

Exploring the nuances of Philippine's sense of self and identity in living beyond boundaries: A life challenge for humanity of our time
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Abstract

This study explored the nuances of Philippine's sense of self and identity in living beyond boundaries and what that holds for humanity today. The study also identified how Philippine's lived experiences of going to the frontiers resonated with her sisters of the Religious of the Society of the Sacred Heart in Uganda /Kenya province, East Africa. Document review was conducted on existing written documents to obtain secondary data on the nuances of Philippine's sense of self and identity in living beyond boundaries. Qualitative research was used to obtain primary data from eight (8) RSCJ members who were purposively sampled according to different ranges of religious life lived experience. This was done by use of in-depth interviews. Document review data was analyzed thematically while the Voice- Centered Relational (VCR) method was used to analyze data from interview narratives. Findings revealed that Philippine's sense of self and identity in living beyond boundaries ranged from being a woman of generosity, spontaneous, impulsive, courageous, determined and undeterred, a woman of deep friendships, communion, radical living of the gospel values, hopeful and resilient, patient and persistent in the face of disappointments, humble, engaged in the apostolate of being in the face of failure to learn the language, servant leadership. However, there were also nuances of fear, anxiety, frustrations, uncertainties, loneliness, helplessness, and feelings of incompetence in leadership. Most of Philippine's experiences resonated with her RSCJ sisters except for certain circumstances like Philippine never returned home for life while RSCJ reported returning home for holidays. None of the RSCJ went through extreme harsh weather, magnitude of poor transport and meagre resources in mission like Philippine. Findings also revealed that some issues Philippine struggled to change such as hopelessness, exploitation of the poor by the rich, human trafficking, poverty and lack of education for all not just the privileged few still exist today. This depicts that Philippine was very much a woman a head of her time.

Key words: Nuances, sense of self and identity, living beyond boundaries, challenge, humanity

Introduction

Nuances are very important insights into the experiences of any individual's story, such as Philippine's inner life in living beyond boundaries. Nuances refer to a small difference in feeling or meaning in whatever the person says or writes about such as Philippine. The full meaning of nuances can only become apparent by careful observation of what the person says or writes; and can only be fully appreciated and understood by someone with experience and knowledge on that issue.¹ This is a call to which every Religious of the Sacred Heart and every member of the Sacred Heart family is invited. The Religious of the Society of the Sacred Heart in the 2016 chapter were challenged to live in their lives four calls for the next eight years which included reaching new frontiers, to live more humanly, to create silence and to act as one body.² This paper focuses on

¹ Retrieved 15th May 2018 from https://english.stackexchange.com/questions/322771/what-does-nuance-mean-and-how-to-use-in-sentences?utm_medium=organic&utm_source=google_rich_qa&utm_campaign=google_rich_qa
English Language and Usage

²Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. General Chapter 2016. Pg. 18 - 19

“reaching new frontiers” by exploring the nuances of Philippine’s sense of self and identity in living beyond boundaries.

The Society of the Sacred Heart’s call of reaching new frontiers implies that members have a calling in Christian life to stretch beyond horizons whether that be through the different calls that make themselves heard wherever they find themselves existentially or beyond their region/country/boundaries to serve God. In other words, we are called upon by God to go to the frontiers and peripheries of the world in order to serve God by reaching out and responding to the cries of the world personally and collectively³. Personally, of interest in this paper will be to discuss Philippine’s attentiveness to the promptings of God’s call within her as she did not settle down but persisted to follow her calling beyond boundaries of any sort. The paper proceeds from the premise that lived experiences are important insight into the inner world of those who have lived those experiences; and other people too can learn a lot from them.

Concept of a Person’s Lived Experiences

Martell explained that a person’s lived experiences, although unique and contextualized to each person, are actually more shared (universal)⁴. The connection or similarity of the lived experiences between one individual and another is in the specific, in one’s unique personal lived experiences. Martell further opined that everyone’s lived experiences are “grounded” compared to the more abstract, theoretical universals applied to explain human nature⁵. An individual’s lived experiences are in the quality of poetic images and metaphors that describe the concreteness of that individual’s world⁶, and thus, in this paper, the focus is on this quality in respect to Philippine’s lived experiences at the frontier.

Lived experiences of an individual invite other people’s shared emotional and physical sensations and responses, and have the essential quality of being deeply inter-subjective and interpersonal⁷. Because of this, in order to understand Philippine’s lived experiences at the frontiers, interviews were conducted with Religious of the Sacred Heart and extracts from written published works on Philippine were examined to find the emotional and physical sensations and responses others have had in reference to Philippine’s lived experiences.

Meaning of Lived Experiences

An individual’s lived experiences rely on his/her sensory encounters with and consciousness of events he/she encounters in everyday life. This presentation relies on the sensory impressions of the Religious of the Sacred Heart and on published extracts of Philippine to assess what were more and less *outstanding* lived experiences of Philippine before and while she was at the frontiers.

The less outstanding (trivial) types of lived experience do not call people to pay profound attention to them⁸. These ordinary experiences require of people very little reflection and/or need to seek any deeper meaning beyond the immediate experience and understanding that helps move an individual from one experience to the next. The more outstanding (significant) types of lived

³Collesano, E. (2017). To reach new frontiers. In Hammond, S. (Ed.), A special issue dedicated to the 2016 General Chapter. *A Journal of the Society of the Sacred Heart, United States - Canada*, winter 2017, 1-20.

⁴Martell, B. A. (2016). *Nature as Spiritual Lived Experience: How Five Christian Theologians Encounter the Spirit In and Through the Natural World. Dissertations & Theses*, 290, Antioch University, New England.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

experience are foundational to people's ontological and epistemological understanding. It calls for phenomenological investigation of lived experiences - moving away from our "natural attitude" to the "phenomenological attitude"⁹. This is helpful, as there is a need to reflect both on people's experiential life but most importantly on the meanings of their lived experiences. Thus, while assessing Philippine's lived experiences of going to the frontiers, effort was made to look for those experiences that some people would have taken for granted, including those experiences that they would easily associate with a person living or having lived a religious life.

That is, *religious* lived experience was important in this presentation because the focus was on assessing Philippine who felt she had God's calling to go to the frontiers. Philippine herself narrates in her memoirs to Madeleine Sophie the details of her religious formation experience:

*"When I entered religious life at the age of eighteen and a half years, a desire to share in the apostolate made me choose the Visitation, in preference to Carmel [a contemplative order], which I loved very much. ... During two whole years of my novitiate I read only Rodriguez, without ever tiring of it; and when we assembled after Vespers, I used to relate to my Sisters the lives of nearly all the saints of the Company of Jesus (Jesuits). That of St. Francis Xavier appealed most strongly to me...I loved his touching appeals to the European Schools to send him missionaries. How often have I not said to him since then, in my impatience, "Great Saint, why do you not call me? I would respond at once." He is the saint of my heart."*¹⁰

We recall and celebrate Philippine's experience because someone else's lived experience touched Philippine's own life as stated above. It has been argued that any individual experiences will no doubt powerfully resonate with and is shaped by lived experiences of other people when shared with each other for example Philippine's life experiences were very much shaped by her encounter with several people in her life and with what she read of the saints as a young person as cited in Mooney

*"...the force of Philippine's early desire, and the vividness with which she recalls her encounters with so many missionaries, reveal just how determined she was to go to the foreign missions. It became the driving force of her life".*¹¹

This was an important aspect of this research as the Religious of the Society of the Sacred Heart were also asked about how their experiences resonated with that of Philippine of going to the frontiers. Three objectives guided the study.

Aim / objectives of the study

To explore the nuances of Philippine's sense of self and identity in living beyond boundaries/ frontiers.

To assess how Philippine's experiences of going to the frontiers resonates with the Religious of the Society of Sacred Heart on mission in Uganda / Kenya Province.

To consider how Philippine's experiences of going to the frontiers challenges our world today.

⁹Davidsen, A. S. (2013). Phenomenological approaches in psychology and health sciences. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 10(3): 318–339.

¹⁰Catherine M. Mooney, R.S.C.J., *Philippine Duchesne: A Woman with the Poor*, p. 43. Paulist Press: New York/Mahwah, 1990.

¹¹ Ibid. p. 40

METHOD

Research Design

This study relied on qualitative research design as its main objective was to explore and understand the participant's experiences on living beyond boundaries/ frontiers. Qualitative research design helps to understand the participants' real life experiences.¹² Archival secondary data were obtained from existing written documents on Philippine Duchesne to explore the nuances of Philippine's sense of self and identity in living beyond boundaries and going to the frontiers. These existing written documents about Philippine were got from the libraries of the congregation and accessible in Uganda/ Kenya province, including different collections from individual RSCJ members as well as online sources. The primary data was sourced directly from the study participants by use of in-depth interviews.

Document review

Document review was conducted on existing documents about Philippine from the libraries of the congregation and accessible in Uganda/ Kenya province, including different collections from individual RSCJ members as well as online sources. It was used to explore the nuances of Philippine's sense of self and identity in living beyond boundaries. Document analysis is a method in qualitative research which is used for the purposes of evaluating and reviewing written documents; in order to interpret and elicit meaning, gain an understanding and develop knowledge that is empirical.¹³ These included books, papers, journals, chapter documents and letters.

Sampling and Participants

Eight sisters with different ages and years of profession in the Society were sampled purposively to take part in the study. Purposive sampling was used to select participants who were perceived to have rich information and diversified opinions about the focus of the study. In-depth interviews were conducted one on one with individual sisters. According to Rabionet, in-depth interviews are appropriate for capturing the nuances of voice and emotions as people relate their experiences.¹⁴ The study was conducted in Uganda / Kenya province of the Society of the Sacred Heart. The Province is multicultural, multi tribal and international in nature. Although the province is situated in Africa with many African religious sisters from different ethnic groups, there are also sisters from Canada, United States, Ireland and Spain. This upholds the rich international ethos of the Religious of the Society of the Sacred Heart as an International congregation. Below is the summary list of participants:

Summary list of participants

Participant	Country of origin	Area of mission	Years in society	Years in Mission
1	Irish	Uganda	50+	25
2	Kenyan	Uganda	18	12

¹²Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five designs*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

¹³ Bowen, Glen A, 2009; Document Analysis as a qualitative Research Method, *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27 - 40

¹⁴Rabionet, S. E. (2011). How I learned to design and conduct semi-structured interviews: an ongoing and continuous journey. *The Qualitative Report*, 16(2), 563-566.

3	Ugandan	Uganda	24	8
4	Ugandan	Kenya	3	1
5	Kenyan	Uganda	13	6
6	American	Uganda	50	15
7	Canadian	Uganda	54	37
8	Ugandan	Uganda	23	20

Note: None of these sisters whose country of origin/ mission is the same actually reside in their places of birth.

Data Collection Methods: Document review and Interviews

Data was collected from both secondary and primary sources. Secondary data is where data is sourced from existing written documents and primary data is where the researcher directly obtains data from the field.¹⁵ Document review was conducted on existing documents about Philippine from the libraries of the congregation and accessible in Uganda/ Kenya province; including different collections from individual RSCJ members as well as online sources. These documents included books, papers, journals, letters and chapter documents. Document review was used to explore the nuances of Philippine's sense of self and identity in living beyond boundaries. Document review is a method in qualitative research which is used for the purposes of evaluating and reviewing written documents; in order to interpret and elicit meaning, gain an understanding and develop knowledge that is empirical.¹⁶ Primary data was obtained directly from the study participants who were the Religious of the Society of the Sacred Heart in Uganda / Kenya province. Eight Religious of the Society of the Sacred Heart in Uganda /Kenya Province of varying ages, years of profession and diversified opinions were interviewed for the study. In-depth interviews were conducted one on one with individual sisters. In- depth interviews were better for the study because they provided detailed information than could be got from other collection methods¹⁷. According to Rabionet, in-depth interviews are better in capturing the finer nuances of voice and emotions as people relate their experiences¹⁸. Interviews were conducted among RSCJ members according to different years spent in religious life.

Procedure

The researcher travelled to different communities in Uganda and Kenya and personally invited some RSCJ to participate in the study. Those who freely gave their verbal consent were individually interviewed. There was careful attention in place to make sure that the eight sisters who were selected to take part in the study were purposively selected from different age ranges and varied number of years of profession in the society. This was an attempt to get as much rich data as possible.

Data Analysis: Results Presentation and Analysis

¹⁵ Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five designs*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications

¹⁶ Bowen, Glen A, 2009; Document Analysis as a qualitative Research Method, *Qualitative Research Journal*, vol 9, no. 2 pp 27 - 40

¹⁷Boyce, C.& Neale, P. (2006) *Conducting In-Depth Interviews: A Guide for Designing and Conducting In-Depth Interviews for Evaluation Input, Monitoring and Evaluation - 2*. Pathfinder International. Retrieved 21 May 2018 from http://www2.pathfinder.org/site/DocServer/m_e_tool_series_indepth_interviews.pdf?docID=6301

¹⁸Rabionet, S. E. (2011) How I learned to design and conduct semi-structured interviews: an ongoing and continuous journey. *The Qualitative Report*, 16(2), 563-566.

Data from the interviews were analyzed using the voice-centered relation (VCR) method. This involved reading each of the secondary source and interviewee narratives in terms of the narrator's relationships to themselves, their relationships to the people around them, and their relationships to the broader social, structural and cultural contexts within which they live in order to listen and hear the different voices that emerge from the results. Sense is then made from the different voices in the narratives to help in answering the objectives of this study.

The VCR method was developed by Gilligan and her colleagues as an approach to study real lived life experiences.¹⁹ According to Gilligan and colleagues this method gives voice to the narrator and enables the researcher to get into the inner world of the narrator/respondent; as it discloses what is really going on inside the narrator and what may be influencing it.²⁰

Following the VCR method, the researcher reads and listens to the narratives in four ways. The first is reading for the plot. Here the researcher reads the narratives looking for the people involved, themes, images, words used in the transcripts. In the second reading, the researcher looks for the narrator's sense of "self" and how it relates to others. In addition, the researcher tries to trace contradictions and tensions, if at all any; in the way the respondent/narrator speaks about the self. This is done through "I" poems.²¹ In the third reading, the researcher listens to how the narrator speaks of her sense of self in interpersonal relationships with those significantly close to her like friends and family; and how these relationships influence the way she thinks and acts. Finally, in the fourth reading the researcher listens for how the social and cultural structures influence what the narrator says. In addition, the researcher pays attention as well to the reactions to the narratives going on inside him or her since he/ she is not neutral to what she / he is hearing in the narratives or generally in the study. Reflexivity is therefore important in using this method. This is reiterated by Leavy & Nagy:

The Voice – centered Relational Method is “a method of psychological analysis that draws on voice, resonance, and relationship as ports of entry into the human psyche. It is designed to open a way to discovery when discovery hinges on coming to know the inner world of another person. Because every person has a voice or way of speaking or communicating that renders the silent and invisible inner world audible or visible to another, the method is universal in application.”²² The listening Guide offers a way of illuminating the complex and multilayered nature of the expression of human experience and the interplay between self and relationship, Psyche and culture.²³

Reflexivity

It is important in this method for the researcher to pay attention to what is happening within herself to stay objective. Thus, reflexivity was important, as it enabled the researcher to understand herself as a Society of the Sacred Heart researcher. It brought deep joy to the researcher as researching on Philippine's life unfolded - the deep legacy Philippine's life had left to the Society

¹⁹ Brown, L., & Gilligan, C. (1992). *Meeting at the crossroads: Women's psychology and girls' development*. New York: Ballantine.

²⁰ Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: Psychological theory and women's development*. London: Harvard University Press.

²¹ Edwards, R. & Weller, S. (2012). Shifting analytic ontology: using I-poems in qualitative longitudinal research. *Qualitative Research, 12*(2), 202-21.

²² Leavy, H. B. & Nagy, S. (2006). *Emergent Methods in Social Research on the Listening Guide: A Voice-Centered Relational Method*. Pg 2 Sage Publications.

²³ Ibid page 19.

of the Sacred Heart and to the researcher herself at great cost to her life. It also enabled the researcher to become aware of how interviewing sisters in the same congregation sometimes influenced their responses. In addition, reading through the secondary data made the respondent aware of the pain people of her own colour must have gone through during Philippine's day; naturally it brought some pain to her soul as well. However, joy came in noticing how Philippine, despite her weaknesses, struggled within herself to be inclusive, to see people as people.

To note here also was the fact that the author herself has been in religious life for the last twenty five years. Therefore it meant that she had some inside and outside insights into some of the experiences that were being narrated on Philippine. While this was advantageous because the researcher could resonate with some of the "I poems" in the data of the religious sisters and the voice behind them; it was also disadvantageous in that it might have created some bias in the study. However, keeping a journal of these feelings and asking a friend to read through the narratives once again and share with her what he too was hearing in the narratives helped her to keep objective

Findings and Discussion

The findings were presented in two sections. Thematic analysis was used for the document reviewed /secondary data; while the VCR Method was used for the primary data. Using document analysis, several themes emerged from the secondary data related to the first objective, seeing the nuances of Philippine's sense of self and identity in living beyond boundaries. According to Braun and Clarke, themes gradually develop as the researcher collects data and continues taking notes. The themes that emerge become clearer after the data has been transcribed. This often depends on how much the researcher has read and familiarized with the data. To get the concrete themes, those with less data are dropped while those with enough are maintained.²⁴ Below are the themes that were revealed through document analysis from the secondary data:

Themes Revealed by the Document Analysis

Personality: In an attempt to trace Philippine's sense of self and identity in living beyond boundaries from the secondary data, one of the themes that stood out was her personality. Philippine by personality was generous, spontaneous and somewhat impulsive; a character that colored most of her decisions²⁵. She was courageous, persistent, determined and un wavering on what she felt God was calling her to DO and to BE. Philippine was a woman of deep friendships; a spirit she formed earlier in her life with her supportive and abiding cousin – Josephine. This friendship stood the test of time and never wavered even when for over thirty years they did not see each other.²⁶ This spirit of resilience began right from her childhood when she had wanted to be a nun and her father objected. Philippine defied her father for her hand in marriage to a suitor he had identified for her even though she found him agreeable. In addition, she had not only stopped at speaking of her desire to be a nun but had gone ahead to live like a nun within their family home while following a routine of daily prayer irrespective of her father's feelings.²⁷ Furthermore, she blatantly refused to go to dances or social events or even wear beautiful clothing. Clearly indicating that she had not giving up on what she wanted. Not only did she do that but

²⁴ Braun, V & Clarke, V 2006. Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, 2: pgs 76 -100

²⁵Osiek, C. (2017) *Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne; A Heart on Fire across Frontiers*.

²⁶Mooney, C. M. *Philippine Duchesne: A Woman with the poor*, p.43. Paulist Press: New York/Mahwah.

²⁷ Ibid

she went and joined the visitation monastic life without her parent's permission. Much as her story is still indicative of many women of her time who resisted their parents' persistence for them to marry against their will. Still one cannot but see Philippine's persistence on pursuing what she wanted irrespective of opposition from even her family.²⁸ Philippine was a woman who spent her whole life entering into new worlds: building bridges, striving to understand other people's experiences, creating communion.²⁹ She was courageous and undeterred in crossing boundaries of any sort if that is what would have been needed in order to bring the gospel of Christ to the world. However, it was clear with this description of personality that Philippine had the boundary of her personality to work on and cross if she was going to be a leader in the many years to come in her life. Philippine struggled a lot to work on her personality which brought out the humility later characterized in her life. Nonetheless, we need to celebrate her persistence as well because in one way through it, we achieved the internationality we celebrate today.

Inclusiveness – woman of communion. Philippine was inclusive - a woman who created communion in all her dealings with people. Her circle of charity and missionary activity were inclusive of others, people of her own background as well as people foreign to her own world, such as the Native Americans and the materially poor in both France and the New World.³⁰ However, from her documents there are traces of the fact that coming from a French culture into the New Land of America, sometimes she also ran the risk of being judgmental and divisive in the way she spoke and wrote about people in the New Land, whites, blacks and Indians. However, Philippine often persisted in attempting to see good in everyone irrespective of the racial divisions that were obvious in the New Land. This was shown in her reprimand of Sr. Catherine when she felt that it was not proper for her to do laundry alongside the slaves, since the whites in America did not do it. She wrote this account to Sophie.

*“...Here is an example which affected me deeply. It is so strange. These religious who wish to do anything for us, wanted to have our linen washed at their cost and by their Negresses. I gave Catherine a small amount to do, in the same room. After several clashes, she came to tell me she did not like working with the Negresses, and that here ‘whites’ did not do so. I answered that the negresses also have souls, redeemed by the same Sacred Blood; received in the same church; and that if she was unwilling to work with them then she had better take a passage on a vessel that is leaving shortly, since we came here for the ‘blacks’ she was so unreasonable that she did not recover her good sense, until the evening”.*³¹

Philippine was always going back on the path of goodness even though the forces around her and her cultural background made her at times see otherwise. To reiterate this point, Hellen McLaughlin who was superior general at the time of her canonization during a Symposium had this to say:

“...We represent so many of the worlds which Philippine, the woman of communion, sought to bring together. In a way, we are the fruit of her life's dream - and we can be a sign for the future if we choose to build communion with each other. We come from many nations

²⁸Mooney, C. M. (1990). *Philippine Duchesne: A Woman with the Poor*. New York/Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press

²⁹Canonization of Rose Philippine Duchesne. Symposium Duchesne. Symposium of “The Missionary Spirit of the Society of the Sacred “Heart”. (Compiled by Helen McLaughlin, RSCJ, Superior General of the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus), (1982-1994).Pg. 119.

³⁰ Mooney, *Philippine Duchesne*, p. 55. Paulist Press: New York/Mahwah.

³¹De Charry, Second Part – 1, North America (1819-1821), pg. 57.

and speak many languages. ³²---Some of us come from privileged lands, wealthy in material goods, powerful internationally. As Philippine knew so well, these people have a unique call, bear a special burden of responsibility in creating a world of authentic love, and justice, a world of shared goods, shared freedom, shared love.³³ Philippine is an example of someone who refused to resign herself to this polarization. Born wealthy, she gave her material goods to those in need. All her life, she educated, evangelized and loved both the rich and the poor. She saw our world as one to be shared among all.” ³⁴

If there is any reason Philippine is a saint, it is for the fact that she persisted on the path of goodness with other people who were different from her. She always forgot herself for the sake of others. This is not an easy thing to do since the human natural inclination is to take priority on oneself. Philippine was never put off by obstacles in her struggle for the dignity of all.

Overcoming obstacles - courageous and undeterred:

Philippine worked hard to overcome obstacles, especially about inclusivity. Philippine surmounted the attitude her society had about what being poor meant. She struggled throughout her life to be inclusive, to see people as people, endowed with the image of God – especially the poor in Grenoble. Given the prejudices and the crippling negative ways in which the French society at the time viewed what being poor was, that the poor were especially the people who needed religion³⁵, the rich were there to help them be religious and therefore purified of their sin. They were blind to the fact that the class system in their society at the time, lack of employment and meagre unjust remuneration for their labor while the rich maximized their profits would naturally and permanently have kept them poor. However, Philippine’s attitude about the poor went a little step higher in a positive direction than that of her society in the sense that

“Philippine recognized their human dignity in a way which radically departed from the conventional assumptions of her class ...she not only likened them to Christ; she discovered Christ in them...Eucharist and the poor are both Christ’s body for Philippine: a real presence of God in the world”. ³⁶

Philippine’s charity represented a new appreciation of who the poor are by the fact that she recognized their inherent dignity as human beings, discerned the special presence of God in their midst, and the awareness that charity was much more than an ornament – it was her life calling.³⁷ This was a time in her society when a woman had no voice and was not even expected to challenge anybody on such kind of attitudes the society held or even act contrary to them. This is because being poor meant as some of the male contemporaries of Philippine saw it meant that the poor were a leprosy on society, vessels of sin, villainous by nature and deserving to be locked up³⁸Philippine however could not be bound by such an attitude, she surmounted and crossed

³²Canonization of Rose Philippine Duchesne. Symposium of “The Missionary Spirit of the Society of the Sacred “Heart”. (Compiled by Helen McLaughlin, RSCJ, Superior General of the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus), (1982-1994).Pg. 119.

³³Ibid. 120.

³⁴Ibid. 120.

³⁵ Mooney, *Philippine Duchesne*, p. 68. Paulist Press: New York/Mahwah.

³⁶Mooney, *Philippine Duchesne*, pp. 68-74. Paulist Press: New York/Mahwah, 1990.

³⁷ Ibid Pg 73

³⁸ Ibid pg 69

those human set boundaries; she continued going the extra mile, pushing the limits- to meet the poor not just in the streets, but actually visiting them in their houses, entering into their neighborhoods and homes, meeting their families and friends, seeing and experiencing their surroundings and personally caring for them in their dying moments. It was not about handing help, it was about BEING with them. Philippine understood the world of the poor from personal experience. Philippine was a woman a head of her times, for already in 1818 she was answering the needs of our times and leading the RSCJ into the 2016 chapter in which one of our calls is “to live more humanly” the chapter states:

*“We are committed to live more humanly: in the radical style of Jesus of Nazareth. We wish to be in closer relationship as sisters with one another and with others; we wish to be simpler, more human and closer to people and their experience, in order to show forth the joyful and compassionate face of God and to be at the service of life wherever we are sent.”*³⁹

This stance in Philippine betrayed and challenged the charitable organizations in Grenoble who kept a distance from the poor dismissing them as lazy and a vice – ridden lot.⁴⁰ Down the centuries, it still challenges our world and each one of us. Philippine felt and touched what the poor lived from inside not from outside. Again Philippine had crossed a boundary of dehumanizing “spaces” created by human beings and entered that place in which humanity is one ; at a time when it could have almost been impossible. Her relatives tried to stop Philippine running such dangerous risks which they felt were way out of proportion of normal charity for they could cost her life at the time. This was perhaps because they were aware of the powerful people Philippine was coming up against by such a daring and bold action at the time. Instead Philippine insisted that she saw Christ in the poor. She told them:

*“Let me alone; it is my happiness and glory to serve my divine Savior in the person of the unfortunate and the poor”*⁴¹

However, despite the fact that this might present Philippine as a fearless person and totally courageous with a natural ability to overcome obstacles; there are still traces in her texts, which depict that she too got fearful, anxious, doubtful and even uncertain of the journey like any human being. Yet when scrutinized further even in such a state , Philippine was still anchored on God. For example when they were in the Rebecca she wrote to Sophie of a fear and anxiety she felt:

“...at certain moments the sea is so terrifying that I was on the verge of writing to ask you to send no one before you received more precise news from us, and have been assured that so much sacrifice would lead to a worthy end ...all this is no laughing matter unless one sees God in the storm...from Wednesday in Holy Week until Quasimodo we were deprived of everything through the bad weather and our illness. God has taken away from me all consciousness of that which could make me desire the end of the voyage, all hopes of success; during the long nights at tempest and insomnia, when God seemed silent and deaf to all our prayers. I often asked myself if I ought to repent having risked the lives of so many people precious to the society, whose gifts would probably be more useful elsewhere; for having pushed our emigration too forcefully. Yet never did these thoughts penetrate my

³⁹Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. General Chapter 2016. Pg. 19, para .1

⁴⁰ Catherine M. Mooney, R.S.C.J., *Philippine Duchesne: A Woman with the Poor*, p. 74. Paulist Press: New York/Mahwah. (Para1-2.).

⁴¹Catherine M. Mooney, *Philippine Duchesne: A Woman with the Poor*, pp. 64 Paulist Press: New York.

heart; peace was bitter but it was always pure....The will of God has been shown by your consent, Reverend Mother....” ⁴²

Gospel values - Radical living of the gospel values.

Philippine persistently lived her life according to gospel values. Her life was a witness to the gospel values she lived in so many ways; for example she abandoned the comfort of her own home, social class, language and culture and set out for the New World; where she dedicated herself to the education of young women who were creole, native American, including many others who were present in America at her time.⁴³ To note here is the fact that Philippine by nature was a woman of strong attachments to places; leaving places often had a high emotional toll on her.⁴⁴ She however left irrespective of what it cost her. This is a clear reminder that the call to holiness is universal and has no boundaries nor is it confined to a particular nation, political system, culture or race. ⁴⁵ It is no wonder that the Potawatomi called her the woman who prays always and the Jesuits saw her as a vital person of witness in the mission - someone whose life spoke of the selflessness of Christ - a life spent for others and totally given to God's mission without any reserve.⁴⁶ However, despite this strong faith, there are times according to the documents when Philippine met with challenges and failures felt that God had almost abandoned her. Philippines faith was vehemently shaken when she failed to re-open St Marie Haut and to keep her promise to St. Regis. She began to doubt God's consistency with her; a struggle every human person feels at a low point of their lives.

“..Many years later when Philippine was beset by failures and burdened by her inability to keep her side of the above bargain, she would be overcome by scruples. She feared that her failures reflected God's displeasure with her and that they were related to her inability to fulfill the promise she made to Regis at this time.⁴⁷ Philippine's later doubts about God's love for her and her scruples about not keeping her promise to Regis reveal the frailty of her very human striving for perfection”⁴⁸.It is ironic that someone who left her family, friends, country and worldly goods behind, who gave gratuitously of herself throughout most of her life, should come to doubt that God could act in any less generous manner with regard to herself. The doubts and fears which appear in her later years with regard to the promise to Regis are simply one more indication that Philippine's holiness can never be understood apart from her very human experiences.” ⁴⁹

The most important point to note with Philippine here is that she did not give up no matter how discouraged she felt. In this particular case she opted to join another congregation. She stooped to a level of humility and total strength in God that amazed even Fr. Varin who said of her to Sophie

⁴²De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Letter 92, From Mother Ph. Duschene to M.S. Barat at Paris, Second Part - 1 North America (1819-1821), pgs. 39 - 42

⁴³ Catherine M. Mooney, R.S.C.J., *Philippine Duchesne: A Woman with the Poor*, p. 15. Paulist Press: New York/Mahwah

⁴⁴ Ibid p.109

⁴⁵ Ibid p. 15.

⁴⁶ Ibid

⁴⁷Pg.76., para 4, Line 4.

⁴⁸Catherine M. Mooney, R.S.C.J., *Philippine Duchesne: A Woman with the Poor*, pp.68-69. Paulist Press: New York/Mahwah (Para.2)

⁴⁹ Ibid Pg. 76-77.

“You will find in this house ... was she alone and at the remotest corner of the world, you should go after her ... she is generous, great- hearted person... I won't hide from you; it is she I have principally in mind when I balance the reasons for and against your journey”

Three years down the line of her return to St. Marie and with all that had transpired between her sisters when they had walked out on her; she received Sophie, the superior of the ladies of the Faith to whom the remaining companions and herself had anxiously waited to join. Sophie recounts this experience

“...I reached the door and when it was barely opened, I saw someone running to meet me who then prostrated herself at my feet. I was twenty and some odd years old then and God knows how I looked... Anyway, this person was Madame Duchesne... and I still blush when I recall that she wrote in her journal regarding our meeting: “How beautiful the feet of those who come in the name of the Lord.” There you have an example of her spirit of faith.” Philippine was thirty-five years old.⁵⁰

Philippine had principally and unconsciously managed despite her inner *nuances* of fear of failure and rejection by her sisters, to cross the boundaries that separate people like *anger, resentment, betrayals, negative and un healthy competition for power and negative selfish and character damaging gossips, self-criticisms as a result of failure* that were so eminent in her world as well as in our own today. She managed to stay resilient in a total belief in a God who is bigger over all human frailties. This brought her not only to a solid spiritual direction under Sophie with her wealth of experience given the education and formation she had received; but it also brought her to a deep friendship of unwavering support with Sophie. Like all things that happen for a reason, both women had historical experiences of personal struggle. Even though Sophie was highly educated, it was hard earned success from her brother that almost caused her health as de Charry opines

“...merely glancing out of the window while at study, he said, was an offense to God. Years later, Sophie would have to struggle hard to overcome the scruples and fears he had helped create in her. But her hard earned success would be an invaluable asset to her in guiding the austere likes of Philippine Duchesne”⁵¹

This is a challenge as our human tendency is often to give up and hand over our lives to others unconsciously other than to God through unwavering faith like Philippine when faced with challenges. It would be good to ask ourselves this question: *How many times have we given up over a particular call or project simply because we did not have human approval and support? Do we stay persistent, consistent on the support of the one who has called us without reserve like Philippine?* This characteristic helped Philippine achieve her goal all through her life on the frontiers by unconsciously persisting beyond boundaries of any sort unless they were what God asked of her. Philippine was a person who responded to her call with unshakable hope, resilience, persistence and insistence.

⁵⁰Catherine M. Mooney, R.S.C.J., *Philippine Duchesne: A Woman with the poor*, pg 85. Paulist Press: New York/Mahwah.

⁵¹ de Charry, *Histoire des Constitutions*, Pt. 1, vol. 1 pp. 167 - 72; Hogg trans., *Formation of the Institute*, pp. 119-23. In Catherine M. Mooney, *Philippine Duchesne: A Woman with the Poor*, pp. 86 Paulist Press: New York.

Responding to the call - hope, resilience, persistence.

Philippine never forgot her missionary vocation. When Sophie gave permission for an all-night vigil on Holy Thursday, April 3, 1806, she wrote to Sophie with the news of having spent the whole night in the company of Saints Francis Regis and Xavier, bringing Christ to the New World. However, it would be another 14 years of waiting, persistence, keeping hope against hope and even insistence for that to happen, but she did not let go her desire. Risking losing every sense of respect and rather appearing ill mannered and pushy when bishop Dubourg came for what was to be a final visit and Sophie was to send him away without an answer for his request to the missions; Philippine did the unthinkable

“...she knelt before Sophie and beseeched her to give her consent for the establishment in the New World. This dramatic gesture must have been convincing. Philippine wrote in her house journal for that day that Mother Barat “has promised him six religious for the next spring...”⁵²

Philippine’s action in human terms may have seemed impetuous or even rather out of proportion given the kind of background and socialization process she had been brought up into. She was on fire with God’s call to take His gospel to others that human standards did not matter; standards of class and status did not matter anymore for God’s standards took precedence. However, the number that was to go to the new world was reduced from six religious to five. Among the group were the oldest Philippine Duchesne, forty eight years of age who was appointed superior against her desires; Catherine Lamarre and Marguerite Manteau who were ten years younger than Philippine. They were “coadjutrix” sisters responsible for domestic duties as the system was those days. Then there were the choir religious who were teachers and the ones on whom leadership roles were bestowed. Among the “choir” religious were Octavie Berthold, thirty years old, Eugenie Aude aged twenty three from a noble family and the only one who had expressed her desire to go with Philippine.⁵³ It is worth noting that this journey was a challenge as cited by Osiek

...some members of Philippine family were there to see her off ... a member of the community later recounted that... Philippine was dry eyed looking straight ahead... at some point, Octavie hesitated ... Philippine gently took her hand and escorted her into the carriage...”⁵⁴

Philippine persisted for her dream to the New World to come about; she literary pushed/ persuaded Sophie to accept. Although it was almost unthinkable of someone with such a background and socialization process such as Philippine did; having to approach someone in a leadership position in that manner in front of a visitor. This may not have been a surprise to Sophie since the Duchesne’s’ as a family were known for their strong will.⁵⁵ She was a woman with a mind beyond geographic and existential frontiers. This is perhaps why Philippine wrote a long account which

⁵²Osiek, C. (2017) *Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne; A Heart on Fire across Frontiers*, pg 14.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid pg 16.

⁵⁵Callan, L. (1965). *Philippine Duchesne: Frontier Missionary of the Sacred Heart*. Westminster, Maryland: The New Press.

she entrusted to Fr. Pierre Perreau, a priest friend of the community to give Sophie after her departure to the new world

*“I value above all else the grace of belonging to the Society of the Heart of Jesus, and that of being able to contribute towards its expansion. No other position in the world could outweigh this heartfelt choice of belonging; at this moment, I am fully aware of all I owe to the Society and I will try to live up to it and make the spirit of the Rules of the Society appreciated. To renew often this holy commitment that, thank God, binds one to the Society, even at a great distance, will be my consolation”.*⁵⁶

Leadership – Personal inadequacies.

Philippine often felt inadequate in a position of leadership. She often compared herself to others as lesser than they. Apart from struggling with the leadership issue, she was not able to learn the language of the people; she felt frustrated, helpless and inadequate, as she herself puts it to Sophie in a letter in which she persisted for Sophie to release her from the position of leader:

*“Forgive me for my letter from Bordeaux (2). Like so many other faults that you have put up with so patiently it seemed natural to me to express all my fears with regard to my office. I am always more and more convinced that I have no gift for leading souls; but God does it by Himself and my sisters are content; they will tell you this...⁵⁷ You could consider Eugene as superior; I think you would have nothing to fear. She is mature, does everything with wisdom and in the presence of God...”*⁵⁸

Apart from struggling with the leadership issue, she was not able to learn the language of the people; she felt frustrated, helpless and inadequate again she wrote to Sophie:

*“...if you can replace me by an English woman, Octavie could take it on. Soon we shall have more Americans than creoles speaking French. What good shall I do without facility in English? I find this true with regard to our postulant both for her good and that of others. I would gladly see myself taking the lowest employments of the house. Besides, you know me, people fear me and a superior should be liked by everyone”*⁵⁹.

Meeting the needs of the dream - Basic needs -Meager resources, strange mannerisms

It was not long before Philippine realized that saying “yes” to the mission on the frontiers was one thing but another to overcome all kinds of frontiers that glaringly now lay before her. Hardships are humanly not easy to overcome. It is stated here by Callan that Philippine had many frontiers to overcome:

⁵⁶Osiek, C. (2017) *Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne; A Heart on Fire across Frontiers*.pg 16.

⁵⁷De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Letter 109, From Ph. Duchesne to M.S. Barat at Paris, Second Part - 1 North America (1819-1821), pg. 137-138.

⁵⁸De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Letter 109, From Ph. Duchesne to M.S. Barat at Paris, Second Part - 1 North America (1819-1821), pg. 137-138.

⁵⁹De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Letter 109, From Ph. Duchesne to M.S. Barat Paris, Second Part - 1 North America (1819-1821), pg. 137-138.

“In her first decade in America, Mother Duchesne suffered practically every hardship the frontier had to offer, except the threat of Indian massacre... She suffered from poor lodging, shortages of food, drinking water, fuel and money, forest fires and blazing chimneys, the vagaries of the Missouri climate, cramped living quarters and the privation of all privacy, and the crude manners of children reared in rough surroundings and with only the slightest training in courtesy”⁶⁰

However, despite all these challenges Philippine plunged herself towards God the only complete and sure anchor with hope. Hope which is only hope when there is nothing else to hang on to – except in the sure belief that God is there seen or unseen, heard or not heard, he is leading the way – which way? He is proving it silently each day because they are still alive; and the Potawatomi are receptive to learning about God the most essential reason for which she had come.

Struggle to keep the Society together in the New World –challenge to remain dependent on both the local bishop and Madeleine Sophie (Superior General).

Philippine went through frustrations, helplessness, anger and at times even temptations to do the contrary to what the superiors wanted or what the structures demanded. “The letters of Philippine show us her struggle to remain dependent on both the local bishop and her superior general which was so essential to her...”⁶¹ Philippine had requested to admit black and mulatto children to the boarding and free school. Both the local Bishop Dubourg and Sophie did not agree with the idea, because the white children would desert the school and that would adversely affect the School.⁶² Sophie wrote to Philippine: *“Do not make the foolish mistake of mixing the white and people of color. You would have no more pupils.”*⁶³ Philippine had to relent to what she was being guided to do, even though in her conscience she knew she was being partial and giving way to prejudices; it contradicted the reason for which she had come to the New World.

In addition, she had also requested Madeline Sophie through several letters to open a house in New Orleans so she could place sisters in small schools where she was seeing need but it seems like Sophie did not respond and yet she needed to take a decision based on whether she was in agreement. In frustration of lack of a response, she wrote to Sophie

*“I beg you to answer me about our making a foundation in New Orleans and placing sisters in small schools. Mother Eugenie tells me that you do not wish us to establish ourselves in little houses of three or four, and many of the villages could not provide for more. I have not seen this in any of your letters”.*⁶⁴

Only for her to realize that this was not far from the truth. Sophie was reluctant on the issue and communicating with Eugenie rather than Philippine on the issue for which she badly needed an answer to help her take a decision. Philippine’s letter no 168 to Sophie on the 20th May 1823,

⁶⁰Callan, L. (1965).*Philippine Duchesne: Frontier Missionary of the Sacred Heart*. Westminster, Maryland: pg 73 The New Press.

⁶¹De Charry, Second Part - 11 North America (1821-1826).

⁶²Mooney, *Philippine Duchesne*, pg 130.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Letter 168, From Mother Ph. Duchesne to M.S. Barat at Paris, Second Part - 11 North America (1821-1826), pg. 102

depicts her frustration and even disappointment in Sophie and the Bishop. One can even read behind this letter a nuance of anger, aloneness of not feeling supported in what she was seeing on the ground. However it also shows that the friendship between Sophie and Philippine was freeing since each one could express herself honestly. Philippine wrote this to Sophie:

*“It is long since I heard from you and that is a great privation. Not one of your letters tells me that you have received those in which I ...remind you of a possible foundation in New Orleans. Your answers to previous suggestions show me clearly that this is not your intention. Monsignor has been one of the first to speak of this great establishment, but at the moment he seems to have no interest in it. No doubt he thinks we are not strong enough without your assistance – which you refuse – and he is right”.*⁶⁵

Devoid of human support - Loneliness/ stripped off friendship and human support.

Philippine relied a lot on Sophie and was very sure of her support; and Sophie too on Philippine’s support. But sometimes Philippine felt frustration that Sophie was not responding to her letters, especially at the most important points where she needed guidance. Depicted here are nuances of frustration, pain and even a bit of anger as she writes in her letter to Sophie

*“It is a real suffering to have no news from you and to be so cut off by distance from the means of hearing from you when I am in such need of guidance...”*⁶⁶

The structural dark spot: – Philippine did not clearly navigate and challenge: contradicting her spirit of inclusivity

Not only did Philippine buy and sell slaves, she even accepted them as gifts for tuition in the school. Some of the slaves were given to the Society as part of the dowries of entering novices and others were purchased by RSCJ houses.⁶⁷ Philippine did not act like a person who saw slavery as wrong, for in her letters, her only problem not to purchase them was because she felt they were too expensive, they had poor habits of work, they easily got into trouble and their presence distracted the sisters.⁶⁸ In this way Philippine had even become over-critical of the people she had come to evangelize. Slavery, nasty as it was, was acceptable even within the church and the state. This was acceptable to Philippine; after all, the few white people could not provide the labor. These are some of the structures that seemed normal at the time. The question is: *What are some of the structures in our time that seem normal but if we are not careful, may bounce back in the future to haunt us?*

⁶⁵De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Letter 168, From Mother Ph. Duschene to M.S. Barat at Paris, Second Part - 11 North America (1821-1826), pg. 111

⁶⁶ Callan, L. (1965). *Philippine Duchesne: Frontier Missionary of the Sacred Heart*. Westminster, Maryland: pg 183 The Newman Press.

⁶⁷ Mooney, C. M. “Lives That Matter: Philippine Duchesne and Solidarity across Frontiers.” Sacred Heart Forum, pp 15-16. St Louis University- July 13, 2017.

⁶⁸Ibid.

Summary of the VCR Analysis

Next, the VCR method was used to analyze the data obtained through interviews. This analysis was conducted for each individual sister.

As noted, this method involves listening for the **types of experiences** and characters or people associated with these experiences as narrated by the interviewee in the plot. It also includes how the interviewees speak of themselves as seen in the self **“I” depicted in the “I poem”** coded in purple which reveals how the person/ interviewee was situated in that particular experience at the frontiers in relation to the main plot. In addition, it also shows the **self-in-relationship**, coded in red, which is used to establish the relationship of the Self “I” of the interviewee with other people or group of people who could be family, superiors, community members and the list goes on as included in their interview narratives; and finally, **social structures and cultural contexts**, coded in yellow. These depict the cultural, religious, political and social settings that influenced the interviewee experiences. A summary of the approach is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Voice centered relational analysis of Philippine’s experiences of going to the frontiers based on interviews

Listening for	Explanation	Interpretation
Plots	Used to identify experiences and characters	Identify types of Philippine’s experiences of going to the frontier such as “courage”, “generosity”
		Shows the people associated with Philippine’s experience of going to the frontier
The self “I”	Used for listening for the voice of “I” and constructing the “I” poem	Shows how Philippine or the interviewees (Sisters) were situated in experiences at the frontiers
Self-in-Relationship	Used to establish relationships of the self “I” (that is Philippine/interviewee with others (who may be another person or group of people).	Shows the various people Philippine and the interviewee (Sisters) related to in experiences at the frontiers
Social Structures and Cultural Contexts	Used to indicate the cultural, religious, political and social settings	Shows Philippine’s or interviewees <i>Cultural, Religious, Social and Political contexts</i> at the frontiers that influenced their experiences

First, the Sisters were asked about “what in the experience of Philippine’s sense of self and identity in living beyond boundaries and going to the frontiers touched each one of them as an individual. Each of the Sisters was interviewed independently and they responded to the question

asked by the researcher as presented and followed by analysis and interpretation using the VCR method below.

Sister Jaja's response: For sure **her courage**...because ...well also **for us when we entered, we knew we** would never go back home and for Philippine when she left for America, she knew that might be for life, in fact she never ever did go back...*So I really..I see* **her courage and her generosity**. She was very **close to her family**...so it took a lot of **courage** and **faith** ...aaah...she was aware that **she was not good in languages** and yah....sooh ... For sure ...*I mean*, the **disappointment that she experienced** when arriving in America...to find that what **she hoped to do, she was not going to be able to do**, ... which was to **work with the native people of America** and yah...that was **very difficult**...(mmmmm) for sure *I would say* she didn't have a very strong sense of her own self because she (Philippine) **always felt she was a failure and not a success and always wanting to be replaced as a superior** which only happened towards the end of her life, aaaahm...but she has...**longed to be with the native people** and **that desire never left her** and aaah... at the age of 71 was able to fulfill it...What was so interesting after one year working with the Potawatomi, for health reasons she understood she needed to return to St. Louis ...but **she still longed to go beyond and she talked even of....going to the Rockies and even to China**...(laughter)...yah... *So myself, I feel...I see the needs here are so great...* (Pause)... Well...*I was just thinking as you were speaking. ..but am not sure now, if this is answering that but for sure,* **her prayer was very strong**, you know and aaahhh (pause)... her call... was very strong...the call to make known... you know, the **compassion** of God, *I think that she wanted to make that known to the ends of the earth. I think that was the driving force of her life.*

From the interview response, it can be observed that the overall issues related to the experience of Philippine's going to the frontiers according to Sister Jaja were her **courage, generosity, disappointments, faith, sense of failure, and continuous hope/desire in fulfilling** her calling to the new frontiers. The following "I" poem explains what Sister Jaja described as Philippine's courage, generosity, disappointments and faith,

*I see her courage and her generosity
I mean, the disappointment that she experienced when arriving in America...to find that what she hoped to do, she was not going to be able to do ... which was to work with the native people of America.*

The disappointment as one of Philippine's experiences of going to the frontier is also captured in the following communication in her letter 83 to Madeline Sophie Barat. Phillipine related to her request to be allowed to fulfill her desire/admiration to be the first to go to the land of the heathen. For Philippine wrote about her experience as follows:

"... Then I discovered that P. Varin was so opposed to my plan that I went back to St. Sulpice in a state of anguish and reproached the Blessed Virgin: See for you have deceived me: the more I prayed, the more my desire for the missions strengthened and yet you see how frustrated I am"⁶⁹.

⁶⁹ De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Letter 83, From Mother Ph. Duchesne to M.S. Barat at Paris, Second Part - 1 North America (1819-1821), pg. 10.

Furthermore, Philippine's sense of failure is explained as follows in Sister Jaja's "I" poem,

"I would say she didn't have a very strong sense of her own self because she (Philippine) always felt she was a failure and not a success and always wanting to be replaced as a superior".

Letter 84 written by a professed to Felicite Desmarquest - Superior at Beauvais - highlight Philippine's sense of failure explained above by Sister Jaja. The professed noted in this letter that when Mother Barat gave Philippine her mission naming her as Superior of the little colony before their departure, Philippine was more than fearful because she dreaded the office as an insurmountable burden, believing she would never have to experience it⁷⁰. Another letter 109 by Philippine to M.S. Barat shows how she thought of herself as a failure for she wrote:

"... if you can replace me by an English woman, Octavie could take it on. Soon we shall have more Americans than creoles speaking French. What good shall I do without facility in English? I find this true with regard to our postulant both for her good and that of others. I would gladly see myself taking the lowest employments of the house, besides you know me, people fear me and a superior should be liked by everyone"⁷¹.

Jaja in the following phrase summarizes Philippine's hope/desire in fulfilling her calling to the new frontiers

...but she has...longed to be with the native people and that desire never left her.

Sister Jaja's responses highlight some of Philippine's relationships with others that contributed to her experiences at the new frontiers. For example, Sister Jaja related Philippine's courage in leaving her known close ties with her home/family where she could easily communicate with the people at home/family and instead decided to go to the Americans in the unknown world to her - where she knew she would have difficulty communicating with people of a different world. Sister Jaja described Philippine's faith in her belief in prayer and desire towards her calling to the new frontiers. Thus, Sister Jaja's response highlighted the cultural context (the (America culture vis a vis Philippine's home/family culture), which contributed to what Philippine experienced while going to the new frontiers.

In addition, Sister Tata's (not real name)' response: The first thing *I actually like* about her from the beginning, even before going to the frontier is her life of prayer. She was a very deep woman in prayer...and when *I was just joining the novitiate and I used to hear those words* that people used to call her a woman who always praysthat kept ringing into my mind so muchthen when I look at her life when she wanted to join a religious congregatingshe knew very well thator she felt maybe within that really God was calling her looking at that time.... that she wanted to join and the family was not for it ... and then she went to the first congregation it didn't work out but with the passion, she came

⁷⁰ De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Letter 84, From a Professed at Paris to Felicite Dematquest Superior at Beauvais, Second Part - 1 North America (1819-1821), pg 19.

⁷¹ De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Letter 109, From Ph. Duchesne to M.S. Barat at Paris, Second Part - 1 North America (1819-1821), pg. 137-138.

and tried to gather the others and said...we can come back and begin a community at her age at that time, the, the timeshe spent with the **desire to go for missions** was not a short time... *I think she really had ...oh deep within her she knew that somehow that is where her call was*, and **the passion...** so she kept it...even though it didn't look that it was going to be possible ..but **she never lost hope...mmm.. she didn't know where she was going**, she risked, *I think she put herself into the hands of God*, and **knew that God was going to do it for her**, mmmm. *I look at that when she went with no language*, but she lived ...she lived her life... happily, and **she touched people's lives..like for now we have an American Volunteer and she knows Philippine**. **So she did not only touch the Religious of the place but also touched the people around** and even though maybe ..they may know so little about religion (mmmh) ...but they know that Philippine did something. *So... I like that...* giving herself and relying on God's providence...she lived in that area with no language and also the time she had there the communication at that time was not easy...and yet she knew that Sophie..like she had...they would communicate through letters with Sophie and with the struggles she went through...poor ..woman she really kept on ...we move, so **like the passion which she had and throwing herself into God's hands** and giving herself whatever will come, **she knew God was behind all that**. Mmmmmmh (clearing voice) sighs. *I think, for me even the fact that after a long time....the...you know like her desire to go to the mission* and she didn't just desire that and it happened ...she took some time*that for me tells me that in her that was a struggle within her, this is my desire what I would like to do, it is not happening and she didn't know when it would happen*, mmmmm **probably she was frustrated a bit and maybe felt like a failure**, but she stood up again and continued and she just...*because I would imagine all that time how she was feeling,....oh like this is what I want to do, it is not happening, a year goes, another one, like any other person for sure...* **she would feel like I may not make it... mmm and a failure** mmmm.. *but what I like is that even with that, she still could stand* and move on...and I think eeh... that it brings what you used to share with me as a young professed that I should not get discouragedeeh ... but keep my head above the waters. *I think for me that's what she was doing that even with her frustrations*. She would put it up again. *Then I look at the struggles, she had with the bishops*, (mmmh) she kept it ... **they fought her, she fought her way out**, trying ...so...*I think she was convinced this was the way... so even though they put her down several times, that must have been a real struggle and I think she would go back and wonder, what next, is this going to work? Is it not going to work? And then she would pick up her mat again and begin the journey ...sooo her life actually seems not to have been a very smooth life*, and *I really think, she really lived as an ordinary woman* with her failures, disappointments, discouragements and she would pick up her mat and begin again and again. (Mmhmmh)...*I think I feel she had a focus and that is what helped her to come up....(mmhmmhh) ..even though she felt she was not able to do what she wanted*.

From Sister Tata 's response, it can be established that the key issues that touched her of Philippine's experience at the new frontier were **her devotion to prayer, passion to respond to God's calling and trust in God, readiness to take risk, leadership among her fellow religious, language barrier, failures, disappointments, discouragements and perseverance in difficult times**. Some of Philippine's experiences are summarized in the following Sister Tata's active "I":

Sister Tata's response about Philippine's devotion to prayer is captured in the following:

*“...The first thing I actually like about her from the beginning, even before going to the frontier is her life of prayer.
when I was just joining the novitiate and I used to hear those words that people used to call her a woman of prayer.....that kept ringing into my mind so much”.*

On the other hand, Sister Tata's “I” poem summarizes Philippine's passion to respond to God's calling and trust in God as follows:

*“ I look at her life when she wanted to join a religious congregating she felt maybe within that really God was calling her,
I think she really had ...oh deep within her she knew that somehow that is where her call was and the passion...so she kept it...even though it didn't look that it was going to be possible ..but she never lost hope..mmmm..*

Passion as one of Philippine's experience of going to the frontiers is the following extract from a letter written by Philippine to Mother Josephine Bigeu:

“... under the cover of darkness, I respectfully kissed the ground that was the goal of so many vows that increased in fervor as we drew nearer”⁷².

This was Philippine's communication after arriving in New Orleans and she was writing in relation to her call to the mission.

Sister Tata's “I” poem described Philippine's risk experiences as follows:

*“didn't know where she was going, she risked,
I think she put herself into the hands of God, and knew that God was going to do it for her.....,
I like that...giving herself and relying on God's providence...
I like the passion which she had and throwing herself into God's hands and giving herself whatever will come, she knew God was behind all that...*

Sister Tata's response related to Philippine having language barrier problem, which was quite a challenge in that she needed to communicate to people she wanted to serve as summarized as follows:

*“I look at how she went with no language, but she lived ...she lived her life... happily, and she touched people's lives...
So... I like that...giving herself and relying on God's providence...she lived in that area with no language and also the time she had there the communication at that time was not easy”.*

⁷² De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Second Part - 1 North America (1819-1821), pg 2.

Sister Tata's explanation of Philippine's leadership experience are captured in the phrase "she went to the first congregation it didn't work out but with the passion, she came and tried to gather the others and said...we can come back and begin a community". Such leadership experience of Philippine is also documented in her Letter 83 as she wrote:

"Permit me, dear Mother, to ask your pardon once again for all the pain I have caused you. Perhaps God has provided me with a way of expiation by giving me that same office that you have carried out for me, my greatest happiness will be to form 'daughters' worthy of you, if I fail to do this I would rather die"⁷³.

The following "I" poem describes Sister Tata's description of Philippine's experiences in terms of failures, disappointments, discouragements and perseverance in difficulty times:

"I think, for me even the fact that after a long time.... you know like her desire to go to the mission and she didn't just desire that and it happened ...she took some time, that for me tells me that in her that was a struggle within her, this is my desire what I would like to do, it is not happening and she didn't know when it would happen, mmmmm probably she was frustrated a bit and maybe felt like a failure, but she stood up again and continued and she just...because, I would imagine all that time how she was feeling,....oh like this is what I want to do, it is not happening, a year goes, another one, like any other person for sure...she would feel like I may not make it...mmmm I am a failure mmmm..., but what I like is that even with that, she still could stand and move on..., Then I look at the struggles, she had with the bishops, (mmmh) she kept it ... they fought her, she fought her way out, trying ...so..., I think she was convinced this was the way... so even though they put her down several times, that must have been a real struggle and, I think she would go back and wonder, what next, is this going to work? Is it not going to work? And then she would pick up her mat again and begin the journey ...sooo her life actually seems not to have been a very smooth life, and, I really think, she really lived an ordinary woman with her failures, disappointments, discouragements and she would pick up her mat and begin again and again..."

The major characters in Sister Tata's response centered around Philippine, God, Philippine's family, Sophie, the bishops, the ordinary people and religious congregation. The interactions between Philippine, God, her family and religious congregation can be used to explain some of Philippine's experiences as described in Sister Tata's responses. For example, as already shown in Sister Tata's "I" poem, the relationship between Philippine and God is depicted by Tata as that of woman who was always praying and the desire she had in what she believed was her calling by God to go serve the people at the new frontiers. Despite her desire to fulfill her calling, Tata's responses show that there was resistance from Philippine's family towards her calling coming from God to go serve. Furthermore, Tata talked about the communication between Philippine and the struggles she had with the bishops. Thus, the context of Philippine's experiences from Sister Tata's responses during the interview can be seen as that of family relationships, religious relationship as

⁷³ De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Letter 83, From Ph. Dechesne to M.S. Barat, Second Part - 1 North America (1819-1821), pg 13-14.

in the case with Sophie, religious congregations and the Bishops, and cultural relationship in the case of language communication.

Sister Cipra responded: The first one *for me I find ... is courage*. I see she was... I think she was in her forties... I don't want to say 45 but am remembering 40s..that *she still longed to reach out* and (clears throat) ... and *the time she left, she had been waiting for a long time to get that chance of reaching out of her country.....and the courage* comes in that *when she arrived in the USA ..she did not manage to learn the language...which should have helped her to serve efficiently, as you would call it, but that never...ahhhh...never changed her dream... She continued with her mission..... So I find that she was courageous. It's easy to run away ...or to give up...be discouraged..but she remained firm* until she now she's ..this year, next year...we are celebrating her 200 years in the USA...(mmmh)...as the first...as a woman who made a difference in education...especially in Catholic Education....In St. Louis especially. So she's valued so much in the US (mmmhhh), St. Louis, and when I went to her tomb..where she was buried in ST. Charles (mmmhhh)..I think the same thing touched me...*I felt that courage was just a call for me, ...that I shouldn't..fear to try frontiers, everything is like a new frontier*. Even this becoming mistress of novices.....Mistress of Novices, ...*I think I look at her and each....encouraged by her...that I cannot block the spirit* (mmmhh) ..*If am open ...I think I can do what I can...and what I can't is not my problem*(mmmh)...*So I try my best (mmmh). I think her perseverance in prayer also comes in because, ...when we read the story, I had a chance to go and to see where she used to pray from in Florissant*Where the novitiate used to be and the little cabin where she used to be is full of papers.....little papers (mmmhh)...*People bring intentions and you hear that she used to be there to pray. ...to have extra time of prayer...and for us who are dealing with young people and the ...mmmh..challenges...how do you encourage a person to even finish an hour in prayer and for ... for her she prayed always until she was given that name...meaning a woman who prays always...that they would bring maybe...stone...children would come and play on her dress.....her habit...and put something and they would come back to check and they would find that it was still on the same spot* ... (mmh)...and that would show them that she has not changed ...she has not moved....(mmmh)...so that plus...knowing that too...*in the hands of God that's where she wants to be.....(mmmh) adoring ...mmmhhh....So that one for sure is a touching calling to that perseverance with prayer*,...(mmmh..especially for the youth (mmmh)... *even us that we feel tired...the backs painng ...but how long can I sustain my spirit in the presence of God in adoration. I feel that she must have trusted more in God...because when you read that she was on the ...on the sea....is it the ship or on the boat for 3 monthsI think.. that is threatening, s...So I must say... she had surrendered her life to God* and she had a focus, and her focus was to go to the ...to go and proclaim the gospel....and *this people...had never heard the word of God* (mmmh)...and especially *to teach the Potawatomi ...those who were abandoned... (mmh) ..the Black Americans...I heard sometimes they had to teach them illegally* (mmmH)..they were not supposed to be taught...but they would hide them somewhere and teach them how to read and write (mmmh)... *I think she had more of trust than fears...I think*.

Sister Cipra's response highlighted two experiences of Philippine at the new frontier, which included her courage, perseverance in prayer and trust in god. As with Philippine's courage, Sister

Cipra explained it that despite her language problem that would have discouraged Philippine to go to America, she never changed her mind on reaching the new frontier but continued with her mission to the end of her life. This kind of Sister Cipra's reasoning is captured in the following "I" poem,

*The first one for me I find is courage.
I see she was...I think she was in her forties... that she still longed to reach out and ...and the time she left, she had been waiting for a long time to get that chance of reaching out of her country....., and the courage comes in when she arrived in the USA ..she did not manage to learn the language...which should have helped her to serve efficiently, as you would call it, but that never....ahhhh....never changed her dream... She continued with her mission.....,
So I find that she was courageous. It's easy to run away ...or to give up...be discouraged ... but she remained firm.*

Sister Cipra explained Philippine's perseverance in prayer in terms of the time she devoted to prayer and her behavioral posture during prayer as seen by those who were around her when she was praying. The following "I" poem captures Sister Cipra's explanation regarding Philippine's perseverance in prayer:

*I think her perseverance in prayer also comes in because ...when we read the story,
I had a chance to go and to see where she used to pray from in Florissant.....Where the novitiate used to be and the little cabin where she used to be is full of papers ...little papers (mmmhh)... and you hear that she used to be there to pray. ...to have extra time of prayer...and for us who are dealing with young people and the ...mmmh..challenges...how do you encourage a person to even finish an hour in prayer and for ... for her she prayed always until she was given that name....meaning a woman who prays always...,
I heard that they would bring maybe...stone...children would come and play on her dress.....her habit...and put something and they would come back to check and they would find that it was still on the same spot ...(mmh)....and that would show them that she has not changed ...she has not moved....(mmmh)...so that plus...knowing that too...in the hands of God that's where she wants to be.....(mmmh) adoring....mmmhhh....So that one for sure is touching... calling to that perseverance with prayer,...(mmmh..especially for the youth (mmmh)... even us that we feel tired...the backs paining ...,
but how long can I sustain my spirit in the presence of God in adoration.*

As for the trust in God as one of Philippine's experiences, Cipra explained how Philippine put her life in God's trust when she decided to travel over the rough sea to go and fulfill that calling in spreading the love of God to the Americans and to teach the black people against the law of the prevailing government. In other words, it seems to Sister Cipra, Philippine believed that God would enable her reach the new frontiers and achieve what she was supposed to do as shown in following "I" poem from Sister Cipra's response:

*I feel that she must have trusted more in God...because when you read that she was on the sea.... for 3 months,
I think, that is threatening,*

So I must say...she had surrendered her life to God and she had a focus, and her focus was to go and proclaim the word of God....and this people...had never heard the word of God (mmmh)....and especially to teach those who were abandoned...(mmh) .. the Black Americans....,

I heard sometimes they had to teach them illegally (mmm)..they were not supposed to be taught...but they would hide them somewhere and teach them how to read and write (mmmh)....,

I think she had more of trust than fears....

Indirectly from this “I” poem, Sister Cipra showed that Philippine too experienced fears. It could have been her own fears or fears for other people’s lives given that they had to hide the black people in America when teaching them how to read and write. Cipra described Philippine’s experience in the context of a foreign country (America) and the religious life of Philippine showed that Philippine’s experiences were in the relationship with the people who were aroused by Philippines praying posture as they wanted to find out if she changed her position when praying over a long period of time, including a relationship with God to who she surrendered her life and a relationship with the black Americans whom she taught illegally in her trying to be inclusive. The illegality of the teaching brings in the political context of Philippine’s experiences of going to the frontiers.

Further Sister Vevox (not real name) had this to say: *I am really touched by her life in that she did not value her life..because to give your life to go to another area ...first of all if you are thinking more of yourself, you will begin thinking how will I get on the other side, how are those people relating, maybe I might get disease...I might end up losing my life...but for her she trusted Jesus and she thought whatever comes....even if she loses her life and Jesus continues...I think that was, ..that was her desire to make Jesus Known. So when I read ...I really think ...How will I also make Jesus Know today? This is what I read in those days and she didn’t think of any challenges. I heard those days there were no easy transport....It was not like now when people go with aeroplane ..what..(mmmh)...they used ship ...and it took several months.and by then....when she left, ..she didn’t go back again....she gave herself completely...she went until ...I think she died without going back. So that selflessness..or self-donation...It really deepened my faith and always I pray through her intercession and it helped me to think more...what can I do in today’s world...when there is a lot of noise...so many things going on (mmmh)....How can I honor the call of Jesus?*

In the context of the religious life, Sister Vevox described Philippine’s experiences of going to the new frontiers as her devotion of her life to God (deep faith), trust in Jesus and with a selflessness life. Vevox was of the view that Philippine from what she read was a lady who gave all her life to sharing God’s love with people at the New frontier throughout her life leaving behind home and the people whom she had already known from her childhood to the time when she died. In the context of the foreign country, Sister Vevox further highlighted that despite Philippine’s sea travel challenges, she still went to serve at the new frontiers. Sister Vevox’s views are shown in the following “I” poem,

“I am really touched by her life in that she did not value her life.. to give your life to go to another area ...first of all if you are thinking more of yourself, you will begin thinking, how will I get on the other side, how are those people relating, maybe I might get disease ..., I might end up losing my life...but for her she trusted in Jesus and she thought whatever comes.....even if she loses her life and Jesus continues..., I think that was, ..that was her desire to make Jesus Known. So when I read ..., I really think ..., how will I also make Jesus Know today?”

Philippine documented her rough sea experiences of going to the frontiers in letter 92 to M.S. Barat when she confessed to the latter that what other people describe the place they were travelling to for their mission with beauty was not true because the description was meant not to discourage people with intentions of travelling to such a place. She described to M.S. Barat the true picture of her experience at sea as follows,

“A storm at sea is truly a terrifying experience. The noise from the breaking waves and roaring wind would drown any thunder or cannonade. It is absolutely deafening and added to that there is the rolling of the vessel itself. The sailors shout - no doubt to encourage one another in their work - but even that is lugubrious sound. Their silence is even more dismal and still worse is the sight of the captain pacing the deck in anxious mood. The vessel tossing violently in an angry sea gives the impression of confusion of the last days; the sky seems rolling up rapidly behind the mountains of water dragging at the stars with it. The sea, nearly black in the storm, constantly gapes wide, disclosing bottomless depths, the waves sweep over the bridge, as the ship rolls and pitches. Twice the waves have forced open our little portholes and have drenched our berths during the night. The masts bend, the sails are either furled or torn, the steering wheel is abandoned in order not to strain the vessel. All this is no laughing matter unless one sees God in the storm”⁷⁴. I am tempted to tell you not to send more people until we reach and see the situation...because every time this boat keeps going down and going up and I don't know whether we are going to arrive or not but any way...we are praying that we get there”⁷⁵.

Sister Vevox further highlighted in her responses that despite Philippine's sea travel challenges, she still went to serve at the new frontiers. Vevox wondered how Philippine would spend many days travelling on sea and concluded that that showed her deep faith and devotion to God's work as shown in the following “I” poem,

*I read in those days ...she didn't think of any challenges.
I heard those days there was no easy transportIt was not like now when people go with aeroplanes ..what!!! ..(mmmh)...they used ship ...and it took several months.and by*

⁷⁴ De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Letter 92, From Mer. Duchesne to M.S. Barat at Paris, Second Part - 1 North America (1819-1821), pg 40.

⁷⁵ De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Letter 92, From Mer. Duchesne to M.S. Barat at Paris, Second Part - 1 North America (1819-1821).

then....when she left, ..she didn't go back again.....she gave herself completely.....she went until ...,
I think she died without going back. So that selflessness... or self-donation...It really deepened my faith and always.

Sister Sasa (not real name) responded: *I am moved about Philippine* her initiative to take risk and all these is covered with her simplicity (mmmh)... Like she had joined another congregation - visitation... she left because of the French revolutions mmmh and stayed at home for 12 years... but I was...looking...after reading from her ... I could look at her.. but what was making her live a sisteras a religiousas a nun in her homeand I saw that was really a great risk and maybe challenging, because as myself maybesometimes when I was at home, I would tell my mum today am going for the youth workshop...she could say no and you will not be going everyday..you have also to work at home... So I see that also part in Philippine... living that kind of a prayer life, commitment and during her... when she waited...after she came back and she joined our congregation...asking for all those years and waiting, waiting more than 13 years ...waiting to hear from Sophie until the last day ..she was granted the permission. So the fact really is .. I value her humility and perseverance (mmh) and I like one of her quotes when she says 'for her it is not achievements that matter..for her , her relationship with God, it is not the great things that you do - or you are but a heart that leaves nothing for self'. For me I feel that is one of her greatest achievements. --and then when she arrived the Potawatomi... getting her name ... 'a woman who prays always'I remember one day one of my community member told me that she respects people's prayer life and how they pray...it is between them and their God and you know ..every time I read about Philippine and remember how this sister went and put a flower, a petal in the chapel to see if she's going to move (laughs) and I remember how my community member shared with me on respecting the various ways people pray and she did not want to judge, but now what moved these sisters, it should have taken some time for them not to know that Philippine really is committed to her prayer and place this flower on her habit ..and then they came it was quite a good number of hours, but still the flower was still in the same position. I said .. but really Philippine, she had.. she was committed to what she was and what she had planned to do.. If it was time for prayer .. and she really meant to pray.. so being our first missionary, there should be also something that struck Sophie for her to say..Yes. a place also she had never been.. and then the challenge of languages... without a language it can really be... I have been in places without the language ..like when I first ..as an aspirant... I was sent to Chekalini, Western part of Kenya. Its Bantu but quite different, ... Karamoja, even here, like here in Mbiiko...they are mixed with people from Busoga, Buganda, from Banyankole...all but without the language, but immediately, you say like one word, you can see the joy of people (mmmh) ... But Philippine, it was a challenge .. she couldn't learn the language but in her way..she was able to discover another way that she could communicate . did know really how... I see that picture really coming out .. that she communicated and she delivered the message she wanted...

Sister, Sasa revealed the following as Philippine's experiences of going to the frontiers during the interview. These included Philippine's risk to take initiative, simplicity, prayerfulness and

commitment to her life, humility and perseverance. The following “I” poem explains how Sister Sasa described Philippine’s risk to take initiative and humility,

... I am moved about Philippine her initiative to take risk and all these is covered with her simplicity (mmmh)... Like she had joined another congregation - visitation... she left because of the French revolutions mmmh and stayed at home for 12 years ..., but I was...looking...after reading from her ..., I could look at her.. but what was making her live like a sisteras a religiousas a nun in her homeand, I saw that was really a great risk

Sister Sasa explained during the interview that Philippine lived committed life. From the interview, Sasa suggested that Philippine encountered challenges while seeking to be accepted in living a religious life as she had been told to wait and she had to wait for the time to come. This is revealed in the following “I” poem constructed from Sister Sasa’s responses,

..... and maybe challenging, because as myself maybe, sometimes when I was at home, I would tell my mum today am going for the youth workshop...she could say no and you will not be going everyday...you have also to work at home..., So I see that also part in Philippine... living that kind of a prayer life, commitment and during her... when she waited...after she came back and she joined our congregation...asking for all those years and waiting, waiting more than 13 years ...waiting to hear from Sophie until the last day ..she was granted the permission.

Sister Sasa summed up Philippine’s experiences as that characterized by humility and perseverance as shown in the following “I” poem,

So the fact really is ..., I value her humility and perseverance (mmh) and, I like one of her quotes when she says ‘for her it is not achievements ... for her it is relationship with God, it is not the great things that you do - or you are but a heart that holds nothing for self’. For me I feel that is one of her greatest achievements.

Secondary data sources that have been already published also document Philippine’s humility. For example, while she was pursuing request for her passion to go to the frontiers and getting concerned with delayed response to her desires, Philippine wrote in Letter 83, “I was prepared to brave all human respect, take any blame, put up with the coldness - in short to any lengths to achieve my desire”⁷⁶. She further added after realizing her frustrations and reacting reproachfully (despairingly) to Blessed Virgin, “Then I understood that I had counted too much on my own efforts and if I was to succeed I must make a total surrender to my superior; I became less agitated ...”⁷⁷.

⁷⁶ De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Letter 83, From Ph. Deschesne to M.S. Barat, Second Part - 1 North America (1819-1821), pg 10.

⁷⁷ De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Letter 83, From Ph. Deschesne to M.S. Barat, Second Part - 1 North America (1819-1821), pg 11.

Sister Sasa further explained Philippine's prayerful life. Sasa explained how Philippine's praying habit attracted people's attention to the extent that some were forced to study her praying habit. Her praying posture especially aroused some people's interest and it really communicated God's message to these people and especially to communicate to Sophie to a point of accepting Philippine's earlier request. This is revealed in the following "I" poem constructed from Sister Sasa's responses to the interview,

*I read about Philippine and remember how this sister went and put a flower, a petal in the chapel to see if she's going to move (laughs) and ...
I said...but really Philippine, she had.. she was committed to what she was and what she had planned to do.. If it was time for prayer... and she really meant to pray ... there should be also something that struck Sophie for her to say. Yes to Philippine's request.*

Like the response of other interviewees in this study, Sister Sasa also emphasized Philippine's language communication barrier experience of going to the frontiers. Sasa likened this language communication barrier experience to her own experience because it was through what Sasa encountered in her lived experiences that she could appreciate this problem as a challenge to Philippines at the frontiers. Thus, Sister Sasa's explanation is summarized in the following "I" poem,

*... I have been in places without the language ...
like when I first .. as an aspirant...,
I was sent to Chekalini, Western part of Kenya. Its Bantu but quite different, ... Karamoja, even here, like here in Mbiiko...they are mixed with people from Busoga, Buganda, from Banyankole...all but without the language, but immediately, you say like one word, you can see the joy of people (mmmh) ... But Philippine, it was a challenge .. she couldn't learn the language but in her way..she was able to discover another way that she could communicate,
I see that picture really coming out .. that she communicated and she delivered the message she wanted....*

From the "I" poem, Sister Sasa explained that from her own experience, she found out that even where one has a language communication barriers, any effort in trying to communicate to the others just brings joy to those people and they will be eager to listen and respond to you. Sasa concluded that this was the case for Philippine who tried to communicate to the American people in a different way apart from through language. Similarly, Sasa explained Philippine's experiences in the context of social relations (talking about her joining another congregation) and the political context (citing the French revolution).

Sister Nadi (Not real name) further responded. The following were experiences of Philippine of going to the frontiers that touched Sister Nadi. These included Philippine' risking, determination, availability, turning failure to success, friendship with Madeleine Sophie, aspect of prayer and language.

Sister Nadi revealed during the interview that she was touched by Philippine's ability to risk and go to the unknown and this was explained in the context of social and foreign country context. That Philippine left her home, all that she was familiar with and going to a country, people and a culture totally unknown to her. That she did that all for the love of God.

Sister Nadi was also with the view that Philippine's determination aroused her interest in her. Nadi explained that Philippine made sure that her dream comes true. No matter what even if it meant waiting, she would keep persisting until it comes true.

Sister Nadi further opined that Philippine's availability was one of the other experiences that taught her. She explained that Philippine was available to whatever needs, ways in which the society wanted to use her. Sister Nadi was of the view that God wanted to use Philippine.

Another of Philippine's experiences that touched Sister Nadi was her turning failure into success. Sister Nadi explained that Philippine was aware of being a failure but she kept going with the mission in America. Thus, apart from social and political context, Sister Nadi's explanations also highlight the religious context of Philippines's experiences of going to the frontiers.

In a social context, Philippine's friendship with Madeleine Sophie also touched Sister Nadi. According to Nadi, Philippine was faithful to Madeleine Sophie. Sister Nadi was of the view that Philippine's fidelity (dependability) to Sophie present or not present held the society as one. Sister Nadi reasoned that may be the long silence, lack of letters, Philippine would have broken away and done her own things but she was faithful to Madeleine Sophie's guidance. She kept writing even if no reply - she kept faith to the society and kept all sisters the same. They knew her well in her weaknesses and strengths. Sister Nadi was of the view that Philippine risked leaving Sophie but at the back of her mind, she knew the possibility that she might not see her again. According to Sister Nadi, Philippine and Sophie did not separate at any time in distance, that the other was able to see ahead of the other - with no funds, no food, even though Sophie kept in her writing.

Another characteristic that aroused Sister Nadi in Philippine was the aspect of prayer. According to Nadi, whatever, Philippine did was connected. People sensed and admired not just routine, she communicated to God and God would touch people through her.

Sister Nadi opined that even though Philippine could not and did not learn English, she had the language of the heart to communicate to people. Despite this, the bishop saw that they needed the presence of Philippine in the mission. Her presence would make the mission a success. This is because there was something beyond words people could touch and feel because of being connected with God.

Objective 2: Assessing how the Religious of the Society of the Sacred Heart' experiences resonated with that of Philippine of going to the frontiers

During the interview with the Religious of the Society of the Sacred Heart, were asked how their experiences of living beyond boundaries/ frontiers, resonated with that of Philippine. The idea in asking this question was to assess as to whether there were any similarities or differences in the

experiences of the RSCJ in their new frontiers with those experiences of Philippine. The following were the interview findings.

Sister Jaja's response: I mean, Philippine had a strong call and I would say also for myself very strong call which ...I think it came from an experience ...aaah... maybe for both of us experiencing God's love and I...which I experienced as a young child ...for Philippine and even when I was young..am not sure when I first heard missionaries but that goes a long way, but for sure the call was toI wanted to make known God's love and aaahm....Sooo I would say having experienced that love, I wanted to share that love and I would say I resonate very much with that also...where she pursued her call to go to the missions, ...also for myself, I was asking for many years and aaah.. I was told,one time the provincial said to me ...please do not bring this up again...(laughs) a year later when I saw her I again brought it, and she said ..you know didn't we agree that you'd not bring it again (laughs) and so aaaahh. ...When Sister X got permission in 1971 to comethe Provincial at that time, said to me..Jaja I know you've been asking for a long time but Sister X has been asking longer ad we can't spare two people,....and so I kept on..., so again persevering the way she did because I thought God was asking it of me. So again, I think to be true to what one hears God is asking.and I would say.....Coming to Africa for some years. I was back in Canada for a couple of years and again I took a good look at what God might be asking of me and I know again I was I know I was to come back and it was very clear, but what I was feeling strongly was, the call to second people here...to be a support and to second the others....and that's where I feel my call is, to be seconding others ...aaahhm. I am not fluent in Luganda. How...Oh Yes...she....I mean also she struggled. I know when I was in Kalungu, I tried to learn the 'Our Father' ... it was printed there on the Church wall, you know behind the Tabernacle, I couldnt,...I never leant it (laughs). I ...for sure maybe like Philippine aaahhmaybe I was about the same age as her in coming to Uganda as she was going to America. So again I thinkwhen one is older...it's less easy to learn a language. Most of the situations I have been in ...They have been situations where English has been needed more....and when I was in Chekalini working as a nurse, I did get to know the ordinary phrases in Kiswahili in medical terms and was able to use themand I find Kiswahili an easier language for me...to learn (mmmmh,mmmmm).but also for Philippine there was a readiness in her to do whatever was needed to be done and for sure, that is.....I have always felt thatI do feel like, ...you know, try to see like, what is God asking of me...today? (pause) I know like for sure in our prayer, like we do pray so much for the refugees and so on...that's a constant in our prayers but is there something more that I can do? (pause) (laughs). Mmmmh... When I was in country X and I was in charge of the elementary school and it was a very good situation for me, I didn't know whether I would be able to do it when I was asked, but I was ready to try....and in fact I loved it and the teachers I worked with, the young teachers were wonderful, parents were supportive and the children were lovely...and I remember like walking down the corridor at this school and just full of joy and happiness and said ...I could stay here the rest of my life...but I felt God is asking more of me, you know and not just staying there, that God was asking more and so, so there was a need to follow that and not just to be settled down in that ..I feel that now we are a little bit settled... settled down... (Interruptions) pause... I think it's important for us as a society, actually as province, for us as a whole society (Pause)...not to settle down...

From Sister Jaja's response, it is possible to single out the following as her experiences that resonate with those of Philippine's at the new frontiers and these included a **calling of God's love, disappointments, communication language problems, perseverance and not being contented/satisfied with the present**. Sister Jaja talked about a strong calling coming from the experience of God's love, which was similar to that of Philippine's calling. Thus, the characters in this experience as shown in the interview findings include Philippine and God on one hand and then Jaja and God on the other hand. The way Jaja's experience resonates with that of Philippine's experience is reflected in Jaja's active "I", examples of which include the following:

*I mean, Philippine had a strong call and I would say also for myself very strong call ... maybe for both of us experiencing God's love,
I was young...am not sure when I first heard missionaries but that goes a long way, but for sure the call was to
I wanted to make known God's love and aaah...,
Sooo I would say having experienced that love,
I wanted to share that love.*

The relationship of the narrator (that is Sister Jaja) with other characters in the interview findings is explained where both Philippine and Jaja, though leaving in different time horizons and places, felt the need to share God's love with the people as Philippine's and Jaja's new frontiers. In addition, Jaja in her responses shows that she too like Philippine experienced a disappointment and perseverance during their call to the new frontier. It is shown that both Philippine and Sister Jaja felt the urgent need to go to the new frontiers only to be held back by somebody superior to them. This is depicted in the following Jaja's active "I" poem: *...where she pursued her call to go to the missions,*

*"....also for myself, I was asking for many years and aaah...,
I was told, ...one time the provincial said to me ...please do not bring this up again... a year later when
I saw her,
I again brought it, and she said ... you know didn't we agree that you would not bring it up again.
... When Sister X got permission in 1971 to comethe Provincial at that time, said to me...,
I know you've been asking for a long time but Sister X has been asking longer and we can't spare two people....and so,
I kept on..., so again persevering the way she did because,
I thought God was asking it of me".*

Furthermore, Sister Jaja similarly to Philippine encountered a communication barrier when she went to the new frontier to fulfill their calling as shown in the following Jaja's active "I" poem:

*"I am not fluent in Luganda...,
I mean also Philippine struggled.
I know when I was in Kalungu,
I tried to learn the 'Our Father in Luganda' ... it was printed there on the Church wall, you know behind the Tabernacle.
I couldn't...,
I never learnt it (laughs).*

*I was...for sure maybe like Philippine aaahhmaybe I was about the same age as her in coming to Uganda as she was going to America. So again I thinkwhen one is older...it's less easy to learn a language,
 I have been in ... most situations where English has been needed more....,
 I was in Chekalini working as a nurse,
 I did get to know the ordinary Kiswahili phrases in medical terms and was able to use themand,
 I find Kiswahili an easier language for me...to learn (mmmmh,mmmmm).but also there was a readiness in Philippine to do whatever was needed to be done and for sure, that is.....
 I have always felt that,
 I do feel like we have settled..."*

The active “I” of Sister Jaja shows how language barrier was a problem to her as it was for Philippine. Moreover, it is shown from Jaja’s response that the language problem is more likely to affect the elderly compared to the youthful religious serving at the new frontiers. However, despite this problem, both did not give up but persevered in achieving their calling to the new frontiers. Jaja’s response also shows she realized that she should not remain enjoying the comfort but when called upon to serve, she should be ready to serve even in uncomfortable situations as shown in the following Jaja’s active “I” Poem:

*“When I was in country x and I was in charge of the elementary school and it was a very good situation for me.
 I didn’t know whether,
 I would be able to do it when I was asked,
 but I was ready to try. and in fact,
 :I loved it and the teachers,
 I worked with, the young teachers were wonderful, parents were supportive and the children were lovely... and,
 I remember like walking down the corridor at this school and just full of joy and happiness and said,
 I could stay here the rest of my life....,
 but I felt God is asking more of me, you know and not just staying there, that God was asking more and so, so there was a need to follow that and not just to be settled down in that ...
 .I feel that now... we are a little bit settled... settled down (interruptions) pause....,
 I think it’s important for us as a society, actually as province, for us as a whole society not to settle down.....(pause)”*

From the Jaja’s explanation her experiences are related to the case of Philippine given that she too left her comfortable home/family environment to go and face the hardships at the new frontiers in America where at times they lacked enough food, travelled via rough oceans and rivers to mention some of the problems. She too left her country and comfortable ministry to go and do more for God. She like Philippine did not heed to complacency. Sister Jaja cautions on a feeling she has now that a little bit of settling down, certain complacency might be setting in among the sisters.

Further to this Sister Tata’ responded: Actually one thing which is very clear is the language...I have been in Karamoja for most of my years in the religious life, I haven’t leant the language par se, I can greet, but I feel that am connected to the people and also have lived thereeven though with a lot of insecurity and that was really a struggle...I felt happy mmmmh..and for me I feel like Philippine that sometimes its heart to heart communication.....the being is also very important that people know who came here.....though even with that little ..you feel there is something

connecting us...(mmh) ..so like Philippine I don't know at the end of it if she really had enough but I...with the little she had, she really did something with it...so for me being in Karamoja ...I really feel connected with her...that moving to the unknown. I didn't know what it was all about...I went...okay I had read a bit about Karamoja...but being there is different (mmmh)...and I see like...when she was living her place to go to America it was really the opposite, and yet she managed to live.. So I think the being eeeeh...there is some communication that for me I feellike that ...I think for me, which I feel like Philippine kept me a happy religious inthat even after a while when I left Karamoja ...I felt like there is something I was missing mmmh...so I was like Philippine I felt that really brings me closer to the people.....so the language you see mmmm...mmmmh is not just about spoken words...

From Tata's response, two important issues emerge that she felt she shared as experiences with Philippine at her new Frontier in Karamoja. These included the language barrier towards her communicating with the people in Karamoja and her physical presence in Karamoja striking a similarity with Philippine's language barrier towards her communicating with the people in America and Philippine's physical presence in America. Tata explained that like Philippine, she could not communicate well with the people in Karamoja and because of this, she may have failed to do some things but her physical presence enabled her to achieve other things as illustrated in the following "I" poem developed from Tata's responses,

*"Actually one thing which is very clear is the language...,
I have been in Karamoja for most of my years in the religious life
I haven't learnt the language parse,
... but I feel that am connected to the people and also have lived there ...,
and for me I feel like Philippine that sometimes its heart to heart communication... the being is
also very important that people know who came here...,
so like Philippine I don't know at the end of it if she really had enough but,
... okay I had read a bit about Karamoja...but being there is different (mmmh)..."*

Furthermore, Sister Cipra responded: The culture even when I was in the country...within Uganda itself...I have never worked in my home region and I will never work there because we don't have communities there (mmh). So I find that each time am invited to new learning. When I left home I had to learn the language in the central...and I began learning simple.....I don't know Luganda very well...but I can communicate a little ..but...maybe not a little bit...even more and in belonging to the society...International society, even within the country....it's as if it's already international.....kind of...but it's national...language with anybody.

From Sister Cipra's response, it was shown that the commonality between her and Philippine was for her serving in various regions where she did not share a common language with the people of those regions and trying as much as possible to belong to the societies in those regions, which was also the case for Philippine. Cipra's response is shown in the following "I" poem,

*"... even when I was ... within Uganda itself...,
I have never worked in my home region and,
I will never work there because we don't have communities there (mmh).
So I find that each time am invited to new learning.
When I left home I had to learn the language in the central...,
and I began learning simple...,
I don't know Luganda very well...,*

but I can communicate a little ..but...maybe not a little bit...even more and in belonging to the society”.

Philippine’s willingness to serve and belong to the society is also documented in her Letter 83 to M.S. Barat as she wrote, “..... *I value above all else the grace of belonging to the Society of the Heart of Jesus, and that of being able to contribute towards its expansion. No other position in the world could outweigh this heart-felt choice of ‘belonging’; at this moment I am fully aware of all I owe to the Society and will try to live up to it and make the spirit of Rules of Society appreciated. To renew often this holy commitment which, thank God, binds one to the Society even at a great distance, will be my consolation*”⁷⁸.

Sister Vevox responded: It is her devotion and selflessness. I pray through her intercession and it helped me to think more..., what can I do in today’s world...when there is a lot of noise...so many things going on (mmmh)...., How can I honor the call of Jesus? she really trusted God completely. (mmmh).... In Jesus’s providence. ...(mmmh)..... and sometimes I ask myself is that thing still happening today...(laughs)...mmmh ...mmmh.....It is like ...it’s as if people do not give the way it were those days....When completely....so many things have changed...so it makes me ask myself...how will I cope...how will I give myself in today’s world?...where there are so many things happening ...a lot of noise, in the world....(mmmh) ...How will I distinguish the voice of Christ from the voice of the world the way she did (mmmh).

Vevox revealed that her experiences resonated with that of Philippine’s going to the frontiers in that she could not comprehend how Philippine lived her life at that time and wondered whether she and her fellow sisters would be able to follow exactly in her steps. She explained that that was the reasons she (Philippine) always prayed for Philippine’s intervention as shown in the following “I” poems,

*“I prayed through her intercession and it helped me to think more,
what can I do in today’s world...when there is a lot of noise...so many things going on (mmmh)....,
How can I honor the call of Jesus? she really trusted God completely (mmmh).... in Jesus’
providence. ...(mmmh)..... and sometimes,
I ask myself is that thing still happening today...(laughs)...mmmh ...mmmh.....It is like ...it’s as if
people do not give the way it were those days....When completely....so many things have
changed...so it makes me ask myself...
how will I cope...,
how will I give myself in today’s world?...where there are so many things happening ...a lot of
noise, in the world....(mmmh) ...,
How will I distinguish the voice of Christ from the voice of the world the way she did (mmmh)”.*

Sister Vevox revealed in her response how Philippine inspired her to try and leave the way of her life. Vevox’s feelings are summarized in the following “I” poem,

*“...In a way that I got inspired....to give myself to God...
I keep on asking...,
how can I do it,
I got several...advise from different people by asking them ...,*

⁷⁸ De Charry, J. Saint Madeleine-Sophie Barat, *Saint Philippine Duchesne Correspondence*, Letter 83, From Ph. Duchesne to M.S. Barat, Second Part - 1 North America (1819-1821), pg 13.

*how can I give myself to God..., and since,
I came to the Society and,
I read these books (mmmh) ...giving myself also...like working wherever I am sent..."*

Then Sister Sasa responded: when I read about Philippine, I saw myself ... I needed somebody to accompany me and when I prayed through her I could see it ... not that I was getting an answer immediately... it took years ...but it happened.. I feel in one way.. she strengthens me.. and I normally say...despite that I don't have it ..still I can make it...and I also ... like the issue of taking risks. So like Philippine really it was quite a long distance. ... So I take risks....but with a purpose...and maybe there I can put a word I learnt in the Society ... discernment ...and I know like for Philippine, for her to say yes, Sophie gave her permission. It took time...the courage to keep on, and keep on, keep on ... keep on.. so also I have that perseverance in ministry am sent to do... I know there are ... many of the ministries I can be sent to .. I have never worked. The time I am sent... that is the time I will begin...and after it ..because of coming down with humility and I have to also learn to ask and trust my own sisters...because I have seen, Philippine could have started .. could have been a founder of another congregation with all these duties. She could have gone and said I want to begin like the way Mother Sister Tata left. But for her she still said yes .. I want to begin this but in the society. So in one way also she says... I ask myself, but am I in the right place... am I able to communicate to Sacred Heart communities... then through this ministry, through doing this, through these interactions I will be able. So sort of.. I learn that from Philippine.. to remain ... I may be having other gifts but they should be under an umbrella, a certain umbrella. For like for Philippine .may be. If she went by herself, she couldn't have been a saint or she couldn't have done what she did during her time (mmmh).

According to Sister Sasa, she resonated with Philippines experiences on going to the frontiers in form of a source of inspiration, risk taking and perseverance in ministries. During the interview, Sasa revealed that Philippine is a source of her inspiration. Sasa explained that she turns to Philippine to seek motivation in what to do. She said that she sought guidance from Philippine through prayer as depicted from the following "I" poem,

*"... when I read about Philippine,
I saw myself ... I needed somebody to accompany me and when,
I prayed through her,
I could see it ... not that,
I was getting an answer immediately... it took years ...but it happened.,
I feel in one way... she strengthens me... and,
I normally say...despite that I don't have it...still I can make it..."*

Sasa explained during the interview that she had learnt to take risk and to persevere in ministries from Philippine's experiences of going to the frontiers. Thus, according Sasa, because of Philippine's experiences in this respect, she was willing to be ready to do what she would be called to do when the her time comes as shown in the following "I" poem,

*"... I also ... like the issue of taking risks. So like Philippine really it was quite a long distance.
So I take risks....but with a purpose...and maybe there,
I can put a word,
I learnt in the Society ... discernment...and,*

*I know like for Philippine, for her to say yes, Sophie gave her permission. It took time ..the courage to keep on, and keep on, keep on .. keep on.,
 so also I have that perseverance in ministry am sent to do... ..,
 I know there are ... many of the ministries,
 I can be sent to ..,
 I have never worked...the time,
 I am sent... that is the time,
 I will begin...and after it”.*

Another issue that Sister Sasa feels in herself resonates with Philippine’s experiences was having humility and trust in those people around her in order to listen to what they tell her to do. In addition to this, to learn to live as community with uniting goals/purpose as shown in the following “I” poem,

*“... because of coming down with humility and I have to also learn to ask and trust my own sisters
 ...
 because I have seen, Philippine could have started .. could have been a founder of another congregation with all these duties. She could have gone and said I want to begin like the way Mother Sister Tata left. But for her she still said yes ...
 I want to begin this but in the society. So in one way also she says...,
 I ask myself, but am I in the right place...,
 am I able to communicate to Sacred Heart communities ... then through this ministry, through doing this, through these interactions,
 I will be able. So sort of...
 I learn that from Philippine.. to remain ...,
 I may be having other gifts but they should be under an umbrella, a certain umbrella. For like for Philippine ..maybe. If she went by herself, she could have not been a saint or she couldn’t have done what she did during her time (mmmh)”.*

Sister Nachap responded: I am impressed by her having the courage to be imperfect ... It’s like you don’t let your image of yourself keep you from doing the will of God. I think that’s how I want to put it. I have throughout my ministry experiences ... been asked to do things I never thought I could do, one of them being aahm.. spiritual director and ahm...you know - just a whole.... Even the kinds of ministries I have done, I never felt really, totally adequate, I don’t feel adequate right now either....but it is part of me...ahm .. this is off the records, I’ll tell you later.....anyway...aaah.... It’s just, something that I have to keep doing, its choosing life and not choosing death and ahm...in all the different ways that can happen....So I don’t know how else to put it...yes, I hear what you are saying), it’s like you can choose to forgive or not to forgive, to ahm,...be angry or to ahm to (let go) ..to let go, to ahm hope rather than despair, it’s like, the cross, Jesus on the cross, He’s letting us know, like My God, My God why have you abandoned me, He was like letting us know that no matter what happens the resurrection is here... keep moving towards the light and away from darkness (mmmh, mmmh)

Nachap revealed during the interview that her experiences resonated with that of Philippine of going to the frontiers in terms of Philippine’s courage to be imperfect. She explained that Philippine did not let her own self stop her from doing God’s work at the new frontiers. Sister Nachap explained that to some extent she too did not let herself to act as a barrier in her religious life as shown in the following “I” poem,

*"I am impressed by her having the courage to be imperfect ... It's like you don't let your image of yourself keep you from doing the will of God.
 I think that's how I want to put it.
 I have throughout my ministries experiences ...,
 I have been asked to do things,
 I never thought,
 I could do, one of them being aahm.. Spiritual director and ahm...you know
 Even the kind of ministries I have done,
 I never felt really, totally adequate,
 I don't feel adequate right now either....but it is part of me...ahm ...,
 It's just, something that,
 I have to keep doing, it is choosing life and not choosing death and ahm...in all the different ways that can happen....., it's like you can choose to forgive or not to forgive, to ahm, ...be angry or to ahm to let go ..to let go, to ahm hope rather than despair, it's like, the cross, Jesus on the cross, He's letting us know, like My God, My God why have you abandoned me, He was like letting us know that no matter what happens the resurrection is here ... keep moving towards the light and away from darkness (mmmh, mmmh").*

In addition, when Sister Nadi was asked how her own experiences resonated with Philippine going to the frontiers, she replied that Philippine is an inspiration to me. Philippine shows me the fact in the day to day living, there is a need to pray because hills and mountains can be levelled. It is not Philippine's mission – it is God's mission. I need to remain connected with God like Philippine was. Sister Nadi response as shown in the following "I" poem,

*"She is an inspiration to me
 Shows me the fact that in the day to day living, there is need to pray because hills and mountains can be leveled. It is not Philippine's mission - it is God's mission.
 I need to remain connected with God like Philippine was".*

Furthermore, Sister Nadi opined that friendship is a gift because Philippine remained connected with Sophie. I want to be this way with my friends. They always learnt from each other (Sophie and Philippine). They trusted each other and believed in each other. Thus, Sister Nadi was of the view that we need people who know us and accept us the way we are. According to Sister Nadi, Philippine and Sophie got to know each other and helped each other to move. Because of this, Sister Nadi had this to say in the following "I" poem,

"I want to be this way with my friends. They always learnt from each other (Sophie and Philippine) - they trusted each other and believed in each other".

Sister Nadi also mentioned about Philippine's resilience. She explained that Philippine's life did not even begin by internationality or going to the frontiers - to America. Sister Nadi observed that Philippine's life began much earlier right from her childhood. Sister Nadi noted that there will always be obstacles but the persistence is what is important. This is important for me to know because it is true even today. Philippine got discouraged but she did not give up. Neither do I want to give up. If it is not working now, it may work tomorrow. I need to keep resilient.

Sister Nadi explained that sometimes, Philippine got discouraged but she did not give up. Sister Nadi summed this up in the following “I” poem,

“Neither do I want to give up, if it is not working now, it may work tomorrow, keep resilient”.

In addition, Sister Nadi emphasized that Philippine’s turning failure into success is a lesson to her and touched her because Philippine knew she was a failure but looking at what was achieved because of her saying “yes”, Sister Nadi reasoned that our Province in the USA, not just our sisters, but even our partners were born and came to be a reality!!! Sister Nadi further added that with her experience of having been in America and studied there, many people have embraced the Society’s mission because of one person (Philippine) saying ‘Yes’. Sister Nadi continued that the spirit of Philippine in America will remain there over and above the Society because Philippine’s daring, accepting to be used by God and by the Society. She added that she “yes “needs to be strong too.

Objective three: How Philippine’s experiences are lived in the Society today: still a life challenge?

During the interview, the Religious of the Society of the Sacred Heart were asked how they thought Philippine’s experiences of internationality are lived in the society today. The following were the interview findings.

Sister Jaja’s response: Certainly..... I see we have moved to so many different countries and I think today aaahhm...like with our General Chapter calls ...I think we are seeing something new, You know am taking a look like at the USC Province and am aware of how they are looking at moving to new frontiers in a different way. You know they are taking a look at ..aahhm...like in the time of Philippine, slaves were ... something that was exempted and our sisters now are taking a look for instance, at what can we do, they are getting in touch with those families and seeing what kind ofwhat’s the word..... needs to see.....what we can do about that, that situation. You know to make, I don’t know what the word is.....it’s not amends but to...along that lineaaaahm... for some... they are very moved into working with women that are trafficked..... There are those types of areas and am seeing that much more since our chapter, general chapter. So I think the general chapter’s really opened the society to look at...when I look at, like countries like India and I see we have moved to the tribals, you know in these last years. Am taking a look at aaahhh..Indonesia...You know and the work that Jera is doing with them...with the people, teaching in a Muslim university, but she certainly is aaahhh.. working with Muslims...and her understanding of the Muslim faith, I think there’s a move towards understanding other religions and how important that is to have one world (mmmh, mmmh) ((yah, yah) I think we are moving in those kinds of directions more, ... we have moved to other lands but maybe there are other ways now we are moving. Well (pause). I thinkthinking of young people that are thinking of maybe joining us...or say rid her lifeshe is somebody that is ready to take risks (yes) and I think that’s something that young people are called toto risking, and she risked, she was ready to risk...yah (mmmmmh, mmmmm).

Sister Jaja observed during the interview that there were some similarities and differences in how Philippine’s experiences of internationality are lived in the society today. Jaja opined that today like in Philippine’s movement to the America at her time, the Religious of the Sacred Hearts move out to different countries. In addition, Sister Jaja explained that how Philippine reached out to the

vulnerable in America, the Religious of the Sacred Hearts also do the same in the different countries of today. Jaja's response regarding the similarities and differences in how Philippine's experiences of internationality are lived in the society today is presented in the following "I" poem,

*"Certainly..... I see we have moved to so many different countries and,
I think today aaahhm...like with our General Chapter calls,
I think we are seeing something new,
You know am taking a look like at the USC Province and am aware of how they are looking at moving to new frontiers in a different way. You know they are taking a look at ..aahhm...like in the time of Philippine, slaves were ... something that was exempted and our sisters now are taking a look for instance, at what can we do, they are getting in touch with those families and seeing what kind ofwhat's the word..... needs to see.....what we can do about that, that situation..you know to make,
I don't know what the word is.....it's not ammends but to....along that lineaaaahm... for some... they are very moved into working with women that are trafficked..... There are those types of areas and am seeing that much more since our chapter, general chapter.
So I think the general chapter's really opened the society to look at....., when I look at, like countries like India and,
I see we have moved to the tribals, you know in these last years.
Am taking a look at aaahhh..Indonesia... You know and the work that Jera is doing with them...with the people, teaching at a Muslim University...,
I think it's a Muslim university, but she certainly is aaahhh...working with Muslims...and her understanding of the Muslim faith,
I think there's a move towards understanding other religions and how important that is to have one world (mmmh, mmmh) ((yah, yah),
I think we are moving in those kinds of directions more...we have moved to other lands but maybe there are other ways now we are moving. Well (pause).
I think,thinking of young people that are thinking of maybe joining us...or say give their livesshe was somebody that is ready to take risks (yes) and,
I think that's something that young people are called toto risking, and she risked, she was ready to risk...yah (mmmmmh, mmmmm)".*

Sister Tata' responded: I think in our province her experience is so far ...when we are sent to go and serve in the mission we are given time to discern and dialogue and I feel that people really willingly feel, I would like aaahhh to go, move and serve where there is needthen I look at the...Ursula...mmmh...feeling called to go to Chad mmmh..mmmhmmmh...there is something there like Philippine to go to the missions And I know even us, when we were novices, there is one of us who kept, I would like to go to the mission in future....., I would like to go to the missions in future, it hasn't materialized but even this something and even at now she's been repeating it.....and like Philippine started that desire a long time....so in us, there is...there are people really who feel and...could go to missions..... But even within our own province because we serve in both countries...so that is the little experience I would say that people move the missions. I think as a province we need to do more in this area I would think sobecause as years go by...probably and the technology which is catching up with us, we might lose some of that mmmh...because for instance Philippine's time was very difficult times,, it was travelling, it was so difficult, if it was communication, it was so difficult. Yet now for us, this days it is very easy we have mobile phones. Eeh..the roads are getting better, even in Karamoja which has been a very difficult place to travel, things are getting better and probably with that we might caught up feeling, you know being in the comfort zone...and not wanting to go risk to another place . So

I would say that with the technology that we are embracing because we cannot run from it and there's a reallythere's very good, its helping us, but there's also need to take caution that we do not lose our roots because she was one of our co-founders ...so in that the spirit she had...even though with technology we can still hold on to that...that if its not possible and that is where there is a call...should move and say yes...and I say this because it looks like eeh from the recent sending, the council shared that it was, very difficult to place people to communities.... I have a feeling that probably that could be something catching up with us (mmmh...mmmh)...as we receive the young people ...see that we don't lose it mmmh.

In response to how Philippine's experiences of internationality are lived in the society today, Tata was of the view that there are some similarities in that there some Religious of the Sacred Hearts who have also expressed their desire to go the missions but they have to wait that time to be realized. This revelation is summarized in the following "I" poem constructed from Tata's responses,

*"I think in our province her experience is so far ...when we are sent to go and serve in the mission we are given time to discern and dialogue and,
I feel that people really willingly feel, I would like aaahhh to go, move and serve where there is need...then...it hasn't materialized...and like Philippine started that desire a long time....so in us, there is...there are people really who feel and...could go to missions".*

Thus, from the poem, it is shown that some Religious of the Sacred Hearts are held back from their desire to go to missions, as was the case for Philippine. In both circumstances, the reason according to Tata is that they are or were held back to go the missions because they did not want them to make rushed decisions but needed to think and discuss about such decisions until the time when they were really ready to go to the missions. However, Sister Tata emphasized that the difference between Philippine's time and the present time of the Religious of the sacred Hearts is brought about by the technology then and that of today. Sister Tata explained that by the time of Philippine, the technology was backward compared to the advanced technology used by the Religious of the Sacred Hearts today and that because of this, some Religious of the Sacred Hearts may not live the hard life of Philippine but decide to live comfortable lives as shown in the following "I" poem,

*"I think as a province we need to do more in this area,
I would think sobecause as years go by...probably and the technology which is catching up with us, we might lose some of that mmmh...because for instance Philippine's time was very difficult times, if it was travelling, it was so difficult, if it was communication, it was so difficult. Yet now for us, these days it is very easy we have mobile phones. Eeh...the roads are getting better, even in Karamoja which has been a very difficult place to travel, things are getting better and probably with that we might be caught up feeling, you know being in the comfort zone...and not wanting to go risk to another place.
So I would say that with the technology that we are embracing because we cannot run from it and that is a realityits' very good, its helping us, but there's also need to take caution that we do not lose our roots because she was one of our co-founders ...so in that the spirit she had...even though with technology we can still hold on to that...that if it is not possible and that is where there is a call....should move and say yes...and,
I say this because it looks like eeh from the recent sending, the council shared that it was, very difficult to place people to communities....,*

I have a feeling that probably that could be something catching up with us (mmmh...mmmh)...as we receive the young people ...see that we don't lose it mmmh".

Thus, from Sister Tata's point view, the present advanced technology, if caution is not taken, may present challenges for the Religious of the Sacred Hearts to serve at the new frontiers given that this advanced technology of present day has had a tendency for some the Religious of the Sacred Hearts of living by themselves only communicating using technology, which limits physical interaction leading to a loss in the connection that Philippine had with the people.

Sister Cipra's response: From my experience, I can say that it is lived through the many of our sisters who have offered themselves to go and serve in difficult places. I know, Sr. Maria is working...I hear with refugees somewhere in Poland...but at certain boarder the...she is working with people who are vulnerable...(mmmh)...and I know, maybe she does not even know their language...but she is serving though...and also I know some of our sisters have been working with these people, ...with the people who are being deported in the USA. I heard some are going there to pray for them and all that...So the internationality in that...meeting even the faces...people who are not their own ...(mmmh)... They are not going there because they know them or something...(mmm) and then it continues that when we are in our country...we receive other people for international experience....and then we are given that opportunity also to go for experience somewhere. We have the Congolese coming here for English and our sisters have gone to Congo to learn French ...mmh.... That exchange, ..Mary Roe...when we were not able ... to provide a novice mistress immediately...mmmh...So I find that is internationality. We are sharing I think ...at all levels ...(mmmm) not finance (mmmh)..only that even ...eeh personnel.... I think we are living internationality...and even the fact that the formation house remains in Rome also...(mmh) I think those who go to Rome for probation ...in Rome ..they have a chance of meeting other members of the whole society....those who are going to prepare for their final vows...mmmmh... I think that is a rich experience ...mmmh. Her experience, I know that she lived an austere life....whatever that would mean would have meant that time...This time is different.. The word 'poverty' means something different and maybe it's a contradiction...because poverty has become to be top and again....what can I call it...the rich have become richer in a different way.... so I thinkthe challenge is that the way the vow of poverty was lived at that time ... which Philippine went through is different from what we have now (mmmh)..from the kind of poverty that we can see (mmmh) ...Because when I have that even the person who will be, who is called illiterate now is a person who cannot use a computer...(coughs)...that one gives you a picture, you know how to read and write but still called illiterate if you cannot use the computer. In future that is poverty then. So it has a new face and a new understanding (mmmh) and poverty has never reduced...(mmmmh). I think she survived on less, in the winter ...she used the stove...and in those countries...even where she went first...the stove is longer being used...even charcoal cannot be used. They are using the central whatever...heating system....(mmmmmmh) I think the whole picture is different.

During the interview, Sister Cipra revealed that Philippine's experiences of internationality are lived in the society today in such a way that there a number of sisters who have offered themselves to go and serve in difficult places such as it was for Philippine when she went to serve in America. Like Philippine, the sister today go different places to help the vulnerable people in whatever way as much as possible even when the sisters have challenges some of which are similar to what Philippine encountered at the new frontier such as language barriers. This revelation is shown in the following "I" poem constructed from Sister Cipra's responses,

*“...I can say that it is lived through the many of our sisters who have offered themselves to go and serve in difficult places.
I know, Sr. Maria is working...
I hear with refugees somewhere in Poland...but at certain boarder ... she is working with people who are vulnerable... (mmmh) ...and,
I know, maybe she does not even know there language...but she is serving though...and also,
I know some of our sisters have been working with these people ... who are being deported in the USA.
I heard some are going there to pray for them and all that...So the internationality in that...meeting even the faces....people who are not their own ...(mmmh).... They are not going there because they know them or something... (mmm) and then it continues that when we are in our country...”*

Sister Cipra during her responses was of the view that the challenges that Philippine encountered during her time are quite different from the challenges of internationality lived and encountered by sisters in the society today. From Sister Cipra’s point of view, the challenges Philippine encountered at her time at the new frontier were more severe compared to the challenges the sisters of today encounter because at Philippine’s time the technology was too elementary help her meet her needs compared to the technology of today. Most of the things done at the time occurred at a slow pace and would take more time compared to how things are done today, let it be communication or movement from one place to another as shown in the following “I” poem,

*“I know that she lived an austere life...whatever that would mean would have meant that time...This time is different..
The word ‘poverty’ means something different and maybe it’s a contradiction ... the rich have become richer in a different way.... So,
I think ...the challenge is that the way the vow of poverty was lived at that time ...which Philippine went through is different from what we have now (mmmh)...from the kind of poverty that,
I can see (mmmh)...because even the person who is called illiterate now is a person who cannot use a computer... that one gives you a picture, you know how to read and write but still called illiterate if you cannot use the computer...
I think she survived on less, in the winter ...she used the stove...and in those countries...even where she went first...the stove is in longer being used...even charcoal cannot be used. They are using the central whatever...heating system... (mmmmmh),
I think the whole picture is different”*

Sister Ve vex’s response: I do think we’re are still living Internationality because since I joined the society...I have been with different sisters. from different continents...like when I started ...I was in Kalungu with different people....I have never met them, they are from western ...am from eastern and I was living with sisters from Ireland and Spain and still, what really helped me know that we are still in that mood, they ...what...is how the sisters behaved...because when I am there, whatever the other sisters taught me ...is the same, it’s like they are following the same behavior, there is no rank ...that this person is from the same area, she’s still a beginner or what ... Sister Ve vex was of the view that Philippine’s experiences are to some extent lived today in the Society. This is because she moved to a new world. Even today, sisters move to different regions of the world like Philippine did. Philippine went to the new world to share God’s love. The same is true for the sisters of today’s world. All these are captured in the following “I” poem constructed from Sister Ve vex’s response,

“I do think we are living Internationality because since I joined the society...,

*I have been with different sisters, from different continents...like when I started ...,
 I was in Kalungu with different people...,
 I have never met them, they are from western ...am from eastern and
 I was living with sisters from Ireland and Spain and still, what really helped me know that we are
 still in that mood ...is how the sisters behaved...because when,
 I am there, whatever the other sisters taught me ...is the same, it's like they are following the same
 behavior, there is no rank ...that this person is from the same area, she's still a beginner or what...*

However, Sister Vevox emphasized that there some differences too in Philippine's experiences of internationality compared to today's because of the new technologies that people have embraced. According to Sister Vevox, today's advanced technology is to some extent spoiling the way youths behave today and it presents a challenge to both the parents' and Religious of Sacred Hearts' influence on the youths. These views are summarized in the following "I" poem,

*"... If I look at the youth today...they are getting more information but ...as if they are losing something...because you can maybe find like...these days the parents most of them...they are crying with the youth...this technology has brought problems to the youth...they don't listen, even the way they dress...the dressing code...someone dresses according to the person is watching...which may ...
 to me is not the right thing ...,
 I could say it is pushing someone away from God..."*

Sister Sasa's response: The other day when I went to Jinja Diocese... They had a ceremony,...that was last year... After Mass people were set free to go and chat and talk ...we never knew each other, who are you ...am Sister Sasa.. International yes and where are you from... I said do you know about Sacred Heart Sisters... Especially Philippine? Heeh... you could have seen how the face just changed and you could see how she started telling me about Philippine because she happened also to be visiting some of the schools Where peoples share about the life of Philippine For me I felt that she was not there during Philippine time but what Philippine lived those days touched people's lives and they have continued passing it on...passing it on ... I said even its good our society for the 2016 for the Chapter I feel good when we hear those terms....Even here where we are sharing at a tableif you hear something like now we are connecting.

Sister Sasa was of the view that what Philippine did at the time while in America has continued to be passed on the people of today. She further expounded that people continue to connect with others like how Philippine did at her time. Sister Sasa's response is presented in the following "I" poem,

*"The other day when I went to Jinja Diocese... they had a ceremony,...that was last year... After Mass people were set free to go and chat and talk ...we never knew each other, who are you ...am Sister Sasa.. International yes and where are you from ...,
 I said do you know about Sacred Heart Sisters...especially Philippine? Heeh... you could have seen how the face just changed and you could see how she started telling me about Philippine because she happened also to be visiting some of the schools ... Where peoples share about the life of Philippine ..."
 For me I felt that she was not there during Philippine time ... but what Philippine lived those days touched people's lives and they have continued passing it on...passing it on ...,
 I said even its good our society for the 2016 for the Chapter,*

I feel good when we hear those terms....Even here where we are sharing at a tableif you hear something like now we are connecting”.

Sister Nachap’s responded: I think...what aaah...what comes immediately are the people who are reaching out to the marginalized and wanting to empower ...aah those who don’t have a voice ...aaah... and she (Philippine) always...Sheila Smith, Reina Gonzalez and Irma De Stephanus, ...I can’t think of a bunch of people ... ahm where they are reaching out to people who have no voice, and empowering them, giving them leadership in their communities (mmmh) . I mean there are all sorts of people that come into mind ..ahm....and I think in our, in the schools, in the states, Sacred Heart schools in the states and Canada, ahmmm that the faculty and the children are being empowered also to connect with those who have no voice in society... So I think that, ...we are living our internationality reaching out to people of other ahm...other countries and even you know....even in the schools of other religious.....but that is happening in extraordinary way in the Sacred Heart Schools and you think about somebody like Laurry...whose been here from.....bringing so many groups and or even what Rinnie Cullen has done to connect...ahm. Connect people with Africa....and all the needs here mmmh. So I think that would be part of it...I think anybody who is willing to work in the country, that’s certainly aaahm part of what she did ahm... I think so there is some difference ...ahm...to me it’s quite what Pope Francis said about reaching out to the marginalized... I think it’s part of what we are called to do...ahm.. yah... Ahm... you don’t have to go to another country to reach out to other peripheries...you can have it right in your own country... I have learnt from Philippine ... to let go, to let go anything that is aaahhh becomes too important in our lives, even friendships. To let go of all our friends and are so many, our family, but, I think it’s the spirituality of letting go... madeleine Sophie refused her to step down. And she wanted that Sophie might change her whatever... He wrote, Bishop Duborg...,I think he wrote to Sophie and said don’t take her out of that role, that position mmmh...but I think it was her lack of confidence in herself whatever that she, she didn’t give herself enough credit.

Sister Nachap was of the view during the interview that Philippine’s experiences of internationality are lived in the society today in the way the Religious of the Sacred Hearts reach out to people in various parts of the world to help them and empower them in their lives. Sister Nachap explained similarly, Philippine went to the frontier to help and empower the marginalized and that today the Religious of the Sacred Hearts are doing what Philippine did at that time. This is captured in the following “I” poem constructed from the Sister Nachap’s responses during the interview,

“I think ...what aaah..what comes immediately is the people who are reaching out to the marginalized and wanting to empower ...aah those who don’t have a voice ...aaah... people like...Sheila Smith, Reina Gonzalez and Irma De Stephanus, they are all doing works of trying to reach out to people who have no voice, and empowering them, giving them leadership in their communities (mmmh).

I mean there are all sorts of people that come into mind...ahm....and I think in our, in the , Sacred Heart schools in the states and Canada, ahmmm that the faculty and the children are being empowered also to connect with those who have no voice in society....., So I think that...we are living our internationality reaching out to people of other ahm...other countries and even you know....even in the schools of other religious..... but that is happening in extraordinary ways in the Sacred Heart Schools and you think about somebody like Laurry...whose

been here from.....bringing so many groups and or even what Rinnie Cullen has done to connect...ahm. Connect people with Africa....and all the needs here mmmh. So I think that would be part of it....I think anybody who is willing to work in the country, that's certainly aaahm part of what she did ahm..."

However, Sister Nachap was of the view that frontiers of Philippine's time are actually different from the way we can define frontiers today. Sister Nachap suggested during the interview that the Religious of Sacred Hearts do not have to go to new regions of the world in order to serve at the new frontier but can do it also around themselves as shown in the following "I" poem,

"I think so there is some difference ...ahm..., to me it's quite what Pope Francis said about reaching out to the marginalized.... I think it's part of what we are called to do....ahm.. yah.... Ahm... you don't have to go to another country to reach out to other peripheries...you can have it right in your own country..."

In addition, Sister Nachap revealed that she learnt how to let go while living in today's society from Philippine's experience of internationality. In other words, Sister Nachap meant that we should not let our friends or family members become an obstacle to fulfilling God's call. We should learn to let go and move forward as shown in the following "I" poem,

"I have learnt from her ... to let go, to let go anything that is aaahhh becomes too important in our lives, even friendships. To let go of all our friends and are so many, our family, but I think it's the spirituality of letting go".

In one of her responses during the interview, Sister Nachap felt that there was some kind of weakness in Philippine she didn't believe in herself but the bishop did. This was because Philippine thought she was not a good leader and she requested to be replaced as shown in the following "I" poem,

"... madeleine Sophie refused her to step down. And she wanted that Sophie might change her whatever... He wrote, Bishop Duborg ..., I think he wrote to Sophie and said don't take her out of that role, that position mmmh..., but I think it was her lack of confidence in herself whatever that she, she didn't give herself enough credit..."

Sister Nadi's response: When asked how Philippine's internationality is lived in the Society today, Sister Nadi replied that we have lived in all kinds of ways like Philippines, that we are different tribes, backgrounds, races and so forth. Sister Nadi observed the acceptance of our differences. She further explained that with going to the frontiers, this Province needs to do more because we are rather complacent and settled. Sister Nadi noted that there is need to go where there is need like Sudan and that we need to see the needs of the time and answer to them - to move away from our comfort zones and move on.

Sister Nadi further observed that Philippine's internationality challenges our world today in terms of total trust in God. She explained that sometimes our world has gotten to believing and wanting to make sure that everything is well laid out in its proper manner. She observed that there is too much planning, wasting too much in gathering resources in planning meetings to have

everything clear cut according to our human reasoning. She exclaimed ‘No!!!’, we need to increase the faith and know that it is God’s work - not looking for certainties.

Sister Nadi also commented about culture. She was of the view that we need to allow our cultures meet with those of other people, to share, to make better, and not to think that mine is the best. There is no best or worst culture. They are only people as people
 Briefly, Table 2 summarizes the dimensions of Philippine that stood out for those interviewed based on the VCR method. Some of these are similar to the document analysis, but some of them also add more personal reflections based on Philippine’s experience, as will be discussed below.

Table 2

Listening for	Examples
Plots	themes describing Philippine’s experiences such as courage, passion, disappointments, resilience, woman of prayer, her sense of failure etc
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God associated with her faith experience • Family associated with her disappointment for blocking desire • M.S. Barat as a formator • Bishops & priests • Community members • Native Americans • Philippine looked at as a saint vs being human
The self “I”	Philippine’s characteristics of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings of inadequacy, • resilient/persistent, • not discouraged by failures, • strong character, • a woman of strong faith, • committed to relationships, • humility, obedient/loyal to leadership
Self-in-Relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God (faith experience) • Family blocking her desire • M.S. Barat as a formator • Bishops & priests • Community members • Native Americans
Social Structures and Cultural Contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious context (e.g. faith in God, her constant prayer) • Family context (e.g. blocking or encouraging Philippine in her desires) • Culture context (e.g. language and her world view) • Political context (e.g. illegality of practicing religion in France and allowing natives black & Indians to be treated like whites and Philippine’s struggle to try and include people of other races in America) • Social context (e.g. keeping the sisters in America consistent with the with the congregation goals despite lack of response to her communication, persistent commitment to communication despite the

	distance from her superior. Attempt to break boundaries that did not unite people. She also led by an attitude of servant-leadership)
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Reflections on the interviews and discussions

In this discussion, given the theme of internationality, the focus is on Philippine’s adapting to a new culture and all that implied, what it means for individual religious and the Society and Sacred Heart family as a whole. The discussion is based to a considerable extent on the interviews.

Philippine’s experiences of going to the frontiers

Adapting to a new culture other than one’s own is not always easy. It is not easy not to compare one’s culture with the new culture one is entering to embrace. It is not even easy not to be critical at times, expecting the new culture to be like one’s own, to view the new culture from the perspective of one’s own. Philippine was no different, for there are times when she thought from the perspective of French culture and worldview on American soil. This naturally made her either negatively critical or positive depending on the issue at hand.

Even though Philippine, due to her worldview and difference in culture, had her own prejudices about others, at least she had a heart to see the good in them; and not just the good but even possibilities for growth and change and not rubbish everything. Along with this was also the fact that at times she fell into the trap of judging other people from her point of view other than from their reference of who they were. We still make similar mistakes today.

The positive attitude to note here is that she appreciated who and what the Indians were in their own right; the negative attitude is that she sometimes questioned whether the Indians’ culture was inadequate. Philippine may not be so much to blame here as those were the prejudices at the time. However, sadly these are the same issues the world over still grapples with –who are better, richer, first world, third world, which color of person is better, which tribe is better than the other and the litany goes on...⁷⁹

Getting into a new world has its own demands apart from the personal. It is always accompanied by not having enough resources to mitigate and respond to the ever increasing needs. It was not long before Philippine realized that she had to overcome all kinds of frontiers which glaringly lay before her. Many people give up at this point; and begin to think they made a mistake. Philippine chose to stay in mission despite the challenges. This staying focused and facing the difficulties squarely for Philippine had been true from childhood. She chose to face the challenges of the New Frontiers with the help of God who had called her; and apply herself to all that God was asking of her for the sake of the people she had come to serve and to evangelize.

It is not always easy to take decisions and be expected to succeed when those decisions are dependent on someone else or on some unchallengeable structures. Philippine had many ideas that she desired to implement. One of these ideas was that education could be for all and not just the privileged few white children. She had gone to the New World to help the less privileged – the Native Americans; and now it seemed the contrary as she found herself educating the privileged instead, only white children; and yet her hands were tied: she had to obey her superiors and follow the structures in place at the time.⁸⁰

In addition, there were also structural challenges like the issues of slaves. It was a structural dark spot that Philippine did not navigate so well. This might have been because of the fact that there were so many structures to follow, or like all slave owners, she too felt that owning slaves

⁷⁹Mooney, “Lives that Matter”. Sacred Heart Forum- St Louis University- July 13, 2017.

⁸⁰Osiek, C. (2017) *Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne*, pg. 25.

was something that was normal, since both church and the state perceived it as such and were not categorical in challenging it.⁸¹

Philippine will forever be a woman ahead of her times. However, having said that does not mean that Philippine had no dark side that colored her life of faith, especially in situations where her socialization process took over her emerging spirit of inclusivity. When she lacked the human labor for the expanding mission at the frontiers, she acted just like others at the time; she bought and sold slaves to make up for this gap since there were few whites willing to work as hired laborers.⁸²

It is very clear that Philippine knew that these were human beings with a soul just like the white people. The question is: why did she not defend them just like the poor she spent herself for in Grenoble? The only answer perhaps befitting this kind of behavior in Philippine is that there was still a part of her which was operating from a world view of the slave owners, a part that saw these people as a little step below the white people. This part still needed to be redeemed in Philippine as well as the church. It is a space about which we owe these slaves reverence for what they contributed in building our congregational ethos; it is a space where we reverence them and render our apology for the inhumane ways we may have treated them when we could have been the voice for them but were not. It is a humbling space in which we like Philippine are faced with the fragility of our human weakness. It is a space in which we recognize within each one of us that which still needs redemption. It is a space our 2016 Chapter calls each one of us to struggle to cross, “to act more humanly...” It is indeed a space in which our first spirit of internationality was born, slave or free, white or black, rich or poor... they all worked hard to build this little Society we call international today. (And so in honor of each of those persons black or white, slave or free, rich or poor in which unconsciously our first space of internationality was born— we observe a moment of silence and give thanks).

However, the mistakes Philippine made cannot be compared to the efforts she tried to make in bringing about long lasting changes that could be for the benefit of all. For example, in 1824, she opened the first school for Indian girls west of the Mississippi River; though short lived - only five years because the pupils were so few. This minimal number had a reason as Philippine herself explains, that the Indians were being pushed westwards by the government, limiting their territories and buying off their land.⁸³ Many of them moved in search of peace and more land, and therefore had to withdraw their children from school and go with them to other places. The obstacles for Philippine to overcome were indeed quite many. She continued to be courageous and undeterred.

How the Religious of the Sacred Heart resonated with Philippine going to the Frontiers

This study found that what touched many of the Religious of the Sacred Heart was Philippine’s life of prayer. This was the anchor that helped her as a person even when there were challenges.

Some of those interviewed found Philippine’s selflessness a challenge. They asked themselves, “How can I pick up her spirit, how can I be selfless, how can I be totally given and how can I distinguish the voice of God from the different voices that make themselves heard in our world today?”

Further, some Religious of the Sacred Heart resonated with Philippine’s desire to go to the missions. When looking at their experience at the new frontiers where they had been, they saw no

⁸¹Mooney, C. M. “Lives That Matter”, pg 6.

⁸²Ibid pg15.

⁸³ Mooney, *Philippine Duchesne*.

differences with Philippine's experiences of going to the frontiers. Whatever she went through, these Religious of the Sacred Heart are going through. Some have been to missions, and there are times when it has been so difficult that there were points when they felt, "*I think it is time to give up and move elsewhere*". Some have been sent to the frontiers lacking the language of communication. However, they would find that when the time came, somehow there was somebody to say, "You can take it up and move on a bit". This was an inspiration from Philippine's spirit to keep moving through life⁸⁴.

In other words, Philippine's mission was not easy in her time and it is not easy for the Sacred Heart family of today, but God is there to keep us going. Looking back at Philippine's challenging experiences and what emerged through them can give us the courage to say Philippine went through it, and we are also going to go through these challenges.

Finally, Religious of the Sacred Heart commented on how Philippine touched people despite her lack of language. It is not only one's ability to communicate through language that touches those with whom the person is trying communicate, but also it is a way of being with other people as it was the case of Philippine, who was able to touch the feelings of those around her in spite of language barriers.

How Philippine's experiences of internationality are lived in the Sacred Heart family today and continue to be a challenge

Going to a mission today may not necessarily require going to another country. Today, going to frontiers also means reaching to those who are vulnerable whether it is where the Religious of the Sacred Heart are presently residing or not. This was the case in Puerto Rico during the hurricanes, where the frontiers were in their midst in the people who lost their properties, their lives, and, sometimes, their loved ones. This was the same too for the Society, with the very touching and painful experience Sister Diana Wall shared with us during the fires in California. This was an abrupt frontier in which so many people had lost their homes and their loved ones, and needed hope. The frontier is not just about going to another country but answering the needs at the time and listening to the prompting of the Spirit. This calls for constant awareness and keeping abreast of what is going on around us, not complacently living in our own cocoon.

Finally, Philippine's life has several implications for our actions today. These include the importance of our life experiences as avenues of inspiration for others and generations after us, the importance of persistence beyond our fears, resilience in the face of discouragements and oppositions from different authorities, the ability to question unjust systems, call to forgiveness by the Society of the Sacred Heart to the slaves and acknowledging their contribution in the building of the Society, the unimportance of human standards, the sobering reality that behind every saint there were strengths and weaknesses just like the rest of us. What makes a difference is the fact that despite our frailties, of uttermost importance is persistence on the side of goodness; looking back to the past not as a space of discouragement because of our historical failings but as a spring board into the future with hope.

⁸⁴Osiek, C. (2017). *Saint Rose Philippine Duchesne*.