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Special Issue: **PHILIPPINE STUDIES AND THE CENTENNIAL OF THE DIASPORA**

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Asia Pacific: Perspectives is a peer-reviewed journal published at least once a year, usually in April/May. It welcomes submissions from all fields of the social sciences and the humanities with relevance to the Asia Pacific region.* In keeping with the Jesuit traditions of the University of San Francisco, *Asia Pacific: Perspectives* commits itself to the highest standards of learning and scholarship.

Our task is to inform public opinion by a broad hospitality to divergent views and ideas that promote cross-cultural understanding, tolerance, and the dissemination of knowledge unreservedly. Papers adopting a comparative, interdisciplinary approach will be especially welcome. Graduate students are strongly encouraged to submit their work for consideration.

* 'Asia Pacific region' as used here includes East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, Oceania, and the Russian Far East.

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Apathy to Activism through Filipino American Churches

by Claudine del Rosario, M.A. and
Joaquin L. Gonzalez III, Ph.D.

Abstract

This study provides some answers to the question: given that accumulation and accounting of social, cultural, economic, and political capitals exists and is performed, has this critical mass translated to societal empowerment for Filipino migrants? Del Rosario and Gonzalez acknowledge that Catholic and Protestant churches have been utilized as an effective hegemonic ally by colonizing states, like Spain and the United States, to pursue their political and economic self interests within their colonies. But due to reverse colonization, del Rosario and Gonzalez argue that the Filipinized churches in San Francisco have become modern day counter-hegemonic spaces and structures where advocacy and activism tactics are learned and immigrant rights are discussed. These counter-hegemonic actions are then directed at US laws that displace, repress, and discriminate against new immigrants.

Immigrant religious leaders and their followers have become a major source of spiritual, cultural, social, and political capital formation in many gateway cities in America. Hence, their 'organized force' in society versus dysfunctional policies could definitely be seen as counter-hegemonic. The San Francisco Bay Area, home to more than 350,000 Filipino immigrants and their numerous spiritual congregations, is no exception. After all, the acceptable political and spiritual socialization Filipino immigrants subscribe to deviates from what the larger American society prefers and is exposed to—a dichotomized path for spiritual and political life. Church and state should be separated by clear mental and institutional boundaries, particularly in government spaces. City hall is the appropriate venue for politics, policy, and advocacy while the cathedral, mosque, and synagogue are the proper spaces for prayer, rites, and worship. Public policies should reflect this dichotomy in terms of process and product. Not to the Filipino immigrant psyche it seems.

Our initial participant observations (shared in Gonzalez and Maison 2004), led us to explore further the dynamics of this socio-political phenomenon guided by the following thoughts: Given the large influx of Filipino pastors, Filipino religious workers, and Filipino members of various Christian faiths into the United States and the many acculturation and immigration issues that emerge, what kinds of unique civic engagement and incorporation exchanges between and among congregants, state, and society have resulted? From a more radical standpoint, have Filipinos been effective at using their immigrant spiritual politicization as a Trojan horse which would allow them to get into the core of American society and make positive inroads into its hegemonic structures? Most importantly, what are the conditions that have allowed a fused transnational spiritual and political capital formation to develop?

We began with the assumption that the evolutionary process of intertwined transnational spiritual and political capital formation amongst Filipino immigrants in the San Francisco Bay Area illustrates a form of 'counter-hegemony' grounded on the early critical points raised by Marx, Friere, Weber, Gramsci, and Ileto on social revolution and the church. After discussing the conceptual underpinnings of this perceived counter-hegemony, we gathered historical evidence of both state-church hegemony and the resulting civil society counter-hegemony in the more than 300 years of colonization and hispanization under Spain and the more than a hundred year old relationship of colonization, neocolonization, and a continuing process of Americanization. Following the Filipino diaspora across the Pacific, we compiled more materials on the movement of this counter-hegemonic socialization and behavior to the United States through the Filipino diaspora of pastors, religious workers, and parishioners—many THAT came early on as agricultural workers and later on as professionals. Crossing to America also meant that we needed to extend our initial speculation. Essentially, this mass movement of people and culture from the Philippines constitutes a form of reverse colonization, where American political, social, and economic institutions and spaces experience varying degrees of Filipinization. The scope of this counter-hegemonic impetus is evaluated in more depth through two cases studies comparing the growth and development of fused transnational spiritual and political capital formation in pre-dominantly Filipino Catholic churches and how they use this to constructively engage local and national public policies which have negative effects to their community. We conclude with some common lessons from the cases and challenges to the sustainability of this unique process.

Revisiting Hegemony and the Church

There is a growing body of research about religion and congregation based political organizing. The nature of the relationship between church and politics has always been controversial with philosophers writing about it for centuries and policy-makers who have been trying to avoid stepping on matters of religion and faith. There is, however, a few works that looks at the dynamic and praxis within emerging Filipino diasporic communities, particularly in the United States. Hence, this is the area where we wish to make a contribution. Our thoughts in this study are grounded on the classic works of theorists such as Karl Marx, Max Weber, Paolo Friere, Antonio Gramsci, and Filipino historian Reynaldo Ileto.

Even after societal moves to bar churches in much of the western world from intervening in the smooth conduct of state affairs, the power of religious teachings continued to be identified as a major stumbling block to effective governance and economic productivity. This moved Karl Marx to argue strongly that "religion is the opiate of the people" and elaborated further in *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* that:

> The foundation of irreligious criticism is: Man makes religion, religion does not make man…Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people.

Eventually, Marx influenced many critical thinkers, political activists, and oppressed workers including Paolo Freire who in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* strongly agreed with him that churches and their teachings definitely fostered a lack of critical consciousness to marginalized groups in civil society by:

> Preaching sin and hell, churches appeal to the fatalistic and frightened consciousness of the oppressed. The promise of heaven becomes a relief for their existential fatigue. The more the masses are frowned in a culture of silence, the more they take refuge in churches that offer pie in the sky by and by. They see church as a womb where they can hide from an oppressive society…This directs their anger against the world instead of the social system that runs the world…leaving untouched their real source of oppression. (pp. 131-132)

Marx and the 'Marxist school of thought' he inspired argued that religion advanced a false consciousness, in which people find solace and relief from their existential fatigue through praying to be saved in another world, the afterlife. They are comforted by this idea, which distracts them from confronting and addressing the material reality and injustices of the present world. To Marx and his followers, the focus should be developing a strong state-driven economic sub structural base' supported by a 'superstructual frame' of loyal civil society stakeholders. They argued that the ideal superstructure is one that is made out of the masses, the oppressed, and the workers. Using a dialectical analysis, Marx stated that building a strong substructure and an oppressed people reinforced superstructure was the only way to reaching true 'socialism'. Socialism is the synthesis of a more equitable approach to redistributing economic wealth and to achieving the political interests of the marginalized majority as opposed to feudalism (the thesis) and capitalism (the anti-thesis). In essence, the Marxist school sought to destroy the hegemonic superstructure made of rich elites, including churches, who only enriched themselves using corrupted feudalistic and capitalistic substructures, by creating a new economic foundation grounded on the tenets of socialism. A counter-hegemony or proletariat revolution led by peasants, factory workers, and other oppressed groups was therefore necessary.

From another perspective, Max Weber, in his famous work, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, provided a counter-argument to the Marxists' views on the primacy of the economic base in relation to institutions, especially churches and their religious teachings. It seemed that to Weber reforming key elements of the superstructure is as important as building a solid substructure. If the Catholic CHURCH is corrupt and inadequate, then one should seek an alternative institution within civil society that would be compatible with a capitalist substructure, like Protestantism. Protestant teachings could offer the much needed counter-hegemonic deliverance for the oppressed and downtrodden. There is no need to change the economic base to socialism. After all, in the Protestant ethos it is assumed that, "Man is dominated by the making of money, by acquisition as the ultimate purpose in his life. Economic acquisition is no longer subordinated to man as the means for the satisfaction of his material needs." (p. 53). Weber suggests further that capitalism grew largely as a result of Protestantism and its teaching of predestination. The idea was that God signifies his favor by rewarding the chosen ones with prosperity for their work, whether shop owner or peasant farmer. Everyone was obliged to regard themselves as chosen ones, because if they did not, they were regarded as having inadequate faith. The highest form of moral obligation of the individual was to fulfill his or her duty in worldly affairs and success in their duty was regarded as a sign of being one of the elect.

Elaborating further on the importance of superstructures or civil society entities was Antonio Gramsci. As alluded to in Omi and Winant's book *Racial Formation in the United States*, Gramsci is known to have popularized in-depth thinking on 'hegemony' in civil society. Hegemony is defined as the conditions necessary, in a given society, for the achievement and consolidation of rule by a dominant group (Omi and Winant, p.67). In other words, it is the conditions that allow for oppression. Society as a whole is persuaded to agree upon an ideology that is favorable to the dominant class. This ideological dominance is achieved by the ruling class through a combination of consent and coercion. The relationship between the two is dialectical and hegemony would not exist without both aspects. At times, consent is the primary force at work, but at other times, when consent is not easily won, coercion or force becomes the primary means of maintaining hegemony.

The dominant class must make compromises and forge alliances with its fundamentally opposing classes in order to gain and maintain political and ideological leadership. In turn, the subordinate classes are persuaded to hold values and beliefs that are consistent with the economic dominance of the ruling class. Although rule can be obtained by force, it cannot be secured and maintained, especially in modern society, without the element of consent. Gramsci conceived of consent as far more than merely the legitimation of authority. In his view, consent extended to the incorporation by the ruling group of many of the key interests of subordinated groups, often to the explicit disadvantage of the rulers themselves. (Omi and Winant, p. 63)

The consent aspect of hegemony is won and maintained through civil society, which includes religion, education, mass media and popular culture. These are the realms in which an ideology that is favorable to the dominant class is created and perpetuated. For example, from the time a child enters school, he or she is taught history and literature that are consistent with the economic and ideological dominance

of the ruling class. They are taught good work ethics which makes them productive workers for monopoly capitalism. When one watches television, news programs and even MTV, there are debates about political topics. But the debates take place within very narrow margins on the political spectrum, not allowing for arguments that are on the left end of the spectrum, or even on the far right of the spectrum. This process insures that the perspectives of the public in general will also be very narrow.

This is in keeping with Marx's hypothesis that the superstructures perpetuate and maintain the base. Gramsci built upon Marxist ideas, by focusing in on civil society and demonstrating that it is the terrain upon which the proletariat must engage in counter-hegemonic activities. He describes the "war of position," which is a very gradual process through which the people must undergo moral and ideological reform to eliminate the class bias of the existing hegemony. Ideology is the key to transforming society—it is what gives a common denominator to all members of a historical bloc. This is where civil society comes in, where "war of position" is a necessary first step in revolution to win the consent of the people. Without consent, power may be seized from the ruling class, but force would eventually be needed to maintain it.

But is it possible for a group in civil society to win a 'war of position'? Could counter-hegemony emerge from a hegemonic superstructure, like the church? It seems so, according to the historical evidence presented by Reynaldo Ileto in *Pasyon and Revolution*. Ileto's work is significant since it illustrates how Filipino civil society is able to position itself for counter-hegemonic projects within the hegemonic superstructures of both Spanish and American church and state. Ileto's work echoes the counter-hegemonic battles described in the vast literature on liberation theology. Ileto makes connections between a popular Filipino religious text *Casaysayan nang Pasiong Mahal ni Jesucristong Panginoong Natin* (Account of the Sacred Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ) or the *Pasyon*, and Filipino revolutionary movements against their Spanish and American colonizers between 1840 and 1910. Although Spain imposed Catholicism upon the Philippines, Ileto argues that the Filipino people were able to create their own brand of Christianity, from which a language of anticolonialism evolved in the late nineteenth century.

The *Pasyon* was the most commonly used text in the reading and dramatization of the story of Jesus Christ during Holy Week festivities in the Philippines. According to Ileto, it served two functions. On the surface, the rote reading of the text provides evidence for Marx's postulate about religion being used to pacify people. The Spanish colonizers used the ritual of acting out the *Pasyon* to teach loyalty among the natives loyalty to Spain and the Church. It also was meant to encourage "resignation to things as they were and instilled preoccupation with morality and the afterlife rather than with conditions in this world". However subconsciously, which Ileto notes was not intended by the Spanish missionaries, the sub-text of the *Pasyon* provided Filipinos with an interpretative, vernacular language for "articulating their own values, ideals, and even hopes of liberation." (p. 12)

The widespread use of the *Pasyon* text as a mantra not only during Holy Week, but also on other important occasions, reinforced its entry into the subconscious of the people. It was used when Filipinos prayed and mourned for their dead, in festivals, in *sinakulos* (passion plays) which were performed outside the church, it was sung in courtship rituals, and common *pabasas* (or reading sessions) could accommodate entire barrios. Some people would forbid their children to read anything but the *Pasyon* during the Holy Week and some claimed that it was difficult to find a girl or boy who did not know the phrases of this book. "Before the abolition of the of friar censorship by the republican and American colonial governments, the *Pasyon* was one of the few literary works available to the rural population, and therefore could not fail to shape to folk mind." (p.19)

A common stereotype of Filipinos that Ileto references is that of a passive, deferential and hospitable family-bound individual. The perception is that the masses are willing to accept existing conditions, avoiding direct participation in politics. "There is a lot of validity in this image. Social mechanisms do tend to preserve the existing socio-economic structure. The struggle for survival often relegates politics to the sidelines, particularly when the masses perceive that politics has generated into nothing more than *pulitika*—the bargaining and jockeying for power among Filipino politicos…'the *tao*, thinking first and foremost of the survival of himself and his family, is little interested in high-sounding policies, ideologies, or principles of good government and administration.' Ileto warns against this stereotype, taking into consideration the many instances throughout history when popular movements threatened to overturn the ruling structures—counter-hegemony at its best. His study examines the possibility that folk religious traditions which usually promote passivity, but really "have latent meanings that can be revolutionary." (p. 10).

Ileto claims that the Filipino masses' familiarity with the *Pasyon's* revolutionary images allowed them a cultural preparedness to live out similar scenarios in response to adverse conditions under Spanish and American hegemony. He analyses the text of the *Pasyon* and emphasizes its importance as a "mirror of the collective consciousness." Its narration of Christ's suffering, death and resurrection conveys a transition from darkness to light, despair to hope, misery to salvation, etc. Analogously, in times of political and economic despair, the masses were able to take action under the leadership of individuals who promised "deliverance from oppression." The themes of the *Pasyon* were parallel to the nation's transition from the dark age of Spanish exploitation and dominance to the bright age of freedom. Ileto illuminates themes within the *Pasyon* that do not encourage passivity and acceptance of the status quo under Spanish or American hegemony. One example is that although Filipinos regard family as the basic unit, the *Pasyon* teaches that a time comes when one must heed to a higher calling, which may require separation from their family. This is exemplified through the emphasis of Jesus' relationship with his grieving mother and his expla-

nation that he must leave her because he had a greater mission to fulfill—saving humankind. Additionally, the masses could identify with Christ in the *Pasyon*. He was described as a poor, seemingly harmless man of humble origins. He and his followers exhibit timid, modest and sad behavior. To the colonizers, this was an ideal image for keeping natives in a subservient state. Despite this lowly behavior on the surface, however, the 'real' story brewing in the minds of the Filipinos was one of defiance to authority and commitment to an ideal.

Hegemony and Counter Hegemony: From America to the Philippines and Back...

Ileto's work is significant to our study of church, civil society, and counter-hegemony because it shows how religious ideals have shaped the Filipino socio-political consciousness. Ileto's thoughts in *Pasyon and Revolution* goes beyond the points raised by Marx, Friere, Weber, and Gramsci by asserting that the indigenous Filipino thinking shaped religion and the practice of religion and eventually inspiring counter-hegemonic behavior against two powerful hegemonic colonizers. In this section of this chapter, we move further up the dialectical chain by examining how Spain and America began a legacy of church hegemony which carried over to Filipino immigrants to the United States. But, later on, these same U.S.-based church institutions experience varying degrees of Filipinization and then used successfully to 'colonize' their former American colonizer.

State and Church Hegemony under Spain and America

Hegemony has shaped the consciousness of Filipinos since the time of Spanish colonization. The Catholic Church and its missionaries were used as tools for establishing and perpetuating Spain's hegemony over the Philippines. Although Magellan is known as the first Spanish explorer to reach the Philippines, it was not until the Legaspi expedition reached the islands in 1565 that the Spanish were able to establish colonial rule. What made this expedition more successful than the first was that Spain used the combination of the cross and the sword to subjugate the native people. The army was the "sword" and the "cross" was, of course, the Catholic Church. The work of Filipino historian Renato Constantino documents how Legaspi arrived armed with Augustinian missionaries, soon followed by Franciscans, Jesuits, and Dominicans. These missionaries became the pretext for Spanish colonialism in which the colonizers aimed to "bring the light of Christianity to the natives." (Constantino, p. 67). "The Spanish Empire was deemed to be in the service of 'both majesties,' God and the King." This was the basis for the union of church and state which became a critical aspect of Spanish rule in the Philippines. The colonial power used the church to pacify the people and to manufacture the consent that was needed to establish hegemony over the islands. Through the research of Steffi San Buenaventura (2002), we have an example of Gramsci's "consent and coercion." She cites John Leddy Phelan's work in determining that while Mexico and Peru were colonized through the "violent conquest by sword…, the Spanish colonization of the Philippine archipelago was primarily a conquest-by-the-cross, whereby Spanish missionaries 'envisioned their work as a spiritual conquest of the minds and hearts of the natives, a supplement to, and the ultimate justification for, the military conquest.'"

Over the course of three centuries, Catholic friars were sent from Spain to eradicate the natives' religious beliefs in "false" idolatry. Ultimately, the friars in the Philippines had more power than the king's administrators because they were larger in number and had more permanent positions. They were entrusted with so many civil duties that over time, they were involved in every aspect of community life. The friars were in charge of schools, taxation, military enlistment, municipal budgets, health, police and even in the local dramas that were staged at the fiestas. Over time, they seized much of the ancestral lands from indigenous peoples.

> Taxes, tributes, exhorbitant rents and arbitrary increases of the same, forced labor and personal services – all these intensified the hardships of natives who now had to give a good part of their products to their landlords. In addition, some administrators practiced other petty cruelties which caused much suffering among the people. In 1745, in the Jesuit ranches of Lian and Nasugbu, Batangas, for example, the people accused the religious not only of usurping the cultivated lands and the hills that belonged to them, but also of refusing to allow the tenants to get wood, rattan, and bamboo for their personal use unless they paid the sums charged by the friars. (Constantino, p72.)

As evidenced in Ileto's work, the Spanish missionaries hoped to use religious teachings to encourage Filipinos to be loyal to Spain and the Church. The Pasyon was one way in which they "encouraged resignation to things as they were and instilled preoccupation with morality and the afterlife rather than with conditions in this world."

Though the most brutal forms of hegemonic activity linked to the church occurred during Spanish colonization, it is certainly not limited to that time. Dawn Mabalon documents how supportive Protestant leaders were of American imperialism. She quotes Reverend Wallace Radcliffe who stated, "I believe in imperialism because I believe in foreign missions…The peal of the trumpet rings out over the Pacific. The Church must go where America goes" (Mabalon, unpublished). The United States won the Spanish American War in 1898 and bought the Philippines from Spain. But they also used their army to suppress any resistance to this purchase, killing over 1.5 million people during the Philippine American War. Mabalon writes that "(m) issionaries even defended the atrocities committed by soldiers in the Philippines, calling Filipinas/os 'treacherous and barbaric' and 'defective in reasoning'" (ibid.). During the American time, religion, particularly Protestantism, served as an important justification for acquisition and domination. United States President McKinley's theological justification for con-

tinuing occupation is well known. He claimed that the United States had the responsibility to "uplift and civilize and Christianize" Filipinos.

San Buenaventura asserts that "the coming of Protestantism ended the Roman Catholic monopoly on Christianity in the Philippines." While the majority of Filipinos remained loyal to the Catholic Church, many chose to join the American religion, which San Buenaventura links to its representation of freedom and liberty. But despite what it was supposed to represent, Protestantism failed to give Filipinos the sense of self-determination that they desired by denying them participation at higher levels of leadership within the church. Although there was a high level of enthusiasm from Filipinos, those who sought involvement were relegated to lower positions of leadership as "Filipino helpers."

While the Spanish relied heavily on the church to maintain power and dominance over the people, the Americans were able to utilize other forms of civil society, particularly education. A new band of hegemonic missionaries were deployed to the Philippines. The Thomasites, as they were called, arrived in the Philippines in 1902 and established an American educational system and English as the primary teaching language. Today, English is still taught alongside *Tagalog* and is the main language used for teaching in the Philippines. The educational system continues to manufacture consent, while US military presence on the islands provides a formidable tool of coercion when needed.

Church Hegemony Follows Filipino Immigrants "Stateside"

American hegemony constitutes both the "push" and the "pull" factor for Filipino immigration to the US. The influence of the American educational system, the US military presence, and the domination of American corporations are major factors in the shaping of Filipino "common sense" in Philippine cities. American brand-names are far more desirable and well-known than local ones. All of the famous Filipino actors and actresses seen on TV everyday are the ones who look the most "white," which demonstrates how the hundreds of years of both American and Spanish colonialism has affected Filipinos' perception of themselves. Leny Strobel writes about how colonial civil society has shaped Filipino psychology:

> The experience of colonization has prevented Filipinos from becoming too critical of American hegemony. Colonial mentality has made whiteness a reference point. Consequently, Filipinos are also often judged by outsiders and by each other on the basis of Western cultural standards, e.g. lazy, undisciplined, passive, obsequious, never on time. Even Senator Shahani endorsed a 1988 study of the Philippine character which blamed Philippine culture, rather than imperialism and colonialism, for the weaknesses of Philippines society. (Strobel, p. 38.)

It makes sense, then, that many Filipinos truly believe that a life in the US would be superior to a life in the Philippines. Strobel points out the historical determinants of Filipino immigration to the US, such as the colonial relationship between the US and the Philippines and the "global capitalist system that influences the movement of peoples from poor to the affluent countries." The remnants of the colonial days along with "globalization" are some of the factors that keep the Philippines so poor, which "pushes" Filipinos out. The glamorization of American whiteness and wealth "pull" those that are able into the US.

Once the United States opened its doors in 1965, many Filipinos saw this as their golden opportunity to chase the "American dream." Many people who were just graduating from college or their professional schools were trained in the American-style schools where they learned that the United States is the land of freedom and opportunity. The common perception is that by living here, they will be able to provide their family with a better, American education and have more opportunities to succeed and to prosper. Strobel writes:

> From 1965 to 1976, more than 250,000 Filipinos entered the United States. This group was composed predominantly of Filipinos from the urban middle class; most were college graduates, professionals, and highly skilled workers. Identified as the "brain drain" generation, they are products of an American-patterned education in the Philippines. Their world view, beliefs, and values have been shaped by this educational system and the hegemony of American culture in the Philippines. This has resulted in reverse ethnocentricism—the preference for things foreign or American, or in Filipino slang, "stateside." (p. 37, Strobel)

The 2000 US Census found that there are more than 320,000 Filipinos in the San Francisco Bay Area alone. But the reality of "freedom" and "opportunity" is less than perfect, as we have seen throughout the history of Filipino presence in the US. During early immigration when Filipino men were hired as agricultural workers, they faced many forms of discrimination. There were anti-miscegenation laws and the infamous sign on the door of many shops and restaurants that read, "NO FILIPINOS ALLOWED."

In the first part of the twentieth century, Stockton, California had the highest number of Filipino residents outside of the Philippines as a result of its agricultural industry. Mabalon explores the ways in which churches in Stockton remained conservative in the earlier part of the century, siding with the more dominant forces of society rather than with the disenfranchised Filipino community of the time. Until 1962, Stockton was part of the massive Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco. Mabalon's article is very revealing in terms of how Filipinos were perceived by the Church. She cites primary sources showing that anti-Filipino racism was one of the factor that pushed Filipinos away from the Church. In fact, she gives undeniable evidence that the Catholic Church supported the 1935 Filipino Repatriation Act in order to address what was called the "Filipino problem." She cites documents from San Francisco Archbishop John J. Mitty who said that "I wish to emphasize my conviction, based upon Filipino sentiment, which repatriation will go far in solving the difficult Filipino problem." Although this conviction was

supposedly based upon Filipino sentiment, "only 2082 Filipinas/os out of a population of more than 100,000 in Hawaii and the US mainland volunteered to be repatriated." In later letters in which he was pushed to address the "Filipino problem," he drafted statements that blamed the Filipinos who "want white collar jobs and flashy clothes." He believed that their difficulty stemmed from the "instability of character of the Filipinos." He ultimately removed those statements from his final letters to the papal representative in the United States, but the drafts which Mabalon was able to obtain, reveal Archbishop Mitty's negative and conservative attitude toward Filipinos.

Mabalon's article shows how unwilling the Catholic Church in Stockton was in addressing problems facing the Filipino community, despite the facts that most Filipinos were Catholic and that Stockton had such a large population of Filipinos*i* Father McGough of Saint Mary's Church in Stockton said, "I regret I have nothing to offer in the way of a solution for these people." Another priest at Saint Mary's stated that Filipinos are already "lost to the church." Mabalon also elaborates where Fred Cordova left off in *Filipinos: Forgotten Asian Americans*, in which he devotes a chapter to discussing the Church and Religion in the Filipino American community. He points out that although ninety percent of Filipino Americans were thought to be Catholic, the Catholic Church did not make much of an effort to respond to the needs of the community. Coming from a Philippine society, rooted in Catholicism for more than three hundred and fifty years, Filipino Americans often were denied access to sacramental marriages, involving Catholic brown men and Catholic white women; to Christian burials, involving indigents; to Sunday masses involving individual browns in all-white parishes; to Catholic education, involving poor brown children; to confession, involving the alien foreign speaking.

San Buenaventura did extensive research on the religious experiences of Filipino American communities in Hawaii and southern California which uncovers the role that non-Catholic religion played in perpetuating hegemony. Immigrant workers arrived in "a plantation system that encouraged the Christianization of its labor force." Because of the Protestant origins of the sugar industry…, the creation of ethnic missions within the Congregational and Methodist Churches was a natural step in inculcating Christian teachings and virtues to the "Asiatic" plantation workers and in instructing them in American democratic principles through the process of Americanization. To them, it was also necessary to nurture Christian religion among the converted workers so as to ensure the continued civilizing effect of Christianity on their outlook and conduct…to prevent having a "Filipino social problem"…Protestant missionaries worked on the assumption that the Filipinos needed special Christian moral guidance. (p. 158, San Buenaventura)

Whether it was the unwillingness to accept Filipino immigrants or the desire to control their behavior, religious institutions in the United States have a long history of continuing the legacy of oppression within the church. Hegemony through the church is a transnational phenomenon, starting with Spanish colonization in the 1500's and persisting throughout the twentieth century.

Counter Hegemony Comes to America: Two Cases from the Filipino Diaspora

The counter-hegemonic consciousness arising from the sub-texts of Spain and America's Christian teachings led to the emergence of spin-off groups from their Catholic and Protestant Churches. Beyond what Ileto described as *Pasyon* prayer sessions inspiring Filipino to move from mass apathy to militant activism versus Spain in 1840 and against America in 1910, were similar hegemonic actions by Filipino Catholic priests. Filipino Reverend Fathers Mariano Gomez, Jose Burgos, and Jacinto Zamora were martyred in public on the recommendation of their Spanish church superiors for sharing their 'progressive views' with their parishioners, particularly the *indios*. This only fueled the anger of Filipino nationalists like Jose Rizal, who penned two novels exposing blatant church-state corruption and abuses. Disgruntled, Rizal eventually left the Catholic church and became a mason. One Filipino Catholic Church pastor, Gregorio Aglipayan, established a breakaway group called the Philippine Independent Church (or Aglipayans) which was refused recognition by the Vatican. Yet another lay person, Felix Manalo, disillusioned by both Catholic and Protestant churches founded his own progressive church called the *Iglesia Ni Cristo* (INC) during the American occupation of the Philippines.

In the decades after the annexation of the Philippines by the United States, Filipino immigrant Catholics, Aglipayans, Iglesias, El Shaddais, Baptists, Methodists, Adventists, Episcopals, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Mormons, and Witnesses came en masse to California not only to continue to spread the faith and Filipinize American spiritual spaces but to mainstream into state-society relations various forms and degrees of Filipino-inspired counter-hegemonic engagement. There was some evidence of counter-hegemonic activities among the early immigrants despite the strong American church-state hegemony discussed earlier. The many Masonic lodges (e.g. Caballeros de Dimasalang), venerating the legacies of Filipino heroes like Jose Rizal, Andres Bonifacio, and Emilio Aguinaldo, from the small towns to the big cities of California, were clear evidence of counter-hegemonic thinking and action among early immigrants. Around the same time that liberation theology began to flourish—during the 1950's and 60's—Stockton's church people changed their attitude toward Filipinos. Mabalon cites instances of counter-hegemony through her work, in which she find that the Franciscans priests, which is a religious order that is dedicated to serving the poor, focused resources on the Filipino and Mexican immigrant workers in the area. In fact, Father Alan McCoy, a liberal Franciscan priest, along with Larry Itliong and Dolores Huerta worked to form the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee (AWOC). The AWOC was responsible for the historical Delano Grape Strike, but few people mention that it has roots in the church. The AWOC would later unite with Cesar Chavez to create the United Farm Workers Union.

Two contemporary case discussions demonstrate in depth these varying forms and degrees. We organized our case studies to delve into the following key factors and conditions that allowed for counter-hegemony to grow and prosper: (1) compelling political issues, (2) leadership structure, (3) socio-economics of the congregation, and (4) parish interest groups.

Saint Augustine's Catholic Church, South San Francisco, California

Background and compelling issues. Based on congregational size, Saint Augustine's is the largest parish in the vast Archdiocese of San Francisco, which is comprised of San Francisco, San Mateo and Marin counties. The membership is more than ninety percent Filipino and every weekend at Saint Augustine's is like a barrio fiesta. They have five masses on Sundays and three masses on Saturdays to accommodate the over 4000 families that are registered parishioners, which means that the church is bustling with activity all weekend. After each of the masses, you do not see everyone rushing off to get back their routine of their lives. Many parishioners do not leave the church until an hour or two hours after the mass they have attended is over. There is always food and parishioners stay to eat and hang out with their friends and say hello to their friends who are coming in for the next mass. Upon completion of any liturgical service, one hears the cheerful sound of parishioners talking and laughing and children running and playing. One can always count on eating a meal after the mass, where active parishioners either set up a table outside the hall adjacent to the church. For fundraisers, the parishioners will sometimes set up a stand outside the front entrance of the church and sell hot dogs, *lumpia* or soda.

Interestingly, there are no *Tagalog* mass or *Tagalog* bible study held at Saint Augustine's unlike in many of the Catholic and Protestant churches that have been Filipinized. There are also no strong indications of Filipinization in the external and internal features and icons of the church. However, these are more than made up for by the linguistic exchanges in Tagalog, Ilocano, Visayan, Kapampangan, Bicolano, and other Filipino dialects between and among priests, lay workers, and parishioners before and after each service. The use of Filipino attire for both men and women during special events such as baptisms, confirmations, marriages, and funeral services are also give away the ethnic background of the congregations. Beyond the language and fashion, the displays of traditional Filipino customs (i.e., children asking for a 'blessing' by putting the hand of their elders on their forehead) and culinary displays during parties and gatherings are clear manifestations of the congregations Filipinization.

One sunny Sunday in October, one of the active parishioners approached me when she saw me buying a hotdog after mass. She was happy to see me there, as we had met on a quieter weekday for her interview. Proudly she explained, "This is how we are here," holding her arm out to demonstrate the liveliness of the after mass activities. Dozens of people still milling around outside, while dozens more entered the church for the next mass. She is a matriarch of the parish community—everyone who seemed to be involved in fundraising knew her and greeted her. She was able to answer many of their questions, even though she did not seem to be directly responsible for any duties that day. "They call me mama," she said proudly and continues to laugh and make jokes with other parishioners. I realized that Saint Augustine's is truly a second home and a second family to many of the parishioners.

Saint Augustine's caught the attention of San Francisco city officials when shortly after the events of September 11, 2001, when the US Congress hastily passed new air transportation and homeland security legislation which mandated that baggage screening for all of the America's airports was to be taken over by the federal government. The new law, signed by President George Bush, restricted airport security screener jobs to US citizens only. At the time, SFO's security screeners were about 90 percent Filipino, a vast majority of them were new immigrants still ineligible for to become US citizens. There was tremendous opposition to this mandate from progressive groups and the Filipinos community in the Bay Area, and Saint Augustine's was very involved in the struggle to protect the jobs of these over a thousand immigrant non-US citizen workers at the San Francisco airport, 900 of whom were of Filipino descent. A large number of the screeners who were affected are parishioners and relatives of parishioners. But this was not the only reason that Saint Augustine's became involved in the struggle and it was not the first time they had taken a stand against injustice and hegemony. After an initial conversation with one of the pastors at Saint Augustine's, Father Robert Andrey, we learned that this parish has been engaged in mobilizing its congregants toward political goals since at least 1998.

Saint Augustine's has 3500 families officially registered as parishioners and an estimated 1500 additional families attending masses, making it the largest parish in the three-county Archdiocese of San Francisco. This is why the parishioners and church leaders were surprised when in 1999, South San Francisco's Planning Commission rejected a proposal to expand the church's building structure and build an elementary school next door. The parish had worked with the city for over eighteen months to come up with an acceptable project. When they were denied, the congregation was so shocked and hurt, that they were adamant about not giving up. After over a year of planning and work, they felt strongly that their voices needed to be heard. About five hundred churchgoers showed up at City Hall to persuade the City Council to overturn the Planning Commission's decision. Their mobilization proved successful, and the South San Francisco City Council unanimously approved the plan.

Leadership structure. There are two different types of leadership at work in the parish of Saint Augustine's. The first is the leadership of the priests and nuns who were involved in the above mentioned struggles. They, in turn, foster a second type of leadership amongst the parishioners. During the last five to six years, Saint Augustine's has bene-

fited from the experiences and political values of three religious leaders: Father Eugene, the head pastor, Sister Nona, head of the music ministry and education, and Father Obet, pastor. Through interviews which each of these individuals we learned that they were bringing years of political organizing with them to Saint Augustine's.

Father Eugene has been a priest in the Bay Area for many years and was one of the first priests contacted by the Bay Area Organizing Committee (BAOC) which does community organizing around the Bay Area in order to empower disadvantaged groups. According to Larry Gordon, president and CEO of the BAOC, Father Eugene was contacted because he is a very talented pastor who shared the progressive political vision of the BAOC and began working with him even before he became the head pastor at Saint Augustine's. Father Eugene sees his role as inspirer and motivator as critical in mobilizing the parish. "You have to be charismatic, welcoming and a little diplomatic at the same time…One thing that really I learned (is) it might be very difficult from the beginning. But if you don't do anything, if you don't make that first start, you will (never) do it. I think it was difficult for me to see what's going to happen. Because it was a really gigantic, a really huge project. But I just found out if there's a will there's a way."

Sister Nona has her organizing roots in the Philippines. She has been very involved in both the airport screener and expansion projects. For her, it was a great experience to be involved in these struggles because it reminded her of the times that she was involved in political resistance in the Philippines. "I have another concentration here with music. But it is not like there (in the Philippines) where we organize and we become very active. Here it is different. But there it takes a lot more courage to involve yourself. It is very risky." Despite the risk involved, Sr. Nona enjoyed the political work that she was involved in back home. She fondly recounts her first experience in organizing. "Well, it's already ingrained in my mind when I was young. My father was a lawyer and he was working with the poor. So I can see him. He accepted more clients with the poor. When I was a sister I had lots of experience. The first experience that I had was when our congregation went to defend the young girls from going into prostitution—giving them work so that they would not have to choose prostitution. That was my first experience. We did some marching and demonstrations. I was one of the leaders and we involved the whole town with the permission of the parish priest and somehow we were even able to involve the mayor. It involved the whole town, but it was peaceful."

Sister Nona brings this experience with her to the US and while the political situation is a bit more stable here, she misses being involved with fighting such blatant social injustices. She sees the social injustice here as well, but does not see enough resistance to it.

"Living here, you realize all the problems. Look at the housing conditions. There are many who are jobless… Why can we not do something? At least to prevent those who first came from the Philippines and other countries. They cannot anymore afford to buy a house. And for me that's not fair. Well you can say that the others were here for a long, long time. Blest are you who are here for a long, long time. But can we do something? Housing goes up and up and up and we just bow down and bow down and bow down. Even here in California, no one is saying something about the housing. And how many people here are jobless. How many have to move somewhere else just to survive. How many have no health insurance. And they cry. They are crying but no one is speaking up. We have to speak out. That's what I hate, that is what is lacking."

So Sister Nona hopes to be able to teach through her example. She goes to the organizing meetings and hopes that people will see her and realize that she is in support of social justice issues. "For me, it's just continue as leaders. If they will see in us, that our presence, our witnessing is strong, I think even if you are not saying anything. If they will see you that you are attending meetings…Oh Sr. Nona is there and Father Eugene is there, Oh they are for it. And we are also very lucky that our volunteers are here. It is not only he work of one, it is community work. The involvement is not just mine, it is everyone's."

Father Obet also has political roots in martial law the Philippines. He is familiar with the idea that religion is the opiate of the masses and does not agree with the idea because it is not his experience here or in the Philippines. "…My formative years were the martial law years…We were fighting the martial law regime when I was a student in the seminary. Then I became a priest and that was when I was able to do more for the Filipinos. And then when I came I did not look for BAOC—it came to me. And I kind of was able to continue what I was doing in the Philippines. I was also involved with community organizing in the Philippines during the time of martial law. In the Philippines there was a thin line between the church and politics. I was so active that there was a wrong report that I was suspected of being associated with the NPA. My rectory was raided in the middle of the night. When there was the People Power Revolution. When that took place, I wanted to make sure that was successful because if it was not, then I was a marked man. I was a very young priest at the time."

Father Obet's work and initiative with Saint Augustine's was critical in the campaign to save the airport screeners. As Saint Augustine's representative to the Bay Area Organizing Committee, he was able to help with a Living Wage victory in San Francisco and was largely responsible for initiating the screener campaign within the parish. His political conviction has been useful in explaining why it is important for the church to become involved in political matters.

"Well, I always preach about faith and justice because for me faith without justice is not real, not authentic. And of course we have the social teachings of the church. They are a well kept secret, but of course we try to uncover the secret. It is really hard to preach about justice, especially if we talk about to each his own, in this crisis of poverty. There is this wrong common notion that when priests talk about justice, we are going overboard because there is a separation of church and state. And you're not supposed to engage in politics. The fact is …that's wrong. Religion covers all aspects of

our life, including politics. But what we don't do as ministers is participate in partisan politics. But politics in general is very big…it is a part of the social teachings of the church. The only problem is that people have this notion that you should not mix church with politics."

The above religious leaders bring their talent and experiences to help make Saint Augustine's a parish that has real political leverage in fighting for social justice. As good leaders, they recognize that they cannot be the only leaders and that the leadership should continue even after they must leave Saint Augustine's. Father Eugene has been very effective at delegating leadership roles to people in the parish. There are at least two dozen names that Father Eugene can cite when asked which parishioners help him to get things done. There is someone to lead the Youth Group, the Small Christian Communities, someone to lead the capital campaign to expand the church and build the school, a leader for the Outreach Ministry, and many more. Father Eugene encourages them to take their own initiative and gives them the freedom to develop each project without reporting each little detail to him. They appreciate this freedom, which also gives them more accountability and ownership of these projects. The leader of the capital campaign for the expansion and the school, for example, worked for months on planning the project with the city and with the other parishioners. When the project was denied by the Planning Commission, she was one of the most determined to fight it.

Socio-economics of the congregation. Although Marx and other political theorists prioritize raising the consciousness of the working class to be the leaders of social transformation and counter-hegemony, Saint Augustine's provides compelling evidence that other social classes can also play an important role and can be very effective when organized.

The vast majority of the parishioners at Saint Augustine's are residents of its surrounding South San Francisco neighborhood, which is a predominantly immigrant community, but one that has enjoyed a little more time and stability in this country than the South of Market district of San Francisco. Many of the people living in the neighborhood have had the privilege to either buy or rent a house rather than having to live in a small inner city apartment. The community has also had time to mature. With the influx of immigrants in the 1970's and 1980's, the children of these immigrants are now either in college or college-bound. The parents now have a little more free time than they once did.

Noemi Castillo, the Director of the Ethnic Ministries office at the Archdiocese of San Francisco, believes that it is sometimes more difficult to mobilize brand new immigrants who are struggling to survive. While it is true that they are the ones who are suffering from the most injustices and can probably identify with those injustices much more easily, they are often too busy working two or more jobs to become civically engaged. Saint Augustine's, she observes, has a larger number of middle class, more stable families than other predominantly Filipino churches in San Francisco.

Ted, a parishioner, keenly reflects upon how the stability he has been able to attain in his years here has allowed him to gain some perspective on social justice: "I see myself as having changed form that conservative, hard-working, trying to make it out here in the United States. It's changed…now maybe we're more stable, we're no longer looking at success as a hungry beginner. We've learned to see that it's more than just grabbing for the big pie. There are less fortunate people than myself over here and in everything we do I just feel that I've been blessed and fortunate and I can't stand to just watch oppression happen in any kind of form. When there is an oppression, I think there is no love and how can I say I'm a Catholic…how can I even say I'm a Christian if I didn't do something about it? I felt I'm being—I'm not being true to myself…It took me thirty years to change the way I think. And then now, when we have attained a certain sort of stability, status in society, then you're focus changes. You grow."

In addition to the insight that economic stability allows, the church can draw upon the resources that it offers: money and time. Father Eugene has not only been able to raise the money that was needed to expand the church and build the school, but he has been able to enlist parishioners to become organizers and leaders in their free time. While most of the parishioners still have to work full time, they no longer have to work two or three jobs to survive. Father Eugene has also called upon some of the parishioners who have retired. As soon as their last day of work arrives, Father Eugene has work planned for them at the church. And the church is so much a part of their life, that they are more than willing, if not flattered to do it.

Activists and organizers often come from the middle class as a result of the luxury of time and education that they have. But they are not so far from the working class that they cannot relate. While they have had some luck and success in gaining financial stability in this country, many of them recognize that they also hold relatively little power in society and could lose their status depending on economic and political conditions. The majority of the families at Saint Augustine's are immigrants, and their experience as new, struggling aliens to this country is not so remote a memory. They remember their experience as foreigners and still feel that they are not completely accepted by US society.

When the federalization of airport security happened, it hit close to home for many parishioners. One of the parishioners who became very involved in the struggle to save their jobs said, "I think as Filipinos we saw it as a threat. We thought that Filipinos who are capable, deemed to be capable in doing their jobs, (were) yanked out of them because they're not US citizens. We felt (like) airport screeners…and then what next? Doctors, nurses, engineers? All of these people. It was flavored with so much racism or discrimination."

Maria is another active parishioner has happened to have a brother who was an airport screener. Although she herself was not threatened, her family was and she was determined that the church needed to do something about it if they could. "We were trying to convince the city officials that people's lives will be very much affected. It is just very unfair." She was particularly angered by the fact that while her brother was being fired by the government because of his

status. His non-citizen status did not stop her brother's son from being asked to risk his life serving the government. "My brother cannot work in this kind of job because he was not a citizen. He was being laid off because of that citizenship thing. But you know, my brother's son is working, is in the armed forces. He is in the Air Force. It is really unfair." The way she sees it, if her nephew is putting his life on the line for the country, the least the country can do is let his father keep his job. "That is their livelihood," she stresses. Maria is keenly aware that even with this kind of job, it is a struggle to live in this area. "Because you know, here in the Bay Area, our cost of living is very high and yet the wage is not comparable to the cost of living. Rental here for a one bedroom is $1200. And the take home is $1200—and that's take home. That means one of the paychecks is already gone to rental. What about the food, the clothing, the car that you drive. Gas too is another…" When Saint Augustine's became involved in the airport screener struggle, her closeness to the situation made it easy for her to see that something needed to be done. "My brother was one of them that will be laid off and so I attended the meeting."

Parish interest groups. The first of two major parish interest groups is actually located outside of Saint Augustine's. The Bay Area Organizing Committee is a broad based organization that is comprised of a mix of religious, labor and civic institutions. The organization's director, Larry Gordon, says that its goal is to "empower" communities and to fight institutional injustice through other institutions. The Bay Area Organizing Committee's relationship with Saint Augustine's began with the church's expansion and school project. Father Obet says that the BAOC wanted to prioritize creating deeper relationships with the city government officials. The parishioners claim that it was the training of the BAOC that enabled them to make their case against the South San Francisco's Planning Commission. They helped the parish formulate well thought out arguments to present to the City Council and emphasized the importance of mobilizing a large number of people to go to the meeting to show their support. Ultimately, hundreds of parishioners showed up at City Hall and several delegates articulately argued for an expansion of their church and the building of an elementary school. The victory with the city was an emotional one, and some of the parishioners wept remembering their joy and relief in finally getting the city to approve their project. Although the parishioners firmly believed that denying them their right to build a bigger church and a school for their children was unjust, they were very nervous about being able to convince the city. Their success, though they felt it was deserved, was a bit surprising, and therefore empowering. From this experience, the relationship with the BAOC grew and they continued to work on the living wage and the airport screener issues.

The BAOC lends its organizing expertise as well as its ability to mobilize other institutions for common goals. The airport screener rally drew in hundreds of parishioners from Saint Augustine's, but even hundreds more from the other member organizations of the BAOC.

The second crucial parish interest group involved in Saint Augustine's counter-hegemonic projects is the Small Christian Community. The Small Christian Communities that exist at Saint Augustine's are the single most mentioned factor in creating the conditions for counter-hegemonic projects within the parish. Every last interviewee talked about the Small Christian Communities and how they made the mobilization of large numbers of parishioners possible when needed. There are two six-week seasons of the Small Christian Communities per calendar year and Saint Augustine's just completed their sixteenth season. Each season, small groups of six to twelve parishioners gather once a week outside of mass, usually at one of the parishioner's homes. Together they spend an hour and a half praying, reading from the gospel, reflecting, sharing and then coming up with ways to integrate what they have learned into their lives. The "Faith Sharing and Integration" portion of the weekly format calls for the small Christian community to share how the reading and the learning are related to their daily lives and relationships. Afterwards, the "Response in Action," decides how the learning can be put into action and lived out in their lives going forward. This acknowledgment that faith and religion must manifest itself in action is quite different from the notion that it is an opiate to the people, and was critical in mobilizing the parishioners toward political and social justice causes.

When we asked Boy how he was able to help gather more than 200 parishioners in a mobilization of more than one thousand people to support the airport screeners and demand that the city do something to save their jobs, he immediately mentioned the Small Christian Communities. "Westborough Middle School was the venue…and (we) had Willie Brown come out. One the day of the rally for the screeners, Ted and I were appointed coordinators. We had to get everyone from Saint Augustine's to be at this place at this time." Ted explained that they made pulpit announcements, Sunday bulletins and phone calls. But a crucial factor was that "We ha(d) these six coordinators who were supposed to pull from the pool of the Small Christian Community facilitators and from there get the numbers." Boy adds that "The Small Christian Communities of Saint Augustine's were very, very well organized, and a very cohesive force. So even if some of (the people in the Small Christian Communities) admittedly, did not quite understand all the issues, because we said get as many of the Small Christian Community members there and get your families and get your friends and get everybody involved. I think that's one of the reasons that we had quite a good turnout. That's where they focused. I said 'grab the Small Christian Communities. Get them to start mobilizing these people.'"

Not only do the Small Christian Communities facilitate the mobilization of the parishioners when they are needed in large numbers, but they also help foster the sense of community within the church. Lisa, another parishioner who was involved in both the screener and the expansion/school project, says that their sense of "*kapatiran*" or brotherhood is very strong at Saint Augustine's. The Small Christian

Communities are what she calls a "life sharing" and she attributes the closeness of the parish to this process. "Before, you know, people just come to church. Now it's so different. People (are) putting their effort together because of the Small Christian Communities. There is more involvement now. . It's not about *chismis*. One of the rules of that bible sharing group is everything is confidential…it has to remain in that group only. Whatever you discuss that's it. It remains in that group…Because of that we got a whole lot of people involved. Got involved with the screeners. Most of them are from the small Christian community…" The Small Christian Communities seem to create an environment of trust, accountability and closeness amongst parishioners in which they feel they have the responsibility to take action in carrying out their faith. All of the parishioners that were interviewed have a strong conviction, based on their Small Christian Community experience that prayer and action go hand in hand. Lisa says, "Prayer without action doesn't do anything. Because one of the teachings of God is to pray and also to do work, you know, just like Jesus. Because he did not just make miracles, you know in order for him to do things, he has to do some work also." The Small Christian Community readings call for believers to engage in civic action. The Small Christian Community pamphlet that was used this last season was called "The Call to Family, Community and Participation," and its opening paragraph read:

> The human person is not only sacred, but social. We realize our dignity and rights in relationship with others, in community. No community is more central than the family; it needs to be supported, not undermined. It is the basic cell of society, and the state has an obligation to support the family…We also have the right and responsibility to participate in and contribute to the broader communities in society.

The themes of the Small Christian Community readings are very social justice oriented, and at times counter-hegemonic themselves. The themes for the last season were Call to Family, Call to Community, Call to Participation, Catholic Social Teaching in Action, The Call to Family, Community and Participation, and the Obstacle of Racism. These themes help shape the social and political consciousness of the parishioners so that the ideas of "prayer without action," and "faith without justice" are not acceptable for them.

These are just some of the conditions that allowed for the initiation of counter-hegemonic projects to occur at Saint Augustine's. Others that were not as highlighted in the interviews included Filipino values, for example. Some parishioners believed that there were Filipino-specific values that came into play when the parish decided to take a stand on the issues that affected them. The sense of "*bayanihan*" when their Filipino brothers and sisters were being betrayed by the government and their deep sense of family urged them to rise up and protect their brothers and sisters whose families would suffer from the loss of their jobs.

Saint Augustine's is really paving the way for churchgoers to realize their potential in making the world a better place. The parishioners have tasted victory and had a glimpse of what the power of organized people can accomplish. But there is still some untapped potential and much work to do. Sr. Nona and some of the parishioners touched upon some of the injustices that they continue to see everyday. We hope this study will encourage them to continue their work and that it will invite other individuals and organizations to harness their power in seeking social justice and counter-hegemony.

Saint Patrick's Catholic Church, San Francisco, California

Background and compelling issues. Within less than a week after the September 11, 2001 attack on the United States, Filipino community activists along with the leaders of Saint Patrick's Church organized a prayer vigil. It was the first ethnic community in the Bay Area to take a collective stand on progressive issues after the tragedy and it was hosted by Saint Patrick's and strongly endorsed by its Filipino pastor, Monsignor Fred Bitanga. The call was for maintenance of peace, a stop to all the anti Arab and Muslim American violence, and for the United States to take a step back and examine our foreign policy as the possible motivation for these attacks. Many speakers also named US imperialism as the reason for why other nations would want to attack us. The over 100 Filipinos who came to the vigil sang "Imagine," by John Lennon, which was soon thereafter banned from being played on the radio by Clear Channel.

Many new Filipino immigrants, especially from small towns, operate within the mental construct of a Philippine *poblacion* (or town plaza), wherein the church is at the center of the plaza with the various governmental institutions and social gathering places around it. Because Saint Patrick's helps Filipino immigrants adjust to American life by reinforcing Filipino cultural values and behaviors, it continues loyalty towards the parish. In San Francisco's South of Market area, Saint Patrick's is the center of gravity that draws Filipinos back even when they have moved to the suburbs.

Within this Filipino 'plaza' is the Filipino Educational Center, where Filipino youth attend after school programs held in Tagalog. The Mint Mall, which is two blocks away from Saint Patrick's, houses a Filipino bookstore, restaurant, Filipino businesses, and non-profit organizations. Also within two blocks away is Bindlestiff Studios, the epicenter of Filipino performing arts in San Francisco, gives local actors, actresses, poets, spoken word artists, and musicians a place to develop and showcase their craft. Filipino student organizations and Filipino American Studies in the universities and one high school in the Bay Area help students in the a process that Strobel has labeled cultural identity formation. The Church, although it is often overlooked, is a site where some of the most powerful rearticulation and counter-hegemonic struggles take place.

The Church is the one and only place that Filipino immigrants can come to in the Bay Area and feel immediately at home. In a world of unfamiliarity, the Church is familiar, comfortable and empowering. Furthermore, it provides serv-

ices to new immigrants that help them to acculturate. In some Bay Area churches, masses are offered in Tagalog and confessions are heard in several Filipino languages. One of the congregation members of Saint Patrick's church in San Francisco commented on how the church gives her a sense of belonging: "…every time I attend mass I can see that all the altar servers, the priests, the lay ministers, the lectors…and also the music ministry, they are all Filipinos and that makes me proud because the other people who attend the mass who are not Filipinos will see how close we are, how big the community is." Many of the Filipino traditions of celebrating holidays are practiced in Bay Area churches. For example, Saint Patrick's celebrates *Simbang Gabi*, which is a treasured form of celebrating Christmas for Filipinos, a nine-day early morning novena mass. The children of parishioners often sing church songs in *Tagalog* and go to catechism classes where their parents feel that they learn Filipino values such as respect for elders. Filipino congregants feel that the Church is a way to feel like part of the Filipino community.

Saint Patrick's Church builds on the sense of continuity between the Philippines, where the majority are Catholic, and the U.S. Filipino ushers greet new immigrants and seat them among the congregants who are mostly Filipino also. More often than not, the celebrant is a Filipino priest. Aside from the Gothic Revival architecture, the new Filipino immigrant usually feels that one is still in Manila, especially during the monthly Tagalog mass. Icons refer to popular devotions in the Philippines, like those to the Mother of Perpetual Help and the Divine Mercy flanking the high altar. The affection Filipino Catholics feel the Holy Infant Jesus (Santo Niño) is enshrined close to the center of the sanctuary. Lorenzo Ruiz, the first Filipino saint, has also his own shrine. Even the Black Nazareno, an icon of Christ, is revered by many male Filipinos at the Quiapo Church in Manila, has a place.

Many Filipino Catholics are not content to pay their respect to their saints simply through prayer touches, caresses, and bestowing affection as if the saint is a living person, they have worn off the paint on Saint Lorenzo Ruiz's feet and the Sacred Nazareno's right hand. For the Filipino parishioners Saint Patrick's church is one of the few places where they can engage in this active form of devotion without being self-conscious. They can also even pray and confess in their native or through bi-cultural priests. Dual citizenship, i.e., allegiance to both the Philippines and the United States, is an accepted mental state here in this church. Filipinos claim that this definitely eases in their acculturation.

The redevelopment of San Francisco into a cosmopolitan city has caused serious displacement to its Filipino residents and workers who take refuge in pockets of the city with low income housing units. The tearing down of the I-Hotel in what was then a ten block Manila town symbolized a victory for commercial developers but it also galvanized Filipinos and their community allies into political action. Thus, affordable housing became an issue especially for those who at the turn of the 20th century to work as agricultural workers and now gravitate to the city to retire and be with fellow Filipinos. The demolition of the I-Hotel was followed by a suspicious fire which gutted the Delta Hotel, another popular low income residence for Filipinos.

The City of San Francisco's redevelopment of the South of Market also affected not only residential areas but old commercial buildings on 6th Street which included the home of Bindlestiff Studios. Artists and musicians lobbied long and hard at city hall but eventually had to move to a new location. Hitting close to the heart of Filipino spirituality was the Archdiocese of San Francisco's decision to close Saint Joseph's church and the adjoining Catholic school which were predominantly populated with Filipino parishioners and students. Filipino pastor Monsignor Fred Bitanga was transferred to Saint Patrick's Church. The loyal Filipino congregation followed.

The neighborhoods where most of Saint Patrick's parishioners live are some of poorest and depressed areas of San Francisco. The South of Market and Tenderloin are areas where petty crime, drug sales and drug use, homelessness, youth gang violence, vandalism to vehicles and property are all part of daily life. Nevertheless, these areas are popular to new immigrants, especially Filipinos, because of their accessibility to downtown jobs eliminating the cost of commuting, availability of low rent apartments, and close proximity to Filipino shops and services, from groceries, to barber shops, to tailors, and restaurants. But most importantly, the South of Market is where the center of their religious life is located. It is easier to earn and save money in these neighborhoods. However, the social trade-offs to many Filipino families for these economic benefits are increased drug use among teens, school drop out rates, teen pregnancies, youth and senior depression cases, and HIV infection incidences. Additionally, the test scores at the local elementary school are some of the lowest in the county.

The long awaited naturalization of Filipino World War II veterans in the early 1990s brought another wave of new immigrants to the Saint Patrick's care. Because of the long Congressional delay in acting on this matter, most of the veterans who arrived were already in their 60s and 70s, with no medical benefits. Their main source of support was SSI or Social Security Income. They had supplement SSI with odd jobs as bus boys, doormen, security guards, garbage collectors, school janitors, newspaper deliverymen, and handymen at the hotels, businesses, schools, and restaurants in the area.

Leadership structure. Just like all Catholic churches, the leadership structure at Saint Patrick's is hierarchical, with the pastor at the top, moving down to the associate pastors, the deacon, and the parish staff. Two Filipino nuns from the Religious of the Virgin Mary, a religious order established in the Philippines, serve on the parish staff, in charge of the parish's finances and their religious educational program. However, the behavior and actions of leaders and followers exhibit very much a Filipino organizational culture. Monsignor Fred Bitanga, the charismatic pastor, is the ultimate authority within the parish. However, over the years, as demands for his guidance and counsel have increased, he has learned to delegate much of the work down to his trusted and loyal associates and the staff, and there is much leeway

in how they handle affairs. Owing to the demands placed on the pastor (who is probably the most popular person in the Filipino-American community, and not just the parish), he cannot help but have the other Filipino priests shoulder some of the work, especially in dealings with the parish's many organizations.

Lay parish activities are coordinated by the parish council, which meets weekly on Tuesday evenings. The 21 different parish organizations send representatives to the council, with the exception of the four youth groups, which have their separate council. The parish council acts as both a consultative and deliberative body in that it coordinates the parish's social life. Decisions on activities and related issues are then relayed back to the organizations, which usually have the responsibility of implementing them. As for the youth, the youth council becomes the primary parish organization for them, an umbrella entity encompassing the youth choir, the altar servers, and the youth chapter of the Legion of Mary. As a result, the youth organizations frequently share the same members.

In the minds of many of his parishioners, Monsignor Bitanga represents a form of political, economic, and social patron. In the Philippines, patrons usually manifest themselves as prominent citizens (i.e. the mayor, the local lawyer, anyone in a position of power). In the absence of such figures, the monsignor becomes the locus of power, able to influence decisions, to bestow favors, and 'bless' community events but most of all actions. The Monsignor's leadership in the parish and the larger community is seen through the respect that is given for his 'blessings.' His 'blessings' though could be explicit or implicit, social or political, formal or informal, direct or indirect. For instance, the monsignor has given his explicit blessings to the September 11, 2001 activities and sits on the board of directors of the Veterans Equity Center while he has also given more implicit blessings to mass actions for the I-Hotel and Bindlestiff studios, to more social services for families, and to the fight for low income housing. He tries his best to be at all social and political events but as mentioned earlier, if he is not able to, he usually sends some of his loyal associate pastors or lay assistants. Even when he is not there, as long as people know that the monsignor is their supporter or that he has an awareness of the issue, then they feel 'blessed' just as in the airport baggage screener displacement issue. Thus, he never in front of counter-hegemonic exercises like marching to City Hall and rallying on Market Street but it does not mean that he is not supporting them or that he has not informed his parishioners of these events. Community leaders engage in mass actions to address the burning issues discussed earlier knowing that they have the monsignor's blessings.

Parishioners come up to the monsignor with a request for help for almost anything. Most of the time, it's with some spiritual matter; but there are times when an individual would ask for his assistance in regards to everyday matter—affairs with institutions outside the Church, such as housing matters or legal immigration status. The monsignor intimated to us in an interview that he is not very comfortable with this kind of solicitation but he is obliged to help however he can. This is how they have been trained in the Philippines and this is what is expected of them by parishioners. Most of the time, he refers such requests to government and non-governmental agencies who are better equipped to help, e.g., Catholic Charities, Westbay, SOMA Teen Center, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services, Board of Supervisor's Office. People view the monsignor as a benefactor, and they are willing to follow him as long as he is able to dispense favors. The persons he helps are also able to 'name drop' him and get 'better' access to services especially from Filipino agencies. In a way, Monsignor Bitanga is able to create a more subtle but effective form of counter-hegemony.

Socio-economics of the congregation. The primary ethnicity in Saint Patrick's is at present Filipino. It used to be predominantly Irish until about the 1970s, but with the demographic shift in the surrounding neighborhoods came the change in the congregation's make-up, along with the parish's merger with Saint Joseph's. Percentages are hard to come by, as the pastor noted that Filipino parishioners are notorious for not registering as such. Hence, the term "parishioners" will be used loosely; "parish regulars" would probably be a more accurate description. In terms of age, the congregation is fairly old. A good part of individuals who take part in daily parish activities are within the 50 to 70-age bracket. There is a significant youth movement within the parish (consisting mainly of families), but the older members form the bulk of the parish. Women seem to dominate the congregation; in many of the parish events observed, women frequently outnumber men three to one.

Single-family homes are rare in the South of Market and Tenderloin areas, these neighborhoods are dominated by apartment buildings and single resident occupancy (SRO) hotels. The congregation reflects the neighborhoods' socioeconomic status, with many of the older congregants living in low-cost housing provided by the parish and the community, such as the Alexis House and the San Lorenzo Ruiz Center. There are many exceptions though, as there are parishioners that come from communities outside San Francisco. Employment varies from parishioner to parishioner and follows age patterns; the older parishioners are either retired or unemployed, while the younger parishioners have steady employment, either part-time or full-time. There are parishioners with professional jobs, though not in management—many work close by as office workers in the Financial District or in retail establishments close to the church in the Union Square area. Many of the older parishioners, especially males, immigrated to the United States to press for veterans' benefits they feel were denied to them by the United States government despite their service during the Second World War.

Generally speaking, the younger generation seems to be more affluent than the older parishioners. Given the different waves of Filipino migration, the younger parishioners are usually the "brain drain" generation and their children. As for the veterans and their spouses, they could be classified as an extension of the original itinerant Filipino field workers of the 1910s to the 1940s, though the veterans came much later.

In terms of their present socioeconomic situation and their location, the veterans have much more in common with the field workers than their "brain drain" contemporaries. Encounters between the older and younger generations of parishioners resemble their counterparts in the Philippines. The older generation has the run of the parish while the younger members have mostly a secondary role. While youth members participate in liturgy (such as the altar servers and the young adult choir), adult members regularly perform the duties of ushers, lectors, and Eucharistic ministers. The average household income though is still much lower than other Catholic parishes.

A good indication of the relative status of older and younger parishioners is the parish organizations. Of the twenty-five different parish organizations, only four are geared towards the younger parishioners. However, the presence of independent youth organizations is significant in that it addresses the question of legacy. Given the advanced age of many of the parishioners, the youth represent the future lay leaders of the parish, and their involvement in parish activities seems like a preparation for this future assumption of leadership roles. There are connections between the older groups and the younger groups—the younger members of the adult organizations serve as informal mentors to the youth parishioners, often identifying each other as fictive kin: the mentors act more as older siblings to the youth instead of a more formal relationship.

Generational dynamics also exist among adult parishioners, with younger adults showing deference to older adults. Though most call each other either "Brother" or "Sister", there are times when persons are addressed as either "*Kuya* (older brother)" or "*Ate* (older sister)", usually in more informal settings. This is another example of the prevalence of fictive kin relationships that are brought over from the Philippines, much like the relationship between the youth parishioners and their mentors. The regionalism that usually characterizes Filipino settings seems much more muted in the parish environment. It can be attributed to the homogenizing effects of religious faith—that is, having something as significant as faith diminishes the effects of other differentiating factors, such as regional origins. That, and the need for ethnic solidarity in a foreign country can also be a determining factor. Saint Patrick's now becomes a center for the creation of a new Filipino identity rooted in the American experience, and the old regionalisms of the past are now used mostly as material for jokes.

Politically speaking, the parishioners of Saint Patrick's live in two worlds. Not only are domestic politics and issues of importance, but what goes on in the Philippines is also followed with interest. The easy availability of both Filipino-language and Filipino-oriented media, as well as the frequent arrival of visiting priests from the Philippines help keep the parish informed of social and political developments in the home country.

Parishioners get informed on political issues inside the church through sermons by the priests or outside the church. Filipino establishments in their SOMA 'town plaza' frequently feature racks where one can get free Filipino newspapers, and newsstands—especially around Downtown and SoMa—sell Filipino newspapers and magazines if the operator is Filipino. The Filipino Channel (TFC) is a cable channel operated by the Philippines-based media company ABS-CBN, and it is readily available on cable networks in Daly City and other areas with a significant Filipino population. For people without access to cable television, two local channels (KTSF and KMTP) have Filipino-language programming.

In terms of activism and engaging in counter-hegemonic activities, some chose to be more sacrificial than other in terms of joining their fellow parishioners on the street protests. Many chose to sympathize through prayers and financial contributions, as in the case of the Filipino airport worker's displacement, some of whom were Saint Patrick worshippers. Their strong Catholic faith helps determine their stance on morality, but they are conscious of where they stand in America. Parishioners seem to reflect a majority of Filipino immigrant families—a mix of social conservatism (usually around the areas of personal and sexual issues) and political progressiveness. Many of the parishioners are conscious of the Filipino veterans' struggle for equity and the poverty that oftentimes surrounds them, and they are also conscious of how far down in the political ladder Filipino Americans are. Like many other Filipino Americans, parishioners in Saint Patrick's view the American dream as more than just personal prosperity but also as political and social validation—which is why the election of a Filipino as mayor of Daly City in November 2001 was of major importance among the local Filipino American community.

Parish interest groups. Church leaders believe that their primary concern is in the spiritual welfare of its parishioners. Hence, their counter-hegemonic engagement is in the form of parish-CBO (community-based organization) partnerships. Apart from daily masses and other religious rituals, plus other devotional activities, the parish sponsors religious education programs for the parish's children that attend public school and Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) programs for new converts to Catholicism or adult candidates for confirmation. In relation to the parish's liturgical functions, the church also has three different choirs (adult, youth, and the Latin choir that sings at the weekly Latin mass), an organization for the lay ministers (ushers, lectors, and Eucharistic ministers), and another organization for the youth altar servers, both for altar boys and altar girls.

And of course, there are the parish organizations. As mentioned before, coordinating the social activities between these organizations (all in all, twenty-five) is the Parish Council. Apart from the eight chapters of the Legion of Mary, the other organizations deal with liturgical functions (as described above), are related to a particular order or devotion (Charismatic Prayer Group, Divine Mercy, Holy Name Society, Lay Carmelite, Sacred Heart Devotion, Saint Vincent de Paul Society), or a particular saint (Confraternity of Saint Joseph, Mother Ignacia del Espiritu Santo, Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary), and the youth parish council.

Historically, many of the social activities for these organi-

zations—such as parties and meetings—have been held in the main parish hall. However, with the recent renovation of the church, social activities were scaled back and the larger ones either cancelled or held outside the church. Some activities—such as the block rosaries popular among the Marian organizations, a devotion where an image of the Virgin is passed among the members' homes for a certain period and rosaries are said during the intervals—still occurred outside the church, but for organizations that were more dependent on the parish's facilities, this proved to be a damper. It is only within the past two years that the social life that revolved around Saint Patrick's precincts began to revive. Before and after the formal meetings and prayer sessions, and during informal parties and functions are times to discuss community issues.

To address the issues mentioned above, many of Saint Patrick's church leaders (including Monsignor Bitanga) and parishioners are actively involved in neighborhood-based organizations like West Bay Filipino Multi-service Center, South of Market Teen Center, the South of Market Health Center, the South of Market Job Training Center, Arkipelago Bookstore, Filipinas Restaurant, and the Filipino Veteran's Equity Center. Many are board members, organizers, staff members, volunteers, financial contributors, and proprietors. Saint Patrick's, as a Filipino institution, has close linkages with these civil society groups. Further, these community-based organizations and the Saint Patrick's often play the role of mutual advocate for Filipinos. They have successfully lobbied the U.S. Congress to provide recognition to Filipino World War II veterans by grants of American citizenship. These organizations have also leveraged funds from the City and County of San Francisco for Filipino youth and their families. They have lobbied for resolutions to be passed by the San Francisco Immigrant Rights Commission and the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. They have also lobbied for the successful appointment of qualified Filipinos (some who are Saint Patrick's parishioners) to city, county, and state-level commissions, boards, and other government posts. Saint Patrick's leaders and members have also supported letters and petitions brought to them by these community-based groups addressed to San Francisco mayors, California governors, California congressional delegations, and even U.S. Presidents. Counter-hegemony at Saint Patrick's is reflected in the symbiotic relationship between the church and these civil society organizations: the church helps new arrivals maintain an important socio-spiritual connection to the Philippines while the neighborhood organizations help them make a successful start in their new home in the U.S.

Summary and Conclusions

Based on our extensive archival and ethnographic researches, we have attempted to provide conceptual, historical, and empirical evidences to the emergence of counter-hegemonic activities within the Filipino-American religious experience in San Francisco.

Conceptually and historically, Marx, Weber, Friere, and Gramsci provided us with a good philosophical framework to examine counter-hegemony through the church. However, Ileto introduced us to a more culturally adapted analytical lens by pointing out that Filipino counter-hegemony against their Spanish and American colonizers was inspired by the sub-texts of religious teachings used for hegemonic means. We extended Ileto's assertion further by arguing that given the proper conditions, i.e., compelling issues, leadership structure, socio-economics of the congregation, and parish interest groups, that Philippine church-inspired counter-hegemony could be transferred and utilized effectively by Filipino immigrants to engage hegemonic structures in American society. Ironically, Filipino immigrant counter-hegemonic activities versus the American church and state were inspired by the same Spanish and American Catholic and Protestant teachings. They started with indigenous Masonic lodges, then into Catholic and Protestant Churches, the diaspora in the 60s and 70s also brought many pastors and congregations into independent Filipino churches like the Iglesia ni Cristo and the Aglipayan Church. Many 'American' spaces and congregations were Filipinized with the decline in traditional church memberships. For instance, the all-American Lutheran church in Pacifica, California was taken over by the predominantly Filipino Seventh Day Adventist congregation in the early 1970s.

Our participant observation at two San Francisco Bay Area Catholic churches allowed us to study this socio-political phenomenon in more depth and found these conditions to be critical to counter-hegemony: Firstly, counter-hegemony begins with compelling national and local political issues. These problems are close to the hearts and minds of the immigrant congregation and also their larger ethnic community. Some of their members might be directly affected, like in the displacement of the Filipino airport screeners at the San Francisco Airport due to a new law and the fight for Filipino World War II veteran's benefits. However, these two national issues being discussed in Washington, DC were also concerns that the larger Filipino community in California were concerned with. Apparently, both Saint Augustine's and Saint Patrick's congregations had a plethora of internal but most of all external concerns that drew them outside the confines of their churches. Additionally, the political environment of tolerance, radicalism, and acceptance in progressive San Francisco is more conducive and open to counter-hegemony than most cities in the United States.

Secondly, charismatic religious and layperson leadership are critical to identifying and acting on the compelling issues. They must be comfortable at bringing out and using the many years of political organizing they were exposed to in the Philippines. The form of leadership could be an explicit, hands on style as in the Saint Augustine case or an implicit, leadership by 'blessing' approach as seen in the Saint Patrick's case. Church leaders could be in front of a march protesting injustices to member of the community or simply sending 'signals of consent' from behind the altar during the homily in a mass. Thirdly, the socio-economic background of the congregation is also a critical element to effective counter-hegemony. However, their current class standing (whether

middle or lower class) and what region they came from in the Philippines are less important to hegemonic activities than their Filipino political socialization and willingness to combine spiritual energy and mass action to address congregational and community issues. Saint Augustine's and Saint Patrick's churches are both pre-dominantly Filipino and led by Filipino pastors. But the class backgrounds of both church varied. A majority Saint Augustine's parishioners were relatively more affluent and established than Saint Patrick's. Finally, parish interest groups are key determinants of successful mass action and linking with community groups. The Saint Augustine's case illustrated the significance of engaged parish interest groups like the Small Christian Community and the Bay Area Organizing Committee while the Saint Patrick's case showed the effectives of parish-CBO partnerships and alliances towards successful counter-hegemony. Parish interest groups are important for winning small battles in city hall and commission hearings as well as big wars at the US Congress for veterans' benefits. They are also the key to continuing struggles against chronic health and other social problems like HIV infection, drug addiction, homelessness, among other social problems.

There are a number of challenges or 'what ifs' to sustaining these many vital lessons. Firstly, there seems to be an abundant supply of compelling issues—internal or external threats—especially among immigrant communities. However, what if they reach a point where there are concerns but they are no longer 'compelling', for instance, if issues became simply more administrative in nature, i.e., balancing the annual budget. What if the community feels that these issues are not worth fighting for? Will counter-hegemonic energy subside? Will low demand for political action eventually lead to political apathy? Secondly, leaders come and go. What if the current charismatic and politicized leader is transferred or replaced by the Archdiocese? There are lots of churches that have large Filipino congregations but not too many Filipino priests with the counter-hegemonic drive to minister and harness their socio-political capital. Thirdly, what if the Filipino immigrant congregation, rich or poor, decides to be apathetic and submissive to the larger societal hegemony? Then, the war of position ends. Lastly, which relates to the previous point, what if the parish interest groups chose to focus on traditional Filipino devotions, venerations, and prayer groups? What if community groups refuse to partner with the parish church? What if the Archdiocese decides to regulate the counter-hegemonic activities of whatever degree just as it discouraged some Filipino socio-religious practices, like holding masses outside of the church? Overcoming these barriers is the key not just to sustaining the gains from counter-hegemony but also replicating and spreading the positive lessons across Filipino churches and for the empowerment of other immigrant communities.

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