze proves the most applicable to this thesis topic, an advertisement designed to entice travelers to visit the Philippines. Tourism is defined using an oppositional explanation, meaning that the act of tourism is one of many leisurely activities based on what society believes is the opposite of organized work or labor. When people seek to engage in tourism, they desire to travel to landscapes which separate them temporarily from their everyday experiences (Urry, 1990). The people and land being traveled to by the tourist then become the recipient of the tourist's gaze, which Urry reminds us is socially constructed through photographs, postcards, films, models, and so on, much like the previously mentioned male gaze (Urry, 1990, p. 3). In the case of this thesis, the social construction of the Philippines and Filipinos happens via the chosen advertisement.

There are many similarities between Urry's analysis of why tourists desire to travel and Said's analysis of why the Orient and Occident are characterized in a binary manner. Urry states that "Tourism results from a basic binary division between ordinary/every day and the extraordinary...people must experience distinct pleasures which involve different senses or are on a different scale from those typically encountered in everyday life" (Urry, 1990, p. 11). Urry's description of what makes the senses feel like they are experiencing something different is mainly visual, which undoubtedly plays an important role in the analysis portion of this project. What he lacks is Said's argument of what

makes the Orient what it is historically depicted as; in other words, how Orientalism influences the binary between the ordinary and extraordinary created through rhetoric. Said describes the Orient as "the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its *cultural contestant*, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the Other...it has helped to define Europe as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience" (Said, 1978, p. 1, emphasis added). Much of Urry's work about the tourist gaze focuses on signs and symbols which create contrast for the tourist. Including the critical viewpoints of postcolonial theory and Orientalism in Urry's tourist gaze contributes to the postcolonial project of uncovering dominant power structures and hegemonic systems. By using the tourist gaze as the third part of this thesis' theoretical framework, we can expand on the tourist gaze and deploy it as a useful tool within postcolonial research.

### **Methodology**

The methodology chosen to answer the research questions of this thesis is a critical rhetorical analysis of the advertisement "Anak," which appeared in a highly successful advertisement campaign called *It's More Fun in the Philippines*. (More about the specifics of the actual artifact will follow in Chapter 3). Using postcolonial theory, *Orientalism*, and the tourist gaze in concert with critical rhetorical analysis continues, expands, and applies the methodologies which these authors used to construct their analysis of different pieces of rhetoric, which in turn, reflect(ed) society's current state of being.

Rhetorical criticism is a long-standing tradition of analysis involving the examination of symbolic artifacts which rhetoric contains within a given text. Heavily

influenced by the works of Kenneth Burke, rhetorical criticism aims to understand the purpose of the rhetorical choices in any given artifact, but also the motivation behind those rhetorical choices (Jaşinski, 2001). In other words, rhetorical criticism works to understand not just what a piece of rhetoric says through metaphor, imagery, or word choice, but what that rhetoric does *outside* of the text; how it influences the broader discourse and culture and is in turn influenced by it as well. Analyzing the advertisement using these critical paradigms is essential to understanding power dynamics within this piece of text. When combined with postcolonial theory, Orientalism, and constructions of the tourist gaze, rhetorical criticism is the methodology and tradition which best fits this project.

This thesis analyzes a video advertisement as its artifact. By using this methodological tradition in concert with the theories discussed above, I hope to answer both of my research questions by analyzing how the rhetoric in this ad communicates messages about Filipino identity symbolically. This is why using critical rhetorical analysis remains essential; it always will be relevant to examine and question systems of power by analyzing rhetoric which comes from those systems of power.

Orientalism is maintained and sustained by discourse and rhetoric. The foundational thought behind this thesis is found in the very argument for Orientalism itself: that “ideas, cultures, histories, cannot seriously be understood or studied without their force, or more precisely their configurations of power, also being studied” (Said, 1978, p. 5). To study tourism discourse through Orientalism and the postcolonial lens is to contribute to current historical and social conditions. To take on this task is to understand further that texts are

a site of power, as well as understand how colonialism continues to reinforce these powers (Shome, 2016).

Rhetorical criticism is a useful way of analyzing rhetoric for this project because of the multifaceted texts present within the advertisement campaign. To analyze only the words used would mean missing out on the myriad of choices to delve into in regard to the physical aspects; landscape choices, physical attributes of actors, music, colors—all of which come together to create the message and must be categorized together to understand as a whole.

I uncover how the choices displayed in the advertisement contribute to a projected Filipino identity through rhetoric. Rhetorical criticism will help answer these critical questions and reveal possible generalizations and patterns which subject Filipinos to stereotypes, which strip humanity and complexity from this crafted sense of identity.

### **Method**

The design and choices in the next chapter were chosen in a fairly straightforward manner, focusing mostly on visual aspects of the commercial. The themes chosen are based on each element within the commercial within those aspects. For example, the first theme I discuss is entitled “The Modern Tourist.” In this section I provide a description of the main character in the commercial. I describe the qualities and visual aspects of “Jack,” such as his skin color, perceived gender and age, among other physical attributes. I also describe Jack in contrast to the other people’s perceived qualities and their appearances in the commercial, including the emotions read on their faces, clothing and ratio of bodies. I do this not to stop after describing what the viewer sees, however. I continue rhetorical analysis through offering them as examples which contextualize why

these aspects and qualities matter in the commercial, and how they reinforce Orientalist rhetoric by drawing upon specific forms of discourse.

Then, there is the dialogue which takes place in the commercial. There are only a few sentences spoken, and one phrase written in the last frame of the commercial. The fact that there is such minimal dialogue makes it that much more important to analyze as a central theme. All dialogue emphasizes one main Filipino quality: hospitality. Included before analysis is an excerpt from an interview which contextualizes why hospitality in particular was chosen as the overall message of the commercial. This inclusion, like other references to connected literature throughout the themes, helps to contextualize as well as historicize the rhetorical strategies in the commercial.

Orientalism relies heavily on binary identities, and these are displayed in the commercial through the emphasis on difference. The themes crafted are a result of the common goals found in rhetorical criticism, postcolonial theory, and Orientalism, in that both fields of study require the researcher to consider all aspects of a piece of rhetoric as persuasive and intentional. By intentional, it can mean that the author consciously chose to reaffirm Orientalist rhetoric, but more likely in this case, the intentionality stems from centuries of discourse which crafted and continues to affirm specific ideologies, centering western identity, and creating an effectively persuasive commercial about the Philippines.

### **Chapter 3: Analysis**

The goal of this chapter is to present, describe, and critique the recurring themes found in the video advertisement. Having a better understanding of the strategies used situates the advertisement in the broad field of tourism discourse and specifically in the context of the Philippine post-colonial location. It also aids in answering the question(s) of identity construction of Filipinos. There are many moving parts, so breaking each one of them apart and describing them is necessary to understand better how the tourist gaze is created, how that, in turn, impacts Filipino identity, and how these commercials qualify as Orientalist discourse.

#### **Choice of Artifact**

As previously mentioned, my analysis is on a video advertisement entitled "Anak" from the campaign entitled "It is More Fun in the Philippines." This campaign effort began in 2012, financially backed by the Philippine Department of Tourism, and has also actively produced new advertisements since. BBDO, one of the world's largest and most successful advertisement consulting firms was involved in creating the concept of the campaign itself and continues to work on the campaign. BBDO originated in New York City and is now present in 82 countries worldwide<sup>6</sup>. The campaign contained about two dozen varying kinds of media released in the Philippines, Southeast Asia, Europe, and the United States, including photographic billboards to video commercials. The commercial I chose to focus on is one of the most popular ones, with an estimated 3.5 million views on YouTube as of January 2019.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://bbdo.com/about>

The marketing campaign as a whole landed third among the world's best according to the WARC 100, a global annual ranking of marketing campaigns in 2014. The rankings are based on performance, effectiveness, and strategy. The WARC 100 is designed to be a benchmark for commercial creativity. In 2016, case studies done by the Philippine Department of Tourism found that the campaign contributed to an increase of incoming tourists within months of releasing the most recent video advertisements (Gatdula, 2014).

The CEO of BBDS, the leading consultant company for the campaign is a man named Tony Harris, a white British advertisement mogul who also works closely with other country's tourism industries. While the funding for this marketing campaign is the Department of Tourism of the Philippines, it is significant that the idea behind this marketing campaign was headed by a European man with a European and U.S. American led team. Here I include an excerpt from an illuminating interview done with Tony Harris by Robin Hicks of Mumbrella Asia, an online magazine, and WARC regarding the inspiration of the campaign for further context.<sup>7</sup> The following quote is the answer Tony Harris gave when asked why the marketing team chose to focus on the concept of "fun" for the campaign:

If you talk to people about the Philippines, if that have any perception at all, it is really negative. Traffic, crime, corruption, guns, Imelda Marcos' shoes...they threw The Beatles out. Nobody throws The Beatles out, but they did. So if they have a perception, it's either neutral, or negative. But if you ask them about Filipinos—now don't forget, there's 10 million Filipinos, and 10% of the

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<sup>7</sup> For the full interview: <https://youtu.be/Pxj9Wi-JxxM>

population works abroad...probably even here in Cannes, you'll find those...you'll find them beavering about somewhere. People's impression of Filipinos is the complete opposite: Good-humored, happy, hospitable, kind, generous, funny, great company...so if you do not want to be observational and instead do something more interactive, use the people...Focusing on the one thing which you do better than anybody else is the only path to greatness and we looked at the good humor and we said well we need to be competitive. We need to say why we're better. And that's a really interesting issue for Filipinos for whom boastfulness is almost a crime. "Hiya" is what they call it. It's kind of like a humility that you must show all the time. So saying you're better than everyone else makes them feel very uncomfortable. So the idea of being competitive was very difficult—at this point I had pointed out I come from a country called Great Britain, so it wasn't really my problem saying that. Anyway, so you take those things, being interactive, being competitive, and keeping it about the human interest and at the heart of it, you got fun. Because you don't have fun on your own, you have fun with other people. So it kind of encapsulated what we felt we wanted to communicate. Most importantly, if you've been to the Philippines or dealt with Filipinos, it's true! It's kind of what their entire life goal is about; your family has fun together, you have fun with your friends, you go out and earn your money so you can come have fun. You know, I wish they did sit around and worry about their pensions and futures more, but it isn't. It's about fun. Or in fact, more fun.

Postcolonial praxis and rhetorical analysis require contextualization to grasp the meaning of discourse fully. Including this portion of the interview highlights the goals of the campaign itself from the person who seems to be in charge of it. Even more critical to unpack is the European/Western influence on the campaign, further strengthening the argument that this campaign fits in the spectrum of Orientalist discourse. In the following analysis portion of this chapter, I provide a thorough examination of the commercial "Anak."

### **Analysis**



*Figure 2.* A screen capture from the 0:05 of "Anak." Retrieved from Tourism Philippines YouTube.

This commercial was described in the introduction portion of this thesis, but I will briefly summarize the commercial again for convenience sake. The opening scene is of a man visiting the Philippines on a pristine ocean and a small island. Boat workers lead him onto a raft which then takes him to a hidden spot on the island. He sees a man feeding the fish, and the camera pans underwater to show beautiful, colorful coral reefs and large schools of fish, creating a beautiful scene. The tourist walks onto the island, gazing at the beautiful scenery. As he strolls along the water, he happens upon a Filipina woman and her two grandchildren. The children are helping her put food together on a table. The

woman hands the tourist a piece of "ube" wrapped in a banana leaf, a traditional Filipino dessert made from bright purple yam. She says to the man, "The fish are eating, so should you, anak." The traveler proceeds to take and eat the dessert, thanking the woman. He then turns to the same man who helped him get to the island, who have been feeding the fish, and asks him what "anak" means. The man responds, "It means *my child*." Jack, the traveler, gazes back at the woman with adoration on his face, and the scene changes back to a panoramic view of the island. The screen then flashes with text reading, "When you're with Filipinos, you're with family."-Jack Ellis, traveler.

### **The modern tourist.**

One of the initial markers of the tourist gaze is found in the qualities of the main character of this commercial, 'Jack.' Jack is a fairly young, white, blonde-haired, blue-eyed man. He is dressed in attire which suggests he is "on an adventure:" beige khaki clothing, a handkerchief around his neck, stuffed-until-bursting backpack. Notably, Jack is alone in this scene. The entire advertisement follows his experience through his viewpoint traveling to the Enchanted River, implying that his perspective is the one the viewer should interpret this experience through. While there is no source which explicitly states that the main audience of this commercial is western tourists, his role as main character implicitly suggests so. This also implies that this type of person, someone like Jack, is the target audience: young, white, "worldly," wealthy, male. These qualities are one part of the created tourist gaze in this commercial, reinforcing Orientalist tropes such as using travel to the East to "find yourself," and traveling for a sense of adventure or authentic experience outside of one's own (western) culture.

Interestingly, the depiction of Jack's experience combines two kinds of the tourist gaze: the romantic gaze, in which the traveler's emphasis is privacy, solitude, and even spiritual experience based on the object of the gaze—in this case, the landscape. The other but more obvious type of tourist gaze depicted here is that of the collective tourist gaze, which emphasizes liveliness, group activity, and a sense of "carnival" (Urry, 1990). This collective gaze is a baseline strategy used to portray Filipinos as a culture which one can visit and have fun, enjoy themselves, and generally find all the qualities desired in what one might consider a good vacation. This is one of the most basic ways this commercial uses this aspect of the tourist gaze to emphasize what Filipinos are in the minds of the west.

The tourist gaze is an important and effective marketing tool for a handful of reasons. Using 'Jack Ellis' is an embodied way to communicate a clear representation of symbolic social status, stemming from constructions of western modernity. Being a tourist is a defining characteristic of being 'modern' (Urry, 1990). Modernity is an important function in this equation of effective tourism marketing because much of modernity in the West is birthed from colonialist notions of what is considered "civilized" and "uncivilized," mundane and novel, everyday and leisure, reflecting the epistemic binaries emphasized in Orientalism. In this way, the character of 'Jack Ellis' not only lets the viewer know that his perspective is the assumed one, but that the perspective of Filipinos is secondary, and crafted from the white, western perspective. Most importantly, it situates the ideal Filipino as subordinate to the western tourist; someone who would be welcoming, hospitable, kind, and not at all suspicious of a

traveler. Jack becomes a visual representation not only of how westerners will be treated if they go to the Philippines, but why: the ideal Filipino is “fun.”

**Visual difference.**

While Jack is being led to the Enchanted River by a group of Filipino men on a “paraw”<sup>8</sup>, their presence and attitudes depict the Filipinos having fun and laughing, which emphasizes a continued sense of collective tourist gaze. Jack’s “tour guide” is putting his arm around him as they exit the paraw, conveying camaraderie and familiarity. This also reinforces the binary character roles in the commercial as explorer versus native, modern tourist versus unskilled laborer.



*Figure 3.* A screen capture from 0:06 of “Anak.” Retrieved from Tourism Philippines YouTube.

There are multiple layers of visual difference presented, which is another important factor in creating the tourist gaze and emphasizing what the “ideal” Filipino is. As they come towards the location, Jack is noticeably the only white person in the shot, surrounded by a group of Filipino men who fill roles as workers or fisherman. Their

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<sup>8</sup> Traditional Filipino sailboat.

purpose in the scene is not only to help Jack get to the location but to add a sense of the authentic tourist experience to the scene through visual difference. According to John Urry, "Tourism results from a basic binary division between the ordinary/everyday and the extraordinary" (Urry, 1990, p. 11). Aside from the landscape, which is discussed below, the visual difference of the main character and the rest of the people around him is clear: one white man among a group of brown Filipino men. It is typical in Orientalist discourse for brown bodies to be used as a marker of the Other, and in this case, the contrast of bodies/skin color does just that. This binary based on skin color and occupation is typical of Orientalist tropes. In this case, if Jack had been accompanied by a tour guide who was non-Filipino, or if he had been in a tourist group with other white travelers, it would interrupt the Orientalist fantasy in which the traveler gets to experience the Orient and Oriental "authentically." For the white traveler, any other person who might appear to be a local might interrupt the fantasy of the Orient (Said, 1978, p. 169). Urry also describes this as a common trait among "conventional" travel rhetoric, citing the lack of black and brown bodies as a part of the construction of the act of traveling itself. He states that

...advertising material produced by holiday companies shows that tourists are white; there are simply no black faces amongst the holiday makers. Indeed, if there are any non-white faces in the photographs it is presumed that they are the 'exotic' natives being gazed upon. (Urry, 1990, p. 142)

The ratio of bodies also plays an essential role in creating the tourist gaze. For example, if Jack had been one of many white tourists or travelers who also looked like him in the scene, the scene might appear more of a "tourist trap," lacking the symbolism

of authenticity and difference to the viewer, thus taking away from the idea that this location is exotic, unique, and therefore worthy of traveling to. Because the ratio is one white body to many brown bodies, the Filipinos depicted in the commercial are mostly at his service and there for his purpose, further reinforcing the binary roles and expectations in the scene as white man traveler, explorer, and Filipino men as helpers, workers, and laborers.

The choice to portray the Filipino people as “helpers” in this commercial is not a surprising one, as it further reinforces the long-held trope of the hospitable Filipino. The Philippines is known for its culture of caregiving, which was and is further enforced by American imperialism and colonialism. Filipino workers are commonly depicted around the world as “hard workers,” or “the friendliest people you’ll ever meet” by sources such as Forbes Magazine (2014) and the CEO of the very company who created this advertisement campaign. On the surface, this may seem complimentary, but the root of the stereotype can be truly dismissive and demeaning. This Orientalist trope is seen in various other “Eastern” cultures, also drawing from the model minority myth (Nadal, 2009). This myth strips humanity and agency away from the identities of the Orientalized, in this case, Filipinos. Framing Filipino workers, yet even more dangerous, Filipino identity as docile and obedient frames them as a non-threatening, consumable product for those who wish to hire them or interact with them. This specific trope again adds to the strength of the tourist gaze of our traveler, Jack, who now sees their purpose as there to serve him and make his experience a welcoming and fun one as opposed to him entering a space that is not his own. It also serves as yet another strategy to describe

to the audience what the ideal Filipino is, and also Orientalizes Filipinos and the Philippines.

**Gender: The woman as nation.**



*Figure 4.* A screen capture from 0:53 of “Anak.” Retrieved from Tourism Philippines YouTube.

Up until this point in the commercial, all characters have been men. The only two women in this advertisement are the elderly Filipina woman and the young girl who is seemingly her grandchild. The lack of women and the placement of them in the scenes are not a coincidence. The role of gender in tourism discourse is also influenced by colonialism. Gender represents essential concepts not only in tourism discourse and Orientalist discourse but in national identity building as well. In this commercial, the main character, Jack, is a man. The perspective of this story is told in this case not only through the tourist gaze but the male gaze, which is consistent with Orientalist discourse, which tends to center the experience of white, western, men. The people who help Jack get to the Enchanted River are also men and are portrayed in this case as sailors, workers, or fishers. Their clothing is plain, resembling that of a laborer. This rhetorical choice aligns with how national identity and gender are often related in a binary way.

Moghadam describes these roles by describing modernity and its role in state-building:

More recently, however, some nationalist projects and most fundamentalist movements have drawn on and reinforced concepts of male-female differences. They have constructed men as breadwinners and economic providers, and women as housewives and mothers who are the symbols of culture and tradition and the carriers of the collective “honor.” (Moghadam, 2002, p. 137)

This concept is played out in the commercial through the qualities and occupations of the men who help Jack. Because the men in the commercial are laborers, this implies them as breadwinners and economic providers, providing the traveler with a boat ride, serving the purpose akin to a tour-guide. These positions imply that men are the providers of labor and skill, while the woman’s qualities are implied to provide the ideal culture itself through providing food and caring for the two children by her side, teaching them how to serve the traveler.

The older woman in the commercial is dressed as the stereotypical “mother” figure; reinforced by the children next to her, and by her adornment in symbols of culture and tradition. In this case, her blouse is a traditional *barong tagalog*, which is a traditional style of dress worn for the attendance of weddings, funerals, and many other traditional events in the Philippines, and her earrings are pearls, historically fashionable attire of a wealthy Filipina. She gives the tourist food, another signifier of culture, which helps to reinforce a generous sense of belonging because she is happy and willing to provide for the white traveler.



*Figure 5.* A screen capture from 0:33 of “Anak.” Retrieved from Tourism Philippines YouTube.



*Figure 6.* A screen capture from 0:37 of “Anak.” Retrieved from Tourism Philippines YouTube.

At this point in the story of our main character Jack, the woman he happens upon offers him colorful purple dessert, *ube*, and is aided of course by her two grandchildren. She happily gifts him with the food, addressing him as “*anak*.” Jack takes the food and thanks her, not knowing what she has just called him. There are several important moments in this short interaction. First, we see the woman with multiple symbols of traditional femininity and the “ideal woman” that go beyond her clothing. For instance, the labor she provides is not the same as the other men; she stands atop the hill and prepares food for the traveler. She is also seemingly teaching the children with her about

the hospitality she provided, as well as teaching them how to prepare the food, drawing again on traditional traits of ideal womanhood such as caregiving and child-rearing. Jack, the tourist, does not get the food from the man who helped him onto the island, he gets the food from the woman: this implies a few more gendered layers of symbolism. Jack, our tourist, is depicted as the foreigner in this situation. He is traveling to consume and experience a different, "exotic" culture. To encounter culture, one must encounter things that represent a culture, in this case, and most commonly, food. Food is different depending on the culture, and in this case, the bright purple dessert wrapped in a banana leaf creates visual difference and exoticism. Jack obtains—freely—this food from the symbolic ideal woman. This woman is kind mannered, pleasant, and addresses him as "*anak*," the definition which Jack finds out in the next moment only after he leaves the woman and asks the man who helped him on the island. Once again, the difference between where and whom Jack is obtaining different kinds of knowledge and experiences from touches on traditional gender binaries as they relate to the nation and state identity building. The woman provided culture in the form of food, and the man provides knowledge in the form of translation.

Another small yet important detail is that Jack does not pay for the food. It is not located at a vendor's stand, but a beautifully crafted table, as if the woman and children live on this part of the island and have been there ready to serve him, waiting. Providing food to family and providing food for strangers are different. One does not buy food from family, and the fact that Jack is given the food reinforces the concept of family-like hospitality. She addresses him as "*anak*," which justifies the free exchange and emphasizes the last frame of the advertisement when a quote is displayed from Jack who

states, “When you’re with Filipinos, you’re with family.” These details continuously reinforce not only binary gender roles, but they emphasize an overall message of continued Orientalist ideas.



*Figure 6.* A screen capture from 0:45 of “Anak.” Retrieved from Tourism Philippines YouTube.



*Figure 7.* A screen capture from 0:47 of “Anak.” Retrieved from Tourism Philippines YouTube.

### Landscape and space.



*Figure 8.* A screen capture from 0:13 of “Anak.” Retrieved from Tourism Philippines YouTube.

Apart from the characters in the scene, the landscape itself offers another rhetorically complex choice for analysis and critique. The usage of lush, green, landscape is also related to the way that the Orient is constructed according to Said’s analysis of different European texts. The rhetorical choice to use this specific landscape in the advertisement goes beyond being aesthetically pleasing to the consumer eye. While this commercial does not utilize an explicit appeal to sexuality, the association between landscape and sex within Orientalism has a long history. Implicitly, the lush, extravagant, tropical landscape in this advertisement draws upon centuries of discourse associating the Orient with fecundity, sexual promise, promiscuity, and pleasure (Said, 1978, p. 188). This is again, an example of the usage of binary to create the tourist gaze, in this case, the land itself is the recipient of the gaze, separating the everyday landscape of someone from the west with the exotic Oriental landscape.

This commercial is shot in Mindanao, which has been listed for years by sources such as Forbes, Time, and other well-known travel sources as one of the most “dangerous” regions in the Philippines. Interestingly, Mindanao is one of the regions

mostly populated by a Muslim community, and other regions in the Philippines which are populated by Islamic communities are commonly listed on various lists and articles as “dangerous” to visit. Nonetheless, this commercial fails to label Mindanao as the location. Instead, they label the beautiful island in the middle of a pristine ocean the “Enchanted River,” Surigao. In this case, the lack of specificity regarding location is an interesting and important choice to note by the creators of the commercial. Not only because Mindanao is labeled as dangerous in popular western culture, but in general, the Philippines is labeled as a third world or developing country. Again, Tony Harris, one of the leading influences of this campaign stated that when “people” think of the Philippines, they think of “guns, traffic, crime corruption...” Choosing this location is a strategic avoidance of those narratives which paint the Philippines as a third world country. To use a tiny island in this commercial communicates that this experience, the one where the traveler gets to see a location that is described as “Enchanted,” and one where tourists are welcomed as if they are family, will be the one that any tourist could have. This is consistent with traditional portrayals of the Orient as an exotic, mystical landscape. Said describes the tourists desire to travel to an unknown place as consistent with Orientalism: “In the Orient one suddenly confronted unimaginable antiquity, inhuman beauty, boundless distance...one always *returned* to the Orient—seeing it as completion and confirmation of everything one had imagined” (Said, 1978, p.167).

Many wealthy tourists travel to consume authenticity and culture but do so not wanting to have to risk exposing themselves to the realities of an actual developing nation, or any other experience that may disrupt their tourist gaze (MacCannell, 2013). Removing the name Mindanao and replacing it with the label of “Enchanted River” helps

to re-shape the image of what the Philippines looks like to tourists, as well as associate the Philippines with the long history of Orientalism. This rhetorical construction is described as the “appropriate other” within the tourist gaze. The tourist gaze relies on binaries, but it is important to note that these binaries must not be constructed to be so extreme as to interrupt the tourist’s enjoyment (Urry, 1990, p. 141).



*Figure 9.* A screen capture from 1:00 of “Anak.” Retrieved from Tourism Philippines YouTube.

**Final image: Filipino values.**

The ending scene of the commercial displays the above text, naming the traveler for the first time in the commercial as ‘Jack.’ This quote is meant to encapsulate this travelers’ feelings when he was called “*anak*,” or, “my child;” a sense of belonging, family, camaraderie, and hospitality he felt from interacting with the Filipinos on his trip. This may seem on the surface to be a warm, positive sentiment, and truthfully many Filipinos take pride in this label, listing family values as a central part of their identity (David, Sharma, & Petalio, 2017). Friendliness and hospitality are not the qualities which

should be under scrutiny, however. The intentions and roots of emphasizing these qualities in a commercial designed to get people to spend money in a foreign country should be examined. It is important here to again recall the interview cited in the introduction of this chapter by Tony Harris, who described Filipinos as:

...Good humored, happy, hospitable, kind, generous, funny, great company...for Filipinos, boastfulness is almost a crime. "Hiya" is what they call it. It's kind of like a humility that you must show all the time. So saying you're better than everyone else makes them feel very uncomfortable.

Not only does Harris continue to emphasize stereotypes, but he also offers a misreading of the Filipino virtue of *hiya*, and its misinterpretation is vital to unpack here as it has potentially harmful effects.

*Hiya* has very little if at all to do with an avoidance of boastfulness, and more aligned with virtue ethics shared among Filipinos. A helpful definition of *hiya* is "a virtue of a person that controls individual wants for the welfare of the other person (kapwa<sup>9</sup>)" (Lasquety-Reyes, 2016, p. 69). When the commercial uses the word "family" to describe a feeling this traveler experienced during his time spent with Filipinos, the question should be asked: how does this commercial want its viewers to define "family" in the context of the messages they just communicated? The idea of family being used in this instance to sell an experience, one based on Filipinos freely and happily giving away their time, labor, and culture because of an obligation to remain humble and avoid boastfulness is in essence, a mendacious commercialization of an incredibly sacred value

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<sup>9</sup> Kapwa is also a Filipino virtue ethic broadly described as a sharing of mutual identity; being with others; an obligation one has towards their fellow man.

to benefit (in this case) this white traveler. The fact that the only form of *hiya*—a simplistic interpretation-- being shown in this commercial is toward the white man is problematic at best. It reinforces Orientalist ideas that the “Others” serve as commodities to be consumed, and it is especially insidious when thinking about the fact that these values being sold have harmful repercussions in terms of stereotyping and pigeonholing Filipino identity.

Evidence of these problematic messages can be seen at the vacation resorts in the Philippines located in places like Boracay and El Nido. For instance, a small-business owner from Siargao was praised in a recent article published by The New York Times for putting his foot down on the number of social media “influencers” attempting to gain free lodging and meals at his recently opened resort in exchange for “exposure.” The owners described their interactions with the influencers as insulting and disrespectful, and in response, wrote in a public paragraph on their Facebook page addressing these influencers to “find another way to eat, drink, or sleep for free. Or find a way to actually work” (Murphy, 2019). This type of entitlement has several roots but undoubtedly is not aided by commercials and CEO's which so vehemently describe Filipinos as such easy targets for those who wish to gain clout and Instagram followers for a low price.

Virtue ethics such as *hiya*, hospitality, and *kapwa* are not to blame for the problematic messages being told in this commercial. These values are a part of what makes Filipinos and Filipino culture who and what they are, and they are a result of surviving centuries of colonialism. However, the government, or more accurately this U.S. based advertisement company, co-opted these terms and values, and used them as a commodity to yet again, serve white(ness) and continue to promote Orientalist narratives.

It is a simplification of a comparatively more group-oriented culture, which many individualistic cultures and more specifically capitalist cultures take advantage of by reinforcing their view of the docile, pushover "Oriental." Capitalism, Orientalism, and the conception of western modernity all take advantage of this stereotype, aiding in crafting a harmful tourist gaze--or at least they have been shown to in this commercial in particular. "The friendly Filipino" is just a 21<sup>st</sup>-century version of the "well-behaved native."

Overall, the rhetorical choices made in this advertisement prove to be complex, interesting, and most of all effective. Each choice made in the commercial seems to emphasize a different layer of historical context and the tourist gaze. In the final chapter, I will argue what these findings communicate about the construction of Filipino identity within the artifact, as well as in different contexts. I will also discuss what those implications mean for Filipino identity. I will also mention limitations of this study as well as what other groups are communicating about the messages being promoted by the Department of Tourism and this video advertisement. Lastly, I offer recommendations and contributions to the academic field as well as individuals interested in advocating for more ethical tourism practices.

## Chapter 4: Discussion & Conclusion

### Discussion

In my research, I employed a critical rhetorical analysis to examine how the artifact frames Filipino identity using various rhetorical choices grounded in Orientalism. This analysis uncovered those strategies and contextualized them within Orientalism, the tourist gaze, and postcolonial theory. This chapter discusses general themes and implications of the analysis, limitations of the study, and future directions for the work. Using the framework of postcolonial theory helps us better understand the messages in the specific context of the Philippines, and because of it there is a better understanding of an historical and international perspective of cultural power that moves beyond boundaries of nation, (Shome & Hedge, 2002) situating issues within structure(s) of geopolitical, historical, and power relations. Much of the knowledge of and about the Philippines and Filipinos have been dominated by western knowledge production, reinforcing cultural narratives about who and what Filipinos are, and it is clear those qualities are used in this advertisement to sell an experience by situating the Filipino identity within the bounds of Orientalism. My first research question concerned investigating the strategies used to depict Filipino identity in this advertisement. Unfortunately, according to my analysis, the strategies utilized in the artifact continued to draw upon Orientalist themes emphasizing difference and inferiority.

In the system of knowledge about the Orient, the Orient is less a place than a *topos*, a set of references, a congeries of characteristics, that seems to have its origin in a quotation, or a fragment of a text, or a citation from someone's work

on the Orient, or some bit of previous imagining, or an amalgam of all of these (Said, 1978, p. 177).

Because the multiple strategies employed by this commercial draw upon what Said calls a “topos” of imagination, it does align itself within the tradition of Orientalism. The portrayal of the Filipino in this commercial is a flattened, generic portrait of the “Other,” drawing upon tropes and stereotypes present in centuries of Orientalist discourse. This serves the purpose of affirming western identity as separate and superior far more than it accurately depicts Filipino identity as something unique or even interesting. This brings me to the most common theme in the advertisement, binary difference. In the following sections, I describe implications of these binary emphases, return to a discussion of “re-Orientalizing,” and lastly, discuss limitations, future directions, recommendations, and contributions of this work.

### **Centralizing whiteness.**

I conclude that this advertisement qualifies as Orientalist rhetoric through rhetorical criticism, which is used to uncover underlying motivations and power dynamics within a text. Rhetorical criticism asks what the text means, but it also requires us to ask what the text does in the world—in other words, Orientalism influences the artifact, so what? The scholarly work used in this thesis lends the argument that it serves the purpose of using Orientalism to center western identity, and a central part of western identity and colonialism is Whiteness, as discussed previously in the beginning of this project and throughout analysis. The purpose of centering Whiteness through Orientalism and the tourist gaze is directly related to power through the remnants of the colonialist system. Thomas Nakayama and Robert Krizek describe Whiteness as a strategic rhetoric,

emphasizing that through this strategy, Whiteness centers itself as “if it had a normative essence” (Nakayama & Krizek, 1995, p. 293). Whiteness is not the white character or any one single white individual, but a systemic power play to situate Whiteness at the top of the social hierarchy, and Filipinos among the bottom portions, existing to continuously uphold whiteness as superior. This practice of crafting Whiteness as the default perspective as well as the superior group is emphasized in the commercial in many sections of analysis discussed in Chapter 3.

First, in the section of analysis entitled "The Modern Tourist," I discuss the clearest portrayal of this rhetorical strategy, which is that the main character in the advertisement is a single white man. This explicitly centers the white perspective as the primary source, the default view of the tourist gaze, again drawing on binaries which affirm western identity through Orientalism. Not because Jack himself is white, but because this commercial is primarily a tool used to persuade visitors to come to the Philippines. Following a white male character through his journey to this exotic space makes his perspective the default and paints every Filipino person in the advertisement as an “Other” at his service; a strategic use of Whiteness to affirm separate but dependent identities.

In “Visual Difference,” I describe the stark contrast between literal bodies and skin color, which again emphasize specific racial roles within the advertisement. The purpose of using the tourist gaze in the advertisement is to construct a shade, or a genre, of Orientalism. The tourist gaze here is constructed through the lens of Whiteness and Euro-centricity and reaffirms supremacist ideas of who is the protagonist and who and what is there to be a product for consumption. The roles being the white body as the

normative view, and the brown bodies being the experience which has been purchased by the white central figure. This reaffirms a sense of supremacy within the dynamic of the advertisement; almost as if to say that white is the assumed position, and everyone else is for Whiteness' enjoyment. According to this artifact, the best, most marketable version of the Philippines and Filipinos is one that ends up being just another consumable experience for westerners.

Centering Whiteness, in this case, is inherently violent because of its relation to Orientalism, which contributes to the violence of colonialism. Mayo, (1925) referenced in Chapters One and Two, used debasement rhetoric in her influential works about the Philippines, which justified colonialism as a moral obligation. These debasement rhetoric's are explicitly absent from the artifact, but their historical influence is acknowledged by using the beautiful, exotic, positive imagery, and emphasizing values such as "Family." These qualities are used for marketing the Philippines positively, but they noticeably negate debasement rhetoric and negative Orientalist conceptions. However, instead of assuming a separate identity apart from colonialism and the West, the strategies minimalize Filipino identity by attempting an erasure, or at the very least an ignoring of historical truth on behalf of a marketable identity. What remains is a flattened version of the Filipino—a completely interchangeable "Other" used for the purpose of marketing an experience.

#### **An absence of hybridity.**

As noted at the beginning of this thesis, hybridity is an essential part of Filipino identity. Filipinos are a part of the "strategic reversal" (Bhabha, 1994, p. 113) of the static binaries created by Orientalism. Unfortunately, this advertisement, or at least the specific

rhetoric, does not emphasize a positive or empowering version of hybridity, or any form of hybridity at all. I started this thesis using the concept of hybridity as a way to engage with this rhetoric, not knowing at the time about the involvement of the European company BBDO. This revelation changed my perspective, as it revealed a western perspective which was directly related to the creation of this advertisement.

While BBDO was involved with the campaign, there is no way to know how much or how little the Department of Tourism contributed content to this specific commercial. All that is known is that the financial backing and promotion of this advertisement campaign through Filipino government funding, which is significant. While the rhetoric in the advertisement did not emphasize hybridity but instead Orientalist binaries, the act of promoting Orientalist rhetoric by the Department of Tourism is an interesting nuance in the overall historical projection of the Philippines. This act communicates the same patterns surrounding hybridity discussed in Chapter 1 regarding the concentration of symbolic capital, such as language, an affinity for western ideals, and overall Orientalist rhetoric necessary for the projection of nationhood in the hands of those in power—the Department of Tourism. The Department of Tourism is responsible for crafting this version of ideal Filipino identity to the world for the benefit of the Philippines, and the sponsorship by a western company seems to be government sponsorship of Orientalism. I do not believe this means that the Philippine Department of Tourism does not care or wishes harm upon their people. What it speaks more to is the lasting violence of colonialism in multiple ways, in this case, dependence on outside sources of income such as tourism to support the economy.

This exclusion of any elements which could potentially describe Filipino identity more accurately serves the purposes of Orientalism and whiteness. Instead of what could be a complex, interesting, inviting story about the varying differences and social locations of Filipinos and the Philippines, what is communicated in this commercial is a simplistic version of the Orient/al. It seems that with very few changes, the country that this commercial is advertising could easily be changed to another tropical destination, and many audience members might not necessarily notice. This is further proof that “Anak” uses explicit, clear, and repetitive binary strategies which are rooted in Orientalism, and thus, the commercial Orientalizes Filipinos and the Philippines.

### **Limitations & Future Expansions**

There are limitations which must be considered regarding the content of this thesis. First, the advertisement “Anak” currently has 14.5 million views on the Department of Tourism’s YouTube channel. The campaign that the advertisement is a part of has over 100 million collective views. This thesis focused on only one of those commercials for the sake of conciseness. While the advertisement is one of the campaigns most successful, it is important to note that it is one of over 25 pieces of media. A rhetorical criticism of the entire campaign is beyond the scope of this project but is a worthy endeavor for the future, as I have argued that tourism discourse is a source of abundant analysis and possibility.

Second, as mentioned in the previous section, the demands of a capitalist society are ever present but especially notable in a developing country such as the Philippines (Dirlik, 1997, p. 19). While this one advertisement paints a problematic picture of Filipino identity which is concerning and necessary to critique, the analysis lacks voices

from Filipinos who are impacted by the realities of economic hardship and conversely, Filipinos impacted by the harms of the tourism industry. As a person who writes from a privileged position as discussed in the beginning of this project, I must stress that my analysis, while critiquing western notions of Filipinos, also comes from the west itself. I do not desire an escape from criticism of this work from those with different or more legitimate social locations and hope to take part in research in the future which focuses on the voices of Filipino nationals who are directly impacted by tourism.

Criticizing texts which come from places of power is and always will be necessary. However, for the future, I encourage scholars to unpack and dismantle harmful systems through critiquing multiple sources of rhetoric and discourse, including voices of those who do not have institutional power but create their own discourses outside of those direct systems. This thesis and its topic are important but is limited in scope. My desire is that this work contributes to a broader critique of colonialism and Orientalism as a whole.

### **Recommendations & Contributions**

Lastly is the question of the act of being a tourist. For readers, this thesis might come across as a harsh judgment of those who have or want to be a tourist in a place like the Philippines. I have also asked myself these questions as I conducted my research. Does wanting to visit the Philippines contribute to the Orientalism sponsored in this advertisement? Alternatively, some may assert that the tourism industry is not going away—if anything, it is expanding daily, therefore realistically recommending an end to tourism altogether seems unlikely. These are all critical questions to propose and are a part of sharp rhetorical criticism. In this section I offer three steps to consider for those wanting to partake in the act of being a tourist. Each step depends on the other to be the

most impactful and require contextual considerations on part of the traveler. These steps are only the first few steps in a much larger global picture of more ethical tourism. I am focusing these recommendations on U.S Americans and other western people who want to travel to different places for a multitude of reasons—leisure, research, or work.

Whatever the reason, I hope these recommendations prove useful and impactful for those who choose to travel.

A foundational principle of creating more ethical tourism is to do as little harm as possible. Before considering a trip to a place with a different culture, consider your intentions versus impact. What this means is that while you or your group may have intentions which you view as harmless, the actual impact of your tourism may be negative and thus should be reconsidered. Recognize that all situations are contextual. Research as much as possible about a culture and place and understand that not all places welcome tourists, especially from western countries. Implicit in this step is to consider the cultural norms and behaviors of the destination before choosing to travel there.

The second step is directly tied to the subject of this thesis: unpacking rhetoric. Changing behavior and actions begins with critically examining the rhetoric and discourse which shapes tourism in the first place. Again, my privileged positionality would make it problematic of me to presume I know what the best choice to make is regarding tourism marketing choices in the Philippines. I argue that this commercial is problematic and harmful for its Orientalist rhetoric, which impacts the global Filipino community as a whole. However, the direct physical impact of this advertisement does not directly affect the place I live, and I want to be clear about this distinction. I argue that the second step for travelers who come from western cultures is that they should

remain self-reflexive in their choices, critically thinking about the persuasive tactics used to sell a destination to a western audience. Understanding a place for more than what it can give to you as an individual goes beyond the consumption of the available tourism rhetoric. It requires work, time, dedication, humility, and reflexivity. Expanding ones rhetorical consumption to include more than one type of narrative about tourism and the destination intended to visit is a good first step at becoming a more ethical tourist.

Lastly, by critiquing this advertisement, I am not insisting that anyone who partakes in tourism is automatically problematic. What is problematic is the way that Whiteness and Orientalism are centered through this rhetoric, and Filipino identity is used as a tool for the tourist gaze. Tourism will likely not go away, but the way we discuss traveling and tourism can and should change if those of us who desire a more ethical world want to act towards making that a reality. The next step towards creating more ethical tourism practices begins with doing detailed research and choosing destinations consciously. U.S Americans should educate themselves on the history of the destinations they visit, especially if those destinations have been directly influenced or occupied by U.S. foreign policy and/or colonialism. Ethical travelers might start by learning about the destination's history with colonialism or systems of power. Understanding privilege is crucial and using that mindset while navigating different spaces helps to view a destination as a privilege and honor to visit, and not just an experience and culture to consume for your own benefit. One might consider solely supporting local businesses during their trip, visiting historical sites which expand narratives, educating your own circle of influence about what you've learned. All of these

recommendations are the bare minimum to consider while visiting a different culture if the goal is to do as little harm as possible while traveling to different cultures.

In the future, as a critical practice, scholars concerned with perpetuating harmful discourse might emphasize ethical travel as a way to combat problematic ideas. Travel to foreign places offers a plethora of benefits to the traveler, but within the systems and bounds of capitalism and Orientalism, what is financially successful takes precedent over dangerous rhetoric. This means that there is a long list of negative impacts which takes place beyond the sphere of rhetoric. Environmental impact, native displacement, cultural appropriation and exploitation are all serious considerations we should make as scholars who seek to know more about the world around us. What is needed is a shift in perspective of how we, especially those of us in the west, view tourism. Associating tourism and travel with fun is a strategic way to make travelers ignore the historical roots of the practice. So, this work contributes to this constant unveiling and reflection of what tourism means and will continue to mean in the future. The answer to these complex issues is undoubtedly not a complete erasure of the realities of the past. The answer to more ethical travel is not to de-emphasize the difference between oneself and the native people of the destination you are traveling to, or even to emphasize those differences through Orientalist rhetoric. The answer lies in the act of being cognizant of the impact of rhetoric on your individual point of view, but also a collective cultural narrative which results from rhetoric and discourse.

My final contribution coming from this work is for my fellow Filipino American community. Many of us feel disconnected to our culture for multiple reasons, but ultimately all roads lead back to the impact of colonialism in the Philippines. If we are to

understand our history and empower ourselves, we must do so by calling out problematic narratives and fighting for representation in multiple fields. Constructing Filipino identity apart from its true history with colonialism proves to be harmful in its own way, impacting our sense of cultural identity (David & Okazaki, 2006). What remains as an answer is the empowering act of representing Filipino perspective and experience in our discourse, truth-telling of the realities of colonialism, and an emphasis on the beauty of what it means to be a culture of people who have survived 350 years of colonialism. I hope that this work aids in helping Filipino Americans to continue to do so with tenacity, strength, and the collective joy of being Filipino.

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