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Affective Journey—National E/motion in Carlos Bulosan’s *America Is in the Heart**

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Abstract

This paper explores the complex structures of ethnic mobility in Filipino American writer Carlos Bulosan’s *America Is in the Heart*. The protagonist Carlos’s active pursuit of a national ideal during the course of his journey is enhanced by the structure of feelings produced in the intimate encounters between the colonizers and colonized. I draw upon Ann Laura Stoler’s conceptualization of “tense and tender tie” and Sara Ahmed’s exposition of politics of emotion to analyze the complex ways in which these intimate encounters help suture the gaps and contradictions between the peril of the Filipino migrant worker in a racist society that sees him as hypersexual, beast-like, and unfit for

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assimilation, and his steadfast faith in the Nation. This subtle biopolitical governance of the U.S. imperialism over the colonial/migrant bodies assures the double command of the empire which includes the colonized in the form of exclusion, or excludes in the form of inclusion and renders the trace of governance invisible. Bulosan's text seeks to expose the racism and injustice of the nation, but the force of resistance is often compromised by the biopolitical governance of empire. This imperial "haunting" characterizes Filipino American literary tradition at its seminal stage, and remains an important subject of reflection in subsequent Filipino American literary intervention.

Key Words: Carlos Bulosan, nation, biopolitics, imperial intimacy, emotion

In her article on Asian American politics of mobility, Sau-ling Cynthia Wong differentiates two types of mobility across the landscape of America. One is characterized by independence, freedom, and self-fulfillment, which she considers the mobility of extravagance. Asian American mobility, on the other hand, is often associated with the experience of coercion, subjugation, and disappointment in self-realization. That is, mobility derived of necessity. According to Wong, Asian American mobility, no matter in the forms of relocation, migration or travel, often suggests dis-placement and immobility. While Wong argues that most of the ethnic mobility narratives seek to chart out a map, “a spatial correlate of completed and contemplated moves as well as a representation of one’s mental patterning of the world” (1993: 129), map-makings on the part of Filipino American narratives of mobility, are very difficult, because the mobile tracts they draw are often involuntary, spontaneous, fragmented, directionless, prompted by the conditions of the moment, and driven by numerous coercive forces. This particular pattern of mobility, Wong observes, “was shaped by the colonial history of their place of origin and the pre-Philippines Independence immigrants’ special status as ‘nationals’ of the United States, midway between aliens and citizens, between exclusion and inclusion” (126). Wong’s exploration of this particular type of mobility, however, does not fully explain the way in which American imperial forms of rule interfere with the ethnic migrant subject’s pattern of mobility. Revisiting the theme of ethnic mobility, this paper intends to further explore the Filipino Americans’ specific status of in-betweenness by means of investigating the intersection of (post)colonial mobility and imperial intimacy in Filipino American writer Carlos Bulosan’s autobiographical novel *America Is in the Heart*. Specifically, I ask: What is the nature of imperial intimacy in the context of U.S. imperialism? How do colonial intimate relationships help mold a new structure of feelings that “moves,” in the double

senses of the word, the ethnic migrant subjects in a way that sustains the operation of empire? What social historical conditions in Bulosan's text enable and make necessary such biopolitical governance?

In her inquiry into the studies of American imperialism, Amy Kaplan has reminded us that "the multiple histories of continental and overseas expansion, conquest, conflict, and resistance . . . have shaped the cultures of the United States and the cultures of those it has dominated within and beyond its geopolitical boundaries" (Kaplan, 1993: 4). The cultural discourses of American exceptionalism, however, have kept the U.S. empire invisible to itself. America's culture logic of exceptionalism can be traced back to the first puritan migrants, who perceived themselves as charged with a special mission to build in the New World a church and a society that can serve as a model for the nations in Europe. And because they are destined to save the world, America and Americans have to maintain a high level of spiritual and moral qualities to render themselves truly exceptional.¹ The concept has since evolved into a self-consciousness which informs and underlies America's subsequent political endeavors at different periods (Madsen, 1998: 1-2). In the Cold War period, a discourse of exceptionalism is mobilized which considers America an exception among all the global powers in that it is inherently anti-imperialist, opposing the empire-building and colonial expansion of the Old World on the one hand, refuting fascism and communism on the other (Kaplan, 1993: 12). The claim to exception from European-style imperial conquest and domination, along with its tactical use of the policy of "benevolent assimilation" contributes to the nation's long-standing denial of, and blindness to, the fact of its imperial history and the ensuing culture of imperialism.² The

¹ For a complete historical examination of the origins and developments of the concept of *American exceptionalism*. See Madsen (1998).

² Kaplan argues that there are three absences in regard to American studies: "the absence of culture from the history of U.S. imperialism; the absence of empire

invisibility of the empire, I would suggest, can be comprehended from a different perspective, namely, the skillful ways in which the empire governs the colonized. Since the colonized in the U.S. empire are often excluded in the form of inclusion, or included in the form of exclusion, it is important to scrutinize those nodes of power that admit and disavow the colonial others at the same time.³ And one of those nodes of power lies at the intersection of private intimacy and public domination.

It is by now widely recognized that colonial rules work through both direct political and military control, and subtle disciplinary forms of governance that produce knowledge of racial difference through colonial intervention into the private sphere, and more precisely, through the management of the domains of intimacy. The meanings of “the intimate,” or “intimacy,” are manifold, referring to relations in the domestic space, or private sphere, sexuality, the body, desire, affect or emotion. Intimacy in colonial, postcolonial, and transnational contexts suggests close encounters across the racial line, whose transaction is from time to time intersected with the direct political control. Ann Laura Stoler has famously claimed that the microsites of private lives and intimate feelings on the frontier of empire are the “dense transfer points of power” that help consolidate the rule of the empire.⁴ In

from the study of American culture; and the absence of the United States from the postcolonial study of imperialism” (11).

³ Following Oscar Campomanes, Allan Punzalan Issac has suggested the invisibility of the colonized subjects a necessary condition upon which the empire is sustained: “the operation and production of empire is predicated on the legislative and cultural institutionalization of disavowal of these other American subjects” (Issac, 2006: 7). See also Campomanes (1995).

⁴ Stoler borrows the term “dense transfer points of power” from Foucault. In *The History of Sexuality*, Foucault maintains: “[Sexuality] appears . . . as an especially dense transfer point for relations of power: between men and women, young people and old people, parents and offspring, teachers and students, priests and laity, an administration and a population. Sexuality is not the most intractable element in power relations, but rather one of those endowed with the greatest number of maneuvers and capable of serving as a point of support, as a linchpin, for the most varied strategies” (Foucault, 1980: 103).

Stoler's words, the intimate frontiers of empire are "a social and cultural space where racial classifications were defined and defied, where relations between colonizer and colonized could powerfully confound or confirm the strictures of governance and the categories of rule" (Stoler, 2006: 24). The imperialist political authority is often secured through the management of sexuality, inter-racial marriage, domesticity, and childrearing on the borders of the empire (28). The imperialist governance of the private sphere and intimate matters concerning bodies and feelings constitutes the disciplinary form of rule that engenders patterns of emotion, or assigns particular affective capability to a specific population in a favorable manner to the operation of the empire.

Given the immanent nature of such a form of rule, and the way in which imperial intimate encounters often constitute pedagogical occasions which initiate the colonized into the discursive field of the Enlightenment project, I understand imperial intimacy as a kind of governmentality akin to what Foucault has termed "biopolitics." For Foucault, biopower is different from transcendent forms of rule, such as sovereignty, in that it governs by providing maximum opportunity for the subject to enhance its sense of well-being based upon rationalized calculation. Issues of private and biological concerns, such as sexuality, procreation, health, etc., are therefore taken as the object of biopower. Biopolitics, likewise, is the art of government that links techniques of power with forms of knowledge. As power exerts its governance over the subjects, it simultaneously establishes a discursive field serving as its foundation of rationalization (Foucault, 1991: 87-104; Lemke, 2001: 191). As my following reading will reveal, imperial intimate encounters and the structures of feelings they produce, are the mechanisms that govern the colonials and immigrants in a productive manner to assure the control of the empire.

Stoler's previous research on colonial rule in the Dutch East Indies emphasizes the encounter between the colonial officials and the natives who often served as their nursemaids, housemaids,

cooks, mistresses in their colonial homes. Intimate domains not only point to those “interior frontiers,” where the colonized were employed, but also the complicated techniques of surveillance and governance over their bodies and sexualities. In the context of America’s imperialist expansion in the Pacific, the imperial intimacy often takes place between cross-national figures riding the tides of the U.S. Asia-Pacific political endeavors and the former colonized. American mobile subjects move between cultures as soldiers, journalists, artists, students, scholars, and tourists, who see themselves as world citizens, while spreading the ideals of democracy and American Dream.⁵ On the other side of these encounters, the colonized mobile figures are incorporated into these events of intimacy as students, pupils, servants, mistresses, sex-providers, et cetera. Intimate encounters between American cosmopolitan figures and the colonized constitute new sites of imperial biopolitical disciplines that produce knowledge, forge sentiments, and provoke desire to gain access to the social spaces of the metropolis and the political ideals they represent. These specific kinds of intimacy, to quote from Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton, create “a variety of moving subjects who utilized a wide range of intimate opportunities and practices to negotiate, contest, and reconfirm the boundaries of rule” (Ballantyne & Burton, 2009: 2). On the surface these well-meaning cosmopolitan figures appear to be benevolent in their intimate encounters with the colonized, often attempting to infuse

⁵ Akira Iriye’s research on American transnational connection maintains that in the first half of the twentieth century the Asia-Pacific region witnessed quite a large number of transnational figures, they move between cultures as journalists, students, artists, scholars, and musicians and practice cultural interchange alongside the exchange between the great powers. Iriye’s contentions pay homage to the alternative cultural internationalism conducted by these figures. While I draw upon Iriye’s findings of the historical existence of these cross-national figures, I tend to see these figures, especially those from the U.S., not merely as contributors to alternative international community, but the nodes of power that help the colonized to internalize the value of the centers. See Iriye (1997: 2); Stoler (2006: 40-41).

aspiration for the social ideals mostly allotted to the citizens. The structures of feelings forged during the intimate encounters, likewise, seem to be productive for they propel the geographical mobility and emotional capability that suggest certain movements of upward mobility. But even if the Filipino (American) subjects are initiated into the realm of the social imaginary, where they are allowed to share the same aspiration for the empire with the citizens, the “double command of the empire” will assure that their emotions are produced and denounced in the same breath.⁶ Allan Punzalan Isaac has teased out the ambivalence of America’s colonial governance in the Philippines by highlighting the inner rupture of America’s strategies of benevolent assimilation. The Filipino subjects are encouraged to mimic the Americans, incorporating American values, social construction, and cultural consumption, only to be disavowed by the empire (Isaac, 2006: 10). The same logic is inherent in the process of production of emotion in the U.S.-Filipino intimate encounters. Feelings for proper American subjects and cultural, national ideals are engendered in intimate contacts and set in motion active pursuit of assimilation. But as Isaac has shown, the inassimilable properties of the colonial reality of the racial others will always return to haunt the process of assimilation (11-12). Henceforth, both affective mobility and geographical mobility tend to loop around in accordance with the larger context of nation-making and empire-building.

Stoler highlights the way in which feelings, sentiments, and habits of mind are “distributed” to forge colonized subjects, as if

⁶ Diana Fuss uses “double command of empire” to define the imperialist technique of rule that demands the colonized to be like the colonizer and different from the colonizer at the same time. See Fuss (1995: 146). Allan Punzalan Isaac adopts Diana Fuss’s view to explore the ambiguous subject position of postcolonial Filipinos produced by this logic of rule in *American Tropics: Articulating Filipino America*. He suggests: “The colonized is enjoined to ‘assimilate but not incorporate, to approximate but not to displace.’ Thus, while inhabiting ‘unincorporated’ territory, the colonized subject must himself incorporate values and culture of the power that disowned him in the first place” (Isaac, 2006: 10).

these feelings and sentiments are pregiven, something that exists before the encounters, waiting to be passed down. Following Sara Ahmed, this study suggests that emotions come into being through contact, that it is generated in the process of cultural contacts between the colonial and the colonized. Furthermore, as Ahmed suggests, emotion moves and binds people together: “What moves us, what makes us feel, is also that which holds us in place, or gives us a dwelling place. Hence movement [. . .] connects bodies to other bodies” (Ahmed, 2004: 11). In Bulosan’s novel, it is the emotion for an ideal political affiliation—an imagined community—that is generated in the intimate contacts between Carlos the Filipino migrant subject and the white women he meets on his life journey. These emotional attachments work in contradictory manners: They are the engine of ethnic mobility, but also the brake that stops the migrant subject from achieving the goal of his journey. Furthermore, the emotional attachments produced in the imperial intimate domains function as the necessary detour for Carlos’s self-development as a political subject. That is, his feelings in the private sphere are the mechanism that decides his structures of feelings in the public sphere. This tense and tender node of power unifies all the contradictions and places the migrant subject under the effective rule of colonial biopolitical control. One is therefore compelled to investigate the cost one must pay to achieve the formation of Filipino American political subjectivity.

I. Mobile Brotherhood and Affective Journey

The novel begins in colonial Philippines, when the country is undergoing a tumultuous process of modernization under the guidance of the United States. Government corruption, class inequality, and poverty serve as the social political background of Carlos’s early life in the Philippines prior to his journey across the

Pacific to the U.S.⁷ The youngest son of a poor peasant in the farming town of Binalonan, on the island of Luzon, young Carlos moves from one place to another doing odd jobs and manual labor, trying to assist the family economy and fulfill the family dream of upward mobility through the education of his elder brother Macario. Since the family can only afford to pay for one son's education, Carlos and his three elder brothers, Leon, Luciano, and Amado form a tacit understanding that they would work hard to pay for Macario's education. In return, the family expects Macario to secure a stable job as a teacher or civil servant and take up the financial responsibility of the big family, redeeming the land they take a loan on to support Macario's education. It is obvious that the novel emphasizes brotherhood as the basic force of the family prosperity and the basis of various social communities. But for Bulosan, brotherhood is formed not through physical proximity or emotional exchange on daily basis but through collective effort of fighting poverty and protecting their possession of the family land, even if that means they will go different ways and never be able to live together. In other words, brotherhood is sustained not by blood relations but political actions. Their love for the family is therefore intricately linked with a sense of revolt against the class inequality that has torn apart the colonial nation. The affective energies among family and brothers are strengthened in their repeated struggles to defy the corrupted upper class and absentee landlords, and the sacrifice that must be made in order to sustain each other. Central to this patrilineal familial bonding is the yearning for justice and equal opportunity and the action one has to take, instead of nostalgia for shared culture or common bloodline. The absence of the original belonging in this patriarchal

⁷ The protagonist is referred to as "Allos," when he is back in the Philippines. The childhood nickname is eventually replaced by the name "Carlos" and "Carl" when he moves to America. To avoid confusion, I use "Carlos" throughout the paper to indicate the semi-autobiographical hero of the novel, and "Bulosan" to refer to the author. My following discussions of subject formation refer strictly to "Carlos" the semi-autobiographical character.

imaginary makes it necessary that the narrator project his search into the future, to act out his desire through geographic and social mobility, to depart from the existing relations and move on to the next possibility.

Since the search for collective belonging is expressed through collective effort among the brothers to seek for self-improvement and social reconstruction, brotherly love can easily be extended to “other sub- and supra-national forms of brotherly community” (Lee, 1999: 17). It is eventually a search for an ideal political affiliation that can be extended from brotherhood to other forms of bonding. As Rachael Lee suggests: “Brotherhood in the novel is conceived of literally, in terms of blood relations, and more expansively as a national community, an ethnic immigrant enclave, a transnational class of laborers, and a panracial notion of humanity” (17). Brotherhood henceforth implies social responsibility and political idealism. But the patrilineal community is in constant danger of being disrupted by native Filipino women. With the exception of Carlos’s mother, the first part of the novel portrays Filipino women mostly as needy and clinging, constantly haunting the boys, demanding marriage. It is the interferences of these girls that often redirect Carlos and his brothers’ life paths, rendering them immobile. Carlos’s brother Luciano is shown to be the object of pity because he is tied down to marriage and a growing family burden he can hardly carry. Here sexualized women pose a threat to brother-bonding not because their sexuality carries negative moral implication, but because they can be a drag on these brothers who aim to seek a better life elsewhere and must travel light.⁸ One can even say that it is the aversion to native women who stick around the brothers, becoming the sign of

⁸ Rachel Lee argues that the book’s “ever-widening horizon of political affiliations” and brotherly bonds hinge on “the successful regulation of sexuality,” especially the sexualized Filipino women (1999: 18). But for me the threat of the sexualized native women does not lie in their rampant sexuality, but the familial responsibility they imply to the males.

unwanted familial responsibility, that propels the brothers' mobility across national borders. In other words, their travels take the form of escape. What they are trying to run from is the danger of immobility these sexualized women might cause, and in turn the disruption of brother-bonding. As Lee maintains: "the author forges two mutually reinforcing connections: one between freedom and brotherhood, the other between imprisonment and women" (23).

If the aversion to native women triggers the movement across the national borders, it is the contact with white women—who serve as the agents of empire—that gives Carlos and his brothers a sense of direction for their journey. Significantly, Carlos's narrative of growth and development is contextualized within an imperialist narrative of encounter. In his various encounters with American tourists and sojourners in the Philippines, Carlos learns to yearn for justice and opportunities promised by the national ideal which is the United States. Bulosan's narrative, however, points to heterogeneous modes of cultural contacts. As American colonized, who are outside-in the imperialist territorial imaginary, the Filipinos' state of liminality is pronounced through the imperial agents' different and sometimes conflicting emotional reactions to the Filipinos. While some Americans look at the locals through a purely touristic gaze, seeking to construct Filipino identity as primitive and sexual,⁹ others regard the Filipinos in a way that is in tandem with the colonial family romance. Namely, they consider the Filipinos wards, who need to be educated and taken care of by benevolent white parents. In the first instance, the Filipino bodies are identified as spectacles, something that are kept in a safe

⁹ Susan Koshy's reading of colonial Filipino subject construction emphasizes the way in which Filipino sexuality was defined against white sexual norm. Their sexuality is interpreted as primitive, aberrant, and hyper, unable to be subsumed by American body politics, what she refers to as "unincorporated territory" of desire. I try to point out the insufficiency of this reading. Because there are other colonial subject-constructions that come out from emotionally charged contacts. See Koshy (2004: 102-103).

distance from the spectators to be enjoyed as objects of visual fascination. There is no emotional exchange between the spectators and the objects of the gaze. In the second instance, the Filipinos are taken as children, awaiting the nurturing and guidance from the white parents. The incorporation of Filipino presence into the colonial family romance suggests a sentimental education, and therefore an emotional exchange that places the Filipinos into the trajectory of American national imagining.

Bulosan demonstrates the two kinds of encounters in young Carlos's short stay in Baguio, a tourist city famous for its pleasant mountain sceneries, cool temperature, and modernized facilities, where European and American tourists swarm the public market. In his first encounter with American tourists, Carlos realizes that they are looking for native subjects and primitive bodies and tries to conform to this specific visual economy by disguising himself accordingly:

One day an American lady tourist asked me to undress before her camera, and gave me ten centavos for doing it. I had found a simple way to make a living. Whenever I saw a white person in the market with a camera, I made myself conspicuously ugly, hoping to earn ten centavos. But what interested the tourists most were the naked Igorot women and their children. Sometimes they took pictures of the old men with G-strings. They were not interested in Christian Filipinos like me. They seemed to take a particular delight in photographing young Igorot girls with large breasts and robust mountain men whose genitals were nearly exposed, their G-strings bulging large and alive. (Bulosan, 1973: 67)

Here the tourists' visual pleasure derives not just from the erotic sensation aroused by the sexual bodies of the Igorot, but more importantly from the sense of secure difference between primitive sexuality and white civilization, and the safe distance between "they" and "us." It is Carlos, the "Christian Filipinos," the in-between subject, that appears to be "out of place," in the way of the visual economy, and must be concealed through disguise.

Undressing before the camera, or making himself particularly ugly, Carlos pulls away from white civilization, and transforms himself into a mere object of visual fascination. For Carlos, the camera's search for fascinating cultural wonders function as his interpellation into the colonial imagination in which he is noting but a body, an object to be visually consumed.

This particular subject formation, however, is quickly replaced by another formation forged during a different encounter. Not long after, Carlos finds a job to deliver rice on a wheelbarrow for a rice trader. On one of those trips to the houses near the market, he meets an American woman, Miss Mary Strandon, an American artist working in a nearby library. Originally from Iowa, Miss Strandon chooses to come to the Philippines because of her emotional connection with the country: her father fought and died in the Philippine-American War. Unlike his previous encounters with American tourists, whose camera lenses demand that Carlos turn native, Carlos's encounter with Miss Strandon marks his entry into American civilization through his incorporation into the American domestic space. When they first meet, Carlos's face still bears the paint he put on to attract the tourists' lenses. Upon seeing his face, Miss Mary Strandon asks: "What did you do to your face" (Bulosan, 1973: 68)? Carlos is too ashamed to tell her the truth that he did it in the hope that white men and women with cameras would photograph him for ten centavos. Instead he tells her that it must be dirt. Miss Strandon hands him a bar of soap and commands him to wash the mark off his face. After he cleanses himself of the mark, Miss Strandon offers him a job as her houseboy. Under her careful coaching, he learns to cook and clean the apartment in a way that pleases his American employer, and becomes adept at general housework. What for Miss Strandon a simple gesture of protecting domestic hygiene denotes at the same time Carlos's reinterpellation into civilization. His first physical contact with American civilization is through the bar of soap: "I filled the bucket in the kitchen and the soapsuds tickled my skin. It was the first time I had ever used soap" (68). The tickle of the

soapsuds, a new sensation to which his body quickly learns to adapt, along with the domestic managing skills he acquires, are the real payoff he receives in this arrangement. One can say that he acquires a new body that feels and functions properly for the American household.

But the scene of his emotional education by Miss Strandon does not happen right after he acquires the docile body; rather, it takes place only after another episode of brotherly bonding between Carlos and a neighboring Igorot houseboy named Dalmacio:

There was another American woman who lived in the apartment next door. She had an Igorot houseboy whose name was Dalmacio. She was a teacher in one of the city schools, and the boy, who did her washing and cooking, was one of her pupils. When our work was done for the day, Dalmacio and I would go to the lake and sit on the grass.

“I will soon go to America,” he said one day. “I am trying to learn English so that I will not get lost over there.”

“I am planning to go to America in two years,” I said. “If I save enough passage money to take me there.”

“You don’t need money,” Dalmacio said. “You could work on the boat. But English is the best weapon. I will teach you if you will do some work for me now and then.”

He put a book in my hand and started reading aloud to me.

“Repeat after me,” he said. “Don’t swallow your words. Blow them out like the Americans.”

I repeated after him, uttering strange words and thinking of America. We were reading the story of a homely man named Abraham Lincoln.

“Who is this Abraham Lincoln?” I asked Dalmacio.

“He was a poor boy who became a president of the United States,” he said. “He was born in a log cabin and walked miles and miles to borrow a book so that he would know more about his country.”

A poor boy became a president of the United States!

Deep down in me something was touched, was springing out, demanding to be born, to be given a name. I was fascinated by the story of this boy who was born in a log cabin and became a president of the United States. (Bulosan, 1973: 69; emphasis in the original)

Dalmacio is one step ahead of Carlos in receiving a colonial sentimental education. As the pupil and houseboy of an American teacher, he is properly cultivated in mind to long for America, and disciplined in body to prepare himself for the language that is necessary for the trip to go there. The knowledge produced through this specific disciplinary process serves to project an ego ideal that cements his bonding with Carlos. Bulosan's depiction of the process of brother-bonding emphasizes the scene in which Carlos *repeats* after Dalmacio's English, and reiterates the story of Lincoln who is "a poor boy [that] became a president of the United States!" The act of repetitive articulation calls forth the emergence of a shared ego ideal under the sign of Lincoln. And it is through the transference of the love between the boys to Lincoln the president that seals and characterizes their friendship. As Sara Ahmed argues: "identification is a form of love; it is an active kind of loving, which moves or pulls the subject toward another. Identification involves the desire to get closer to others by becoming like them" (Ahmed, 2004: 126). Freud's discussion of group psychology suggests that group bonding relies on the transference of love to the leader, by which the transference becomes the common quality of the group (Freud, 1922: 38; quoted in Ahmed, 2004: 130). If Carlos's identification with Dalmacio is that between an ego and an alter ego, his identification with Lincoln is much more complicated. For Carlos, Lincoln is split into Lincoln the boy, and Lincoln the president. Henceforth, identification with Lincoln moves between individual identification and group identification. As a boy, Lincoln is the passage through which Carlos can approximate the ego ideal, which is Lincoln the president, and hence the sign of the nation. Consequently, this "something" that was touched in Carlos's heart and "springing out,

demanding to be born, to be given a name” can be seen as the love that sticks Carlos, Dalmacio and Lincoln the poor boy together to form a universal boyhood, which is then transferred to the ego ideal which is Lincoln the president. Eventually, the love that moves among the boys gets translated into the love for the Nation. The mobility and instability of this love that is in a constant state of moving and moving out, therefore, can never be given a proper name.

Mary Strandon’s intervention into this group identification provides a different emotional tie for Carlos. It is through her that Carlos’s identification with the sign of the nation can be performed. Subsequent to Carlos’s initiation into the ideal of the nation, Mary finds out about his passion for knowledge and finds him a job working with her in the library. Working in a library provides Carlos with the chance to approximate his ego ideal of Lincoln, as the latter was said to walk miles to borrow books in order to know more about his country. His physical proximity to Mary, therefore, opens up the gateway for knowledge and places him in the vicinity of who he wants to become. This intimate encounter therefore provides the basic link between interracial emotional tie and a mode of knowledge that forges the process of his subjectification.

II. Anti-miscegenation and Courtly Love

The two scenes taking place before Carlos’s passage to America display two archetypes of imperial intimacy, which are to be repeated with slight variations over and over again in his subsequent contacts with white women in the States. But while the first type of encounter—the one in which his body was looked at as a sign of primitive sexuality and exotic wonder—draws fascination from the women tourists in U.S. colonial territory, it draws completely different emotional reactions from white American women during and after his passage to America. On the ship that carries Carlos and other Filipino immigrants to America, an

epidemic breaks out among the steerage passengers before they arrive at Honolulu and the Filipino passengers are forcibly confined in the lower cabin for many days. As the epidemic remits, they are allowed to come up to the deck and sunbathe. At this moment they encounter a white American woman scantily clad in a swimming suit:

I was pleasantly sunning myself one afternoon when Marcelo rolled over on his stomach and touched me. I turned and saw a young white girl wearing a brief bathing suit walking toward us with a young man. They stopped some distance away from us; then as though the girl's moral conscience had been provoked, she put her small hand on her mouth and said in a frightened voice:

"Look at those half-naked savages from the Philippines, Roger! Haven't they any idea of decency?"

"I don't blame them for coming into the sun," the young man said. "I know how it is below."

"Roger!" said the terrified girl. "Don't tell me you have been down in that horrible place? I simply can't believe it!"

The man said something, but they had already turned and the wind carried it away. I was to hear that girl's voice in many ways afterwards in the United States. It became no longer her voice, but an angry chorus shouting:

"Why don't they ship those monkeys back where they came from?" (Bulosan, 1973: 98-99; emphasis in the original)

Susan Koshy's reading of this encounter stresses upon the formation of the migrant subject under the gaze of the white woman: "In the moment of the passage, the corporeal identity of the narrator is reduced to an epidermal schema, which becomes the site of a repetitive and relentless visibility imposed on the Filipino subjects as a foreign presence in the United States" (Koshy, 2004: 104). This reading, however, fails to explain the different reactions between the white American voyeurs in the Philippines and those in the United States. What happens that the same naked body

which was regarded as fascinating is now looked at with horror? Obviously it is not the corporeality *per se* that is unpleasant and terrifying. Rather, it is the space that the body occupies that matters. For the white girl, the half-naked Filipino bodies are offensive, not because their nakedness is a sign of savageness or lewdness by itself, given the fact that she herself is half-naked. But because their naked bodies are too close to her. The woman's reaction to her male companion's confession that he has been "down" there reveals her anxiety for the disruption of the safe distance that keeps the white and the others apart: "Don't tell me you have been down in that horrible place? I simply can't believe it!" Nakedness of the other among us is dangerous not because it is morally threatening, but because the others' proximity to "our nakedness" threatens to dissolve the line between they and us. What is really frightening is that our nakedness may be read in the way we read the others' nakedness.

Carlos's unfortunate experience on the ship is his wake-up call to the abject subject position into which he is about to be initiated. As an abject, Carlos and his Filipino companions are inside-out of the territorial imagination of the country. Because of their colonial ties with the United States, the Filipino migrants are categorized as "non-citizen nationals," neither aliens nor citizens. Their entry to the States is allowed only if they do not transgress the boundary set up by certain racial grammars that see them as unfit for assimilation. They are needed by the country to serve as cheap labors, yet, excluded from the reproductive rights of the citizens, which are officially institutionalized through the implementation of the laws of anti-miscegenation.¹⁰ To justify and consolidate such

¹⁰ Anti-miscegenation laws between whites and Mongolians were passed in several states in the early 1920s. In 1933, California government amended the anti-miscegenation laws to include Malays. After the Filipino immigrants were officially recognized as Malays, they were banned from white-Filipino marriages. The laws applied to the Filipinos immigrants retroactively, hence rendering previous interracial marriages between whites and Filipinos illegal. See Koshy (2004: 98) and Lee (1999: 30).

exclusive laws, colonial representations of negative Filipino disposition or racial traits have to be produced and circulated to such an extent that popular opinions are firmly on the side of the laws. In public discourses, Filipino migrants are constructed as hypersexual, beastlike, and morally degraded; in short, they are lacking in proper sexuality and humanity, and cannot be properly assimilated into the United States; nor can they reproduce proper racial subjects (Koshy, 2004: 97-98; Lee, 1999: 30-31). Anti-miscegenation and the ensuing cultural discursive construction of the Filipino immigrants, therefore, represent an official disciplinary control over the abject racial bodies. In parallel with the official discursive and legislative controls are social violence and political coercion exerted on those bodies. Bulosan's texts records various forms of cultural prejudice derived from such public bias and racist ideology: Scenes after scenes of verbal abuse, outright humiliation, spatial segregation, police beating, political oppression, labor exploitation, and private lynching "chart out" the impossible map of Carlos's journey.

However, if the direct political technologies of control over the Filipino immigrants' bodies are ruthless and crude, why is that Carlos's love of the nation remains? And if love is capable of moving the body toward something to which it is affectively attached, the question can be asked in a different manner: Why does the national ideal instilled through colonial intimacy continue to propel Carlos's narrative of development in a racist environment, in which his journey is nothing but a coerced "nomadic looping" which leads to nowhere (Wong, 1993: 132)? Sau-ling Wong rightly questions Carlos's undying faith in America: "If the tribute [to America] remains profoundly affecting, it is less from the reader's conviction of its inevitability than from marvel at such single-minded devotion. This curious enhancement through detraction is not a calculated artistic effect but a symptom of the fierce ideological contestations taking place in the text, contestations that appear manageable in 'Be American'"(133).

Wong reads this incongruity between the way the nation treats

Filipino immigrants and their undying faith in the nation as the *symptom* of “ideological contestations” in the text. The “ideological contestations” point to all the gaps and discrepancy between the migrant subjects’ national love and harsh social reality. But Wong stresses the fact that these contestations “appear manageable in ‘Be American.’” That is to say, the contestations are in fact manageable. In the context of my argument concerning anti-miscegenation, the contestation between the social prejudice and national emotion is managed and resolved in a symptomatic manner through the performance of “courtly love.” As Susan Koshy illustrates in her historical investigation, anti-miscegenation in the forms of law or cultural ideology often leads to violence and abuse. In psychoanalytic register, however, anti-miscegenation can also be the catalyst of love between brown men and white women, and eventually the bond between brown men and the nation. And the two consequences of the practice of anti-miscegenation are actually two sides of the same coin. Anti-miscegenation, I would argue, stages the affective detour in the manner of courtly love that strengthens the bond between the individual and the collective through the suspension of love for the women. In the structure of courtly love, the knight loves and protects a lady to whom he is forbidden to gain sexual access in order to fulfill a greater love for God and the state. Central to the structure of courtly love is the obstacle between the knight and the lady, which, in its process of suspending the love, simultaneously enhances the love by turning the sign of the lady into a sign of lack that triggers further pursuits (Lacan, 1975: 69). Since the lady is but a front of the religious and national ideal, the endless pursuit is ultimately a pursuit of an inaccessible God/Nation.

In her discussion of the national ideal, Sara Ahmed translates the structure of desire in courtly love into an affective pattern that circulates and binds the individual and the collective in the heterosexual logic of identification and idealization (Ahmed, 2004: 127-128). Ahmed uses Freud’s theories of identification and idealization to formulate the complex structure of the love for the

nation. In Freud's theories, the boy loves the father through identification, which involves the desire to pull the subject towards the ego ideal by trying to be like him. The boy's secondary love is the love for the mother, which is expressed through the idealization of the mother as the ideal object, whom he must "have." Ahmed emphasizes that identification with the father as ego ideal and idealization of the mother as ideal object actually takes place on the same emotional plane because "the love for the mother is a means by which the identification with the father is performed" (126). Furthermore, the ideal object and the ego ideal are *effects* "of the ideal image that the subject has of itself" (127). Identification (to be) and idealization (to have) are therefore joined in their relation to an ideal. In this light, "to love and to be loved is . . . about fulfilling one's fantasy image of 'who one would like to be' through who one 'has'" (129; my emphasis). Love for the nation, or group identification, can be conceived through this double-structure of love as well.

Besides the unhappy contacts with white women who read the proximity of Filipino male bodies as dangerous and threatening, Carlos's bleak journey is from time to time illuminated by his numerous encounters with white women who represent the human side of America yet to be uncovered. Previous critical examinations of the function of these positive images of white women in Bulosan's text tend to stress the maternal virtues and humanist knowledge these white women embody. Rachel Lee reads these white women—Mary Strandon, Marian, Dora Travers, Alice and Eileen Odell, etc.—as surrogate mothers who introduce Carlos to the world of knowledge and books, encouraging "his intellectual affiliation with (male) authors who share his vision of cross-racial tolerance" (Lee, 1999: 32). This reading focuses upon the virtues of the ideal object as pre-given that serve to pass down the knowledge necessary for Carlos's contact with the humanist tradition which is supposed to embrace cultural difference. That is to say, what the mainstream society fails to achieve—the ideal of racial tolerance, equal opportunity for all races, human rights, and

citizenships—is compensated for by the maternal side of America which is “human, good, and real” (Bulosan, 1973: 235). And the friendships between Carlos and these white women are possible because they have shared the same ideals, which enables Carlos’s continuing pursuit of a national ideal that “prize[s] men as its proper subjects” (Lee, 1999: 33). More importantly, Lee points out that Carlos’s enterprise of imagining an alternative community is, while trying to include members from different races, gender exclusive. In Carlos’s national imaginary, proper white women embody a cross-racial tolerance rarely found in mainstream society. They thus serve as the face of the nation, the vessel through which the alternative nation seeks to voice itself. Exactly because of their function as the mediators, the passageways through which Carlos approaches a national ideal which takes male subjects from diverse racial backgrounds as its proper members, the claim of women to nation is not taken into consideration. The unions between brown men and white women serve eventually to consolidate the male bonding among the brown men in a different national imaginary (Lee, 1999: 31-36).

Lee’s reading, however, seems to put Carlos on equal footing with white male subjects in relation to white women, and in relation to the nation. In other words, by reading white women as the sign of nation Carlos can fully control and exploit to achieve brotherly bonding, Lee inadvertently draws an impossible parallel between white male and Filipino male immigrants in their relations to white women and to the nation. It is important to remember that Carlos’s friendship with these white women occurs under the social decree of anti-miscegenation that forbids interracial marriage between whites and colored people on the ground that white women will lose their citizenships in such a relationship. The cultural foundation of the laws, as I have shown above, derives from a bias that charges the Filipino males as a threat to civilized order because of their presumed hypersexuality, moral degeneracy, and beastly quality. Carlos’s response to the laws is to try to perform the opposite, to be nothing the laws presume the Filipinos

to be. In other words, he tries to be a proper subject on all counts so that he can fully deserve the nation. And his relationship with the proper white women is the stage on which he performs his “propriety.” The prohibition of interracial intimacy becomes an ambiguous cultural front which produces new modes of emotion as it forecloses the possibility of sexuality.

Susan Koshy remarks in a similar vein: “It appears that prohibitions on miscegenation create a profound ambivalence about the racial and national identity in Bulosan’s writing that is symbolically resolved through the deeply invested and idealized inscriptions of the white woman’s body. The white woman’s presence is so heavily charged with the force of these prohibitions that Carlos can only see her as *screen* that reflects the meaning of his own racial identity” (Koshy, 2004: 126; emphasis added). In this light, the way in which Carlos bonds with these white women can be seen as an *effect* of the ideal image Carlos perceives for himself and then projects to them. By “having” their friendship or emotional attachment, he is able to approach the ego ideal that will allow him to be the proper subject and be admitted into the imagined community of the United States of America. Interestingly, his way of “having” these women is performed through an active gesture of “not having,” of not trying to transgress the social, spatial, sexual, racial boundaries laid down by the laws of anti-miscegenation. The effort of “not having” is especially striking, given the affective intensity that permeates Carlos’s numerous rendezvous with these white women. This symptomatic performance of courtly love is vividly portrayed in his relationship with Mary—a humble white girl Carlos meets on a bus in San Francisco and an echo of all the other kind-hearted white women who appear to be Carlos’s ideal object. For a while Mary stays with Carlos and the other Filipino men, while none of them were employed and the house was often filled with the smell of liquor, sour wine, and despair:

But I had Mary. . . . She had become a symbol of goodness.

My companions felt the same toward her. She became the delicate object of our affections. She was an angel molded into purity by the cleanliness of our thoughts. When a stranger came into our household and looked at her longingly, I could see some of my companions doubling their fists. This platonic relationship among us was healthy and clean, and in a way it gave me a new faith in myself. (Bulosan, 1973: 301)

Here Mary is but a signifier, an empty sign whose meaning is given through her encounter with the Filipino workers. Mary's purity is something "molded" into her by the men's purity of thoughts. And the purity of thoughts can be, and has to be, manifested through proper distance between the white woman's body and the brown male bodies. The sacredness of her virtue is an effect of their steadfast preservation of a platonic relationship. I read this collective effort of maintaining a safe distance between the male community and the white woman as a collective emotional performativity, which designates a break with what is coded and assigned to the Filipino bodies, namely their beast-like qualities. The purity of thoughts and the emotion of love are thus locked in a short circuit. The more they resist their sexual fantasy the more affection they feel for the woman; the less the woman returns their affection, the more elevated they feel about themselves. Since the white woman is but the ideal object of a secondary love, through her the brown men express their identification with their ego ideal, namely the nation, the deadlock of the emotion between the brown men and the white women is at once a deadlock between the brown men and the nation.

Sara Ahmed's conceptualization of national emotion is relevant here. Ahmed translated the structure of desire in courtly love into an affective pattern that circulates and binds the individual and the collective in the logic of (un)reciprocity. She suggests that "[e]ven though love is a demand for reciprocity, it is also an emotion that lives with the failure of that demand often through an intensification of its affect. . . . Love may be especially

crucial in the event of the failure of the nation to deliver its promise for the good life. So the failure of the nation to ‘give back’ the subject’s love works to increase the investment in the nation. The subject ‘stays with’ the nation, despite the absence of return and the threat of violence, as leaving would mean recognizing that the investment of national love over a lifetime has brought no value” (Ahmed, 2004: 130-131).

In this light, Carlos’s repetitive performativity of pure love for white women/white nation is eventually a *symptom* of the U.S.’s biopolitical control over the body that is at once colonial and migrant. Although the love he expresses holds the possibility of refuting the cultural discursive construction of the Filipinos as hypersexual, and reinterpreting his racial body as human, the structure of the love, however, is established upon the logic of un-reciprocity. The nation does not have to be responsible for, or respond to, the love from the racial other. The social manifestation of the lack of return-love is the persistence of social violence and lack of equal opportunity.

III. The Cost of Being Political

Carlos’s complex relationships with the two kinds of white women—one teaches him to love the nation through pure love, the other treats him as intruding hypersexual outsider—can well be read as the two contradictory sites of Filipino American subjectification/subjection, which requires two conflicting political technologies for the consolidation of the imperial power. Historians and critics of American imperialist enterprise in the Philippines have pointed out that U.S. occupation of the Philippines has caused a rupture to American exceptionalism (Chuh, 2003: 51; Rafael, 1993: 185). To manage and conceal the violence of conquest aberrant to the foundational ideals of the United States of America, President William McKinley translated colonial conquest into “benevolent assimilation” to highlight its

moral imperative, so that the “‘Orphans of the Pacific’ cut off from their Spanish fathers and desired by other European powers would now be adopted and protected by the compassionate embrace of the United States” (Rafael, 1993: 185). The measure of colonial governance, as Vicente Rafael points out, consists in a disciplinary technology of “making native inhabitants desire what colonial authority desired for them” (1993: 186). Similar to Stoler’s claim that the macropolitics of empire rules through microsites of governance, Rafael emphasizes self-rule under the intimate supervision of colonial rule as the hinge upon which the empire is sustained. He says:

While colonial rule may be a transitional stage to self-rule, the “self” that rules itself can only emerge by way of an intimate relationship with a colonial master who sets the standards and practices of discipline to mold the conduct of the colonial subject. The culmination of colonial rule, self-government, can thus be achieved only when the subject has learned to colonize itself. In this way can benevolent assimilation indefinitely defer its own completion, in that the condition for self-rule, self-mastery, can be made identical to the workings of colonial rule, the mastery of the other that resides within the boundaries of the self. White love holds out the promise of fathering, as it were, a “civilized people” capable in time of asserting its own “character.” But it also demands the indefinite submission to a program of discipline and re-formation requiring the constant supervision of a sovereign master. (1993: 186-187)

Carlos’s intimate relationship with the idealized white women in his journey serves to function as the transit points where colonial rule is transformed into self-rule through the biopolitical discipline of proper affect. In this light, his active pursuit of the ideal object of the nation through his intimate relationships with the white women is in fact circumscribed by the imperial project of assimilation. On the other hand, those white women who express outright aversion and exclusive attitudes toward the Filipino

migrant workers based upon existing racist ideology can be seen as the border-petrol of America's immigration laws and therefore, agents of nationalist disciplinary mechanism. Taken together, the socio-historical conditions surrounding Carlos's journey to constructing political subjectivity and formulating ethnic community are over-determined by the conflicting politics of America's imperialist expansion and white nationalist racial policy. Carlos's conundrum, thus, designates the inherent contradictions embedded in the racial category of "American national" (Chuh, 2003: 51).

Given that their inclusion is at once a form of exclusion, Carlos's effort to unionize his fellow Filipino workers can hardly detract from hegemonic discourse of nationalism. The politics of emotion that aim to strive for an alternative imagined community, as I have shown above, display a symptomatic gesture, on the part of the Filipino migrant subject, to deconstruct and rectify the racist, colonial representation of Filipino bodies and sexuality. Yet, the affect that emerges from the encounter between white women and brown men fails to derail from a trajectory of love that works against the Filipino colonial/migrants.

Carlos's journey ends at the moment when he projects his love of the ideal nation to the landscape of America: "I glanced out of the window again to look at the broad land I had dreamed so much about, only to discover with astonishment that the American earth was like a huge heart unfolding warmly to receive me. I felt it spreading through my being, warming me with its glowing reality. It came to me that no man—no one at all—could destroy my faith in America again" (Bulosan, 1973: 326). Critics E. San Juan Jr., Te-hsing Shan, Shyh-jen Fuh, Rachel Lee, Margarita R. Orendain, and M. Alquizola, etc. have discussed extensively the complex motivations of Carlos's public announcement of love for the nation which has disappointed him in every aspect of his social life in America. Given the scope and the major concern of my paper, I am unable to give full references to each of their arguments. But one can find three commonly shared observations in regard to Carlos's

final gesture of national love. Firstly, “America” is germinated only in Carlos’s heart; secondly, the “America” that is in Carlos’s heart is a utopian ideal of a Promise Land that attracts immigrants to fulfill their desire for an ideal “home”; finally, the public announcement of this love for a national ideal or ideal nation works to disclose and critique the lack of this ideal land in reality (Fuh, 2008: 455-457; Lee, 1999: 25; Orendain, 1988: 375; San Juan Jr., 1996: 138-139; Shan, 2005: 339-341).¹¹ Acknowledging this critical tradition on the one hand, I would like to suggest yet another reading, that Carlos’s faith in America could possibly derive from the fact that both of his brothers Amado and Macario are permitted to join the war, thus turning their love of the nation into patriotism, namely the love of nation expressed through protecting the land of the nation, meanwhile fulfilling the masculinity required for the membership of the nation. The action in the name of love represents a ticket to the imagined community in crisis, suturing the split between the lover and the loved one. It is as if the nation has finally returned its love to the forlorn lover. Emerging from the mutual writing of heart and land and from the site of seamless merger between love and the object of love, as I will argue more extensively in the following, is a “political subject” who, in pursuit of a “good life” (*bios*), is caught in the intersection between institutional and biopolitical models of power.

America Is in the Heart is structured around a narrative of struggle, survival, and development, highlighting especially Carlos’s acquisition of knowledge and writing ability and the emergence of political consciousness following his writing career. Part IV of the novel delineates the process through which he puts his political consciousness into action by means of organizing

¹¹ San Juan Jr. also suggests that such a public gesture of love for the nation may be a marketing strategy for the publication of the book. See also Alquizola’s (1989: 216) and Fuh’s (2008: 458) comments. San Juan Jr. argues that other than serving as the site of an ideal America, the “heart” also harbors the longing for “one island,” the Philippines, which is not blatantly pronounced in the text (Bulosan, 1973: 323; San Juan, 1996: 139).

unions and publishing newspapers that serve as the voice of the minor communities. Despite his countless experiences of intolerable victimization and total despair, Carlos never forfeits his dream of belonging to the land. The goal of his political “career” is to accomplish the American Dream, while in the meantime seeking to legitimate the minority’s claim to America. All of his political pursuits are conducted while he is suffering from TB and white racism. Quite a few of Bulosan critics have pointed out the discrepancy between Carlos and his brother Macario’s undying believe in American Dream and the unbearable hardship they bear in America.¹² While questioning Carlos’s pursuit of American Dream as an internalization of American exceptionalism, most of the critics assert Carlos’s intellectual growth and his skills in deploying reading and writing as powerful weapons by which to enlighten the minority and lower class workers and resist the domination of the upper class and white racism.¹³ In this reading, Carlos’s political subjectivity is characterized by a conscious adoption of social humanism in his political practices through writing and social intervention through the organization of labor unions.

Given the frame of my previous discussion, I understand the term “political subject” differently. I read the term more in line with Giorgio Agamben’s use of the term. Agamben’s conceptualization of politics derives largely from Michel Foucault’s reconfiguration of power. Foucault claims that around the 18th century, State power begins to take natural life into calculation, and that powers exercise through government, not rule.

¹² Critics Sau-ling Wong, Te-Hsing Shan and Shyh-jen Fuh have made such comments. Wong remarks that it is a ideological contradiction (Wong, 1993: 133), Shan takes it as an internalization of mainstream value (Shan, 2005: 339-344); Fuh reads the gap as an ironical double visions (Fuh, 2008: 456-457). My own reading strives to emphasize the way in which these contractions or internalization or double visions are sutured by the biopolitical governance of imperial intimate encounters.

¹³ See Shan, (2005: 345-353) and San Juan (1972: 93).

Governmentality, therefore, refers to the political techniques through which the State integrates the care of natural life of the population into its center (Agamben, 1995: 5). In the meantime, Foucault examines the historical development of “the *technologies of the self* by which processes of subjectivization bring the individual to bind himself to his own identity and consciousness and, at the same time, to an external power” (5; emphasis in the original). Agamben strives to locate the convergence of the two faces of power, which Foucault has never identified clearly. For Agamben, political techniques and subjective technologies are inseparable. That is to say, the subjective technologies that take one’s biological life into calculation are the condition on which the sovereign power exercises its political techniques. Although seemingly on the opposite end of the politically qualified life (the good life, *bios*), natural life (bare life, *zoē*) is actually implicated in the former. Specifically, politically qualified life is constituted through an exclusive inclusion of natural life (6-7). In this sense, politics and bare life are locked in a zone of indistinction.

For most Bulosan critics, Carlos’s political subjectivity is forged in his dedication to the improvement of the political life for the ethnic community in an imagined nation—the “America” in his heart. Yet reading Carlos’s affective journey against Agamben’s frame of thought, one can say that Carlos’s pursuits of an ideal community and a politically qualified life for the minors are built upon a biopolitical production of one’s emotion or emotional life. As the emotions produced in the process of imperial intimate encounters reach their purest form of abstraction, namely, the emotions that move one toward a totalizing, idealizing concept of the nation, the political subject simultaneously experiences birth through a symbolic death. In other words, the formation of the political subjectivity is also within the rational calculation of the empire.

IV. Emotional Derailing and Political Unconscious

If the structure of feelings that sustains Carlos's political consciousness is ineluctably compromised by the biopolitical technology of "white love," is it possible to find a different emotion that will disrupt the symptom of courtly love? I would like to present a moment in the text that detracts from the politics of emotion that sustain Carlos's travel narrative. I read this fleeting moment as the temporary unveiling of the political unconscious in Carlos's process of transformation from a colonial/migrant subject to a political subject.

In one of the numerous journeys he makes along the west coast, Carlos stops by Santa Maria, where he works as a stoop laborer, planting cauliflower. The workers live in the bunkhouse, sleep on dirty cots with blankets that are never washed, and eat in a dining room which smells like a pigsty. The food is cooked by someone who "had a harelip and his eyes were always bloodshot and watery" (Bulosan, 1973: 158). The crude and unhygienic life form is to be matched by the nighttime entertainment of collective whoring. Here life is stripped down to its basic instinct of labor, food, and sex, and the migrant workers of various ethnic origins live the lives of mere animals. Conscious of the horror of such a horrendous life form, Carlos is stricken by the nonchalance of the residents here: "I knew at once I had to run away. Was it possible that they were not horrified" (159)? Carlos is, however, forced to have his first sexual experience with a Mexican prostitute:

The woman bent over me, running her hands over my warming face. The men released me, withdrawing sheepishly from the wall of sheets. Then, as though from far away, I felt the tempestuous flow of blood in my veins.

It was like a spring in an unknown land. There were roses everywhere, opening to a kind sun. I heard the sudden beating of waves upon rocks, the gentle fall of rain among palm leaves. Was this eternity? Was this the source of creation? Then I heard a thunderclap—and suddenly

the sound and stench of humanity permeated the air, crushing the dream. And I heard the woman saying:

“There, now. It’s all over.”

I leaped to my feet, hiding myself from her.

“Did you like it?” she said.

I plunged through the wall of sheets and started running between the cots to the door. Benigno and other men laughed, shouting my name. I could still hear their voices when I entered my tent, trembling with a nameless shame. (Bulosan, 1973: 160)

What is significant in this scene of sexual orgasm lies not merely in the intensity of feelings experienced, but, more importantly, in the way in which these feelings are verbalized: How feelings are processed at the moments of writing. The feelings evoke images of natural beauty that transcend time—roses, sun, rock, waves, gentle rain, palms leaves, eternity and creation—indeed images that bring associations with paradise. As a flower blossoms in dessert, the feelings of pure physical joy temporarily emancipate Carlos from his beastly surrounding of bare life. These feelings, given the context and the sexual object, are everything opposite to the feelings Carlos holds for the white women. Not icy-cold sense of purity derived from sexual repression, but exploding heat of sensation that blossoms and flows through the body and life. Not effects of projecting love, but concrete and specific physical feelings. They provide a temporary line of flight from the biopolitical control over the emotional pattern of the colonial/migrant body. But given that the body is always already ruled through self-rule, the sensual derailing from the established emotion politics can only sustain for a fleeting moment before Carlos puts a stop to it. The feelings are on the verge of becoming an emotion, a force of attachment that moves people together, when the Mexican woman asks about how he feels about it. The question raised by the Mexican woman “did you like it?” turns the commercial sex or pure animal libido into social intercourse with humanist meaning; it is this danger of a possible emotional bond

between him and the Mexican woman that Carlos must run from. Carlos's consciousness surfaces and translates the moment of pure joy into one of shame. The Mexican woman, along with the feelings she brings forth, like the Filipino women back home, have to be pushed into the background, left behind on one's journey, because it is exterior to the trajectory of love that moves one toward the national ideals and the ideals of democracy and equality.

V. Conclusion

Bulosan's autobiographical novel depicts a transnational journey with multiple and sometimes contradictory directions of movement. It is, first of all, a physical journey across national borders in search of a sense of belonging. The trajectory of that journey places Carlos into the "ethnoscape" of transnational minor workers who provide cheap labor indispensable to the prosperity of California's farming industry at the time.¹⁴ Because of the nature of this specific social space, Carlos's racial class body is subjected to multiple dominations. As a Filipino migrant worker,

¹⁴ Arjun Appadurai defines "ethnoscapes" as follows: "By ethnoscape, I mean the landscape of persons who constitute the shifting world in which we live: tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest workers, and other moving groups and individuals constitute an essential feature of the world and appear to affect the politics of (and between) nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree" (1996: 33). I adopt Appadurai's idea of "ethnoscapes" to understand the world in which the migrant workers of different ethnic backgrounds move and live because the term invoke other elements of global cultural economy which intersect with ethnoscapes in a complex and sometimes disjunctive manner: mediascapes, technoscapes, finanscapes, and ideoscapes. Appadurai's skillful uses of these "-scapes" are to be matched by his understanding of the role of imagination in social life. Imagination, according to him, includes "images (in Frankfurt School sense), the idea of imagined community (in Anderson's sense); and the French idea of the imaginary (*imaginaire*) . . ." (Appadurai, 1996: 31). These imagined constructs are central to all forms of agency that mobilizes movements of deterritorialization as well as reterritorialization in the global world constituted by the aforementioned building blocks of "-scapes."

his labor is exploited, his body exposed to violence, starvation, criminal offences, disease, and his sexuality policed and misrepresented (Koshy, 2004: 95). His experience of deprivation is shared by other workers with different ethnic backgrounds: Filipinos, Mexicans, Chinese, Japanese, etc. That his journey brings him to constant contact with other workers sharing similar fate of deprivation and exploitation is the foundation upon which he forms the workers' union on the American west coast. In the meantime his journey to America designated an entry to an "ideoscape" in which he absorbs the Enlightenment ideas of rights, equality, freedom and democracy as a life-long goal of pursuit through reading texts like *Robinson Crusoe*, Walt Whitman's poetry and other publication that provide an intellectual foundation for his involvement with the workers' movement. Carlos's navigation through these two "-scapes" enables the emergence of his political subjectivity as well as a literary voice seeking to articulate the stories of minor workers living at the bottom of the society. There is, however, a huge gap or disjuncture between what he has experienced as a migrant worker, and the Enlightenment ideas promised by the nation. Yet, the gap does not lead to a rebellious agent, nor is his journey to deterritorialize the nation. As Susan Koshy has pointed out, his national imaginary engenders "an inclusionary politics rather than a transformative one" (96). This failure, however, is concealed by a form of imagination that sees nation as an ideal construct, an ever-expanding community of universal brotherhood, and an imagined world of harmony between nature and human society. Once nation is imagined as something to be found later, or beyond, a sign waiting to be filled in with our conscious effort, racism and domination become tolerable because they will eventually be overcome. As Appadurai elucidates, the five dimensions of global cultural flows—ethnoscapes, mediascapes, technoscapes, financescapes, and ideoscapes—are but the building blocks of the imagined world "constituted by the historically situated imaginations of persons and groups spread around the globe"

(Appadurai, 1996: 33). Imagination is clearly the force that steers transnational movements. But if imagination in a postmodern world is engendered by media-produced images, the social, national imagination of Carlos's lifeworld is produced through a politics of emotion implicated by the colonial and racist biopolitics. These disciplinary technologies are as productive as they are repressive, creating docile body, predictable sexuality, and calculable emotion. These specific structures of feelings and complex detours of governance characterize postcolonial Filipino American literary tradition at its seminal stage and continue to resonate in subsequent literary representations. They invite a literary imagination that denounces racism and colonization and their control and coercion over the ethnic labored, sexual bodies; yet, because the formation of that imagination is originated from narratives or cultural representations produced by the white colonizers, its power of subversion is often compromised by the subtle form of power found in the arena of intimacy and private feelings. These complex ambiguities in Filipino American literary representations may well be a fertile subject of reflection and object of further exploration for concerned critics. It is equally challenging to scrutinize the possibility of finding textual moments of relief in these ambiguities, as I have attempted to demonstrate earlier.

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情感之旅：卜婁杉《美國在心中》之情動國家

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摘 要

本文討論菲裔美國作家卜婁杉《美國在心中》族裔移動的複雜結構。故事主人翁積極追尋國家理想，其追尋之旅深受殖民者與被殖民者之間親密接觸所產生的情感結構的影響與強化。我引用安·蘿拉·史托勒對「緊密而溫柔的牽繫」觀念的闡釋，及沙拉·阿蜜所謂的情感政治，來析論親密接觸如何縫合菲律賓移工國家信念與個人處境之間的鴻溝，他身處一個視他為濫性、禽獸一般難以同化的種族歧視社會，卻對國家抱持不可動搖的信心。本文認為源自於生命權力治理的情感政治，正是美國帝國主義得以確保其對來自殖民地的移工身體進行雙重統御的方式，這種權力機制以排除的方式來進行涵納，或者以涵納的方式來進行排除，使得權力的蹤跡得以遁形。卜婁杉的文本試圖揭露美國的種族主義與不公不義，但主人翁的抵抗能量往往被帝國的生命權力治理所抵銷，這種帝國「纏崇」既是菲裔美國文學傳統必須面對處理的議題及特色，也是一個值得持續追蹤的研究命題。

關鍵詞：卡洛斯·卜婁杉、國家、生命政治、帝國親密、情感