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**Political-Security, Economy, and Culture within the Dynamics
of Geopolitics and Migration:**

On Philippine Territory and the Filipino People

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Abstract:

The paper considers the interaction of the dual elements of the nation-state: territory and people. Particularly, it discusses the interaction of geopolitics and migration, i.e. the non-mobile territory and the mobile people, from the perspectives of political-security, economy, and culture, and how the interactions influence government policy focusing on the case of the Philippines.

The paper ferrets-out the major factors in the geopolitical transformation of the Philippine Islands into the westernmost frontier of the United States, and how this geopolitical transformation created a migratory linkage from the Philippine Islands to the United States. The paper shows how migratory movements shaped the geopolitics of East Asia or Western Pacific before World War II by pointing out the following. One: The westward expansion of the American people initially changed the geopolitical conditions in the American continent, and eventually changed the geopolitical make-up in the Western Pacific. Two: The migration of Filipinos to the United States was a key factor in the granting of Philippine independence, thereby reshaping the geopolitical conditions in the Western Pacific region.

The paper shows that the geopolitical transformation of the Philippine Islands came with the implantation of American culture and English language. The paper discusses how this cultural aspect has functioned in terms of a migratory linkage by looking at the current migratory pattern of Filipinos.

The paper then shows how the economic agreement the Philippines signed with the United States in 1946 to attain independence eventually led to the establishment of a migratory system as the Philippine government adopted of a labor export policy in the 1970s. The paper further shows the importance of remittances from overseas Filipinos to the Philippine economy.

The paper elaborates and discusses how the political-security policies undertaken by the Philippines have been deeply influenced by both its geopolitical circumstance and the current situation of Filipino migration. Finally, the paper points out that the large presence of Filipinos overseas and the country's dependence to their remittances are a cause of weakness for the Philippine state in maintaining a credible foreign and security policy.

Keywords: Geopolitics in East Asia; Nation-state; Philippine Territory; Filipino Migration

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Political-Security, Economy, and Culture within the Dynamics of Geopolitics and Migration: On Philippine Territory and the Filipino People

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I. Introduction

The nation-state has two elements: territory and people. These elements have fundamental contradiction in the sense that the territory is non-mobile and the people are mobile. The paper is a discussion on the dialectical interaction of the two contradictory elements of the nation-state by focusing on the case of the Philippines. That is, the paper brings-up the case of the Philippines to discuss the interplay of geopolitics and migration: how geopolitics influences migration, and vice-versa from the perspectives of political-security, economy, and culture.

According to Hay (2003), geopolitics talks about “the influence of geography on the political character of states, their history, institutions, and especially relations with other states”. On the other hand, migration talks about the movement of people across space and borders (Lambino, forthcoming). Accordingly, international migration is the movement across state borders.

Modernity has seen the ascendance of the nation-state as the foundation for the arrangement of political power over geography and people through the establishment of an inter-state order (Agnew, 1998). This international order that originates from the Treaty of Westphalia is based on the sovereigns’ mutual recognition of each other’s freedom in governing their territory and the people within the territory. The dual elements of the nation-state—i.e. the territory and the people—although fundamentally contradictory is united in a way that international order is based on this unity.

However, recent years have seen the degradation of this unity as the integration of markets across territories of nation-states accelerated. Improved systems of communication and transportation have enabled people, commodities, capital, and ideas to move through the global market and across national territories with greater speed. The paper looks at the degradation of this unity from the aspect of the movement of people.

The turn of the millennium has especially seen the sharp increase in the number of people working outside the country of their permanent residence. According to the World Migration Report 2010, there were only 150 million migrants in 2000. In 2010, the number of migrants has

grown almost 1.5 times to 214 million. It is also projected by the same report that the figure could rise to 405 million by 2050 (International Organization for Migration, 2010).

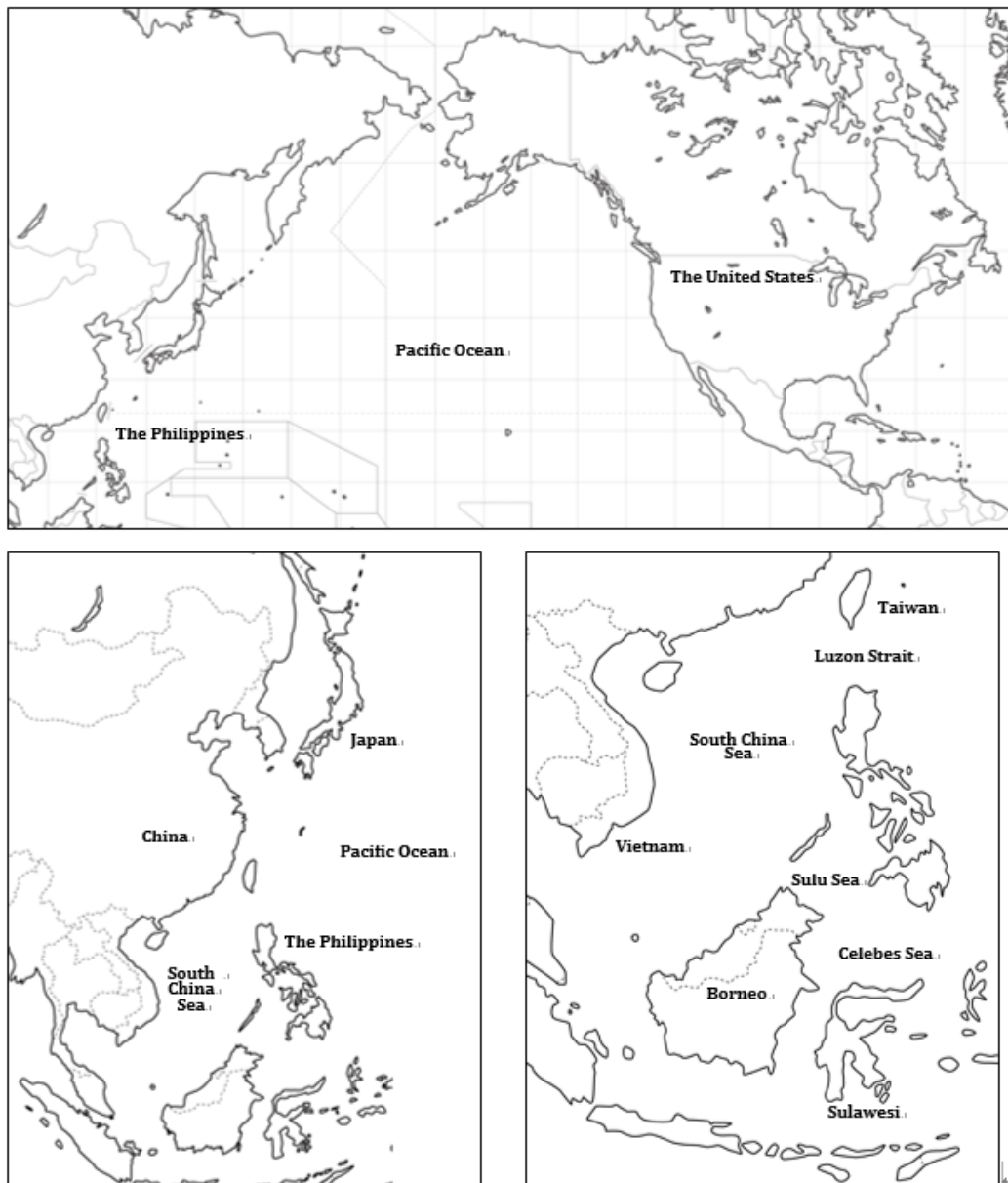
As people move, the unity of territory and the people that had been secured starting with the Treaty of Westphalia is degraded more and more in a way that migration has increasing geopolitical and security consequences. For instance, the Hamburg cell or the core group that planned and executed the September 11 attacks in 2001 by crashing airplanes to the World Trade Center and the Pentagon was composed of migrants living in Germany. This attack altered geopolitical relationships, including the full-scale invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq in 2001 and 2003 respectively. Recently in Europe in the year 2015, governments and the media are tackling the problematic nature of migrants coming to European continent especially through Libya, and discussing the preventive merit of military intervention in Libya (Traynor, 2015).

Why is this study focused on the Philippines and the Filipino people? Aside from having a long history of migration, the Philippines remains to be a major labor exporting country—around 10% of its population is residing outside in 2009 (Commission on Filipino Overseas, 2009). The country's economy is very dependent on the remittances from overseas Filipinos. In 2012, around 8.5% of its gross national product (GNP) is constituted by the remittances from Filipinos overseas. For these reasons, the Philippines is an appropriate country to study the interaction of geopolitics and migration. At the same time, the study is valuable and important for the Philippines. The paper shows that both Philippine geopolitical circumstance and Filipino migration are important in shaping Philippine foreign and security policies.

The direction of Philippine foreign policy can be gleaned upon from Republic Act No. 7157, otherwise known as Philippine Foreign Service Act of 1991. According to the Act, the Philippines has three pillars for its foreign policy. One: to preserve and enhance national security. Two: to protect the rights and to promote the welfare of overseas Filipinos. Three: to promote and attain economic security. To operationalize these objectives, the Philippine government further defined foreign policy realities that include the following. One: overseas Filipinos will continue to be recognized for their critical role in the country's economic and social stability. Two: China, Japan, and the United States, and their relationship will be a determining influence in the security situation of East Asia.

It is assumed in geopolitics that migration as a transnational interaction declines with physical distance (Mouritzen and Wivel, 2005). This is not the case for the Philippines. Major destination countries for Filipinos such as the United States are located very far from the Philippines. As the paper discusses, distance in the context of migration is not simply a physical quantity, but rather

Figure 1: Location of the Philippines



it is as much as a qualitative measurement based on historical and cultural affinity.

On the other hand, the geopolitical circumstances of countries are premised on the non-mobility of their territories. Because of their non-mobility, the geographical location of a country—i.e. its distance or spatiality from other countries especially from the geopolitical poles¹—influences their behavior in general and their policies in particular, whether they like it or not.

The Philippines is located in the eastern part of Asia and in the western part of the Pacific (Figure 1). It cannot choose which neighbors to have or which neighborhood to be located at. It

cannot move into a different location when its geopolitical situation becomes inconvenient or turbulent. What this means is that like other countries, its geographical location is fixed. For this, its geographical location influences the direction of its history as a nation-state as being actualized through government policies and other social dynamics. To the north across the Luzon Strait lies Taiwan and farther north lies Japan. Across the South China Sea, to the west lies Vietnam and to the northwest lies China. To the southwest across the Sulu Sea lies the island of Borneo, and to the south across the Celebes Sea lies the eastern islands of Indonesia. Across the Pacific Ocean lies the United States.²

While the United States is situated far in terms of physical distance from the Philippines, the two countries had been linked historically and culturally—albeit almost unidirectional in terms of influence from the United States to the Philippines—since the beginning of the 20th century as an outcome of the former's occupation of the latter for almost half a century. Since 1946, they became close military allies through the security agreements they signed in relation to the granting of Philippine independence. This close security relationship that resulted between the Philippines and the United States is underscored by the fact that the United States is the only country where the Philippines has a defense treaty. Furthermore, it is the only mutual defense treaty signed by the U.S. with any Southeast Asian country and the first to be signed with a Western Pacific country.

Aside from historical ties, the weight of the United States for the Philippines comes from the United States being the undisputed global pole. In addition to the fact that it is located in the Asia-Pacific and therefore it shares the Pacific Ocean with the Philippines, the United States has the ability to project power in the East Asian Region (i.e. Northeast Asia and Southeast Asia). Not only the ability to project power, it has actual power through a strong military presence with its bases in Japan and South Korea. It has room to strengthen this presence through the bilateral security arrangements it has with countries in Southeast Asia (the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand). Without doubt, the U.S. military presence in the region is a continuation of its Cold War geopolitical positions. This is not to say that the United States cannot reposition and recalibrate its security apparatus in East Asia according to the changing geopolitical realities and priorities.

On the other hand, from the perspective of the immediate vicinity of the Philippines, China is the undisputed geopolitical pole state in Northeast and Southeast Asia (Mouritzen and Wivel, 2005).

Even though Japan has the second largest economy in the East Asian region and the third largest in the whole world—and accordingly has positive sanctions vis-à-vis states in the region such as

the granting of market access for goods produced in these states—it does not have paramount negative sanctions at its disposal because its international actions are constrained by a pacifist constitution that prevents it from developing a military that has an offensive capability. Furthermore, Japan is hobbled by the military aggression it carried out in the region that culminated during World War II such that major segments of the region’s population and even of its population have lingering negative sentiments that can be activated against it. For these reasons, although Japan is trying to recalibrate and strengthen its security presence in the region as it lost its regional economic preeminence to China and therefore its foreign policy and strategy anchored on economic strength lost its edge and effectiveness, Japan (at least as of the paper’s writing) does not have the stature to be considered a pole state in the region.

Meanwhile, China has the ability to project power in the region because of both its economic and military strength. Since 2012, China became the second largest economy in the world after the United States and largest in the region as a consequence of fast economic growth averaging around 10% from 1979 to 2010. It has the economic strength to project its influence on the economies especially in the region. In 2014, China (excluding Hong Kong) is the third largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) with US\$116 billion, and Hong Kong, China is the second largest source of FDI with US\$143 billion (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, 2015). In addition to its economic power, its military has a nuclear arsenal and is the largest in the world. Furthermore, its economic strength has enhanced its ability to support the strengthening of its military capability. While it has the ability to project power in Northeast and Southeast Asia, China’s influence in the region is hobbled by its highly-centralized political structure and authoritarian ideology (Mouritzen and Wivel, 2005), and the intolerance implicit in the ideology makes it unattractive as a partner for non-pole states including those in the region.

As mentioned earlier, the paper considers the interplay of migration and geopolitics by looking at the case of the Philippines. The paper uses historical and geographical perspectives to look at this interplay. It first looks at its geopolitical conditions of and factors for its formation in the first half of the 20th century, and how these experiences shape migration and its present geopolitical circumstance. The paper also examines at the Philippines’s past and present geopolitical locations in relation to different poles of power, i.e. the United States and China, and its relationship with migration.

II. Migration and the Philippine Islands as the Westernmost Frontier of the United States

This section looks how the territorial formation of the United States was interlinked with the process of the establishment of and geopolitical circumstances of the Philippines. It looks

initially at the westward expansion of the United States and the American migration up to the West Coast of the American continent. Then the next two sections discuss the continuation of the westward expansion into the Pacific Ocean that came with the American occupation of the Philippines.

A. Westward Continental Expansion of the United States

In his 1892 paper *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*, Frederick Jackson Turner pointed-out the frontier's importance in American history. He argued that the American westward migration and expansion, and the subjugation of the new frontiers had played a major part in forming the national character and psyche, and the building of the American society. The national character was formed on top of the pioneer premise—i.e., there was land, work and adventure to be had by moving to the west (McGrew and Brook, 2013).

The frontier functioned as a valve that could alleviate the overpopulation pressure in the East Coast of the United States. It provided the people with ready access to cheap or free land in the frontier that was seemingly limitless. The frontier presented new economic opportunities and challenges. Individuals looked for land and resources in the frontier to exploit and develop that they hoped would lead to and secure their prosperity. Along with individuals moving and migrating to the west, industries located in the east expanded their reach to the frontiers and established hegemony in terms of commercial, industrial, and financial in the new territories.

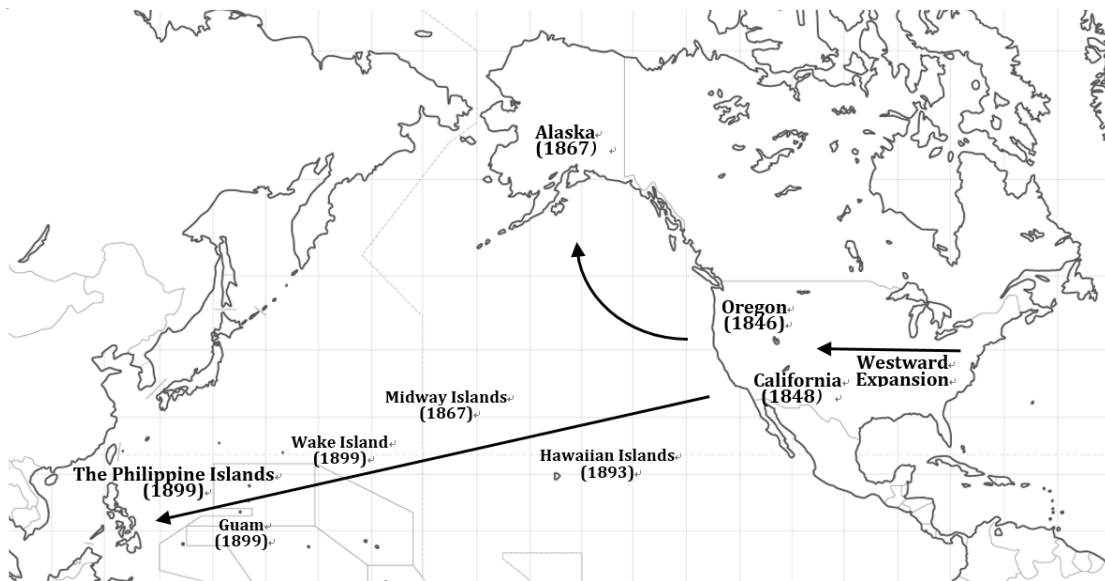
But what were the major contributing factors that started and advanced the westward migration and expansion?

One was the notion of Manifest Destiny. It provided the legitimation story to the American people for westward migration and expansion. The essence of this notion can be gleaned upon from the 1811 letter of John Quincy Adams, who was then the U.S. ambassador to Russia and who would eventually become U.S. president, to his father John Adams, who was a former U.S. president. He wrote,

The whole continent of North America appears to be destined by Divine Providence to be peopled by one nation, speaking one language, professing one general system of religious and political principles, and accustomed to one general tenor of social usages and customs. For common happiness of them all, for their peace and prosperity, I believe it is indispensable that they should be associated in one federal Union. (Quoted from McDougall, 1998)

Under this notion, settlers poured westward as they believed that it was America's fate and their responsibility to expand westward towards the Pacific coast.

Figure 2: Westward Pacific Expansion of the United States



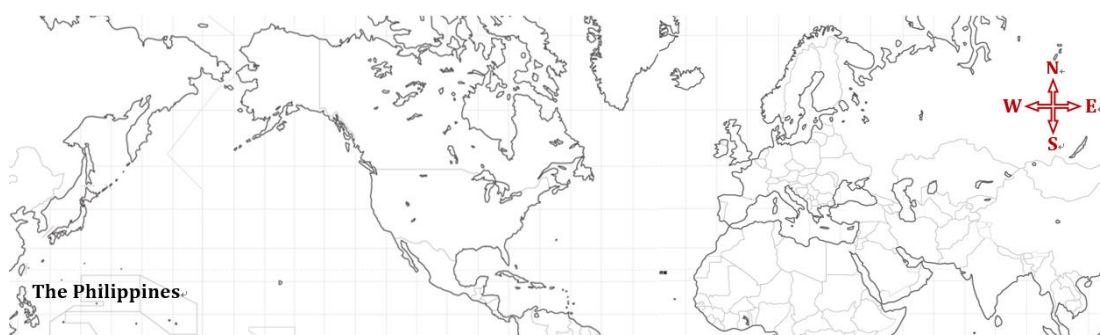
Another major factor was the Treaty of Ghent signed on 24 December 1814. The treaty ended the War of 1812 between the United States and the British Empire and brought lasting peace between them U.S. A consequence of the treaty was that the American Indian Nations that were along the way of and seen as an obstruction against United States' westward migration and expansion lost their last remaining European diplomatic partner. By losing the British Empire on their side, the existing military barriers by the American Indian Nations weakened to resist the tide of America's westward expansion.

The last major factor was the declaration of the Monroe Doctrine on 2 December 1823. Through the Doctrine, the United States proclaimed its resolve not to tolerate and allow European involvement in the Americas. The Doctrine was instrumental in preempting possible intervention by foreign powers against the United States' westward migration and expansion. The Manifest Destiny as a legitimation story was indispensable in the realization of the Monroe Doctrine since its enforcement necessitated territorial expansion. This was because European countries were also seeking to acquire colonies in North America. The westward migration of settlers therefore also functioned as a defensive posture that made newer European encroachment in North America more difficult.

B. Westward Pacific Expansion

The continental expansion was largely completed with the acquisition of Oregon and California in 1846 and 1848 respectively (Figure 2). As the United States reached the Pacific Ocean, the

Figure 3: The Philippines as Far West



great energy and momentum that had been built-up were not completely exhausted, and the expansion eventually continued westward deep into the Pacific.

It is true that there was a brief lull in the westward expansion after it reached the West Coast until the energy re-emerged and reappeared initially as the Black Ships under Commodore Matthew Perry that came to and demanded Japan in 1853 to open its trade with the West. Under the banner of the Manifest Destiny, the westward territorial expansion appeared again and as before with vigor starting with the purchase of Alaska from Russia in 1867 that was initiated by the Secretary of State at the time William Henry Seward. Secretary Seward went further in advancing a stronger presence for the United States in the Pacific as he argued for the necessity to secure naval bases in the Pacific and to build a canal in the Caribbean. This would create a highway for U.S. trade and commerce with Asia. In 1867, through his efforts, the U.S. annexed the Midway Islands³ to function as a coaling port for U.S. ships on their way to and from Asia.

The strategic foundation of America's Pacific expansion was strengthened by the geopolitical ideas of Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan. In his influential book *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783*, which was published in 1890, he asserted that historical evidence has favored "island nations" and that sea power has been the essential characteristic of a great power.

Under this geostrategic vision, islands in the Pacific became focus of the new Manifest Destiny. For the same purpose as in the acquisition of the Midway Islands, Pearl Harbor was annexed in 1887, and the Hawaiian Islands as a whole was annexed in 1893 and became officially a territory in 1898 (Figure 2). In other words, the acquisition of these islands was made for them to function as rest stops in the naval highway between the United States and Asia.

The westward movement continued. The Philippine Islands, including Guam that was governed from Manila during Spanish rule, were annexed in 1899 following America's victory in the

Spanish-American War.

Under a longer historical timeline and a wider geographical scale, the westward expansion started in Europe when Europeans and their civilization moved to the West Coast of the United States. This westward expansion then subdued and almost completely wiped-out the American Indian Nations, and finally it arrived at the Philippine Islands as it became the westernmost frontier of the United States.

From this perspective, while the Philippine Islands are usually categorized as part of the Far East, from this perspective it would also be appropriate to view the islands as part of the Far West (Figure 3). From the discussions above, the creation of the naval highway linking the United States and Asia was driven by both economic and geopolitical objectives. It aimed for the facilitation of trade and commerce, and at the same time, for the projection and expansion of power.

C. American Occupation of the Philippine Islands

As an outcome of the Spanish-American War, Spain gave-up its control of most of the territories under *Indias Orientales Españolas* or the Spanish East Indies—whose seat of government was Manila and included the Philippine Islands, Guam and the Mariana Islands, parts of Taiwan, and the Moluccas—in favor of the United States in 1898. This eventually brought about the outbreak of the Philippine-American War in 1899 and ultimately to the decline of the First Philippine Republic and to the actualization of American occupation of the Philippine Islands.

The American occupation influenced the social and economic life in the Philippines in profound ways, and shaped the country's national culture. One was through the educational system that was adopted and implemented during the American occupation (Kelly, 2000, pp. 26, 29, 43). The United States government introduced a mass-based public education and transplanted the educational system from the United States (Espiritu, 2003). Furthermore, the English language was introduced and established as the medium of instruction as soon as the Americans started primary schools. Another point is that the mass-based educational system brought Filipinos and incorporated them into the Western knowledge.

The access to education improved the level of knowledge and advanced human development in the Philippine Islands, and provided opportunities for individuals to improve their social and economic standing vis-à-vis other individuals. Through novels, children stories, and the presence of American educators called Thomasites,⁴ American culture and ideals seeped and latched into the Philippine society. The major cultural and ideological linkage of the islands was transformed from being Hispano-centric to America-centric.

Education and culture being institutions for the state to nurture the self-governance of the people according to the state's rationale, objectives, and interests, the educational policy that was implemented during the American occupation of the Philippine Islands was far from anomalous considering that the Philippine Islands was being administered as a territory of the United States, and the subsequent Philippine independence had not been decided upon.

The U.S. occupation administration through the Philippine Commission headed by William Howard Taft in 1903 approved the Pensionado Act (i.e., Government Scholarship Act) in 1903. The Act established a fund to finance the study of Filipino scholars in the United States. Under this program, 104 scholars from the Philippine Islands went to the United States in 1903. What happened was that their education came with their Americanization. The profound Americanization can be gathered from the childhood experience of a daughter of a former government scholar. The daughter talked about her Americanization by sharing that the first word that she uttered as a child was "apple," which is not grown in the Philippines but since apple pie was a favorite food of her father during his studies in Illinois in the United States.⁵

What is true is that after returning to the Philippine Islands, many of these scholars became the governing elite and deeply influential traversing wide-ranging fields of politics, economy and education. In fact, among the scholars are Jorge Bocobo (who became the President of the University of the Philippines), Camilo Osias (who became the President of the Philippine Senate), Jose Abad Santos (who became the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court), and Antonio de las Alas (who became the Secretary of Finance) (Posadas and Guyotte, 1990). The spread of American education and the formation of American-educated governing elite during the occupation created copies of the American in the Filipino and of the American society in the Philippine Islands.

Even after its independence, the Philippines continued to model its school curricula after the educational system of the United States. For instance, until now, the English language continues to be the language of education, law, and commerce long after its independence. Educational and cultural institutions that had been placed by the Americans continue to endure in the Philippines.

On the other hand, the start of the Filipino migration to the United States was largely as an outcome of worker recruitment including the recruitment by the U.S. Navy. The first large-scale recruitment was the one made by the Hawaiian Sugar Planters' Association in 1906. Within the period of 20 years, 120 thousand Filipinos went to the United States⁶ to work in sugar plantations.⁷ According to the 1930 U.S. census, around 30 thousand Filipinos live in the state of California and a total of around 120 thousand live in the United States (Espiritu, 2003, p.

101).

During the American occupation, the Philippine Islands was militarized in which many U.S. military installation sites were established. Along with the formation of the military linkage between the Philippines and the United States came the formation of a migratory system from the Philippine Islands to the United States. The military installation sites functioned as recruitment stations for military personnel.⁸ Between 1925 and 1929, 5% of U.S. Navy personnel were from the Philippine Islands (Lasker, 1931, p. 61). In fact, in 1930 around 25 thousand Filipinos worked on ships or in military installation sites of the U.S. Navy (Tyner, 2010, p. 27). Furthermore, the U.S. military presence created another migratory system from the Philippines to the United States through the marriage of American military personnel with Filipinos whom they meet during their station in the Philippines.

Before World War II, many Filipinos worked to produce cash crops such as sugar and pineapple in plantations in the United States, and in ships and in military installation sites of the U.S. Navy. This is one context in understanding the migratory linkage of the Philippines to the United States. In short, the migratory system between the Philippines and the United States was formed within the context of American occupation of the Philippines, and therefore within the wider geopolitical objectives and policies of the United States.

D. Post-Independence Philippines

1. Migration and the Granting of Philippine Independence

During the American occupation of the Philippines, many Filipino leaders wanted to be independent in running the government by themselves. Pro-independence leaders like Manuel L. Quezon, who became the first president of the Philippine Commonwealth between 1935 and 1944, lobbied the United States for independence. He even declared mistakenly or not in 1923 “I prefer a government run like hell by Filipinos to one run like heaven by Americans.”

However, the independence of the Philippine Islands was not an outcome solely of the lobbying of the pro-independence leaders. It was as much an outcome of domestic pressures within the United States from two sources: American farmers, and American workers. The American farmers were concerned about the competition against their products coming from the agricultural imports from the Philippine Islands. On the other hand, the American workers were concerned about competition for work coming from Filipino migrants.

During the Great Depression that started in 1929, farm incomes dropped significantly in the United States. As a result, American farmers exerted pressure on their legislators towards the protection of their products from overseas competition by imposing tariff and import quotas.

The Philippine Islands being a part of the United States, sugar and coconut oil coming from the islands were not subject to U.S. tariff law. This allowed the unrestricted inflow of agricultural commodities from the islands that was seen and condemned as the cause of a depression in market prices.

What was worse for the Americans during the depression period was the problem of high unemployment. Because the Philippine Islands were under American occupation, Filipinos were not considered aliens from the legal viewpoint. Hence, under United States law, Filipinos could freely move to the American mainland unlike those from other countries.⁹ By being able to move to and work in the United States, they were seen by the American workers as competitors for work. As a consequence, many labor unions in the United States were against the migration inflow of Filipino workers. For example, the California State Federation of Labor during their annual convention in September 1927 adopted a resolution by unanimous vote to ask the California Congressional delegation to pass a law that would exclude Filipinos effectively. Other labor federations in the West Coast also made similar resolutions (Scharrenberg, 1929, p. 51). Consequently, the American Federation of Labor by unanimous vote declared for the immediate granting of Philippine independence because exclusion of Filipinos could only happen through the granting of Philippine independence (Scharrenberg, 1929, p. 53).

These factors led to the passage of the Hare-Hawes Cutting Act in 1933 by the U.S. Congress. The Act provided the de-occupation and the granting of independence to the Philippine Islands after ten years with the condition of ratification of the Philippine Commonwealth Senate. As an implication of the granting of Philippine independence, Philippine agricultural products would be placed under tariff regulations for foreign products and the people from the Philippine Islands would become subject to immigration regulations.

The Act included a stipulation about the right of the United States to use several military and naval bases in the Philippines after independence. The provisions—and most specifically the provision on U.S. military presence—many saw as unfavorable led the Philippine Commonwealth Senate to reject it. There was serious dissatisfaction within the Philippine establishment regarding the infringement of sovereignty due to the presence of foreign military bases.

As a replacement to the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Act, the U.S. Congress enacted the Tydings-McDuffie Act (Philippine Independence Act or Public Law 73-127) in 1934. It was broadly similar to the Hare-Hawes-Cutting Act. The stipulations on tariff and quota importation and on limitation of Filipino immigration remained in place and only the issue on U.S. military presence saw modifications. The Act signified the American intention to withdraw its military

from the Philippines upon independence as it stipulated the return of all U.S. military bases except for a few naval installations and fueling stations (Ikehata and Yu-Jose, 2003). From the American perspective, the withdrawal was justified from the standpoint of the concern that the utility of the Philippine Islands as a military outpost would pull the United States into an unwanted Asian war (Chapman, 1987).

According to this Act, the Philippines would gain independence on July 4 immediately following a period of ten years from the date of inauguration of a form of self-government. Self-government was seen to become a preparatory measure for independence, and its form became the government of the Commonwealth of the Philippines. After the presidential elections in the Philippines on 17 September 1935, the Commonwealth government was inaugurated on 15 November 1935. Based on the stipulation, the Philippines would be granted independence on 4 July 1946. In other words, notwithstanding the Japanese occupation of the Philippine Islands between 1942 and 1945, the Philippines still attained its independence as scheduled.¹⁰

The discussion here showed that the Filipino migration to the United States was a major factor that led to Philippine independence, accordingly to a fundamental change in the geopolitical make-up of the East Asian region.

2. Post-independence Security Relationship and Migration

The security relationships undertaken by post-independence Philippines were largely shaped by the agreements it signed with the United States right after the war. Two agreements were vital in establishing the post-independence security relationship between the Philippines and the United States. These are the Military Bases Agreement, and the Mutual Defense Treaty.

The outbreak of and the experience during World War II in the Pacific radically changed the viewpoints of both the Philippines and the United States concerning American military presence in post-independence Philippines. The Philippines saw the importance of American military presence for its security against external aggression considering the apparent weakness of the country's military capability at the outset of World War II. On the other hand, the United States saw the importance of postwar military presence in the Pacific to defend itself from external attacks emanating from Asia. The Joint Chiefs of Staff concluded that the United States must encircle the Western Hemisphere with a defensive barrier of outlying bases composing the Aleutians, the Philippines, Okinawa, and the former Japanese mandates. From these bases, the United States could maintain its access to vital raw materials from Asia, to defend crucial sea-lanes, and conduct an air attack against industrial and military infrastructure of any potential and real rival from Western Pacific, including the Soviet Union (Leffler, 1984).

Based on this adjustment in the understanding of the geopolitical circumstances of both countries, in November 1943 that was actually before the end of the war, the Philippine Commonwealth president-in-exile Quezon and the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff agreed that the military base clause of the Tydings-McDuffie Act should be repealed (Ikehata and Yu-Jose, 2003). The following year, the legislatures of both countries passed resolutions seeking the continuation of American military bases in the Philippines (Ikehata and Yu-Jose). The experience of war brought about a growing consensus in support of Philippines-U.S. military cooperation after independence in both countries.

Even before the surrender of the Empire of Japan in April 1945, President Truman and President Osmeña, who succeeded as the president of the Philippine Commonwealth after Quezon's death, held summit talks focused on post-independence military arrangements. This summit resulted to the "Preliminary Statement of General Principles Pertaining to the United States Military and Naval Bases in the Philippines to be used as a Basis for Detailed Discussions and Staff Studies" that called for the continuation of U.S. military bases and close military cooperation even after Philippine independence.¹¹ The importance of the military bases for the United States comes from the fact that would function as outposts and as springboards from which the United States armed forces may be projected.

The 1946 Treaty of Manila (i.e., the Treaty of General Relations Between the United States of America and the Republic of the Philippines), which provided for the handing over of American sovereignty on the Philippine Islands and for the establishment of the Republic of the Philippines, reserved the continuation of the U.S. military bases in the Philippines, and served as the basis for U.S military presence.

On 14 March 1947, the Military Bases Agreement was signed between the Philippines and the United States. The agreement granted 99 years of unhampered jurisdiction over 16 military base facilities, including the huge facilities at Subic Bay and Clark Air Base in the central part of Luzon Island. Under the agreement, it is stipulated that the Philippines was prohibited from granting military base rights to other countries. The agreement also placed no restrictions on how the military bases would be used and what weapons could be stored there by the United States.

Both countries supplemented the Military Bases Agreement by signing the Military Assistance Pact on 21 March 1947. The pact allowed the Joint United States Military Advisory Group to train the Philippine military and to provide equipment. By the time of the signing of this agreement, the Cold War had started and the U.S. had established that the Philippines must be a stronghold in the Far East of American influence—again from the U.S. geographical perspective

it can be considered its Far West bastion—against international communism. The military bases together with those in occupied Japan were seen to be the forward wall of defense against a possible aggression by the Soviet Union. This was clear from what General MacArthur enunciated on 1 March 1949 that the defense line begins in the Philippines and continues through the Ryukyu Archipelago (Okinawa) and then passing through Japan and the Aleutian Islands to Alaska. He supplemented this on 29 May 1950 by arguing the importance of Taiwan in the defense of the United States as it is located in and connects the defense line between the Philippines and Japan. This defense perimeter became known as the Acheson Line named after American Secretary of State Dean Acheson.

Again, the presence of military bases in the Philippines fostered immigration of Filipinos to the United States. For instance, as late as 2006, Filipinos accounted for the largest proportion of foreign-born in the U.S. military with around one-fourth of the total foreign born personnel.¹² Historically, Filipinos had been the only foreign nationals permitted to enlist in the U.S. military. After independence, aside from allowing continuous access for the U.S. to military installations in the Philippines, the 1947 Military Bases Agreement allowed the U.S. Navy to recruit Filipinos. Between 1944 and 1973, 22 thousand Filipinos were recruited into the U.S. Navy (Powell, 2005). The military service in the U.S. armed forces became a pathway towards U.S. citizenship for many Filipinos.¹³

Another migratory flow that resulted from the presence of U.S. military bases in post-independence Philippines again was that of the spouses of U.S. military personnel. Through the 1945 Military War Brides and 1946 Fiancees Act, Filipino spouses of U.S. military personnel were able to migrate to the United States. Approximately 118 thousand spouses and children moved to the United States through this legislation (Posadas, 1999).

Meanwhile, the Mutual Defense Treaty between the Philippines and the United States that was signed on 31 August 1951 by the representatives of both countries in Washington D.C. was another leg of their security relationship. It was crafted within the context of the Cold War. The treaty was a response to the growing threat of international communism. This was after the victory of Chinese Communist Party in and the expulsion of the Kuomintang from China to Taiwan in 1949, and after the North Korean invasion of South Korea starting the Korean War in June 1950.

For its involvement in the Korean War, the United States needed Japanese cooperation in order to facilitate the necessary logistical support from its military bases in Japan. However, this was easier than done. The military occupation of Japan by the United States was a thorn in their relationship. A peace treaty had to be concluded between the two countries to end the military

occupation. But allies of the United States such as the Philippines, New Zealand and Australia had deep reservations due to their concerns of Japanese remilitarization. To assuage and alleviate these concerns, the Americans signed security pacts with these countries. By mid-1950s the United States had completed security treaties with the Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan that became the foundation for American military presence in the region.

The Mutual Defense Treaty between the Philippines and the United States obliges both countries to support each other in cases in which an external party attacks one of the countries. According to Article III of the Treaty,

[If either the Philippines and the United States] is threatened by an external 'armed attack' in the Pacific ... [t]hey shall declare publicly their sense of unity and their common determination to defend themselves against external armed attack, so that no potential aggressor could be under the illusion that either of them stands alone in the Pacific area.

After the Mutual Defense Treaty was signed, the flow of military aid and equipment, and opportunities for military training increased substantially. For example, between 1950 and 1971, nearly nine thousand Filipino officers went to the United States for advanced military training. Even by the early 1950s, the Philippines was fully integrated within the U.S. global defense system, a key link in the wall of containment against the communist bloc (Rodao and Rodriguez, 2001).

The protective security umbrella that was provided by the Mutual Defense Treaty and the Military Bases Agreement made the Philippines become dependent to the United States for security against external threats. Because of this sense of security and also because of having a natural defense barrier of seas, the Philippines did not develop its own military capability to defend its borders against external threats. The military's role in the Philippines was shifted towards counterinsurgency operations against the local communist movement and separatist movements. This dependency had long-term security implications to the Philippines since even after more than two decades since the end of the Cold War the country only has negligible military forces on its own and has one of weakest in the region.

This section discussed that the geopolitical requirements of both the Philippines and the United States led to a strong military linkage, which in turn transformed into a migratory linkage from the Philippines to the United States.

Table 1: Trade Balance in the 1960s (in US\$ thousand)

Year	Exports	Imports	Trade Balance
1960	560,389	603,870	-43,481
1961	499,512	611,298	-111,786
1962	556,021	586,738	-30,717
1963	727,106	618,190	108,916
1964	742,036	780,325	-38,289
1965	768,448	807,579	-39,131
1966	828,195	852,772	-24,577
1967	821,456	1,062,191	-240,735
1968	857,715	1,150,218	-292,503
1969	854,601	1,131,486	-276,885

Source: Philippine Statistical Yearbook (various editions).

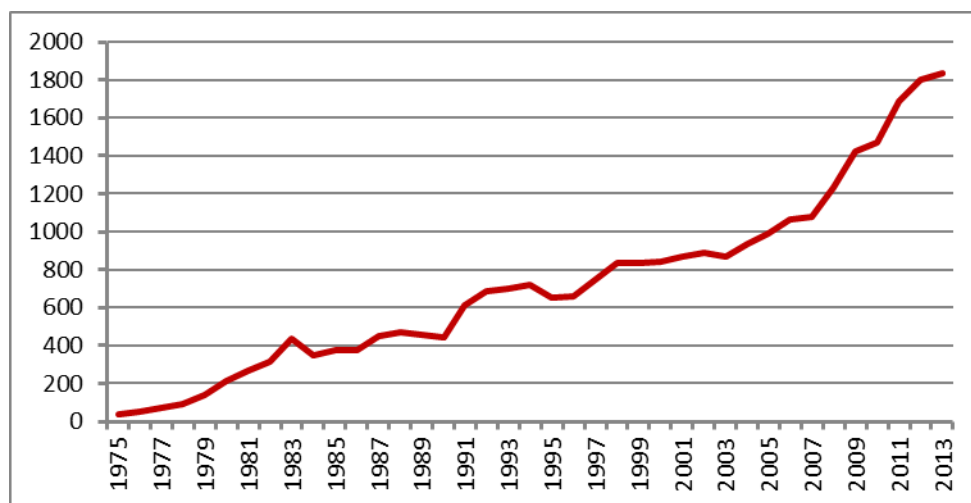
3. Post-Independence Economic Relationship and Migration

The economic situation of post-independence Philippines was largely influenced and swayed by the agreement it signed to attain independence from the United States. This was the Philippine Trade Act that allowed American preferential treatment in the Philippine economy right after the war. According to Milland Tydings, one of the Senators of the United States who sponsored the law that led to Philippine independence, the idea “is to keep the Philippines economically even though we lose them politically” (quoted from Kratoska, 2001).

The Philippine Trade Act—also known as Bell Trade Act—was passed by the Congress of the United States on 30 April 1946 as Public Law 371 and then approved by the Congress of the Philippine Commonwealth on 2 July 1946. It stipulated the economic conditions governing the political independence of the Philippines from the United States.¹⁴ The trade act established a system of preferential tariff between the two countries. Under the system, American manufacturers were allowed to export American-made products into the country free of duty, quotas, and price ceilings. This paved the way for the large inflow of American-made goods into the Philippines causing serious crisis in the balance of payments and consequently weakening the economy (Ofreneo, 1995).

As a policy response triggered by the balance-of-payment crisis in 1949, the Philippine government adopted an import substitution policy to reduce imports from the United States. However, due to the limited size of the domestic market exacerbated by the considerable inequality that effectively made the domestic demand more limited (Bello et al, 2004), the growth of the industrial sector slowed down considerably in the 1960s. The import substitution policy did not lead to the industrialization that would lessen Philippines’s dependence on

Figure 4: POEA deployment of Overseas Filipino Workers (in thousands)



Source: Iyotani and Kajita eds. (1992) for the data between 1975 and 1983, and Philippine Overseas and Employment Agency for the data 1984 and onwards.

foreign manufactured goods. The trade deficit did not decline, but instead it even continued to grow. For instance, between 1962 and 1969, the value of exports grew 1.5 times from US\$556.0 million to US\$854.6 million, while the value of imports grew faster at 1.9 times from US\$586.7 million to US\$1.1 billion (Table 1). During the same period, the trade deficit expanded from US\$30.7 million to US\$276.9 million. Private commercial banks and governments in the developed world, and international financial institutions provided the loans to the Philippines to finance its ballooning trade deficit and interests from earlier loans. This is in line with the aspect in which net-exporting countries have the motivation to recycle their trade surplus as loans so that net-importing countries can continue importing.

The total external debt of the Philippines grew 6.5 times from US\$355 million to US\$2.3 billion (Boyce, 1993). This was equivalent to 36% of the country's GNP (Boyce, 1993). The rapid growth of the Philippines's external debt especially short-term debt in the 1960s triggered the balance-of-payments crisis in 1970. In this crisis, the debt service payments of the Philippines exceeded the inflow of new money.

The problem of ballooning external debt was not lost to the Philippine government. It devised and promoted various programs for the country to earn foreign currency as a response to the growing problem of external debt. These were tourism promotion, promotion of export-oriented industrialization, and labor export policy (Lambino, 2009). Here considering its research

Table 2: Overseas Filipinos (Stock as of December 2009)

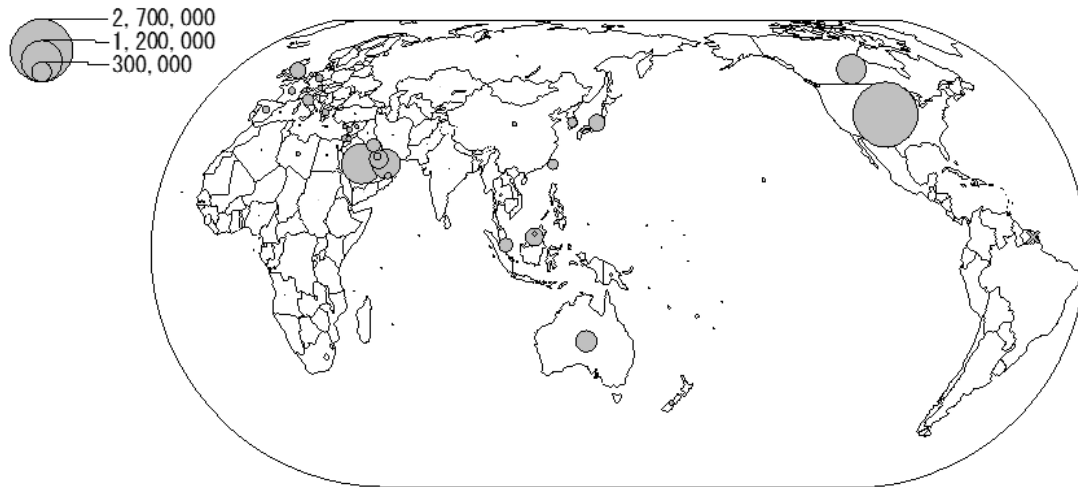
Continent	Total	Migrant or Permanent Resident	Contract Workers	Illegal Residents
Total	8,579,378	4,056,940	3,864,068	658,370
%	100.0	47.3	45.0	7.7
America	3,582,879	3,162,843	253,700	166,336
%	100.0	88.3	7.1	4.6
West Asia	2,415,896	5,594	2,294,602	115,700
%	100.0	0.2	95.0	4.8
South and East Asia	1,074,496	262,780	552,524	259,192
%	100.0	24.5	51.4	24.1
Europe	722,427	312,361	309,914	100,152
%	100.0	43.2	42.9	13.9
Oceania	388,520	311,145	68,515	8,860
%	100.0	80.1	17.6	2.3
Sea-based Workers	330,424	-	330,424	-
%	100.0	-	100.0	-
Africa	64,736	2,217	54,389	8,130
%	100.0	3.4	84.0	12.6

Source: Philippine Overseas Employment Agency.

objectives, the paper focuses only on the labor export policy. Under the labor export policy, the government intended for the country to acquire foreign currency through the increase of foreign remittance as a result in the increase in Filipino migrant workers, whose families were projected to remain in the Philippines.

The Philippine government started its policy of promoting overseas employment and therefore its labor export program through the 1974 Overseas Employment Program (OEP). In order to administer the program, the government promulgated the 1975 Labor Code of the Philippines to create the Overseas Employment Development Board, National Seamen's Board and Bureau of Employment Services. In 1982, through Presidential Order No. 797, these agencies were unified which resulted into the establishment of POEA. The 1970s to the 1980s saw the establishment and frequent reorganization of government agencies involved in labor export. The establishment and reorganization show the Philippine government's seriousness in pursuing its labor export policy. This policy's effectiveness can be seen in Figure 4 as the number of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) deployed by the Philippine government has been increasing, and in 2013, the number has increased to around 1.8 million.

Figure 5: Overseas Filipinos (Stock as of December 2009)



What has been discussed in the section is that the independence of the Philippines, and accompanying changes in the geopolitical makeup, came with economic conditions that led to the dispatch of migrant workers overseas by the Philippines.

III. Migration and Present Geopolitical Position

A. Present Situation of Filipino Migration

1. Global Distribution of Overseas Filipinos

After the adoption of the labor export program by the Philippine government, the number of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) deployed under the government program increased extensively. As shown in Figure 4, in 1975 only around 36 thousand were deployed, but after 35 years in 2010, around 1.5 million were deployed. This is an increase by 41 times.

Table 2 shows that there are 8.6 million overseas Filipinos as of December 2009. This accounts for around 10% of Philippine population. Of the 8.6 million overseas Filipinos, 3.6 million were in America, 2.4 million were in West Asia, 1.1 million were in South and East Asia, 722 thousand were in Europe, 389 thousand were in Oceania, 65 thousand were in Africa and 330 thousand were sea-based workers. Unlike the typical movement of peoples between neighboring countries such as in the cases seen in the Singapore—Johor (in Malaysia)—Riau (in Indonesia) Growth Triangle or Mexico—United States, the spatial mobility of Filipinos is global in scale (Figure 5). There are overseas Filipinos as far north as Northern Europe and as far south as Australia and New Zealand.

By countries, the top ten country-destinations for overseas Filipinos were U.S. (2.9 million), Saudi Arabia (1.2 million), Canada (640 thousand), U.A.E. (610 thousand), Australia (336 thousand), Malaysia (244 thousand), Japan (211 thousand), U.K. (201 thousand), Hong Kong (169 thousand), and Singapore (163 thousand). Overseas Filipinos in these ten countries account for almost 80% of the total.

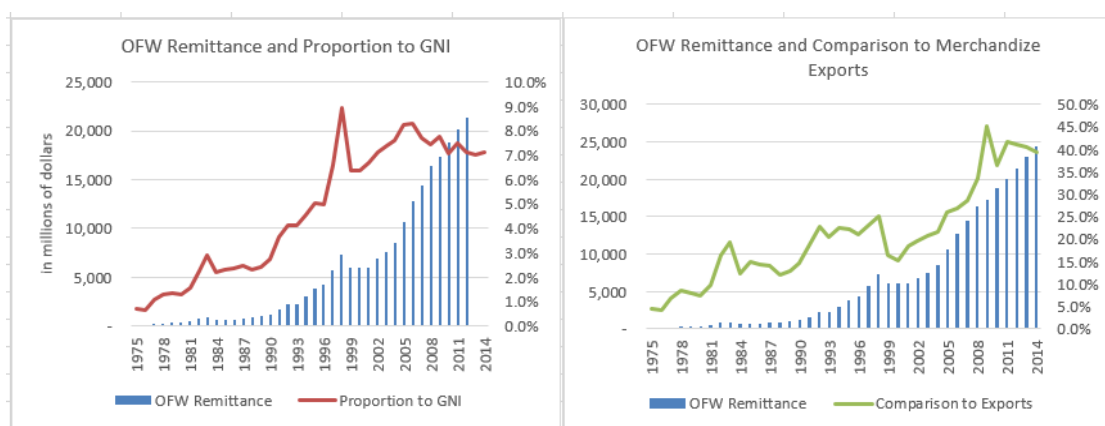
One assumption is that migration as a transnational interaction declines with physical distance (such as in geopolitics by Mouritzen and Wivel, 2005). But this is not the case for the Philippines. All the countries in the top five country-destinations are located very far from the Philippines, and six of the top ten are countries not located in East Asia.

The destination countries of Filipinos have less to do with distance than with cultural distance in the context of the usage of English language. Of the top ten destination countries, six countries or territories (United States, Canada, Australia, United Kingdom, Hong Kong and Singapore) have English as an official or de-facto official language. Furthermore, in Malaysia and United Arab Emirates as former protectorates of the British Empire, English is an active second language. In short, the active use of English in a particular country is a significant element in the determination of country-destinations for overseas Filipinos. What this means is that the current migration of Filipinos is being influenced substantially by the institutions that had been placed during the American occupation of the Philippine Islands in the first half of the 20th century. In other words, cultural linkages that are formed due to geopolitical objectives and circumstances can create migratory systems such as in the case of the Philippines.

Another characteristic of Filipino migration can be culled from the perspective of their legal status. Of the 8.6 million overseas Filipinos, 47.3% are permanent residents of the host countries, 45.0% are contract workers, and 7.7% are illegal residents. The legal status of Filipinos is considerably different from one continent to another. In America, most of the overseas Filipinos (88.3%) are naturalized or permanent residents. In West Asia, most (95.0%) are contract workers. In South and East Asia, around half are contract workers and compared to other continents many are illegal residents. In Europe, overseas Filipinos are either naturalized/permanent residents (43.2%) or contract workers (42.9%). In Oceania, most (80.1%) are naturalized or permanent residents. In Africa, most (84.0%) are contract workers.

Because of their legal status, contract workers and illegal residents are less or are not protected and are vulnerable to be repatriated. This is especially true when the economy goes downturn. For instance, recent years have seen the almost regular deportation of Filipinos from the Island of Borneo. Without having complete rights of naturalized citizens, they are also vulnerable in the sense that they can become bargaining chips in geopolitical strategies. For instance, a threat

Figure 6: OFW Remittance and its proportion to GNP



Sources: The Central Bank of the Philippines, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization.

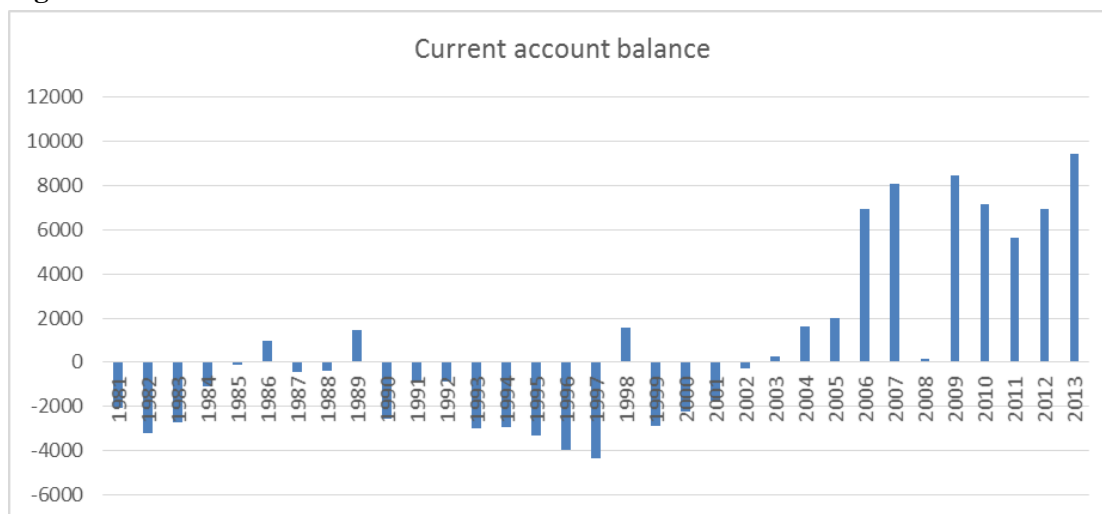
was made of deporting 80 thousand Filipino workers in Taiwan in 2013 because of a dispute arising from overlapping exclusive economic zones.

2. Importance of Overseas Filipino Workers in the Philippine Economy

The export of labor has become one of the pillars in the Philippine government’s drive towards economic development. Figure 6 shows the amount of remittances from OFWs and its proportion to the country’s Gross National Product. Both values grew substantially since the Philippine government adopted its Overseas Employment Program in 1975. The amount of OFW remittance was about 100 million dollars in 1975. This was about 0.7% of the country’s GNP for that year. The amount of remittances increased by seven times in 1985 and its proportion to GNI grew to 2.3%. Ten years in 1995, the amount of remittance further grew to around 4 billion dollars or 5.1% of the GNI. The remittance continued to grow. In 2005, the remittance increased to 10.7 billion dollars or 8.2% of the GNI, and in 2014, it increased to 24.4 billion dollars accounting 7.1% of GNI (Figure 6).

This section then considers the domestic economy from the perspective of foreign currency inflow. When the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA) was established in 1982, foreign remittances from OFWs amounted to around 810 million dollars. If this amount is compared to the value of merchandize exports, this would amount to 16.3% of merchandize exports. In 2014, the remittances would amount to 39.3% of total merchandize exports. Labor exports become one of the most important Filipino “commodity” for exports. What this suggests

Figure 7: Current Account Balance in USD Million.



Source: Asian Development Bank.

is that for the Philippine state, the OFW remittance is important as means to earn foreign currency that would pay for the imports as well as service foreign debt. Even the current account surplus being experienced by the Philippines since 2003 and that amounted to US\$9.4 billion in 2013 would not have been possible without the remittances from OFWs (Figure 7).

Another aspect is that a part of Philippine labor surplus is absorbed by the international labor market. Through this, unemployment rate is dampened in the country.

In other words, for the Philippine government, the export of labor plays an important in maintaining the economy and in stabilizing the society.

B. Post-Cold War

After independence, many sectors in the Philippines became increasingly dissatisfied with the perceived unfairness and one-sidedness of the security relationship between the Philippines and the U.S., particularly the Military Bases Agreement (MBA). To placate them, the Philippine government renegotiated provisions of the Military Bases Agreement with the government of the United States. Between 1947 and 1991, at least 40 amendments were concluded to give more control over the U.S. military bases to the Philippine government. Noteworthy among the amendments were made under the Ramos-Rusk Agreement that was signed on 16 September 1966. While the lease was originally valid for 99 years or until the year 2046, the agreement shortened this to 25 years after signing or until 16 September 1991. Another noteworthy amendment to the MBA was made under the 1979 Romulo-Murphy Exchange of Notes that

transferred the nominal control of the U.S. bases to the Philippine government, confirming Philippine sovereignty over the bases.

The Philippines further made the effort to consolidate the control on the U.S. military bases through the new constitution that was promulgated on February 1987. Under Section 25, Article 18 of this constitution, “[a]fter the expiration in 1991 of the Agreement between the Republic of the Philippines and the United States of America concerning Military Bases, foreign military bases, troops or facilities shall not be allowed in the Philippines except under a treaty duly concurred by the Senate and, when the Congress so requires, ratified by a majority of the votes cast by the people in a national referendum.” What this means is that that the lease extension would only be made under a treaty, thereby the Philippines exercising more institutional control.

In May 1990 or a little more than a year before the expiration of the Military Bases Agreement, the Philippines presented a diplomatic note and expressed its intention to terminate the lease effective on 16 September 1991. But the United States did not find this acceptable. To find a point of concurrence for both parties, the Philippines and the United States started negotiations called the Philippine American Cooperation Talks to replace the Military Bases Agreement. The negotiations lasted seven rounds of talks between 1990 and 1991, and throughout all the seven rounds, the U.S. panel was firm in insisting a ten-year renewal of the Military Bases Agreement. The outcome of the difficult negotiations was the signing on 27 August 1991 in Manila of the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Security that would pave the way towards the extension of the lease of Subic Naval Base facility in the Philippines. The document did not include Clark Air Base, which was the other major U.S. military base, since it was extensively damaged by the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo—a volcano in Luzon Island—in June 1991, and its restoration would cost an enormous amount of money. Another salient consideration for the United States during the negotiations was the ongoing disintegration of the Soviet Union. It was becoming clear that the Cold War would end, and for the U.S., the geopolitical value of its military bases in the Philippines significantly diminished, and consequently the incentive to extend also lessened.

In the end, the Philippine Senate rejected the treaty on 13 September 1991, thus precluding even the lease extension of Clark Air Base. This was an outcome of the widespread nationalist sentiments in the Philippines that saw the American military bases as a vestige of American occupation. On 6 December 1991, the Philippine government officially informed the United States to withdraw its military bases within a year.

The withdrawal went without major holdups and was completed on 24 November 1992. However, this withdrawal came with the deterioration of the security relationship between the

Philippines and the United States. The importance of the security relationship for the U.S. was further devalued by the end of the Cold War.

Attempts were made to moderate the geopolitical impacts and implications to East Asia—i.e., Northeast and Southeast Asia—and assurances were made regarding the American military withdrawal from the Philippines. For instance, government officials of both countries had repeatedly reaffirmed the 1951 Mutual Defense Treaty. They also tried to devise a mutually acceptable security relationship to continue joint military exercises. However, resistance at the time against foreign military presence coming from Filipino nationalists was particularly determined. In December 1996, the Supreme Court of the Philippines rejected the extension of a pre-existing Status of Forces Agreement between the Philippines and the United States leading to the suspension of the joint military exercises.

Yet, by February 2000, they were able to resume the joint military exercises. What happened that radically changed the opinion and stance within the Philippine establishment towards a more favorable view of their security alliance with the United States and towards rebuilding this alliance?

The end of the Cold War led to the breakdown of the bipolar order with the collapse of the Soviet Union, and it affected the geo-strategic calculations for the Philippines. Of special importance has been the enhanced political-security weight of China as the U.S. decreased its involvement in East Asia. The turbulence immediate to the post-Cold War allowed China to project and to enhance its power in its immediate vicinity.

The Philippine government officials initially and falsely believed that the Philippines-U.S. Mutual Defense Treaty would provide an indirect deterrence vis-à-vis China on their conflicting territorial claims. However, this was not the case. China became more assertive with its claims in the South China Sea.¹⁵ Right after the decision towards U.S. military withdrawal from the Philippines, on February 1992, the National People's Congress of China passed the "Law on Territorial Waters and their Contiguous Areas" declaring the Spratly Islands, including the Kalayaan Islands,¹⁶ as part of its territory and authorizing the use of armed force to settle the conflicting territorial claims (Berry, 1997).

Chinese territorial assertiveness further intensified in the following years as it took advantage of the regional power vacuum that was created by the breakdown in Philippines-U.S. military cooperation and that was made more vacuous by the weakness of the Philippine military. In 1995 and 1996, it built structures on Mischief Reef that is only 209 km from the island of Palawan. In 1997, a skirmish erupted between the Chinese navy and Philippine warships that were sent to investigate reports that the structures had been upgraded (De Castro, 2007). The

tension between the Philippines and China was further aggravated when eight Chinese warships were spotted around Mischief Reef and a structure was newly detected on a reef six miles from an island controlled by the Philippines in the Kalayaan Islands.

Its military weakness to protect its territorial claims was a sobering realization for the Philippine establishment. Due to China's location in the same East Asian region and accordingly due to its proximity to the Philippines, Philippine authorities were concerned about a unipolar geopolitical environment in the region in which China would be the dominant power. As a measure to prevent this, they recognized the need to bring back the United States as a counterweight to China and through this to attain a regional balance of power. The territorial dispute that came to fore with the Chinese occupation of the Mischief Reef led the public perception and establishment's strategic calculation in the Philippines to shift in favor of restoring and rebuilding its security relationship with the United States.

During the turbulence immediate to the post-Cold War, China became more assertive towards Taiwan particularly in terms of its military activities. During the Third Taiwan Strait Crisis between July 1995 and March 1996, China effected a series of missile tests surrounding the island of Taiwan. The first set of missiles was supposedly intended to cause serious concern within the Taiwanese government as it was seen to have the intention to declare Taiwan as separate from China. The second set of missiles was fired in early 1996 supposedly to sway the 1996 presidential elections in Taiwan. Furthermore, Chinese military posture towards Taiwan intensified as it conducted naval exercises including a simulated amphibious assault in August and in November 1995.

These events prompted the U.S. to show its military capability and its determination in the region specifically in protecting Taiwan. In December 1995, it sent the U.S. aircraft carrier—the Nimitz—to pass through the Taiwan Strait. The U.S. reaction prompted an escalation of the crisis. Between January and February 1996, China concentrated around 100 thousand troops along its coast facing Taiwan. On March 2006, China deployed a total of 150 thousand troops, 300 airplanes, and a number of guided-missile destroyers and submarines. As a countermeasure, the United States on 8 March 1996 deployed the Independence carrier battle group to the international waters near Taiwan and on March 11, the United States deployed the Nimitz carrier battle group to the Taiwan Strait to join the Independence carrier battle group.

With this incident, the United States recognized the geopolitical importance of rebuilding its security relationship with the Philippines. The Philippine proximity to the Taiwan Strait makes it valuable in case a military confrontation ever occurs in the Taiwan Strait. Meanwhile, in the Philippines, Chinese determination actualized in the expansion of Chinese occupation in the

Spratly Islands reinforced the view on China as a security threat and a long-term security challenge.¹⁷

With the increase in Chinese military assertiveness in East Asia, the Philippines and the United States decided and moved towards rebuilding their security relationship. The rapprochement materialized into the conclusion of the 1998 Philippines-U.S. Visiting Forces Agreement, which permitted the resumption of combined military exercises by both countries. The ratification of the Visiting Forces Agreement paved the way for the the resumption of military cooperation between the Philippines and the United States resumed including joint exercises (Thayer, 2003).

The Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) defines the status of Visiting American Forces on Philippine territory in connection with the conduct of the military exercises. The VFA, which became effective on May 27, 1999 upon its ratification by the Philippine Senate, reconfirmed Philippine commitments to its security alliance with the United States. In particular, it allowed the carrying out of joint and combined military exercises between Filipino and American forces. The largest among these exercises is the Balikatan (that is a Tagalog word for “shouldering [the burden] together”) between 26 April and 10 May 2001 in the islands of Luzon and Palawan, the island nearest to the contested territory in the Spratly Islands.

C. Migration and the War on Terror

Hours after the September 11 attacks in 2001, President Arroyo of the Philippines sent a letter to President Bush that says, “Nothing can describe the shock and horror of all humanity in the face of the unimaginable acts of terror inflicted on the United States today. All mankind is diminished by the extreme evil we saw unleashed on your cities.”¹⁸ The Philippines further pledged “all out support” to the United States including military support. On 23 September 2001, the Defense Secretary of the Philippines at the time, Angelo Reyes, announced that U.S. forces and coalition partners fighting “the war against global terrorism” could use the former U.S. military bases of Clark and Subic as well as the Benito Ebuena Air Base in Cebu (Putzel, 2003). Active cooperation and the pronouncements made by the Philippines to the United States indicates the strategic nature of the relationship from the Philippine perspective as it affirmed the Philippines shares its fundamental values and that it acknowledges its geopolitical standing as the sole global power. It also reflected Philippines’s geopolitical calculation for the United States to be the balancing power in the region.

What is clear is that the September 11 attacks rebuilt and strengthened the Philippine-U.S. security relationship. While American military presence through joint military exercises remained as a check against Chinese territorial expansion, the main rationale for Philippines-U.S. security cooperation shifted to counterterrorism.

The Philippine government further saw the global war on terrorism as an opening to involve the United States and curtail support for its military campaign against terrorist groups operating in the Philippines such as the Abu Sayyaf Group (Medeiros et al., 2008). Under this background, the United States deployed military personnel to train and advise the Philippine Armed Forces for counterterrorism operations on the southwestern Philippines, particularly in the Abu Sayyaf's center of operations of Basilan Island. The deployment was conducted under the Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines that was in turn a part of the U.S. Global War on Terrorism. Beginning in 2002, the United States established Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines, a unit consisting of between 100 and 450 personnel that would be deployed semi-permanently in southwestern Philippines to assist with counterinsurgency and counterterrorism (Center for Strategic & International Studies, 2009).

To stress the special and unique relationship between the United States and the Philippines, President Bush said on May 2002 during the dinner toast when President Arroyo made a state visit to the United States, “[o]ur nations are natural partners. We are connected by an ocean, united by a shared history, and sustained by the bonds of family and culture.” By that, President Bush underlined the cultural linkage that was built by American occupation of the Philippine Islands and the familial linkage that resulted from considerable and incessant migration of Filipinos to the United States.

As a complement to the Visiting Forces Agreement and as a support for the operationalization of the Mutual Defense Treaty, the Philippines and the United States signed the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA) on 21 November 2002. The MLSA includes the objective “to further the interoperability, readiness, and effectiveness of their respective military forces through increased logistic cooperation.” With these agreements to rebuild the security relationship, U.S. military aid flowed to the Philippines and increased to levels not seen after the withdrawal of the U.S. bases in 1992. Meanwhile, the Philippines allowed the U.S. military again the use of Philippine airspace and airfields this time as transit points in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

For its committed support to the U.S.-led global campaign against terrorism, the Philippines was designated as a major non-NATO ally in May 2003 along with Thailand as the countries in Southeast Asia. As a major non-NATO ally, the Philippines and the United States are expected to cooperate “on military research and development, and give the Philippines greater access to American defense equipment and supplies.”¹⁹

The U.S. Global War on Terror escalated, and the United States invaded and then occupied Iraq beginning in 2003. In late 2002 and early 2003, the United States made efforts in convincing the

United Nations Security Council to authorize the war against Iraq. But in no time it became clear that the war would not have UN authorization. In the end, the United States, with the United Kingdom, bypassed the UN Security Council and organized the Coalition of the Willing for the invasion of Iraq. Despite serious and overwhelming internal security problems, and immediate external threats, the Philippines nevertheless deployed a contingent of 51 troops to support the operations of the Coalition of the Willing in Iraq.

While the expansion of U.S. military footprint in the Philippines was made under the global campaign against terrorism, it was at the same time seen as an instrument as and a façade in encircling and containing China (Malik, 2002 p. 271). Stratfor—i.e. Strategic Forecasting, Inc.—argued that the Pentagon was using the global war on terror to expand its forces in Asia and strengthen its influence in a region that was steadily coming under China’s influence²⁰ as Washington considered China as a long-term security threat (Bin, 2002). Similarly, the Commission on America’s National Interests described China as “America’s major potential strategic adversary in East Asia” (Commission on America’s National Interests, 2000, p. 64).

What happened was the Philippines played the twin strategic approach of bandwagoning with the U.S., and balancing against China. After all, the U.S. is a distant and a familiar power, whereas China is nearby and is located in its immediate neighborhood. Furthermore, for the Philippines, the United States is attractive as a counterweight against China because of the following. One: Unlike China, the United States does not have outstanding territorial disputes with the Philippines. Two: Unlike China that had supported the local communist movement trying to overthrow the Philippine government, the United States has been supportive of the establishment in pacifying insurgency movements in the Philippines. Accordingly, a wide segment of the Philippine establishment sees China for its role as a destabilizing power within the state. Three: The Philippine culture is aligned with American culture and this alignment is continuously renewed by the millions of Filipino migrants in the U.S. Four: unlike China that has a highly centralized political structure, and authoritarian ideology (Mouritzen and Wivel, 2005), the United States has a more pluralist and open ideology and accordingly appraised as likely tolerant.

However, bandwagoning by the Philippines to the Global War on Terror stopped when the Philippines ignored its commitments to the United States by withdrawing the Philippine contingent from Iraq on 14 July 2004. What was the major factor that compelled the Philippine government to risk its security relationship with its most important ally, and to withdraw its troops from Iraq? This will be answered in the next section.

D. Impact of Overseas Filipinos to Foreign Policy

On 7 July 2004, Angelo de la Cruz—a Filipino truck driver and an employee of a Saudi firm—was transporting fuel from Saudi Arabia to Iraq. He was kidnapped by a group calling itself as Khaled Bin Al-Walid Squadrons of the Islamic Army of Iraq. The group threatened to execute the driver if the Philippine government did not withdraw its troops in Iraq by 20 July 2004. After the group's demand was broadcasted via Al-Jazeera, there was an immediate public sympathy to de la Cruz and to his eight children in the Philippines, along with the public clamor for the withdrawal of its contingent in Iraq to save his life. The public sympathy and clamor was not unexpected considering that one out of ten Filipinos were working overseas.

Philippine government officials initially appealed to the abductors for de la Cruz's release on the grounds that the presence of the Philippine contingent in Iraq was not a part of the occupying force. However, the abductors understood the situation differently and saw the Philippine contingent as part of the legitimizing force of the occupation. The group saw de la Cruz as part of the infrastructure supporting the occupation and therefore he was considered as a legitimate target.

Other countries threatened by insurgent troops through kidnapping would in general have refused the demands that would fundamentally alter government policy. The Philippines could not afford the risk of public outrage. It decided and made a reversal of government policy, and it agreed to withdraw Filipino military forces in Iraq. Consequently, the alliance between the Philippines and the United States underwent again a crisis. The United States was displeased and reviewed its financial and military assistance to the Philippines.

The Philippines's decision to backtrack from its commitment placed its security relations with the United States in a precarious position. Yet, the Philippine government gave-in to the demands of the kidnap group and save dela Cruz over the risk of damaging its security relationship with its major ally the United States.

Given the importance of labor export to the Philippine economy, and of foreign remittance to many Filipino families, government policy in general and foreign policy in particular are closely linked with overseas employment. As mentioned earlier, one of the pillars of Philippine foreign policy is the protection of the rights and promotion of the welfare of overseas Filipinos. This was re-stressed by President Arroyo when she made the pronouncement that "The interests of our overseas Filipino workers are paramount. The government is going out of its way to support their immediate transfer out of harm's way in the event of tactical contingencies anywhere in the world."²¹

Given the large number of OFWs, if it did not give-in to the demands made by the abductors, the Philippine government would be seen as insensitive to their plight and sufferings, and only interested in acquiring the foreign remittance for the country. According to President Arroyo in her State of the Nation Address on 26 July 2004, “Why was Angelo de la Cruz saved? Because I stuck to my oath. Since I first became President in 2001, my declared foreign policy focus has been to protect the vital interests of the nation, including our eight million overseas Filipinos.” As de la Cruz became the symbol of the vulnerability and the suffering of the millions of overseas Filipino workers, the Philippine government was gravely concerned that his execution would lead to a massive public outrage against the government’s inability to protect overseas Filipino workers that would destabilize the government and the society.

Philippine government’s concern on the seriousness of the public outrage to the extent of risking its security relationship with the United States came from its experience in another case—that of Flor Contemplacion in 1995. Contemplacion, who had four children, had worked as a maid in Singapore beginning in 1988. She was charged and convicted by a Singaporean court of killing another maid and a child in 1991, and for this she was sentenced to death. On 17 March 1995, she was hanged in Changi Prison of Singapore. On that day, Filipinos began one of the biggest civil protests ever seen in their country. Contemplacion epitomized the national narrative of an individual sacrificing herself for the betterment of her family and others in the Philippines being one of the millions of Filipino overseas workers.

When Contemplacion was buried on 24 March 1995 some 80 km south of the Philippine capital, an estimated 50 to 100 thousand people lined the streets for her funeral procession, and show their grief and solidarity. In the Philippine capital, thousands of protesters tore-up Singaporean flags, or burned them. This was repeated in other major cities of the Philippines. Not only this, Singaporean factories in the Philippines also became targets of the protests. Hours before and after the burial, the Singaporean embassy and Singapore Airlines’ office in the Philippines received bomb threats. Popular outrage that was expressed against the Singaporean government for their execution of Contemplacion was as much expressions of concern on the treatment of overseas Filipino workers, and protest and frustration against the Philippine government for its failure to protect them. The failure to prevent the execution of Contemplacion became a symbolic representation of the Philippine government’s powerlessness in protecting millions of its citizens overseas notwithstanding the fact that it was instrumental in sending them there.

During times of crises, political institutions in the Philippines often become targets of severe criticisms. In Contemplacion’s case, the government was criticized for its ineffectiveness and irresponsibility. At the height of the furor, women’s groups, labor associations, OFW groups, academics, and media charged the Philippine government for its alleged mishandling of the

situation, and made sharp criticisms regarding other public policies pertaining to OFWs. They argued that in spite of the personal sacrifices, and the economic benefits that the country gains in return, the government does not provide adequate social safety-nets and welfare protection to the OFWs. Many Filipinos considered Contemplacion as a martyr, one of the many Filipinos who sacrificed their lives due to the failure of the government in managing and governing the country. Many were enraged and deeply frustrated with the government for seemingly treating overseas Filipinos solely as commodities and their lives as unimportant and replaceable like commodities to be exported.

The public outrage in the Philippines came to a boiling point, and brought the government to the crisis point. Public support for government reached the lowest levels, and because of this support for government programs were being seriously affected. The government was also concerned that the public dissatisfaction would re-strengthen the support for different insurgency movements in the Philippines.

To calm-down public outrage, the foreign affairs secretary initially, and then the labor secretary resigned, admitting that they had failed in their duty of caring for Filipinos working overseas. In addition to this, the Philippine President at-the-time, Fidel Ramos, dismissed the previous ambassador to Singapore, suspended the current ambassador, and terminated all trade and state visits. He also forbade the sending of Filipino migrant workers to Singapore. There were even moves within the governors' league in the Philippines to expel and forbid Singaporean nationals from their provinces.

What the Contemplacion case taught the Philippine government was that extensive public outrage could be caused by a perceived injustice leading to death of an overseas Filipino. If his or her case captured the collective sympathy, the government further learned that this could seriously destabilize its functioning, and the society in general. As the country and many Filipino families were dependent on remittances from overseas Filipinos, in this case, the Philippine government had to prioritize internal stability over external security and in particular its security relationship with the United States.

The withdrawal of the Filipino contingent from Iraq in 2004 only showed the importance of migration to the Philippine society, and economy as well as the Philippines's vulnerability and weakness in crafting a credible and robust foreign and security policies due to this.

Concluding Remarks

The paper considered the interaction of the dual elements of the nation-state: territory and

people, in shaping how the authority of the nation-state is being administered. Particularly, it discussed the dialectical interaction of geopolitics and migration, i.e. the non-mobile territory and the mobile people, and how this interaction influence government policy by looking at the case of the Philippine territory and the Filipino people.

The paper ferreted-out the major factors in the transformation of the Philippines into the westernmost frontier of the United States. It showed that the occupation of the Philippines was a continuation of the westward expansion of the United States through migration that was promoted by the notion of Manifest Destiny, the Treaty of Ghent, the Monroe Doctrine and Mahan's Sea Power Doctrine.

The paper showed that the geopolitical circumstance that came with the transformation of the Philippines into the westernmost frontier of the United States had created a migratory linkage from the Philippine Islands to the United States. The paper further showed that the American occupation of the Philippines had transformed the Philippines into an image of the United States including the implantation of American culture and the English language. The paper then showed that the transplanted culture based on the English language as significant in the determination of the destination countries in the current migration pattern of Filipinos.

The paper showed how migration can influence in shaping the geopolitics of a region by pointing out the following. One: The westward expansion of the American people initially changed the geopolitical conditions in the American continent, and eventually changed the geopolitical make-up of Western Pacific. Two: The migration of Filipinos to the United States was a key factor in the granting of Philippine independence, thereby reshaping the geopolitical conditions in the Western Pacific.

The paper showed how the political-security relationship undertaken by post-independence Philippines was largely determined by post-World War II geopolitics. The Philippines-U.S. security relationship was shaped by the Cold War in general and the expulsion of Kuomintang to Taiwan and Korean War in particular.

The paper showed how the economic agreement the Philippines signed with the United States to attain independence eventually led to the government's adoption of a labor export policy in the 1970s. The paper further showed the importance of remittances from overseas Filipinos to the Philippine economy.

The paper showed that the withdrawal of American military bases from the Philippines led to the deterioration of the Philippines-U.S. security relationship. It also showed that after the withdrawal, China became more assertive militarily in the vicinity of the Philippines.

The paper showed that the rapprochement of the Philippines to the United States was driven by its objective to counterbalance China, which is located in its immediate vicinity. The participation of the Philippines to the war on terror was a way to re-affirm its commitment to its security relationship with the United States.

The paper showed why the Philippines withdrew its contingent from Iraq although this risked its security relationship with its major ally, viz. the United States. This was because of its concern of a possible outrage caused by the execution of an overseas Filipino worker in Iraq. It showed that government policy gave importance to public opinion shaped by a social reality of serious sacrifices by overseas Filipinos for the support of the country's economy. The paper showed the weakness and vulnerability of the Philippine state in terms of maintaining a credible foreign and security policy due to the large presence of Filipinos overseas, and due to the Philippine economy's dependence from their remittances.

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Notes:

1 A geopolitical pole is a state or an alliance of states that can apply substantial both positive and negative sanctions in a territory or region to influence the states in the territory or region to behave according to its will (Mouritzen and Wivel, 2005).

2 The Philippines being surrounded by the seas as a natural barrier against external powers has had weak security infrastructure and arrangement that have been implemented and laid-out by the political authority whether foreign or local. Its defense infrastructure has for the longest time focused on internal security threats and has given less attention to external security concerns. In terms of military capability in terms of both defense and power projection, it has one of the weakest in East Asia.

3 The islands are called Midway because they are midway or somewhere halfway between the United States and Asia.

4 Initially 540 teachers from the United States arrived in 1901. In 1902, more teachers arrived to bring the total to 1,074 American teachers in the Philippines (Morris, 1998).

5 "Virginia Benitez Licuanan, daughter of a prominent pensionado, speaks about her own 'Americanization' as springing from her parent's stay in the United States. She recalls that her first word was probably 'apple'. Her father was an apple pie addict since his formative years as one of the first pensionados in the small Middle West town of Macomb, Illinois" (Calata, 2002, p.93).

6 Strictly speaking, the Filipinos did not go to the United States because at the time the Philippine Islands was a part of the United States, and therefore, by being in the Philippine Islands, they were already in the United States.

7 Most of the Filipinos worked in the Pacific Coast such as California or in Hawaii especially in the agricultural regions. Others worked in fish canning factories in Alaska or the Northwest of the United States (Espiritu, 2003, pp. 28-29).

8 Besides Americans, only the people from the Philippine Islands were allowed to work for the U.S. military. Among the U.S. military services, they could only join the U.S. Navy. Nevertheless, they could only work in low-level positions such as cook or dishwashers (Espiritu, 2003, p. 28).

9 Section 28 of the Immigration Act of 1924 of the United States defines the term "alien" and specifically declares that "citizens of the islands under the jurisdiction of the United States shall not be held as aliens" (Scharrenberg, 1929, p. 49). Therefore, Filipinos were not aliens from the point of view of American law.

10 During the Japanese occupation of the Philippine Islands, the Philippine Commonwealth government was in exile.

11 Please refer to Department of State (1945: vol. 6, pp. 1208-1209).

12 Please refer to the homepage of Migration Policy Institute.

<http://www.migrationinformation.org/datahub/countrydata.cfm?ID=572#7>, Access Date: April 20, 2012.

13 The recruitment of Filipinos to the U.S. Navy ceased when the Military Bases Agreement was not renewed in 1991.

14 The Laurel-Langley Agreement replaced the Bell Trade Act in 1955 in part to placate Philippine dissatisfaction over the restrictive clauses of the Bell Trade Act. These include the pegging of the Philippine peso and the prohibition of the Philippines to impose export tariffs. Although the tariff schedule was revised to favor Philippine goods more, and to make the parity agreements reciprocal, the system of free trade between the Philippines and the U.S. continued in a way that in general the Philippines was a supplier of cheap raw materials and was a market for U.S. manufactured goods.

15 The part of the South China being claimed by the Philippines is mandated to be called as the West Philippine Sea by the Philippine government through Administrative Order No. 29 in 2012 (Lambino, 2014).

16 Kalayaan Islands refer to the islands being claimed by the Philippines among the Spratly Islands.

17 In addition to this, there was an issue of and serious concerns for security officials arising from the local communist movement in the Philippines. Security officials in the Philippines were wary of China for its past support to the insurgency movement. The Chinese Cultural Revolution encouraged Filipino communists to implement a revolutionary struggle in the Philippine countryside similar to that in China (Banlaoi, 2007). Jose Maria Sison, the founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), went to China around the time of the Cultural Revolution and brought home the ideology of Maoism (Banlaoi, 2007). The CPP has been considered as a threat to the Philippine domestic stability especially in the

countryside. With its military arm, the New People's Army (NPA), the CPP continues carry on hostilities against the Philippine government using the Maoist strategy of protracted people's war. Because of the continuing presence of the communist movement upholding a Maoist ideology, Philippine military officials saw the local communist movement as a vestige of Chinese influence and accordingly saw China as the power behind the ideology.

18 Office of the President, "PGMA's Letter to U.S. President George W. Bush regarding Terrorist Attack in the U.S.A.," September 12, 2001, www.opnet.ops.gov.ph/speech-2001sept27.htm.

19 Please refer to the following homepage of the U.S. State Department on the designation of the Philippines as a major non-NATO ally of the United States.

<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2794.htm>, Access Date: July 28, 2015.

20 Strategic Forecasting Inc., "Philippines: U.S. Exercises May Lead to Regional Base,"

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21 Office of the President, "PGMA's speech during the command conference on Anti-Terrorism," 27 March 2003, www.op.gov.ph/speeches.