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## The Igorot as Other: Four Discourses from the Colonial Period

*Ma. Luisa Aguilar-Cariño*



When the Spaniards arrived in the Philippines in 1521, members of the six major ethnolinguistic tribes in Northern Luzon had for years been coexisting in the mountains, occasionally trading with other lowland groups. Because of the rugged mountain terrain and the fierce resistance put up by the Igorots against Spanish attempts to colonize them, the area was never completely subjugated. William Henry Scott writes that out of the 45 or so known Spanish expeditions sent to the mountains, all failed in the attempt to colonize the Igorots (Scott 1975). It is little wonder then that Spanish chronicles are replete with references to the Igorots as hostile, lazy, barbaric, pagan and cannibalistic.

German chronicles of expeditions into the Cordillera in the late 19th century seem to be more objective, but are bound to reflect what the interpreter chose to present. Otto Scheerer, another "German traveler," wrote that in 1882, towards the final years of the Spanish regime, there were no Christianized natives to be found in the Cordillera (Scheerer 1975).

After the Spaniards came the Americans, and with education as the tool, they managed to achieve what their predecessors had not. What was previously a marshland called *Kafaguay* became the first (and thus far only) city in the Cordillera: Baguio. Kennon Road was eventually built to pave the way for the opening of American-controlled gold mines. Missionaries working zealously among the tribes introduced the doctrine of Christianity and the concept of a Christian God (*Apo Diyos*). Roads and schools were built, at the same time that studies on the culture and life of the mountain tribes were encouraged. Lowlanders migrated into the area, seeking employment; the concept of money was introduced into what had hitherto been a barter and subsistence economy. The volume

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of trade grew, and all of a sudden, the traditional lifestyle of the Igorots ceased to be effective in the face of change, complexity and modernity.

The difficulties of the Igorots in adjusting to social change (to integrate, or to retreat into the mountains and preserve tradition?) were compounded by the difficulties of facing up to increasingly varied—often distorted—images of themselves and their way of life. Many such descriptions of the Igorot accrued through historical time and space, and were subject to varied transformations as lowland and highland cultures met, as urbanization spread, and as a book-learning culture flourished. At about the time Europe—and a small number of educated *ilustrados*—were reading books like Paul Proust de la Gironiere's *Twenty Years in the Philippines* (1853), the people who formed the subject of such texts were unaware that they were already being mythologized. Having themselves no power to appropriate the lexicon of recognized language and through it speak for themselves, they unwittingly came to exhale the aura and substance of legend.

Today, inaccurate and emotionally colored descriptions of the Igorot still enjoy currency. The Igorot is still regarded by the outsider as the *busol* or headhunter, whose specter may be effectively used to frighten children into good behavior. Or else, he or she is one or another stereotyped figure, in media, in literature, or in the popular imagination: inarticulate, illiterate, half-savage, the half-naked man in the g-string or the humpbacked beggar woman plucking at the corner of your sleeve.

The early tribes had no system of writing, even the simplest (Cariño-Perez 1977). For the non-Igorot layman and scholar alike, information about tribal life and customs could for a long time only be had through recourse to the more widely circulated sources on Igorot life and culture, such as Spanish chronicles, or German and then much later, American accounts of expeditions to the mountains. Such texts have somehow helped to reproduce and perpetuate certain images and notions of Igorot life and culture, simply because their authors could not escape the condition of their own subjectivity and cultural difference.

It has only been recently, beginning in the 1960s with the shift in scholarly and other orientations to an examination of "native" concerns, that the interest in the writing of texts on aspects of Igorot life and culture by *Igorots themselves* has grown more active.

The writing of criticism on texts that have been widely accepted as authoritative sources on Igorot life and culture (histories, anthropological studies and essays), including criticism of texts written by foreigners, is a rare occurrence even by contemporary standards (Fiagoy 1980). Many studies continue to be written, using sources shaped by foreign

perspectives, mental frameworks, and cultural attitudes. And many such sources have also come to be uncritically regarded as the authoritative statements on their subject matter.

### Discourse and Power

Edward W. Said, an orientalist scholar, remarks that in the West, "true" knowledge is described with the ideal qualities of nonpartisanship, scholarliness, impartiality, and independence from political attachments or beliefs. However, *in practice* this is most difficult and unrealistic since

no one has ever devised a method for detaching the scholar from the circumstances of life, from the fact of his involvement (conscious or unconscious) with a class, a set of beliefs, or from the mere activity of being a member of society. (Said 1984)

In this article, four samples of texts written in the colonial period will be examined: Sinibaldo de Mas' "Pagans," Paul Proust de la Gironiere's *Twenty Years in the Philippines*, Fray Angel Perez's *Igorots: Geographic and Ethnographic Study of Some Districts of Northern Luzon*, and Tage Ellinger's *Friend of the Brave*. The analysis will attempt to see how what has been written about the Igorot has been inescapably shaped by the fact that their authors have invested their subject matter with a particular perspective. In this way the analyses will attempt to provide insight into how human beings address themselves to problems related to the study of culture, and how people attempt to consider/make sense of/explain what is radically different or *other*. The article will attempt to illustrate the Foucauldian idea that the knowledge that disciplines or areas of study claim for themselves is not a "natural" explanation but a *way of handling or approximating its subject matter*.

French poststructuralist critic and philosopher Michel Foucault, who had read Althusser and Marxist structuralism, was interested in looking at the role played by language and discourse in shaping perceptions regarding the way social relations are formed. Proceeding from the premise that reality is a social construct, he shows through his major works how definitions of reality are constructs of the *dominant class*, types of discourse characterized by *their power* to contain or exclude, confine or penalize, what cannot be understood or what is seen as *other* (Wuthrow et al. 1984).

Laying bare such relationships demands a method (which Foucault called "archaeology") that is not content with seeking a clear and singular meaning at the heart of a text (such as is presumed by formalist criticism), but that constantly oscillates between the text and its context(s), between the language of the text and the conditions outside of it which have made it possible for the text to speak its content at all (Foucault 1972).

Edward W. Said's *Orientalism* (1984) is probably one of the most coherent applications of Foucauldian categories on a specific body of texts. The title of his book refers to an identifiable type of discourse/set of discursive practices that has for its subject the peoples of the Middle and Near East (their lifestyles, cultural beliefs, practices, cultural temperament, etc.). According to Said, Orientalist discourse can be defined as "a way of coming to terms with the Orient, based on the Orient's special place in European Western experience" (1984). Its function is mostly and purportedly academic and scholarly, although Said avers that it did not begin as such:

Orientalism is particularly valuable as a sign of European-Atlantic power over the Orient than it is as a veridic discourse about the Orient (which it claims to be in its academic or scholarly form). Orientalist discourse is powerful and strongly knitted together with the institutions (socio-economic and political) which make it possible. (1984, 6)

Orientalism reflects the 18th-century European need to control the East, not merely by economic manipulation as colonies were set up, but also by reproducing a particular image of the Orient, by making statements about it, authorizing views on it, describing it, and eventually teaching it.

Said does not deny that there are articles of genuine scholarship on the Orient, but at the same time there is also a large set of ideas about the East that is embroidered with doctrines of European superiority, different kinds of racism and imperialism. The popularity of notions like "All Arabs are obsessed with sex" or "The Japanese are suicidal by nature" or "The Filipinos are an indolent race" are part of the results of the propagation of Orientalist texts.

Said acknowledges Foucault in his work of mapping out certain strategies that reveal how such categories and assertions are mythicized and given currency. Some of these strategies involve the analysis and description of an author's position in relation to his subject matter, a description of relationships between texts, types and genres, a descrip-

tion of the formulation of problems, and a description and analysis of style (for example, what types of verbs and pronouns are employed, what types of modifiers). Said's study has provided a model of sorts for this undertaking.

In an interview recorded by Dreyfus and Rabinow, Michel Foucault (1982) speaks in general of how discourse—any type of discourse—always has occasion to play significant roles in society and in culture. At the same time, discourse also serves many other practices and functions, sometimes unknown to its authors, and even to its recipients. Each discipline and area of study represents specific sets of methodological choice and strategy, and through his major works, Foucault has upheld the theme that in order to understand the things we claim to know, we must approach discourses not simply to discover their contents, but rather in order to find out the structural rules and strategies which regulate them from within, as well as make possible their continued existence. Books and texts refer to countless ideas, and authors are in the habit of referring to other authors, and so the appearance of any new text is from the start invested with certain inherencies and predispositions.

### The Other

When we speak of that body of texts written by Western authors, particularly in the area of Spanish and American colonialism in the Philippines, it would be difficult to prove that such works have been chiefly responsible for the shaping of non-Cordillera Filipinos' responses towards their "mountain brothers." However, it is not so difficult to imagine how such texts could have been highly influential. For instance, even for the respected Dean C. Worcester in his 1913 summary (for *National Geographic Magazine*) of the most important characteristics of non-Christian tribes in the Philippines, the emphasis is on "what American rule has done for these people." The captions to pictures accompanying the Worcester report also read like the following: "If nothing more were accomplished to persuade these especially filthy little savages [referring to the people of Lepanto and Bontoc] to clean up, the work of the American colonial administration would be worthwhile." In a similar vein, Episcopalian Missionary Bishop of the Philippines (1902-17) Charles Henry Brent was like many other Americans (and not just the missionaries) who came to the country in the belief that theirs was "the white man's burden" to protect the natives from their own incapacity (Clymer n.d.).

Other widely held notions categorizing the Cordillera tribes using a "majority" versus "minority" perspective (and on a larger scale, the framework of "civilized" versus "uncivilized"), have also contributed to the nature and character of present-day quests for autonomy and self-definition. Thus it is also helpful to look at some of the scholarly attempts to represent the Cordillera people in discourse, to see how the assertions made there may be accepted, if not at face value, then as a type of narrative which, by its subsequent involvement with and development by texts of later periods, has spawned "truths whose fictionality has been forgotten" (Foucault 1982).

If discourse is power in the sense that writing about something indicates that one has seized a certain control over a subject and has access to the various possibilities of developing and expanding it; further, if power implies strategy (the employment of some means to gain a specified end, or the evaluation of rules thought superior, or the dispersion of certain procedures aimed at subjecting an opponent, making that opponent retreat into a specified subordination), then the analysis of discursive practices offers the possibility of reversal—of liberating the very things which a dominant system of discourse would like to keep hidden or suppressed.

Underneath anything *said* lurks an *unsaid* which makes the former possible precisely by its absence. What has been reduced to silence, is the *Other*. Throughout history, there are many instances of the *Other*: witches, rebels, heretics, madmen, *indios*, all examples of a principle that seems to go against rationality and yet by being so provides justification for rationality itself. Such are our discursive practices, says Foucault, that

the history of ideas usually credits the discourse that it analyzes with coherence. If it happens to notice an irregularity in the use of words, incompatibilities, concepts that cannot be systematized, then it sees it as its duty to find a principle of cohesion at a deeper level—one that will organize discourse and restore it to its hidden unity.

The texts examined in this article belong to that body of scholarly texts and/or ethnohistories on the Igorot by Western writers. These works form part of that screen or filter through which the rest of non-Igorot Philippine society—and the rest of the world—has received ideas about the Cordillera. Despite recent attempts to correct fragmented images or stereotypes given through history, the effects of this discourse can still be seen and felt, for these images have been reproduced in various ways, perhaps most visibly in the field of popular culture and the different

communications media. For instance, there is indelibly etched in the popular consciousness the image of a kind of primitive sensuality in the figure of the topless Igorot woman (Nora Aunor's film "Banaue"). Also, in the cartoon strip "My Little Pupung" (Tonton Young, *Manila Bulletin*), the Igorot has been pictured as an ignoble savage; in one frame, he descends from a Love Bus in Manila to find the "tail" of his g-string caught in the doorway and in danger of unraveling.

Such ideas easily insinuate themselves into literature and other forms of discourse. The task in this case is to uncover the relationships between critical language and the language of the text, and the relation of these to the world/the historical context. The texts examined here were selected because they form part of that body of "official documents" (in the sense of Said's "veridic discourse") used to report on the progress of colonial aims and to present conditions in the Philippines to the rest of the literate world. More importantly, they were selected for the single-mindedness and consistency with which they pursue certain related themes about the Igorot.

### **Sinibaldo de Mas: "Pagans" from "Informe sobre al Estado de las Islas Filipinas en 1842"**

Sinibaldo de Mas was the Spanish Minister to Peking at the time of his arrival in the Philippines in 1842. While here, he was ill most of the time, and the accounts he wrote of people and life in the islands were most probably derived from local knowledge and from available printed sources (chronicles, reports, official documents, correspondence among the Spanish government officials, clergymen, and so forth).

De Mas begins his essay by bewailing the inability of colonial troops to take the pagans of the Cordillera by force, and accusing the natives of sabotaging the government's tobacco monopoly. He writes apologetically, of being unable to make first-hand observation of the Igorots, but ironically follows this with the promise "to treat of them at perhaps at some tedious length to give the most accurate picture." He continues, ". . . I have only seen some of these individuals who come down to the Christian towns to buy and sell" (De Mas 1975).

De Mas makes comments on clothing, ornaments, and similarities he perceives between the native tongue and other Asian dialects and languages. The rest of the essay is devoted to the general attempt to prove the Igorot "pagan" and "barbaric," categories employed by other texts

produced in the same period, and possible only because the authors unconsciously articulate and delineate their position as Europeans or white men belonging to a race lodged in order and civilization.

From the outset, the terms of discourse are laid down with the load of "otherness" made explicit in the derogatory title. In this way, De Mas indicates that his essay is a comparison of civilized and uncivilized, from his particular viewpoint.

In a tone of growing incredulity, the writer observes that the Igorots

believe in a Supreme Being who created the little world they know, but they have confused ideas about him, and have never stopped to speculate on his origin, existence or power except what they can discern with their senses.

Besides divesting the Igorots of the power of reflection, he goes on to comment on the *cañao* (which for the Igorot is the most concrete locus of ritual practice and belief) as "nothing more than eating, drinking and dancing." Other aspects of Igorot life remain totally and equally incomprehensible to de Mas. He says:

they [the Igorots] are ruled more by superstition than by any rational motivation. When they hear thunder, they make feasts because they say that Kabunian is asking for pigs . . . Going along the trail, if a certain bird flies across their path, it is a very bad sign, and if it is a snake, they hurry back to their house.

De Mas never stops to consider that what he sees as confounding all reason from the Western view of social life and practice, may be explainable in terms of an altogether different logic, in terms of different social codes and practices. So we find the refrain running through the essay that the Igorots are "ignorant and little inclined to use their reason."

At all times we are made aware of De Mas' clear separation of himself (and by implication of other Europeans like him) from the subject of his discourse. Nowhere is this clearer than in the sections where he describes the Igorot as subhuman, animalistic and ape-like, and resorts to the use of the third person impersonal pronoun in description:

when a woman delivers, she does so alone, immediately washing the little creature in the river and bathing in it herself; she then puts the child on her shoulder and returns to her house to take care of it.

Father Lorenzo Juan, the parish priest of the town of Aringay, who spent a long time as a missionary in the mountains, told me that several

Igorot women who had been converted to the Christian religion confessed that when they were still single in their own *rancherias*, being unable to satisfy their lust with men . . . had sexual relations with monkeys.

De Mas concludes his essay with the suggestion that the Spanish colonial authorities buy these "pagans" for the princely sum of twenty or thirty pesos each, distribute them in the lowlands where they could be put to work in rice or tobacco fields, and "at the end of forty or fifty years, what with one attracting the other, they will come to accept our yoke and appreciate the advantages of civilization."

**Paul Proust de la Gironiere: "Journey to the Igorots" from *Twenty Years in the Philippines***

Benito Legarda y Hernandez, who wrote the introduction to the Filipiniana Book Guild's edition of the Gironiere work, says that *Twenty Years in the Philippines* was probably the bestselling book on the Philippines in the 19th century. This may be inferred from the book's publishing history: two editions of the text in French, an English translation of the earliest French edition published in London and New York, and since then several issuings; in December 1990, a new edition with pen and ink illustrations appeared on the shelves of the local Bookmark chain of stores.

The first edition of Gironiere's book (1853) entitled *Vingt Anees Aux Philippines: Souvenirs de Jala-Jala* published in Paris by Comptoir des Imprimeurs-Unis, contained a rough map, a plate illustration of some Tinguian weapons, and a text without chapter divisions or headings. The English edition, *Twenty Years in the Philippines* (1854) published in New York by Harper and Brothers, contained chapter divisions and headings that more or less provided an ample overview of the text's contents. This edition also had several appendices about the Philippines and about the author, a map, plus various testimonies gathered by Gironiere from friends, whose purpose was to vouch for the truth of the accounts in his book.

In 1855, Gironiere put out an extended edition of the earlier one, calling it *Aventures d'un Gentilhomme Breton aux Iles Philippines* printed in Paris by Comptoir des Imprimeurs-Unis, Lacroix-Comon. This edition is much more replete with detail than the other two editions preceding it. There are chapter divisions, but they are different from the English edition.

Benito Legarda y Hernandez writes that what must have attracted the 19th century reader was Gironiere's "narration of several adventures, at that time considered unusual or bizarre. Among them may be enumerated the killing of man-eating crocodiles, the hunting of wild carabaos, the exploration of caves, and the adventures of those caught in captivity by Moro pirates." Hernandez adds a note of caution, however, as to the veracity of Gironiere's statements: "That almost from the beginning he was forced to defend the truth of his narration" casts uncertain shadows upon the quality of his text. Even Dr. T.H. Pardo de Tavera was supposed to have said of the book, ". . . ha exagerado y fantaseado en lo relativo a su persona, pero nada mas que en eso, porque los hechos que refiere sobre Filipinos y Manila particularmente, que vio y presencio, son de la mas estricta verdad."

Other references expressing doubt over the soundness of Gironiere's text exist in a book written by British officer Henry T. Ellis (1859). Ellis came to the Philippines in 1856 on a six-week furlough and got in touch with Gironiere's close personal friend, M. Vidie.

In the course of a long conversation I [Ellis] had with him [Vidie] respecting Gironiere and his book, hardly one, out of all the many adventures and achievements there recounted, did he remember, or ever seem to have much faith in, although he had been on the island at the time.

It is the sixth chapter of Gironiere's text that interests us here, for this is where Gironiere describes his encounter with the Igorots, their dwellings, superstitions, physical appearance and customs. Gironiere begins with a comparison of Igorot and Tinguian physiognomy (he had earlier visited the Tinguian tribes), noting that in their features and manner of dressing they were remarkably alike, only that "their [the Igorots'] shape was not so handsome as that of the savages I had just left." Next, he relates how he wanted to see the interior of a typical Igorot hut, despite the difficulty of entering through an opening "through which it was impossible to have either ingress or egress, except in crawling on all fours." The results made an unfavorable impression on the Frenchman. Consequently, he wrote, "I found myself within an obnoxious hole, or hovel, a small opening in the summit of which the daylight peeped in and the smoke crept out . . . I soon got out of such a den, from which I was driven by the nauseous smell it contained in its every part, but I had been able to see everything in it."

Another passage in the same chapter describes how Gironiere and his Tagalog slave encounter an Igorot on the trail, carrying four jars of some

kind of meat stew to a village in the north. Gironiere relates that his slave, unable to restrain himself, helped himself to one of the jars and then sent the native packing.

Towards four o'clock we halted to take our repast. This wished-for moment was impatiently expected by my lieutenant, as the savage's jar sent forth a very savoury smell. At last the desired moment arrived. We sat down upon the grass. I stuck my poignard into the jar, which Alila had brought up to the fire, and I withdrew—an entire human hand!

The passage then goes on to describe the horror and distaste that fell upon the countenances of both Gironiere and his companion, and despite the addition of a footnote stating Gironiere's personal inclination to believe that the Igorots were not really cannibals, the above passage must have had a great effect upon its early readers.

**Fray Angel Perez: *Igorots: Geographic and Ethnographic Study of Some Districts of Northern Luzon***

Augustinian priest Angel Perez came to the Philippines in 1884 and eventually took charge of the mission of Cervantes. He later earned a transfer to Bangued, then to Manila and finally to Macao, where he became interim head of a newly established Augustinian house. Returning to Manila in 1901, he served for five more years as historiographer in his order before returning to Spain.

While Fr. Perez was in Macao, he wrote a historical account and catalogue of the governors that had served in Lepanto in the colonial period; he also sought to record the general descriptions of the districts of Lepanto, Bontoc, Tiagan, and Quiangan [Kiangan], and of the "races which populate these districts." The manuscripts were originally entitled "Memoria de la Mision de Cayan" and were published in 1902 by the Manila printing house El Mercantil as *"Igorotes: Estudio geografico y etnografico sobre algunos Distritos del Norte de Luzon."* In the foreword to the English translation (Perez 1988), Scott mentions that the "Memoria" was written to inform Perez's superiors of "pagan needs for the civilizing benefits of Christian conversion." Like most Western authors of this time, Perez is, Scott promises, someone who "neither recognizes nor appreciates Igorot culture and . . . appears to be absolutely obsessed with their uncleanness and nakedness."

Indeed, the text is spattered with Perez's observations on a number of items in Igorot life at the turn of the century (ranging from clothing, to cultural practices and to the effects the educational system operative at the time had upon the natives). Perez writes of thinking "to introduce among them the use of the jacket and short pants," and among women a type of skirt that would not "leave all their features and contours too conspicuous." Elsewhere, he writes about native religious beliefs and practices (such as the propitiation of various nature and ancestor spirits) as "aberrations of the intelligence," thereafter concluding that "their culture is very limited and they do not realize the error in which they live."

A contemporary reader may be more sophisticated than his or her counterpart in the past so that he or she would be less prone to fall under the illusion of infallibility that the written text, through its manipulations of language, is capable of conjuring. But the gentle admonition in the foreword to the reader to "regard his prejudices with more charity than Perez" is in the right place. For Perez's observations, though ample in ethnographic material, are given to the reader in a style that is loose and that tends to meander. Further, because the memoirs and observations are rendered like journal entries that look not only at the *Igorrotes* but also stop to accommodate such notations as "Cadanaanan, its Sewing and Filth," or "Tadian, its Pine Groves," "Poem of Father Tombo," and "The Journey of Weyler and his Fantastic Experiences," the reader can very well be beguiled into taking a less than critical stance in relation to the work.

### **Tage Ellinger: *Friend of the Brave***

Danish-born Tage U.H. Ellinger taught in the University of the Philippines at Diliman during the 1940s and in 1951 volunteered to expand the Philippine collection of Dr. Kaj Birket-Smith (Director of the Ethnographical collection of the Danish National Museum) assisted by a one thousand dollar grant from the Carlsberg Foundation.

In the preface to *Friend of the Brave* (1954), which puts together accounts of most of his expeditions, Ellinger explains that his visits (undertaken with "quite a bit of effort and not a little risk") among the Bontocs, Ifugaos, Kalingas, Palawanos, Abenlens, Negritos and Tausugs were recorded and published out of the desire "to save them from the oblivion that is the fate of stories that are published in papers that are read

today and thrown away tomorrow." That Ellinger has seen his role as that of official spokesman, to the world, for these "headhunters, outlaws and 'wild' people," is echoed in the introduction written by Dr. Jose P. Laurel:

He [Ellinger] has often taken it upon himself to volunteer as spokesman, pleading eloquently for appreciation and understanding of those countrymen of ours who have not participated in the westernization of our majority civilization, but have remained faithful to their ancient Philippine traditions.

The stance that Ellinger takes from the outset is colored with a decidedly missionary feeling, and the title of the book effectively projects its author into the more important role of the fearless hero-adventurer. Because Ellinger has dared to do what few have done—to go amongst people reputed to have killed and taken heads—he can claim the authority to speak of the *other*.

There is indeed a sense of verisimilitude in his accounts. He makes many quite accurate observations about ritual practice, division of labor, and other aspects of economic and social life, and at certain points even defends indigenous practices to outsiders thus: "To apply Christian concepts to a non-Christian way of life is not only stupid but a grave injustice."

However, even here there are interstices where the text admits the tell-tale signs of its author's inescapable involvement in his own subjectivity. Admiring the woven Bontoc cloth, Ellinger reports that "Western civilization can note a victory in having added, at least for most of the younger generation, a blouse and a slip." In the rest of the text, many anecdotes show Ellinger's desire to be invited (or to invite himself) to the houses of the most colorful personalities in the villages he visited: in Banaue to the house of tribal chieftain Ataban who had taken seven heads, in Kalinga and Bontoc to the homes of families engaged in a feud with other villages, in Palawan tracking down, meeting and befriendng the notorious Moro Chieftain Ambilan. From these encounters, Ellinger comes away with various gifts, including one of the skulls taken in a headhunt by Ataban and the glamor of "conquest":

Everybody seemed to think that I was joking or was just plain nuts. I ought to have known that was impossible. No one had ever done it.

Towards the end of the work, in the accounts of his travels in Mindanao, Ellinger offers many suggestions to the Philippine government, includ-

ing turning all of Sulu into a free port and resort town. He notes that people have told him "Too bad that it had to be a foreigner who made the suggestion," but retorts that some foreigners come to the Philippines and fall in love with this country to the extent that they devote their lives to its better future. They have a deep desire to help advancing it and help solving its problems . . . Why not consider such friends as adopted members of the big family and give them the privilege of sharing in the work?

### Conclusion

Cultural anthropology tells us that men and women create images of themselves within the context of the social group. Languages, social systems and institutions are not universally shared; they are the main sources of differences among human beings. Nevertheless, the history of human thought is replete with variations of the idea that the qualities, virtues, values or categories that people assign to things in their personal and social experiences are natural or innate.

The texts briefly examined here articulate certain elements, because according to their authors, they cannot be adequately accommodated or justified within their own ideas about the world and how to establish order in it. Traditionally, the favored presupposition for all analyses was that which proclaimed the "one true way, a single truth privileged above all other truths" (Megill 1985). From medieval times, the world has been viewed as a frontier whose possibilities are not entirely known to man, but which possess an inherent coherence and justification that Reason (and Science and Progress) will finally make visible.

From the contemporary viewpoint, we can understand that "to compare across cultures is like trying to compare the worth of primitive currencies where no common standard of value applies." However, we also see that the authors examined here have merely been reflecting in their own discursive practices the manner in which their social environment has been used to assigning categories to things. Part of this activity necessarily involves structuring and defining the world in terms of "possibilities of remoteness or nearness of other humans" (Said 1984).

And yet, in a way, these authors could not help what they were doing. Since Aristotle, the philosophical tradition in the West has been grounded upon the question "Who am I?" and has taken as its motif the journey of the ego outward to find itself, with its ultimate return being always to itself.

The scorn and bafflement which may be displayed in such texts, for the people who are their subject matter, must be evaluated against historical facts; they must also be examined against other documents like native literature, rituals, and other forms of material culture. But, seen on their own, the Western texts, even prior to any activity of continually shifting analysis between text and context, document and history, or east and west, have already revealed cracks and discrepancies pointing to their inability to thoroughly contain or suppress the reality which in their discourse has been assigned as the other. It is not that the Western texts have completely shut out with blinders the signs that positively indicate that the Cordillera people had a complex and meaningful cultural life, history, sets of metaphysical and legal codes. The single fact of their exclusion or dismissal from the Western analyses would in itself indicate that the difference has already been acknowledged and recognized by the authors. The attempt to resolve them, however, has gone only so far as the level(s) at which they could be admitted or dismissed within the white man's perspective. As Derrida reflects, "there is no language so vigilant or self-aware that it can effectively escape the conditions placed upon thought by its own prehistory and ruling metaphysic" (Megill 1985).

The activity of deconstructing these Western texts on the Igorot shows how we might look at the processes through which meanings are made possible and given life in texts, and how they are premised on the subjects who formed them. More than this, the activity offers the promise of reglimpsing the other through the cracks of discourse, and of how this other might also act as a mirror to throw its own light upon that to which it is by definition so intimately related.

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