

Pilipinx becoming, punk rock pedagogy, and the new materialism

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This paper employs the new materialist methodology of diffraction to probe the entanglements of matter and discourse that comprise the assemblage of Pilipinx becoming, or the ways by which people are racialized as Pilipinx. By methodologically diffracting Pilipinx becoming through the public pedagogy of punk rock, this research complicates standard stories of Pilipinx identity to provoke more generative encounters with the Pilipinx diaspora in Oceania. As new materialist theory holds that social life is produced by aggregations of related events, it rejects the notion that ontological becoming is dictated by immutable systemic or structural realities. This application of new materialist ontology contributes to understandings of relationality by demonstrating how Pilipinx identity emerges out of processes of relational becoming comprised of co-constitutive discourses, movements, and materialities of human and nonhuman origin. This approach troubles conceptions of Pilipinx becoming which propose that Pilipinx bodies are racialized through the imposition of colonial mentalities and broadens these theorizations by approaching Pilipinx becoming as a relational process in which coloniality plays a part. This relational conceptualization of Pilipinx becoming is informed by how punk rock, when framed as a form of education, complicates dominant understandings of the contexts, conditions, and capacities of Pilipinx bodies. In so doing, it demonstrates how public pedagogies and alternative approaches to education transform affect economies which produce the material conditions of gendered and racialized oppression.

Keywords: Philippine diaspora; relationality new materialism; punk; decolonization

OCEANIC RELATIONALITIES, AGENTIAL REALISM, AND PUNK ROCK PEDAGOGY

With populations of over 300,000 in Australia and over 40,000 in New Zealand, the Pilipinx¹ community is becoming increasingly visible in a multicultural Oceania. The Pilipinx diaspora, however, is not adequately theorized by frameworks predicated upon assumptions of tensions between settler/indigene, Western/non-Western, or English

¹ Pilipinx, Filipina/o, or Pin@y are interchangeable terms used to represent people of Philippine origin. Writers use these terms per their own contexts (Nievera-Lozano, 2018). I have chosen to use *Pilipinx* because the letter *F* is not used in *baybayin*, the native script upon which the Philippine alphabet is based. The sound of the letter *F*, however, is present in other indigenous Philippine languages, such as Ifugao and Kalinga (Almario, 2013). Nievera-Lozano (2018) also calls “for the use of the *x* . . . to be inclusive of people who identify as transgender, genderqueer, or non-binary” (p. 1).

speaking/non-English speaking. The history of colonialism in the Philippines, in particular, distinguishes the contemporary and historical contexts of diasporic Pilipinx from other Asian migrant groups, as they have greater familiarity with Western culture and the English language. Seventy-six percent of Pilipinx, for example, understand spoken English (Social Weather Systems, 2008) while Hong Kong, a former British colony, has an English speaking population of 53% (Census and Statistics Department, 2016). Still, the treatment of Pilipinx as outsiders in other countries often correlates to social ostracization and racial abuse, including in Australia and New Zealand (Bonifacio, 2009; Eisen, 2011; 2018; Espinosa, 2017). Relational frameworks therefore offer more generative means of theorizing Pilipinx becoming in Oceania as they allow for the consideration of material, discursive, and educative subjectivities as constitutive elements of identity formation.

Such frameworks allow for the complication of standard stories, or stereotypes that affect how nondominant groups are treated and perceived. As the standard story goes, Pilipinx are *alipin ng mundo*—a Tagalog phrase meaning “servants of the world” or “servants of globalization” (Bonifacio, 2009). The framing of Pilipinx as servants is a racialized construction for, as bell hooks (2003) writes, “the very notion that we are here to *serve them* is itself an expression of white supremacist thinking. Embedded in this notion of service is that no matter what the status of the person of colour, that position must be reconfigured to the greater good of whiteness” (p. 33, emphasis added). The conception of Pilipinx as *alipin ng mundo* should, therefore, be confronted as a consequence of colonialism, white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, misogyny, and economic exploitation as opposed to a genetic trait. In spite of this, Pilipinx becoming is rife with resistance, solidarity-building, activism, consciousness-raising, and joy (Bonifacio, 2009). Becoming Pilipinx, as such, is not a product of dialectical tension but a lifelong process of embodying “the material multiplicity of self, the way it is diffracted across spaces, times, realities, imaginaries” (Barad, 2014, p. 175). This paper analyses and assembles the material-discursive constituency of Pilipinx becoming before *diffracting* this assemblage through the public pedagogy of punk rock.

Punk rock is herein conceptualized as an alternative and self-directed educative context in which participants teach, learn, and produce knowledge pertaining to the historical contexts and contemporary experiences of marginalized people (Cordova, 2017; Romero, 2016; 2018). As practised by diasporic Pilipinx, punk rock pedagogy, or the educative processes that mediate one’s eventual self-identification as a *punk*, demonstrates the capacity of education to disrupt the proliferation of discriminatory material, discursive, and social relations. As such, the public pedagogy of punk is conceptualized herein as an exertion of power that unsettles aggregations of events that produce the assembled relations of racism, sexism, and coloniality. By exploring how punk rock pedagogy broadens conceptions of what it means to inhabit a Pilipinx body, this paper demonstrates how alternative approaches to teaching and learning are central to processes of relational becoming. Diffracting Pilipinx identity formation through punk rock pedagogy, moreover, demonstrates how relationality (rather than essentialism, absolutism, or determinism) is the organizing principle of identity formation and, by extension, of social change.

PUNK CULTURE AS AN EDUCATIVE MEANS OF RESISTIVE BECOMING

This paper's use of punk rock pedagogy to diffract the assemblage of Pilipinx becoming is rooted in my own educative becoming as a Pilipinx punk. My *conscientizacao*, Freire's (2018) term for the development of a critical consciousness, began not in the classroom but in dilapidated concert halls and during late nights spent listening to songs like Anti-Flag's "Red White & Brainwashed" and Bikini Kill's "George Bush is a Pig". As an undergraduate, the work of Pilipinx-American punk bands like Signal 3, Eskapo, and Digma provided vital and visceral context for concepts I encountered in Philippine Studies courses, such as colonial mentality, anti-miscegenation laws, and the Bataan death march. Most importantly, I learned, through punk rock, that opposition does not end with critique. Instead, punk identity requires a lived commitment to egalitarian ways of knowing, being, and becoming "part of the world" (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2017, p. 123).

This experience is not unique to me: the theorization of punk as a public, community-responsive, and decolonizing pedagogy is established in educational literature. While popularly identified with loud music and outlandish fashion, punk culture is more appropriately understood as the social practice of developing oppositional orientations towards dominant culture (Dunn, 2016). Through art, music, and community engagement, punks often learn iteratively about injustice and inequality and then shift the onus of transforming oppressive conditions away from the state and onto themselves. As Dunn (2016) writes:

Instead of passively accepting the world as it is, punk inspires people to do something about it on a *personal* level. Don't wait for someone else to fix what bothers you—do it yourself. Or, as the oft-quoted punk slogan goes *do it yourself or do it with friends*". (p. 38)

I have, elsewhere, conceptualized punk rock pedagogy (PRP) by theorizing that becoming *punk* is an educative process that consists of three pillars: 1) historically and community-responsive analyses of the material conditions of oppression, 2) the use of punk music as a historical and theoretical framework for contextualizing this historical inquiry, and 3) actions undertaken in solidarity with marginalized people, with particular emphasis on black, indigenous, and person-of-colour (BIPOC) communities, the LGBTQ community, and the working class (Romero, 2016).

Despite the presence of white supremacist and heteronormative discourses in punk rock, punk culture's foundational commitment to opposition allows punks from non-dominant groups to openly challenge these hegemonic agencies and build autonomous networks that better reflect their ontological and educative goals (Duncombe & Tremblay, 2011). Douglas (2017) notes that, for indigenous punks in Aotearoa New Zealand, "punk is a cultural forum housing abilities to include politicized emphases that can encourage indigenous expression and identity" (p. 87). Participation in the public pedagogy of punk rock, moreover, engenders what Cordova (2017) terms "educative healing", in which the process of knowledge creation allows learners to resist, interrogate, and ultimately unlearn oppressive discourses and behaviours. Diffracting the assemblages of the Pilipinx diaspora through the PRP, therefore, portends the insurrection of subjugated knowledge pertaining to the affective relational capacities of being and becoming Pilipinx.

ON DIFFRACTION: NEW MATERIALIST SOCIAL INQUIRY AS A DECOLONIZING METHODOLOGY

In order to engage the seemingly disparate discourses of the Pilipinx diaspora, PRP, and Oceanic relationality, this paper operationalizes Barad's (2007) conception of agential realism. As a methodological endeavour, agential realism proffers "a causal explanation of how discursive practices are related to material phenomena" (Barad, 2007, p. 45). Agential realism holds that *agencies* (such as people, things, and ideas) "form through relation" (Chang, 2018, p. 854) and can only be differentiated by the nature of their relationships to other materialities and discourses. The relational dynamics out of which agencies emerge are, therefore, *intra-active* as opposed to interactive, which suggests contact without transfiguration (Barad, 2007). New materialist social inquiry then draws from Deleuzo-Guattarian ontology to refer to the totality of an agency's entangled intra-actions as its *assemblage* (Bennett, 2010; Fox and Alldred, 2015). In the flat ontology of new materialism, change occurs simply when new agencies or intra-actions are introduced to assemblages and the exercise of *power* is simply "a momentary exercise of affectivity by one relation over another" (Fox & Alldred, 2017, p. 180).

Analyses of assemblages occur by *diffraction*, or by introducing material or philosophical obstructions that reveal how an agency works and why. Diffractive methodology "is not setting up one approach/text/discipline against another but rather a detailed, attentive and careful reading of the ideas of one through another, leading to more generative and inventive provocations" (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2017, p. 115). Barad's (2007) own use of diffraction, for example, enables her to disrupt accepted orthodoxies in quantum physics by reading them through queer and feminist theories.

Like all things, Pilipinx becoming is an assemblage of entangled material and discursive agencies. These include cultural subjectivities like cuisine, sport, art, history, and kinship ties. But an agential realist account of the assemblage Pilipinx becoming might also include the physical movements of gendered and racialized bodies traversing national borders and the legal, social, cultural, and historical frameworks that shape how diasporic Pilipinxs are treated and racialized abroad.

Theorizing Pilipinx becoming might, therefore, begin with analyses of the Philippines' role in global capitalism, given the influence that economic concerns exert upon Pilipinx bodies. Per world systems analysis, the Philippines is a *peripheral* nation whose role in the global economy is to provide raw materials to postindustrial, or *core*, nations (Navarro, 1982). This conscription of the Philippines and its people as servants to Western development can, moreover, be interpreted as a contemporary manifestation of the Philippines' history of colonial subjugation. Philippine colonization began 1521, when the islands first fell under Spanish rule and continued in various forms until 1942, when the Philippines gained independence from the US (Nadeau, 2008). The vestiges of colonization in the Philippines include the ongoing influence of the Roman Catholic Church, national systems of government and education that are organizationally identical to those of the US, and the concentration of power and capital among an elite group of families of European descent (Iglesias, 2003).

The most enduring psychological legacy of colonialism in the Philippines, however, is the prevalence of a colonial mentality, which:

[C]onsists of the following components: (a) characterizing Filipino culture as inferior to Western culture, (b) emulating Western culture to distance oneself from being Filipino, and (c) believing that colonization was imperative for the Philippines to become a civilized nation. (Eisen, 2018, p. 4)

Per David and Okazaki (2010), colonial mentality is the central agency that defines what it means to be from and of the Philippines. By measuring Pilipinxs' implicit negative attitudes towards their own race, David and Okazaki (2010) provide evidence in support of the automaticity of colonial mentality among Pilipinx-Americans, or the "automatic association of pleasantness, superiority, and desirability to American culture, and an automatic association of unpleasantness, inferiority, and undesirability to Filipino culture" (p. 855). David and Okazaki (2010) go on to implicate both historical colonialism and ongoing discrimination against Pilipinxs as integral to the perpetuation and automaticity of colonial mentality. Because the duration and severity of colonialism in the Philippines has affected Pilipinx becoming in ways that do not apply to most other Asian groups, scholars have noted the importance of understanding the uniqueness of the Pilipinx experience and of disaggregating Pilipinx contexts from pan-Asian generalisations (Ong & Viernes, 2013).

But in order for deepened relationalities to emerge out of theorizing Pilipinx becoming, it is necessary to "think about differences that matter" (Barad, 2007, p. 72) and to complicate the assemblage even further. The labour of deepening Oceanic relationalities by diffracting Pilipinx experiences might include mutually beneficial ends, such as: more harmonious interpersonal relations between Pilipinxs and other communities in Oceania; heightened awareness among Pilipinxs of the cultures and histories of Oceanic states; and combating the "intergenerational downward mobility" with regard to the economic attainment of Pilipinx immigrants (Ong & Viernes, 2013, p. 22). Momentous indeed are the implications of theorizing how Pilipinx identity emerges and the ways by which these emergences can be made to work differently.

A NOTE ON DATA COLLECTION: TEXT AS SENSE-EVENTS

This paper's attempt at reading and diffracting new materialist ontology, Pilipinx becoming, and PRP through one another is anchored by the cultural production of three diasporic Pilipinx punk bands: Dispossessed, Material Support, and AninoKo. In order to compile a data set that attests to the PRP of these bands, I first collected the lyrics of every song from each band's two most current releases into a digital reference document. I then transcribed the lyrics of songs that were not published online or in the liner notes of the bands' physical releases (solely for research purposes). This focus on lyrics is informed by Kranke, Brown, Danesh, and Watson's (2016) conceptualization of song lyrics as a source of data that allows researchers "to engage in learning material that is relevant, up-to-date, and reflective of contemporary events and issues" (p. 234). Next, I augmented the reference document with interview transcriptions and texts attesting to each band's goals and objectives (i.e. the "About" sections on their respective websites).

This data was then sorted into analytical codes grouped along the primary themes of assimilation, feminism, diaspora, solidarity, immigration, indigeneity, and resistance. I then "read" literature which documented and theorized the Pilipinx experience in Australia, New Zealand, and each band's local context "through" these coded texts to consider how they might "close down any capacities or open them up" (Fox & Alldred, 2017, p. 183). I defined "capacities" as *sense-events*, or material-discursive possibilities

which emerge out of the “never-ending enfolding of non-human, human, practices, objects, affect, motility, discourse, nature, smells, sound, and other earthly elements” (Allen, 2018, p. 45). The purpose of reading data, affects, and affective capacities as sense-events was to make explicit that the objective of this inquiry was to discern the composition of assembled relations (such as “Pilipinx becoming” or “Oceanic relationality”) which consist of both human and nonhuman agencies. Because new materialist ontology holds that “power has continuity only as long as it is replicated in the next event” (Fox & Alldred, 2017, p. 180), this mode of post-human ontology offers a comprehensive means of theorizing how oppressive practices can be disrupted, as it recognizes that the affects that ultimately alter a given assemblage may not be products of human activity. As such, the decentring of human beings and their concerns is integral to the ability of education research to theorize disruptions of assembled relations whose repeated aggregations result in human suffering. The analyses presented below, therefore, demonstrate how PRP—as a diffractive apparatus—“make[s] evident the entangled structure of the changing and contingent ontology” (Barad, 2007, p. 73) of the Pilipinx diaspora in Oceania.

**“THEY DO NOT ASSIMILATE”:
PILIPINX RESISTANCE TO STANDARD STORIES IN OCEANIA**

Examples in both popular and scholarly Oceanic discourse suggest a belief that, while Pilipinx do often assimilate to the dominant cultures of Australia and New Zealand, they can only do so by subjugating their own cultural identities. The Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS), for example, concludes that Pilipinx in Australia “are making an effort to forge compromises between their values and the prevailing Australian mores” (Soriano, 1995, p. 118). While the AIFS report is over two decades old, its framing of Pilipinx and Australian values as intrinsically at-odds continues to inform race relations in Australia, where “despite the high rates of English language skill, labour participation rates and higher qualifications, Filipinos register much lower rates in skilled managerial, professional or trade occupations, only 39% compared to the Australian average at 48%” (Espinosa, 2017, p. 68).

The assumed perfidiousness of Asian and, by extension, Pilipinx values is more explicitly reflected in Queensland Senator Pauline Hanson’s lament that “I believe we are in danger of being swamped by Asians. They have their own culture and religion, form ghettos and do not assimilate” (quoted in Martino, 2016). Allegations of racism (Remeikis, 2019) have done little to curb Hanson’s power, as her One Nation party garners support by espousing the view that “unabated multiculturalism could only be successful at the expense of silencing the voices of long-time (white) Australians” (Espinosa, 2017, p. 23). However, Montayre, Neville and Holroyd’s (2017) quantitative study on the narratives of older Pilipinx migrants adjusting to life in New Zealand troubles Hanson’s fears by noting that “Filipino migrants adjust to living in Western society by a complex process of learning to speak and understand English, as well as assimilating their religious beliefs and practices into their host countries” (p. 6). This finding should be of little surprise given that 94% of religious Pilipinx identify as Christian (Miller, n.d.) and English is one of two official languages of the Philippines (*Philippine Constitution*, art. XIV § 7.). But as long as orientalist characterizations inform how Pilipinx are racialized and treated in Australia and New Zealand, no amount of assimilative effort will afford diasporic Pilipinx a sense of belonging in those countries (Siar, 2014).

Diffraction tensions between the Pilipinx diaspora and the dominant cultures of Oceania through PRP, however, reveals more productive agencies, linkages, provocations, and possibilities within the assemblage of Pilipinx-Oceanic social relations. In particular, the Sydney hardcore punk band Dispossessed complicates the discourses of Pilipinx migration and becoming in Australia by asserting that Pilipinx themselves are capable of deciding what constitutes “belonging”. Dispossessed’s music, lyrics, and actions demonstrate this alternative conception of what it means to be a diasporic Pilipinx in Australia by asserting that the assimilative responsibility of diasporic Pilipinx is not to the dominant culture at all. Instead, Dispossessed’s work maintains that migrant communities should be accountable to the rightful and traditional owners of their adopted land.

Comprised of Aboriginal and immigrant Australians whose vocalist, Harry Bonifacio Baughan, is a first-generation Australian-Filipino, Dispossessed questions the notions that a) Pilipinx cannot be truly home in Australia and that b) white Australians get to decide who does. Dispossessed demarcate their allegiances in the “About” section on their official website, which asks the following questions of media members:

*Do I acknowledge that this publication exists on stolen land?
Do I give a voice to indigenous writers and artists?
Is Dispossessed the first and only indigenous band I will ever support?
Is my idea for a piece giving them space to help their cause or do I just want a slice of them to satisfy my capitalistic, colonial and egocentric agenda?
Thank you.
(Dispossessed, 2018)*

In a 2018 interview with the news outlet SBS Filipino, Baughan describes how learning to write and play music with Dispossessed made him realise that “white Australia isn’t going to serve our needs... they’re never going to hand over any liberation. They’re never going to willingly dismantle the structures that make them beneficiaries. It’s our moral duty to be closer to the people whose land it actually is” (Violata, 2018). Later in the interview, Baughan renders his commitment to indigenous and immigrant solidarity through the lyrics of an unreleased and untitled Dispossessed song:

*Awakening from the deepest sleep
What we see is not a dream
From the concrete, from the street
A new world blossoming
(Violata, 2018)*

If the automaticity of colonial mentality represents “the deepest sleep,” consciously deciding to exercise influence over one’s racialized becoming represents an “awakening.” By explicitly centering their art around the needs and historical contexts of Aboriginal Australians, Baughan suggests that immigrants need not be concerned with assimilation, pleasing those in power, or proving the likes of Pauline Hanson wrong. What diasporic Pilipinx are truly responsible for is the “new world blossoming”, by casting aside the colonized thought patterns of the old world and complicating conceptions of the ultimate purpose of the Pilipinx diaspora.

But music alone cannot lead to a new world blossoming. Dispossessed’s music, therefore, informs and inspires direct actions undertaken in solidarity with Aboriginal communities. In early 2019, for example, the band used their platform to raise funds to purchase water filters in response to a drought in Collaranebri, New South Wales, which forced the

region's Indigenous communities to drink water from contaminated bores (Allam, 2019). Per punk's do-it-yourself ethos, the members of Dispossessed also travelled to Collaranebri to install the water filters themselves. As a diasporic Pilipinx, Baughan's work with Dispossessed suggests that his participation in the pedagogy and praxis of punk complicated the colonial assemblage of his Pilipinx-Australian becoming. The Pilipinx identity that emerged from Baughan's encounters with art, history, migration, and discourse was not that of a servant of the world, but a servant of the people.

RESISTIVE PILIPINX (P)EMINISMS

Women in the Pilipinx diaspora face intersecting risk factors, which expose them to multifarious forms of violence and exploitation (Bonifacio, 2009; Espinosa, 2017; Parreñas, 2015). Following gendered flows of migration, the majority of diasporic Pilipinas relocate to countries with demand for low-wage work in the healthcare sector and as domestic helpers (Parreñas, 2005; Bonifacio, 2009, Parreñas, 2015). But due to the high number of women who migrate to Australia and New Zealand to marry white men (Bonifacio, 2009; Espinosa, 2017), the predominant characterization of Pilipinas in Oceania is through the sexualized pejorative "mail-order bride":

Embodied as racialized, sexualized, and submissive wives, Filipino marriage migrants are susceptible to abuse and violence... All too often, they have been portrayed as if they were trapped in time, hapless victims without agency to negotiate their marginality and subordination, let alone exercise citizenship. (Bonifacio, 2009, p. 1)

Bonifacio (2009) notes that Pilipinas in Oceania bear the overlapping burdens of racism, misogyny, the devaluation of women's labour, and the widespread perception that they are helpless to change or even fathom their circumstances. These discursive entanglements coalesce into material realities defined by physical, mental, sexual, and economic abuse (Espinosa, 2017; Marsh, 2019).

Music, however, has long been a medium through which women in vulnerable social positionalities have confronted misconceptions of their agency while unpacking the reality of their circumstances, as Angela Y. Davis (1998) explored in *Blues legacies, and black feminism*. Bessie Smith's "Yes, Indeed He Do", for example, contrasts it's narrator's violent home life with sardonic vocals, playful instrumentation, and absurd imagery:

*And when I ask him where he's been, he grabs a rocking chair
Then he knocks me down and says, "It's just a little love lick, dear"
I don't have to do no work except to wash his clothes
And darn his socks and press his pants and scrub the kitchen floor
I wouldn't take a million for sweet, sweet daddy Jim
And I wouldn't give a quarter for another man like him
Gee, ain't it great to have a man that's crazy over you?
Oh, do my sweet, sweet daddy love me? Yes, indeed he do
(Davis, 1998, p. 255)*

Smith's performance demonstrates "that the victim does not cower before the batterer but rather challenges his right to assault her with impunity" (Davis, 1998, p. 29). The tradition of feminist musicking pioneered by early blues singers continues in punk rock, a community understood to be dominated by white men but in which women of colour have been highly influential for four decades (Bag, 2015). Like the complex black women of

Bessie Smith's blues, Pilipina punks refuse to let stereotypes essentialize them. They are the complex protagonists of their own stories, fully capable of dictating their fates without trivializing their circumstances.

Material Support, a “Filipina-fronted agit punk band from NYC, agitated by state repression, government corruption, and patriarchy” (Material Support, 2018) exercise PRP as a means of asserting Pilipina agency. Material Support's lyrics, penned by Pilipina songwriter Jackie Mariano, are explicitly antiauthoritarian and represent a Pilipinx psychology in which colonial mentality is replaced with a Freirean (2018) sense of community-responsive critical consciousness. Mariano demonstrates her conscientization in the song “Manarchist Brocialist,” which calls for the violent destruction of the very agencies that exploit diasporic Pilipinas. For Material Support, learning and creating in the educative healing space of punk culture allows for the cultivation of a Pilipina psychology that is anything but helpless:

Manarchist, Brocialist
Fuck your autonomy
When it's an excuse
To manhandle me
Smash the patriarchy, transmisogyny
Hetero- and homo-normativity
Smash it now
 (Material Support, 2016)

Like “Yes, Indeed He Do”, “Manarchist Brocialist” challenges men's feelings of entitlement towards the bodies of women, even when those men espouse progressive values. “Know Your Rights” demonstrates an even more fully formed feminist conscientization by serving as a polemical against police brutality and a guide for persons-of-colour interacting with police:

You don't gotta talk to no fucking cop
But if you have to talk to the cops
Be firm and assertive
Why did you stop me?
Do you have reasonable suspicion?
Officer, please give me your badge number
 (Material Support, 2018)

Here, Mariano directly challenges the patriarchy alluded to in “Manarchist Brocialist” by making it *matter*, or by giving patriarchal power a body (and even a badge number). For Mariano, smashing the patriarchy begins with refusing to cower before its capacity for violence. Instead, she insists the police officer be held accountable to *her*. Mariano's discursive unsettling of power relations between Pilipinas and patriarchal authority contradicts perceptions of Pilipinx as servants and Pilipinas as even less than that (Bonifacio, 2009; Espinosa, 2017). Pilipina punks, like Mariano, are, instead, agitators, activists, and themselves authority figures in their communities.

Like Dispossessed, Material Support are more concerned with community-responsiveness than assimilation and their social practice is not limited to music. All of the band's members are community organizers who coordinate protest actions against human rights abuses in the Philippines. Mariano and guitarist Miles Ashton also founded their own civil rights and immigration law firm, through which they conduct pro-bono work on behalf of the National Lawyers Guild (Mariano Ashton PPLC, 2019). Material Support are members of the Pilipinx diaspora, but instead of striving to serve and

assimilate, the community-responsive pedagogies and praxes of punk allow them to embody divergent Pilipina futures and feminisms.

DO IT YOURSELF OR DO IT WITH FRIENDS: PUNK CULTURE AS A RACIAL COUNTERSPACE

As a peripheral economic nation, the Philippines' chief export is *people* (Dudwick, 2011; Parreñas, 2015). Perceptions of Pilipinxs abroad are, in turn, moulded by stereotypes of Pilipinxs as a desperate lot whose families are sustained by comparatively meagre wages from industrialized nations (Espinosa, 2017, pp. 101-102). This discourse then inflames perceptions that Pilipinxs are happy to be exploited abroad because staying home would mean starvation or death (Parreñas, 2015).

Though organizations such as Migrante Aotearoa advocate for Pilipinx workers in the New Zealand, belief in the innate otherness of Pilipinxs has fuelled incidences of racial abuse (Kireby, 2019; Small, 2018). In the face of racist violence, punk culture provides punks-of-colour the opportunity to transform their lives into “racial counterspaces, which can provide individuals with avenues to critically examine their racial experiences and identities” (Eisen, 2018, p. 12). Educative racial counterspaces informed by punk culture include workshops convened to discuss global and local politics, the composition of art and music, community organizing, volunteer work, protest actions, and direct advocacy work on behalf of the unhoused and economically disadvantaged, such as the free lunch programs provided by Food Not Bombs (Romero, 2016). The work of AninoKo, “a fast hardcore punk band composed of four Filipino immigrants” whose songs are “about the immigrant experience and the issues facing the Filipino community” (AninoKo, 2018), demonstrates how the educative healing of Pilipinx punk provides Pilipinxs onto-epistemological armour against interpersonal, institutional, and self-inflicted denigrations of their racial identity.

AninoKo's lyrics are sung exclusively in Pilipino and contain explicit critiques of power, white supremacy, and global capitalism. “Anak Diaspora,” for example, implicates the corruption of Philippine politicians and moneyed elites as the root of Pilipinx suffering (translations, provided by AninoKo, in brackets):

*Ang mga tao [All the people]
at mga trapo [and all the corrupt politicians]
na nagnanakaw ng pera [that rob the people of money]
Sila'y kalaban [They are the enemy]
na yumayaman [getting rich]
mula sa ating dugo [off the blood we shed]
(AninoKo, 2016)*

Like the police officer in Material Support's “Know Your Rights”, AninoKo relates discursive phenomena to corporal forms—“the people” who shed blood but are still robbed of money by “the corrupt politicians”—to demonstrate the material consequences of economic exploitation.

“Tangina Mo Trump” similarly makes discourses of power and privilege *matter*, by giving these discourses a body; that of US President Donald Trump. When vocalist Ruperto Estanislao screams “*Tang ina white power mo!*” (Motherfuck your white power!), he conveys a perception that Trump's rise to power emerged from entanglements inverse to his own becoming as working class Pilipinx immigrant. To Estanislao, Trump

possesses generational wealth instead of generational trauma and “white power” instead of automatized colonial mentality. Estanislao himself posits that the ruinous influence of white power in the Philippines is a foundational agency in the assemblage of the Pilipinx diaspora:

I think it's important to understand why we're leaving the Philippines in such mass numbers. I went back [to the Philippines] in 2009 and since 2009, I can't count how many people are now in Dubai, Canada, the UK, Istanbul, everywhere, man. Americans will be like “well, your economy can't sustain you, blah blah blah”. But centuries upon centuries of intervention from the West, not only military-wise, but psychologically, education-wise, it really does force you to leave. (Estanislao, personal communication, 2014)

To Estanislao, Donald Trump is not just a politician but an inevitability of imperialism and white supremacy. These same ideologies inform affect economies whose aggregate effects are the continued exploitation the Philippines, its land, and its people. It is for this reason that AninoKo ends “Tangina Mo Trump” with a vulgar release of contempt (translation in brackets):

*Tang ina mo! [motherfuck you!]
Trump!
(AninoKo, 2016)*

AninoKo's screeds against corruption in the Philippines and white supremacy in the US reflect the resistive psychology Estanislao developed through his participation in punk culture, demonstrating the pedagogies of educative healing intrinsic to punk's countercultural production. Where global capitalism and world systems relegate Pilipinx to “racialized social systems that denigrate Filipino culture and identity and encourage one to disassociate from being Filipino” (Eisen, 2018, p. 4), AninoKo use PRP to derive resistive and resilient ontologies from Pilipinx culture and history.

Like *Dispossessed* and *Material Support*, AninoKo's art informs the practice and activism of its members, who have dedicated their lives outside of music to organizations such as the Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines, Migrante, and Bayan US. AninoKo's members also expand the possibilities of Pilipinx becoming themselves by operating a record label exclusively for Pilipinx punk bands, Aklasan Records, and the only annual Pilipinx punk festival in the US, Aklasan Fest. Through the label and festival, the members of AninoKo create spaces for Pilipinx punks to share knowledge, create shared meaning, and redefine the affective capacities of Pilipinx becoming.

CONCLUSION

In her keynote presentation at OCIES 2018, Prof. Joanna Kidman calls upon Oceanic scholars to embody *docta spes*: the “educated hope” that decolonizing international and comparative education will “deny the power of the colonizer – that relentless, hectoring voice- passed on through settler-colonial generation after generation” (Kidman, 2018, p. 7). One way to deny the power of the coloniser is to refuse to engage with the world in colonial terms and by refuting colonial taxonomies that shunt people and ideas into binary, oppositional, and fixed categories (Hoskins, 2017). Colonial hierarchies have defined Pilipinx becoming for long enough, as the Spanish-Filipino caste system separated Pilipinx into categories—*peninsulares*, *insulares*, *mestizos*, and *indios*—that institutionalized access to power as a function of Spanish ancestry (Nadeau, 1992). Instead of reforming these binaries to be more inclusive, new materialist social inquiry

and PRP alike dare us to engage with material-discursive phenomena in ways that not only theorize change but demand it.

If nothing else, diffracting the Pilipinx diaspora through PRP proves that Pilipinxs can be punks and punks can be Pilipinxs. If one can be Pilipinx *and* punk, Pilipinxs cannot *only* be feckless servants of globalization or destitute victims of circumstance in need of (more) salvation. The conceit that Pilipinxs can be punks, entrepreneurs, change agents, or scholars is too complex for theorizations in which Pilipinxs can only be *the oppressed*, forever indebted to *the oppressor* for our very existence. In this manner, diffractive and agential theorizations of Pilipinx becoming echo Hoskins' (2017) provocation for critical theory to avoid essentializing Māori as victims and instead account for the multiplicity of self and the relationality of becoming:

We theorise about the struggle against oppression and about victimisation, dominating power structures, colonising western knowledge, deficit thinking - but we don't *behave* that way. Most often we don't act like victims but are courageous, relational, and engaging. We step up and face others rather than disengage or throw things from behind colonial lines.s (p. 104)

Yet the automaticity of colonial mentality shows that Pilipinx becoming has been transfigured by five centuries of violent subjugation and that the ongoing traumas of colonialism require immediate reckoning. Still, this mission is underserved by theoretical essentialisations of Pilipinx victimhood or otherness, which offer little space for nuanced characterizations, resistive psychologies, emergent feminisms, narratives of collective and individual resilience, or acts of joyful rebellion. Unlike “colonizing logic whereby the ‘self’ maintains and stabilizes itself by eliminating or dominating what it takes to be the other” (Barad, 2014, p. 169), diffracting the Pilipinx diaspora through the educative healing of PRP illuminates the complex situatedness of Pilipinxs in Oceania. Instead of drawing colonial battle lines anew, let us instead “figure difference differently” (Barad, 2014, p. 170) and silence what Kidman (2018) calls “the colonizer’s hectoring voice”, which continues to squeal and beckon wherever Pilipinxs hazard to tread.

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