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Colonial Consumption and Colonial Hierarchies in Representations of Philippine and Puerto Rican Tourism

Faye C. Caronan

*This article compares colonial representations of the Philippines and Puerto Rico from an 1899 travelogue entitled **Our Islands and Their People**, commissioned by the U.S. military, with representations of these islands made by today's Lonely Planet travel guides. The similarities between the 1899 representations and today's suggest the comparable aims of colonialism and tourism: to encourage the consumption of these islands by foreigners. The article goes on to explore how two novels, Jessica Hagedorn's **Dogeaters** and Esmeralda Santiago's **América's Dream**, represent Philippine and Puerto Rican local perspectives of tourists to challenge the colonial/tourist representations.*

KEYWORDS: U.S. colonialism, neocolonialism, tourism, Philippines, Puerto Rico

Tourism is promoted today as an industry that can turn poor countries' very poverty into a magnet for sorely needed foreign currency. For to be a poor society in the late twentieth century is to be "unspoilt." Tourism is being touted as an alternative to the one-commodity dependency inherited from colonial rule. Foreign sun-seekers replace bananas. Hiltons replace sugar mills. (Enloe 1989)

In her July 2004 inaugural address, Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo promised to create ten million jobs in the Philippines by the year 2010. Macapagal-Arroyo's administration plans to meet this ambitious goal in part by investing in and developing the

country's tourist industry. The Philippine Department of Tourism Secretary, Roberto M. Pagdanganan, believes that "[o]ne international tourist creates one job" and hopes to create five million jobs by 2010 by attracting an additional five million international tourists to the Philippines (Quimpo-Espino 2004).

In 2003, the Puerto Rican Tourism Company launched an extensive media campaign in the U.S. and Spain to advertise the continuing development of the tourist facilities in Puerto Rico and package Puerto Rico as more than just a beach escape (*PR Newswire* 2003, *Latin American News Digest* 2004). As of 2003, an investment of US\$560 million in twenty-one new hotel developments resulted in the creation of 2,782 construction jobs and 2,572 permanent hotel jobs. Scheduled to open in late 2005 is the Puerto Rico Convention Center in San Juan, which is expected to become the Caribbean's top meeting facility (*PR Newswire* 2003).

The tourist industry represents only a small but significant fraction of the Philippines' and Puerto Rico's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), 7.4 percent and 5.3 percent, respectively, in 2004 (World Travel and Tourism Council 2004). However, their commitment to investing in and developing their international tourist industries illustrates the importance both the Philippines and Puerto Rico place on tourism for their economic development. As a former U.S. colony and a current U.S. commonwealth, the development of the Philippine and Puerto Rican tourist industries can be understood as postcolonial strategies for fostering economic growth after centuries of economic subordination to colonial powers. Today, external debt amounts to 78.7 percent of the Philippines' GDP, and the Philippines exports labor internationally because there are not enough jobs for Filipinos in the Philippines (Respicio 2005). Since the implementation of Operation Bootstrap in 1948, the Puerto Rican economy has become increasingly integrated into the U.S. economy, and the lack of employment opportunities in Puerto Rico has also resulted in the export of Puerto Rican labor to the continental U.S., mainly in New York City (Benson-Arias 1997).

Social anthropologist David Harrison (1992) argues that the development of tourism does not lead to postcolonial economic growth and development, because, as postcolonial countries become increasingly

dependent on international tourism economically, tourism becomes a form of postcolonial hegemony similar to colonialism. This article investigates tourism as a site that reveals the continuities between colonial and postcolonial inequalities in the Philippines and Puerto Rico through an analysis of colonial texts, travel guides, and novels that represent tourism. I begin with a section illustrating how the Philippines and Puerto Rico are linked through a history of Spanish and U.S. colonialism. I move on to analyze how representations of Puerto Rico and the Philippines in modern *Lonely Planet* guidebooks are similar to those in an 1899 colonial travelogue, *Our Islands and their People as seen with Camera and Pencil*. These similarities not only reveal how current travel guides erase U.S. colonialism but also emphasize that foreign consumption is at the core of both colonialism and tourism. I follow this analysis with a discussion of how Jessica Hagedorn's *Dogeaters* (1990), a Filipino-American novel, and Esmeralda Santiago's *América's Dream* (1996), a U.S.-Puerto Rican novel, bring to fore the colonial inequities that international tourism reproduce, and thus critique the consumerist representations of the islands offered by past colonial and modern tourist texts.

A Shared Colonial Legacy

Spain acquired imperial control of the Philippines and Puerto Rico in the sixteenth century. Spanish control of the Philippines began in 1565 and continued until 1898, the year the Spanish-American war ended and the Philippines became part of the U.S. empire (Goodno 1991). According to the Treaty of Paris, Spain ceded control of Puerto Rico to the U.S. and ceded the Philippines to the U.S. for US\$20 million. Filipinos and Puerto Ricans responded differently to U.S. colonial rule. Resistance in the Philippines led to the Philippine-American War. There was no similar widespread resistance to U.S. colonial rule in Puerto Rico.

The U.S. war department established military governments in both the Philippines and Puerto Rico. Then-secretary of war, Elihu Root planned to tutor the colonized populations through participation in U.S.-style political institutions (Go 2000). Despite similar intentions for

these islands at the beginning of U.S. colonial rule, Puerto Rico and the Philippines were soon on different historical trajectories. The 1916 Jones Act made Filipinos wards of the U.S. and specified independence for the Philippines, when deemed politically fit. The 1917 Jones-Shafroth Act granted U.S. citizenship to Puerto Ricans, insinuating a permanent colonial relationship between the U.S. and Puerto Rico. In 1934, the Tydings-McDuffie Act declared the Philippines ready for a limited form of self-government as a commonwealth.

In 1946 the U.S. granted the Philippines full independence, and in 1952 gave Puerto Rico limited sovereignty as a U.S. commonwealth. However, U.S. neocolonial hegemony continues to undermine Philippine and Puerto Rican sovereignty. Just one year after granting the Philippines its independence, the U.S. secured their military interests in the Philippines with the U.S.-Philippines Military Bases Agreement, allowing the U.S. to station 15,000 troops at various locations, including Clark and Subic Naval bases. U.S. military presence remained until 1991, when the agreement expired. However, the U.S. continues to be the largest foreign investor in the Philippines to fight communist uprisings and to protect private U.S. investment and trade interests (Goodno 1991). In 2003 the U.S. military returned to the Philippines to conduct joint military exercises with the Philippine military against the Abu Sayyaf in the southern Philippines as part of the American war on terror.

As a commonwealth, Puerto Rico remains politically subordinate to the U.S. Despite its own elected governor and legislature, Puerto Rico's sovereignty is undermined because all Puerto Rican laws are subject to approval by the U.S. Congress. Puerto Rico has one nonvoting representative in the U.S. Congress. Until 2004 there was substantial U.S. military presence in Puerto Rico: the U.S. Roosevelt Roads naval base on the main island, and the base on the island of Vieques. Local Vieques residents protested U.S. military bomb testing on the island for years before the U.S. finally agreed to close the base. In 2003 the Vieques base closed, and in 2004 the Roosevelt Roads base closed. However, the land belonging to the U.S. military in Vieques was not made available to local residents. Instead, it now belongs to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (*BBC News Online* 2003).

Touring the Empire

In her examination of U.S. films about the Middle East, Melani McAlister (2001) argues that cultural productions provide a site where the U.S. populace can encounter the other without physical contact. These cultural encounters are mediated by U.S. filmmakers and at times produce knowledge about other people and places that are consonant with state interests. Similarly, travel guides explicitly produce knowledge about foreign places and people for those who have yet to physically encounter them. The goal of these travel guides is seemingly benign: to inform potential tourists of what to expect when they travel. However, these guides construct “objective” information about places and people from particular privileged vantage points. For instance, *Our Islands and Their People* is a two-volume travelogue of the empire of islands newly acquired by the United States in the Pacific and Caribbean, created from images taken by photographers commissioned by the U.S. military (de Olivares 1899). Thus, representations of Filipinos and Puerto Ricans in *Our Islands* supported U.S. military interests by introducing U.S. citizens to the new overseas empire and touting the potential profits of these islands. *Lonely Planet* travel guides are not explicitly linked to U.S. foreign interests. However, like *Our Islands*, these guidebooks represent positions of economic privilege. *Lonely Planet* offices are located in the U.K., the U.S., France, and Australia, all developed countries. The authors of *Lonely Planet: Philippines* and *Lonely Planet: Puerto Rico* are also from developed countries, a majority from the United States. These representations are mediated through the perspectives of individuals based in countries that are imperial powers.

Given these circumstances, the similar representations of Filipinos and Puerto Ricans in *Our Islands* and the Philippines and Puerto Rico *Lonely Planet* guidebooks are not surprising. The similarities between the packaging of Puerto Rico and the Philippines to convince U.S. citizens that these islands should be U.S. colonies, and the packaging of these islands for foreign tourists, illustrate how colonialism and tourism both encourage the consumption of these islands. The similar representations in *Lonely Planet* and *Our Islands* also suggest that little has changed in the

Philippines and Puerto Rico in the past century, erasing the enduring consequences of U.S. colonialism.

The introduction to *Our Islands* indicates travel as a key objective: "The object of this book, therefore is to present as perfect and complete a view of the late Spanish Islands and their people as the *tourist, traveler or pleasure seeker* could obtain by visiting them in person" (ibid., 5, emphasis added). This travelogue clearly links travel to colonialism, by encouraging travel to the islands and also itemizing the benefits for the U.S. of maintaining an island empire. Discussion for each territory contained a recipe for successful exploitation of the land to illustrate the benefits of occupation, describing the climate and what crops would be successful there, indicating inexpensive, available land, and even including methods for cultivating crops.

Our Islands and *Lonely Planet: Philippines* represent the Philippines as an unexplored frontier. *Our Islands* makes an explicit pitch toward U.S. entrepreneurs, stating that

In a commercial sense, [the Philippine islands] are probably worth more than any other region of the same size in the world. In spite of the average density of the population, which is three times greater than that of the U.S., there are vast districts of wild lands, wholly unoccupied and nominally owned. (Ibid., 691).

Likewise, *Lonely Planet* represents the Philippines as an exotic paradise that is for the most part untouched. This guide reproduces the rhetoric of Westward expansion:

The best thing about traveling in the Philippines is the sense that there are still discoveries to be made, sometimes just around the corner. With so many islands and so few visitors (at least in comparison to some other Southeast Asian nations), the Philippines is one of the last great frontiers in Asian travel. For those willing to adapt to the challenges of travel here, there are plenty of rewards. (Rowthorn et al. 2003, 11)

Adventurous travelers are urged to challenge themselves by discovering for themselves the "last great frontier." As in colonial times, uninhabited

parts of the Philippines still wait to be discovered. *Loneley Planet* praises the beauty of the Philippines' natural landscapes: "extraordinary rice terraces, tropical rainforests, underground rivers, soaring limestone towers, uninhabited 'Robinson Crusoe' islands, and cascading waterfalls. And that's just above the ocean surface!" (ibid.). Emphasizing Philippine cultural diversity, the guide states that the islands are home to "hundreds of ancient cultures and one very modern one" (ibid.). Such a statement suggests that these "ancient cultures" are not affected by the one "modern" culture, thus dismissing the effects of colonialism on local culture.

Representations of the Filipino people in these texts are not similarly enthusiastic. In *Our Islands*, the U.S. military shows its perception of Filipinos as a primitive, savage people. Comparing Filipinos to Africans, the book concludes that "[f]or all the practical purposes of civilization, the mirthful, easy going African is superior to these treacherous and blood-thirsty hybrid Malays. They have been pirates from the earliest eras and the vengeful disposition is written indelibly on their sullen faces" (de Olivares 1899, 559). The fact that Filipinos resisted U.S. colonization could only have reinforced the U.S. military's characterization of Filipinos as violent. *Loneley Planet* speaks well of the Filipino people, but does so tentatively. The guide reassures the tourist by stating that "there is no reason to be overly nervous about visiting the Philippines, most Filipinos are honest folks who will go out of their way to help a traveler" (Rowthorn et al 2003, 62). Qualifying their endorsement of Filipinos with the word "most" accounts for what the guide categorizes as "dangers and annoyances": political instability in the Muslim south and the impoverished rural areas. Under annoyances, the guide describes "the prostitution scene as quite disturbing, particularly if you are unlucky enough to see evidence of the Philippines' bustling child prostitution industry (in places like Angeles)" (ibid.). Another annoyance they describe is gender specific: "Filipino men are unfailing in their efforts to charm women, especially foreign women" (ibid., 61). These excerpts ignore how U.S. colonialism contributed to a particular sexual economy in the Philippines. Angeles is located where the U.S. Clark military base once stood. The guide's description of how Filipino men attempt to woo foreign women ignores the fact that many Filipino women also

attempt to woo foreign men in order to leave the Philippines. Mail-order bride industries take advantage of such women. There are separate travel guides and group tours designed to help the Western man find the Filipina of his dreams.¹ Thus, the picture of the Filipino man wooing the Western woman and the prostitution industry must be understood within colonial understandings of race and sexuality.

Our Islands and *Lonely Planet: Puerto Rico* also employ the rhetoric of Westward expansion. The former emphasizes empty, fertile lands to encourage the entrepreneur to invest labor and capital in Puerto Rico: "In every one of the principal islands there are vast tracts of unoccupied lands as fertile as the sun ever shone upon, and these may be purchased, now before the general era of improvement sets in, for a mere song in comparison to their real value" (de Olivares 1899, 285). The latter encourages tourists to travel beyond the cities by promising that those "who venture into the island's mountainous interior or explore its undeveloped southern and western coasts are coming across stately hill towns where the locals in the plaza seem to have been feeding the same pigeons for decades" (Peffer 2000, 148). This text constructs Puerto Rico as still undeveloped, but now markets the untouched lands for U.S. tourists, not U.S. entrepreneurs. The author constructs the locals as anachronistic, quaint people more suited for tourist consumption than their own economic production.

Our Islands and *Lonely Planet* both represent Puerto Rico as a place of racial harmony. *Our Islands* states that there is "a population of over 800,000, there are 70,000 negroes and 250,000 mulattoes. These conditions within themselves show the absence of all prejudices on account of color. But the African race is declining, and will eventually either disappear or be amalgamated with the white race" (de Olivares 1899, 287). It assumes that the existence of a sizeable mulatto population translates to the absence of racism. However, it also assures the U.S. reader that the black population will vanish or be incorporated into the white population, minimizing the possibility of future race trouble the U.S. might encounter there. *Lonely Planet* tells the reader there are "strong and recognizable vestiges of Amerindian ancestors, Spanish *conquistadores* and West African slaves, as well as the political and economic

influence of the USA" (Peffer 2000, 9). Both travelogue and travel guide construct Puerto Rico as a place of cultural and physical mixing. However, *Lonely Planet* does not include the U.S. as part of this cultural mix. In this manner, it reassures tourists that they can have the conveniences of home and still experience the exotic other.

Both the Philippine and Puerto Rican travel guides are a particularly fruitful site for investigating the contradictions of neocolonialism because they market the Philippines and Puerto Rico as exotic and culturally authentic, but simultaneously convenient, for the Western tourist. On the one hand, as illustrated in my previous analyses, the effects of U.S. colonial rule on culture must be minimized in order to emphasize that these islands can offer a culturally exotic experience. On the other hand, the conveniences that the Philippines and Puerto Rico offer emphasize the legacy of U.S. colonialism. The prevalence of English speakers in the Philippines that is due to the influence of U.S. colonial education makes travel convenient for the Western tourist. In describing what items are necessary for the tourist to bring to Puerto Rico, *Lonely Planet* advises, "Not much, really. One of the great joys of Puerto Rico's tropical climate and status as a U.S. commonwealth—as well as its position as the economic center of the Caribbean—is that travelers do not need to lug in a lot of clothes, gear, supplies, medicines, favorite foods[,] etc." (ibid, 54). The U.S. tourist does not need a passport or visa, can drive around Puerto Rico with his driver's license, and can even avoid the hassle of currency conversion. Emphasizing the conveniences created by U.S. colonial rule further erases the negative consequences of U.S. colonialism on these islands.

This comparison illustrates the continuity of representations of the Philippines and Puerto Rico at the moment of U.S. contact and today. Both representations encourage the consumption of these islands and reduce U.S. colonial and neocolonial influence to conveniences that do not affect authentic, exotic cultures of these islands. These enduring representations are challenged in Hagedorn's *Dogeaters* and Santiago's *América's Dream*. Travelogues and travel guides do not include a local voice, emphasizing only what the locale offers. In contrast, these novels privilege the local perspective in order to illustrate the power inequalities that colonialism and tourism create in the former colonies.

Tourism's Reproduction of Colonial Inequalities

Cultural productions do not always take the perspective of power. Culture also opens up a space for resistance to hegemonic representations of peoples and places. Such narratives of resistance emerge in fiction created by minority writers in the U.S. Hagedorn's *Dog eaters* and Santiago's *América's Dream* foreground the colonial inequalities that international tourism reproduces. Both novelists were born in their respective homelands at a time when the Philippines gained independence and Puerto Rico became a U.S. commonwealth. Both immigrated during the U.S. Civil Rights movement in the 1970s. These enabled Hagedorn and Santiago to critique both the neocolonial present and the transition from colonialism to neocolonialism in their respective homelands. *Dog eaters* and *América's Dream* both represent the lives of tourist industry laborers. In the former, set in Manila toward the end of martial law, Joey Sands is a mestizo whose father is an African-American serviceman and whose mother is a Filipino prostitute. Joey's livelihood likewise depends on prostitution to wealthy, male international tourists. In the latter, the main character, América works as a hotel maid on the island of Vieques. She juggles with the pressures of a runaway daughter, an alcoholic mother, and an abusive, possessive boyfriend.

Representations of the tourist industry center on prostitution in *Dog eaters* and on the hotel industry in *América's Dream*. Accordingly, my analysis of these two novels explores Hagedorn's use of sexual tourism and Santiago's figure of the hotel. These representations emphasize the privileged position of tourists and the subservient position of locals, similar to the former colonial hierarchy of colonizer in a privileged position over colonized. As Mary Louise Pratt (1992, 53) observes in *Imperial Eyes*, this hierarchy produces stereotypes of "the rough and humble peasant gladly sharing his subsistence with the enlightened man of the metropolis whose essential superiority is accepted." Both novels represent tourists' expectations of the Philippines and Puerto Rico, and illustrate how the local willingness to meet tourist expectations reinforces these stereotypes and reproduces colonial inequalities.

Santiago (1997, 1) calls the reader's attention to the figure of the hotel at the very beginning of her book. She paints the image of

América, the novel's main character, "[o]n her knees, scrubbing a toilet at the only hotel on the island." América's employment at a hotel illustrates that she works in service to tourists, and seeing her clean toilets underscores her position. The hotel is located on the island of Vieques, then home to a U.S. naval base. The base served as a weapons-storage facility and a site for bombing exercises (Dreifus 2000). Locating the first half of the novel in Vieques, itself a flashpoint of U.S. colonial rule, suggests a connection between América's subservience and U.S. colonialism. Revolving the main character's life around a hotel reflects the dominance of the hotel industry in recent Puerto Rican economic development. The Puerto Rican Tourism Development Act of 1993 declared that in the island of Puerto Rico 90 percent of tourism income is tax exempt, and tourism income is completely tax exempt on Vieques and Culebra. Capitalizing on these tax exemptions, Ritz-Carlton, Wyndham, Marriot, Embassy Suites, and Hampton Inn built luxury hotels in Puerto Rico to attract wealthy tourists. As a result, the number of hotel rooms in Puerto Rico doubled in five years (*Institutional Investor* 1998). The explosive growth of the hotel industry increases the probability that a Puerto Rican local's livelihood will come to depend on a hotel. These hotels, symbols of privilege and wealth, become important interfaces between the poor locals and privileged tourists.

Meanwhile, Hagedorn focuses on sexual tourism in the Philippines under martial law. The representation of sexual tourism in *Dogeaters* functions as a critique of Pres. Ferdinand Marcos' political use of tourism to legitimate his imposition of martial law, which facilitated U.S. neocolonial influence in the Philippines. In fact, the U.S. government was made aware of Marcos's plans to implement martial law five days prior to its imposition. During Marcos's rule, the Philippines was marketed in any way necessary to attract foreign tourists, no matter how detrimental to the local population. While under the direction of Jose Aspiras, the Department of Tourism promised tourists "a tanned peach on every beach." This explicitly sexualized marketing led to an increase in sex tourism and pedophilia tours (Richter 1999). Hagedorn represents the exploitation of Philippine sexual tourist workers in a scene that illustrates the ease with which a tourist can obtain sex-related services. Neil Sedaka, an American military serviceman, asks Joey Sands, with whom

he is engaged in a short-term sexual relationship, if he can get a sex show as a favor for a friend. To this Joey replies, "You want boys, girls, or both? Maybe you want children?" (Hagedorn 1990, 73). Tourists in the novel come to expect a varied sexual menu. Hagedorn represents Filipinos as having no qualms providing one, even if it involves children. Hagedorn's choice to name the American serviceman after Neil Sedaka, an internationally acclaimed musician, suggests that Americans can all afford celebrity status in the Philippines. Sexual transactions, much as hotels in *América's Dream*, portray tourists' privilege to pay any price to obtain any desired pleasure. Given the low wages that jobs in other industries offer, the economic benefits of pleasuring tourists constrain locals to economic choices made available by U.S. colonialism, like prostitution.

The privilege these tourists enjoy depends on the host country's ability to fulfill their needs and desires. Catering to these needs and desires creates employment opportunities for locals but these are labor intensive, menial jobs (Harrison 1992). Hotels offer positions for waiters, bellhops, and chambermaids. Sexual tourism creates jobs for prostitutes and pimps. These employment opportunities are similar to those offered to native populations in a colonial context, reflecting how tourism forces native populations to remain in positions of servitude (ibid.).

Both novels use tourism to explicitly link colonial and neocolonial inequalities in Puerto Rico and the Philippines. This link is made in *América's Dream* through the figure of La Casa del Francés, the hotel where América has worked "since [Don Irving] bought the decaying plantation house and converted it into a hotel" (Santiago 1997, 31). In his analysis of tourism to third world countries, David Harrison (1992) observes a trend where old colonial buildings, such as abandoned sugar mills in the Caribbean, are renovated into hotels. This transformation suggests how tourism is replacing traditional commodities in economic importance. The plantation house's conversion to a hotel, rather than the construction of a new hotel, suggests a superficial shift that does not undermine the original economic foundation.² Tourism, like colonialism, leaves Puerto Rico dependent on an external source of economic prosperity. The figure of the plantation house also illustrates the desire to idealize the "good old plantation days," thereby fulfilling tourists' desires

to celebrate colonial legacies while omitting history, because the workers in the fields have been displaced to urban factories or tourism jobs.

The oppression that both tourism and colonialism impose on Puerto Ricans is also similar because both spring from a common external force. In *América's Dream*, this common oppression finds expression in América's maternal lineage and emphasizes the continuity of oppression, even as control of Puerto Rico changed hands from one colonial regime to another. América traces her ancestry to a Frenchman who brought his wife and her servant, Marguerite, to Puerto Rico. His wife died shortly after she arrived in Puerto Rico, and Marguerite helped the Frenchman overcome his despair at the loss of his wife. Eventually, the two became romantically involved, but when the Frenchman passed away he left Marguerite only with an illegitimate child. América is Marguerite's great-great-great-great granddaughter. Romances with native women were necessary during colonial times because of the lack of foreign women, and because natives were knowledgeable in the preparation of local foods and medicines and could thus care for their masters in times of illness (Pratt 1992). Both military campaigns and plague decimated the native population in Puerto Rico within decades of the Spanish arrival to the islands. Thus, servants like Marguerite fulfilled the role of caretaker and lover for the Frenchmen. But she could not legitimately claim her lover's land and only managed to survive by maintaining her position as housekeeper for the plantation's new owner:

Over the years, La [C]asa changed hands many times, and each time, one of Marguerite's descendants, a woman with a child and no husband, appeared at the back door claiming to be the housekeeper. No one questioned her right to clean its hallways, tend the courtyard, dust its rooms, scrub its tubs, polish its tiles. (Santiago 1997, 77)

Dubbing the ability to perform housework "a right" is ironic, but also illustrates the lack of opportunities that existed for women, especially unmarried ones, both now and under colonial rule. Santiago's use of irony highlights the masculine perspective of La Casa's various male owners who tacitly recognized Marguerite's descendants' ownership rights by allowing them to perform menial housework. Passing the job

of housekeeper from one generation to the next suggests that Puerto Rico's passage from colonial possession to commonwealth has made little difference in the lives of the working class, because tourism recreates a hierarchy reminiscent of those inscribed by its former colonizers.

Joey's ancestral lineage in *Dogeaters* likewise expresses the relationship between colonialism and tourism. Exploitation resulting from sexual tourism subjects both Joey Sands and his mother to similar forms of oppression. Joey's livelihood depends on sexual tourism. His steady clients and one-night stands are all wealthy men who bring him to hotels and bachelor apartments. In the three times that we see him involved in a short-term sexual relationship, he is always with a foreigner: an American, an Australian, and a German. Joey describes his mother as "a legendary whore" who was "disgraced, abandoned, just like the movies. Driven to take her own life. My father was not the first man to promise her anything that's for sure" (Hagedorn 1990, 42). Like Joey, his mother sold her body to survive. Although the identity of his father is never revealed, various references to Joey as a "little G.I. baby" and descriptions of his "tight kinky curls" imply that his father is an African-American U.S. serviceman (*ibid.*, 72). Between 1946 and 1992 U.S. military bases remained active in the Philippines, and prostitution near these bases—remnants of colonial rule—was commonplace. Hagedorn thus explicitly links tourism to colonialism by identifying Joey as a G.I. baby born to a prostitute. Sexual tourism subjects Joey to a similar situation as that of his mother.

Tourism leaves the hierarchy that privileges the colonizer over the colonized intact. The novels represent two distinct viewpoints: the perspective of tourists and colonizers who occupy a position of privilege, and the perspective of locals and the colonized who occupy a subservient position. Within these two categories (tourists, locals) are a myriad of differing perspectives that are due to class, gender, ethnicity, and sexual preferences. In fact, a majority of tourists to the Philippines do not arrive from the U.S. but from neighboring Asian countries and Australia (United Nations 2003). However, the novels' emphasis on foreign tourists from Western countries underscores the similar ways that international tourism and colonialism exploit the Filipino and Puerto Rican laboring classes. This emphasis also explicitly critiques the erasure

of colonialism in current travel guides like *Lonely Planet*. Interactions between tourist industry employees and foreign tourists in *América's Dream* and *Dogeaters* focus on wealthy foreigners' privileges and their exploitation and oppression of tourist workers (Joey and América). An examination of these foreign tourists' perspective reveals how their expectations, which are often created by or reinforced by travel guides, affect Puerto Rico and the Philippines, thus illustrating how these two countries cater to tourists' needs at their own expense.

Catering to Foreign Desires

Both novels explicitly represent the complicity Puerto Rico and the Philippines in their subordination by conforming to tourists' expectations. In *América's Dream*, América's lover, Correa, works at a beach guardhouse, stopping tourists and taking down their personal information before allowing them onto the public beach. América dubs this a waste of time because

the road and parking are not the only ways to get to the beach. You can walk to it from other beaches, from the town, and, on horseback, from the wild vegetation surrounding it. She thinks the tourism office goes through all the trouble of taking down people's information to make tourists feel safe. (Santiago 1997, 12)

Tourists stress the importance of remaining safe while traveling. Any perceived danger or disorder decreases the number of tourists visiting the country. Therefore, countries dependent on tourism need to create a sense of security for tourists. Yet, vacation is supposed to provide an adventurous escape for tourists from everyday life. The presence of a guardhouse suggests that the beach may be dangerous, adding a sense of risk to tourists' excursions. But, América's reaction to the guardhouse illustrates that the guardhouse serves no real purpose but to fulfill the tourists' desires to feel simultaneously adventurous and safe. In this scene, Santiago suggests that Puerto Rico allocates resources to build and maintain a guardhouse that merely represents, not enforces, security. By dubbing the guardhouse "a waste" Santiago implies that

these resources ought to be used in a more productive manner, perhaps to benefit Puerto Ricans. Allocation of funds to tourism rather than services for Puerto Ricans illustrates that tourists' desires take precedence over locals' needs.

In *Dogeaters*, the Philippine government also complies with tourists' expectations:

The Manila International Film Festival is the First Lady's latest whim. She orders the city and slums rejuvenated with fresh coats of paint, windows and doorways lined with pots and flowers, the streets swept aside and reswept by women in red and yellow sweatshirts with "Metro Manila Aide" printed in big black letters on the back and front. Even Uncle's shack gets the treatment. (Hagedorn 1990, 130)

Here, Hagedorn deploys sarcasm to critique the film festival, which resembles an actual International Film Festival hosted by then-First Lady Imelda Marcos. The novel intentionally represents the film festival to reveal corruption and inequity under Marcos's rule. In the novel, the film festival was expected to attract many tourists to the Philippines. The novel's first lady creates a façade of cleanliness in order to produce a pleasing atmosphere for these tourists, instead of directly addressing the problem of poverty in Manila, symbolized by the slums' "coats of paint" to cover up the problem. Ironically, the workers wear "Metro Manila Aide" sweatshirts, suggesting that their work is for Metro Manila's benefit. The tourists' expectations take precedence over the locals' needs, which would best be met by actual aid for the city. Here, the novel clearly lays the blame for tourism and the inequities tourism creates on the U.S.-supported Marcos administration.

Hagedorn's sarcastic critique continues as she depicts how the construction of a cultural center for the film festival exemplifies total disregard for locals:

The workers are busy day and night, trying to finish the complex for the film festival's opening night, which is scheduled in a few weeks. Toward the end, one of the structures collapses and lots of workers are buried in the rubble. Big News. Cora Camacho even goes out there with a camera crew. "Manila's Worst Disaster!" A special

mass is held right there in Rizal Park, with everyone weeping and wailing over the rubble. The archbishop gives his blessing, the First lady blows her nose. She orders the survivors to continue building: more cement is poured over the dead bodies; they finish exactly three hours before the first foreign film is scheduled to show. (Ibid.)

Again, Hagedorn represents past events. In 1982 Imelda Marcos, then the first lady, inaugurated the film festival, which she felt necessitated the building of the Manila Film Palace. The hurried construction resulted in an avalanche that killed at least six people (de la Cruz 1985). In her book, Hagedorn depicts how the unconcerned first lady views the tragedy as a nuisance. Although the media label the avalanche "Manila's worst disaster," no concrete measures are taken to make amends for it. A façade of concern performed for the media, represented by the archbishop's blessing and the first lady blowing her nose, constitute the official response to the tragedy. The sarcastic tone of the passage foregrounds the public officials' insincerity.

Later, the first lady orders the "survivors" to continue construction without addressing worker safety. Narrowly escaping death once, these survivors' lives are again endangered. Despite the hazardous conditions, the survivors manage to finish building the film palace on time, suggesting that the film festival is more important than its builders' lives. Most egregiously, cement, like the archbishop's hasty benediction, is poured over the dead bodies, signifying the worthlessness of their lives. These dead workers represent the Philippines's willingness to sacrifice Filipino lives for tourism.

During martial law, Marcos directed resources toward tourism and left more pressing domestic concerns, such as labor laws, land reform, and environmental issues, unaddressed. President Marcos wished to present the Philippines as a modern nation to encourage foreign investment (Richter 1999). Arturo Escobar's (1995) discussion of development in *Encountering Development* notes that the first world's emphasis on development compelled many in the third world to devalue their own culture, believing their traditions somehow prevented development. Therefore, development was equated with modernization and local cultures were cast aside in the name of progress and Western culture.

Hagedorn captures this sentiment by representing an international film festival that showcases no Filipino films. Instead, it featured films from Germany, a seemingly superior, modernized country. Colonialism similarly degraded native culture, depicting the colonized as heathens, devoid of "civilization." Colonizers civilize the colonized by introducing their supposedly superior culture. The choice to show foreign films not only reveals the government's desire to attract tourists, but also colonialism's internalized oppression that leads Filipinos to believe their cultural productions are inferior.

The novels not only represent how the Puerto Rican and Filipino governments devalue the lives and needs of their own people to encourage tourism but also how tourists likewise devalue local people. Tourists objectify the local population, treating them as commodities. Centuries of oppressing blacks taught whites to deny black subjectivity by rendering their bodies invisible, argues bell hooks (1992). Similarly, in *América's Dream*, América is in contact with tourists at the hotel on a regular basis. As she performs her housekeeping duties,

She notices how they look right past and pretend not to see her. She feels herself there, solid as always, but they look through her, as if she were a part of the strange landscape into which they have run away from their everyday lives. Those who do see her, smile guardedly, then slide their gaze away quickly, ashamed, it seems, to have noticed her. (Santiago 1997, 30)

América is rendered invisible, because recognizing her subjectivity also requires that the tourists recognize their own privilege. Santiago emphasizes the discomfort of those who do look at América and quickly look away, "ashamed." This scene encapsulates Frantz Fanon's (1970) argument that colonizers who attempt to see and understand the colonized become plagued with guilt. In the novel, tourists avoid this discomfort by framing América as a worker content with her work. They "tell her how charming it is that she sings" boleros, ballads, and cha-cha-chás as she works (Santiago 1997, 1). These songs are commodities of the local culture. Thus, tourists reluctantly see her, but readily consume her songs, the foreign culture they traveled to find.

Santiago (1997, 37) represents how tourists, like past colonists, objectify the local population. The hotel guests observe América cleaning the rooms in the morning as “she hums a bolero or a salsa tune, seemingly lighthearted.” Using “seemingly” to describe América’s mood places doubt on the interpretation of América as lighthearted, although her singing appears to confirm the tourists’ assumption. However, whether or not América’s mood corresponds with her actions does not matter to tourists who view her only as a commodity. In fact, América is commodified both on and off work. As she walks around Vieques, a

público passes in the opposite direction, and the driver waves at her. It is an air-conditioned van for twelve passengers, full of tourists gawking at the lush vegetation and doubtless at the brightly dressed woman walking along the road. She tries to ignore their rude stares, the feeling that to them she represents the charm of the tropics: a colorfully dressed woman walking along a sunlit road. (Ibid., 17)

The tourists do not consider that their stares may cause América discomfort. Comparable to “lush vegetation,” the tourists objectify América through their desire to experience “the charm of the tropics” while on vacation.

In *Dogeaters*, the German filmmaker Rainer, one of Joey’s lovers, similarly objectifies him, symbolized by the pictures that Rainer takes of him, both real and imaginary:

I feel his eyes boring into me, watching every move as I eat, as if he’ll never get enough. “It’s a picture I take with my mind, so I won’t forget you.” I wish he’d stop. I don’t mind when he takes *real* pictures of me with that fancy camera of his, which he’s done all week: *Joey Swimming*. *Joey and Cup of Coffee*. *Joey Lighting a Cigarette*. *Joey Bored*. *Joey Brooding*. (Hagedorn 1990, 149)

In *Tender Violence*, Laura Wexler (2000) argues that photographs taken of domestic images in U.S. colonies served the interests of U.S. imperialism. In the above excerpt, Rainer chooses to take pictures of Joey engaged in ordinary activities, not ones that reveal his consumption of Joey’s body. Through Rainer’s photographic choices, Hagedorn critiques

the subjects that tourists tend to choose for their pictures, those that capture locals performing everyday tasks, like eating, sleeping, playing, or talking. They take pictures of everyday leisure tasks, not the also everyday task of factory work, or cleaning hotels as a maid. Rainer does not take photographs of Joey at the club where they met, where Joey usually finds his clients. A picture of Joey in the club would be "no less real" than a picture of Joey bored, but it would capture Rainer's sexual objectification of him, and reveal the exploitative hierarchy of tourism. Instead of capturing Joey's character, the pictures reduce Joey to a flat, two-dimensional reproduction, a commodity representing "authentic" Filipino life to take home as a souvenir. Tourism allows privileged foreigners to objectify and exploit tourist workers, just as colonialism did.

Returning the Colonial/Tourist Gaze

Our Islands and the Philippine and Puerto Rican *Lonely Planet* travel guides are written from the perspective of the privileged foreigner who seeks to consume the islands, and thus take the islands and their people as their object of study. However, Hagedorn and Santiago in their novels subvert the colonial hierarchy by returning the gaze. Their characters are not merely helpless victims of the tourist industry but also have agency, however limited, within the power hierarchy created by international tourism. In both novels, the characters are subjects that objectify tourists and are able to exploit tourists' expectations. Through América's position as a hotel maid, Santiago also challenges tourists' negative stereotypes of Puerto Rico and the third world in general.

Santiago represents the exploitation of tourists' desire for security and safety while they travel. Correa's job at the guardhouse at one of the islands' popular beaches requires that he sign the visitors in and out as they arrive or leave the public beach area. There is no fee for the tourists' use of the beach, so Correa often benefits from worried tourists. In one scene a tourist inquires if paying a parking fee is required. He replies "'If you want to pay . . .'" Correa grins, and the woman pulls out two folded dollar bills from her pocket and hands them to him. The tourists think if they tip the guard, he'll keep an eye on their cars"

(Santiago 1997, 13). Correa's statement is at once suggestive and subtly threatening. Santiago illustrates that Correa will not exert extra effort to give paying individuals preferential treatment, but tourists expect their car will be left unsupervised if they do not pay.

In contrast, Santiago subtly subverts the hierarchy produced by tourism through América's perspective. Santiago inverts stereotypes of Puerto Rican hygiene. Underdeveloped areas are often stereotyped as dirty and unhealthy. However, América subverts this stereotype by illustrating that tourists are unsanitary and she, the "dirty" local, is responsible for maintaining a clean environment. While cleaning a room she finds two used condoms on the floor. She reflects:

That's one thing she has never understood about Yanquis. They do things like leave their used condoms on the floor, or bloody sanitary pads, unwrapped, in the trash cans. But they throw a fit if there's hair in the shower drain, or if the toilet is not disinfected. They don't mind exposing other people to their germs, but they don't want to be exposed to anybody else's. (Ibid., 79)

América is aware of the tourists' double standards, expecting to avoid foreign illnesses while on vacation, but at the same time disregarding their capacity to infect the locals with their own illnesses.

Like Santiago, Hagedorn represents the manipulation of tourists. In *Dogeaters*, Joey and his pimp, Andres, exploit tourists seeking sexual services. When some Australians enter the club, Joey and Andres observe, categorize, and objectify the men:

Middle-aged, okay bodies. They've never been here before. They hesitate—they could turn around and leave and never come back. Andres sizes up the situation. They aren't servicemen. They look classy, yet casual. What Andres calls "old money"—his favorite kind. (Hagedorn 1990, 77)

How a potential customer is classified determines what roles Andres and Joey will assume. Their behavior conforms to specific desires that particular types of tourists expect to make a sale. In this case, Andres greets the Australians with the utmost courtesy, and in his best English.

As expected, this causes the Australians to relax and engage in conversation with Andres at the bar.

Andres stands under a poster of a matador and bull, brought to him all the way from Barcelona by one of his rich lovers. He is chatting amiably with the Australians, asking innocent little questions: *Where are you from? Really? And how do you like Manila?* The Australians loosen up. One of them, the older one, eyes me boldly. I ignore him, smiling to myself. Andres will pick just the right moment to make introductions. (Ibid., 78)

The image of the matador and the bull serves two purposes. The poster displays a scene readily identified with Spain, a subtle reference to Spanish colonial influence on the Philippines. Hagedorn's reference to Spanish colonialism in the inert form of a poster also illustrates how colonial legacy in the Philippines is packaged culturally, without referencing the violence of Spanish conquest and occupation. The image also symbolizes the power struggle between Andres and the Australians. Although the bull may have more brute strength, representing the Australians' greater economic resources, the matador controls the situation with his distracting red cape, representing Andres's ability to play on the Australians' sexual desires. Joey likewise takes advantage of the situation. The older Australian's bold stares suggest his control in the situation, but in actuality Joey holds power by acting disinterested. In ignoring the Australian's stare Joey asserts his power because the Australian must actively pursue and win Joey over. By describing how Joey waits for the calculated "right moment" to meet the Australian, Hagedorn illustrates Joey's agency to better negotiate his sexual transactions.

Hagedorn (1990, 132) further depicts the objectification of tourists when Joey compares Rainer to "God the Father, lost in paradise. He can't get over how perfect I am; he can't get over the perfection of his own creation. He falls in love with me. They always do." By referring to Rainer first as an individual "he" and then lumping him into a plural "they," Hagedorn signifies the unimportance of Rainer's individuality to Joey. What is important is that Joey can exploit the tourists' expectations to temporarily live a life of luxury. Joey becomes Rainer's ideal sexual

object. Here Hagedorn references colonial policies that required the assimilation of the colonized to the colonizers' image. In implementing assimilation policies, colonizers assumed the colonial subject to be inherently inferior and lacking the tools to advance themselves. The colonizers believed that only they could provide the colonized with these tools (Vergara 1995). By comparing Rainer and international tourists/colonists as God, Hagedorn emphasizes their desire to create the other in their own image. Joey represents the uncivilized local population that must be recreated according to those desires. To maximize his benefit Joey conforms to those desires.

Political groups also capitalize on tourists' desires. During martial law, Marcos expanded the Philippine tourist industry, hoping to establish the legitimacy of his rule. Political groups opposed to martial law targeted tourism to undermine Marcos's rule (Richter 1999). Hagedorn (1990, 130) reveals the irony of Marcos's failed plans for tourism in a description of Manila's beautification for the International Film Festival as "painted scenery in a slum no one's going to bother visiting—but what the hell, we all get a big bang out of it." Hagedorn implies that Marcos did not address domestic concerns resulting in slums; instead, he simply covered up these problems to attend to his priority of attracting international tourists. Hagedorn represents how Marcos's political opposition reacted by targeting tourists to create the image of the Philippines as a dangerous environment, discouraging tourism. Referring to the efforts to beautify Manila as "a big bang," Hagedorn suggests both people's amusement at the failed effort to attract tourists and alludes to an explosion during the 1980 American Society of Travel Agents World Congress held in the Philippines. In his speech, Marcos emphasized peace and order in the Philippines to encourage tourism, but an explosion occurred at the end of his speech. Shortly thereafter organizers cancelled the conference (Richter 1999). These opposition groups successfully turned what was Marcos's political stage into their own. Knowing the importance of safety and security to tourists allowed these political groups to use them as political leverage. Instead of showcasing a safe, orderly Philippines, the conference highlighted the instability of Marcos's government. Hagedorn illustrates how such acts of political terrorism work to subvert the hierarchy that seeks to privi-

lege tourists. In a switching of roles, the lives of the tourists become as politically expedient a tool as the lives of the locals buried in the collapsed film palace.

Conclusion

In *Dogeaters*, Joey Sands constantly yearns for an escape from his life in Manila as a prostitute. However, the only way he sees out of Manila is through prostitution. He hopes that “[s]ome foreign woman will sponsor me and take me to the States. Maybe she’ll marry me. I’ll get my green card” (Hagedorn 1990, 40). After returning to the U.S., one of Joey’s clients sends him a postcard of Las Vegas. Joey considers writing back and asking his client to send for him. Unlike Filipinos, Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens. In *America’s Dream*, the heroine, as a U.S. citizen, manages to achieve that which Joey desires—she leaves her homeland for New York City. However, despite the fact that América enjoys the benefits of travel to the U.S. as a U.S. citizen, her move to the U.S. changes very little for her. She serves as a nanny before again becoming a hotel maid in the U.S. Here, Santiago shatters the illusion of the U.S. as a land of unlimited opportunities. The conditions América faces upon migrating to the U.S. suggests that Joey would encounter similar hardships in the U.S. After all, the postcard Joey receives is from Las Vegas, the only state in the U.S. where prostitution is legal.

Thus, the characters of Joey and América illustrate how working class Filipinos and Puerto Ricans travel internationally under circumstances far different from that of international tourists to their islands. They travel as laborers, not as tourists. Both characters gesture at how working class Puerto Ricans and Filipinos fail to escape their conditions of oppression as colonized people, as citizens of former colonies, or as (im)migrants, despite the different historical situations of Puerto Rico and the Philippines and their different political statuses as U.S. Commonwealth and independent nation.

Likewise, the similarities in rhetoric between *Our Islands* in 1899 and today’s *Loneley Planet* guides illustrate the continuities between power hierarchies created by tourism and those that once existed during colonial times. In 1899 and today, the Philippines and Puerto Rico are marketed

to Western countries for consumption, first as colonies abundant with resources for the U.S. empire, and now as tourist sites abundant with exotic culture and untouched environmental wonders, and yet simultaneously convenient. The conveniences—the use of English, and of the U.S. dollar in both the Philippines and Puerto Rico, and lack of customs hassles in Puerto Rico—point to prior or current U.S. colonial policies, while simultaneously erasing the negative effects of U.S. colonialism. Hagedorn and Santiago contest the representation of the Philippines and Puerto Rico by contemporary tourist texts and explicitly link the inequalities caused by colonialism and by tourism.

Like *Our Islands* and the *Lonely Planet* guidebooks, *Dogeaters* and *América's Dream* have been produced and published in the West, specifically in the U.S. Thus, these representations are mediated through authors living in the diasporas, not based in the homeland. However, being based in the U.S. allows Hagedorn and Santiago to contest colonial/tourist representations of the Philippines and Puerto Rico in the space where these representations are reproduced. In other words, the novels' critiques of tourist texts are available to those considering travel to the Philippines and Puerto Rico, and those who purchase travel guidebooks to these islands. Possible tourists reading these novels may become aware of their privileged positions.

Representing the perspective of tourist workers in the Philippines and Puerto Rico allows the two novels to emphasize that these workers are not merely victims of colonialism and tourism by giving the characters some agency to negotiate with tourists and to stereotype them. However, this limited agency does not provide an escape from exploitation caused by international tourism. Tourism can help the Philippine and Puerto Rican economies by bringing in badly needed foreign currency, but it does not allow for development that can transform the unequal colonial relationship that it reproduces.

Dogeaters posits an alternative to tourism that would end exploitation of Filipinos. Joey eventually escapes his life as a prostitute with the help of communist guerilla fighters who provide him refuge in the mountains when he witnesses the assassination of a popular senator. Hagedorn recognizes these guerilla fighters as enacting a legitimate resistance by representing their success in freeing Joey from his exploitation.

Thus, the novel implies that an end to Filipino exploitation requires help from oppositional and leftist organizations in the Philippines, which advocate national economic development through self-reliant industrialization, and not through the development of the tourist industry.³

Notes

1. For one such travel narrative, see Makow 2000.
2. A similar phenomenon is occurring in the Philippines. Former U.S. military bases in the Philippines are being converted into casinos and hotels. See Goodno 1994.
3. Gabriela, a Philippines-U.S. women's solidarity network, is one such organization.

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