

Photography & Power in the Colonial Philippines – 2

Dean Worcester's Ethnographic Images of Filipinos (1898-1912)

by Christopher Capozzola

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If the camera was an invaluable weapon in the military conquest of the Philippines after 1898, photography also helped Americans make sense of their new colonial subjects in Southeast Asia in the years after the war's official end. During the early-20th century, both photography and American political power underwent rapid and dramatic change. Neither was entirely new; the rhetoric of "manifest destiny" had pushed American settlers across the Pacific

in the 19th century, and photographs had been around for decades. But the years around 1898 brought a burst of political and visual innovation as the camera came to be a standard visual tool both in the United States and the Philippines. This unit tracks the relationship between photography, anthropological knowledge, and political power in the Philippines by exploring the photo collection of one American colonial official.

Dean Worcester organized, catalogued, and annotated his photo collection himself. This unit's image gallery maintains the organizational structure and categories that Worcester used, and the essay reproduces Worcester's own captions as a window into his visual imagination.

The photographs in this unit, unless otherwise noted, are from the Worcester Photographic Collection, courtesy of the Museum of Anthropology, University of Michigan.

DEAN WORCESTER'S WORLD

For most Americans in 1898, the Philippines was a new and distant place. The United States concluded a brief war with Spain in August 1898, and the terms of the Treaty of Paris, signed in December, granted the Philippines to the United States in exchange for a \$20 million payment to the Spanish Empire. Americans avidly sought to learn about the "white man's burden" that they had taken up across the Pacific. Representations of what British poet Rudyard Kipling called America's "new-caught sullen peoples" circulated in the metropole, peddled with appealingly visual titles such as *Fighting in the Philippines: Authentic and Original Photographs* (1899) or *Our Islands and Their People as Seen with Camera and Pencil* (1899). One of the first books to reach American readers was *The Philippine Islands and Their People*, published in September 1898 by Dean C. Worcester, identified on the book's title page as an Assistant Professor of Zoology at the University of Michigan.



*Dean Conant Worcester, seated front and center, captioned this photograph:
“Our party and a group of Ilongote chiefs,” 1900.
Location: Dumabato, Isabela*

[dw02d043] detail

Indeed, Worcester’s initial interests in the Philippines were biological, not political. Born in rural Vermont in 1866, he first traveled to the Philippines in 1887 as a student member of a University of Michigan bird-watching expedition led by his professor Joseph Beal Steere. He returned in 1890 for another expedition in the company of Frank L. Bourns, a fellow scientist and photographer. Not content to record the local bird life, the two men traveled to the most remote regions of the islands, meeting hunters and farmers, warriors and fishermen, all of them subjects for Worcester’s camera.

Dean Worcester’s rapid rise in 1898 from zoologist to colonial kingmaker was a mix of expertise, happenstance, gumption, and connection. He was, in part, in the right place at the right time: when the Spanish-American War began in April 1898, few Americans had ever even been to the Philippines, let alone had any expertise about the place, ornithological or otherwise. In the space of just a few weeks, Worcester turned his letters home into a published book—one of the first to reach American readers, and definitely the most lavishly illustrated.

One of Worcester’s readers may have been President William McKinley, who invited Worcester to meet with him at the White House in December 1898. McKinley appointed Worcester to the Philippine Commission, the first institution of civil government in the country, from 1899 to 1901. Worcester went on to serve as secretary of the interior of the Philippines from 1901 to 1913, and—with only a few interruptions for travel in the

United States—would spend the rest of his life in the Philippines. But it was those 14 years of colonial service that mattered most for Worcester, for the U.S. colonial government, and for the ways that the state visualized the Philippine Islands and their people.

Dean Worcester loved cameras. He had begun taking photographs as a young man, and by the time he left for Manila on the *Empress of Japan* in January 1899, he was a capable photographer who entertained himself aboard ship by taking group shots and tinkering with his camera.



Worcester included himself (seated far left) in this group photograph with “members of the first Philippine Commission and staff” while at sea in 1899.

Worcester’s caption: “Members of the first Philippine Commission and staff on board the ‘Empress of Japan’,” 1899.

Location: Empress of Japan, Pacific Ocean

[dw59b003]

Within a few years, Worcester had amassed considerable power in the colonial administration, incorporating into his portfolio as secretary of the interior responsibility for a wide range of undertakings: health, forestry, public lands, agriculture, weather, mining, government laboratories, and non-Christian tribes. As part of his official duties, Worcester regularly traveled through the 7,000 islands of the Philippine archipelago and met with some of the country’s 10 million inhabitants. On his investigations, he always brought along his own camera or hired a photographic assistant. Worcester praised

Charles Martin, his favorite photographic assistant, for having “made a large series of valuable negatives which afford a permanent photographic record of conditions at present obtaining among many of the non-Christian tribes of the archipelago and of their manners and customs.” [1]

Ilustrados: Worcester Documents Manila

Worcester’s headquarters were in the colonial government buildings in Manila, where he interacted with a diverse, urbanized population, most of them Western in religion and dress, some of them close collaborators with the new American regime, and only a few of them captured by his camera. The so-called “ilustrados” (from the Spanish word for enlightened) included Spaniards who had traveled to Asia as part of the colonial government, as well as Spanish-speaking elites in the major cities, along with ethnic Chinese merchants and laborers.



Most of the Filipinos Dean Worcester interacted with during his career as a colonial official were urban, Spanish-speaking elites such as those seen above. Worcester took relatively few photographs of these men and women known as “ilustrados” (from the Spanish word for enlightened).

Worcester’s caption: “Don Pedro Sanz, his Visayan wife, his sons-in-law, daughters, and grandchildren,” 1899.

Location: Manila, Manila

[dw48B003] detail



In addition to the non-Christian groups that fascinated Worcester, he also photographed groups he labeled as “Spaniards” and “Spanish-German Mestizos,” here six young women.

*Worcester’s caption: “Group of six women; with the exception of No. 1, all are Visayan-Spanish mestizas,” 1901.
Location: Dumaguete, Eastern Negros*

[dw49A021]



In the Philippines, Worcester encountered a substantial Chinese minority population. But he appears to have spent very little time photographing the ethnic Chinese or their neighborhoods.

Worcester's caption: "A Chinaman carrying fruit on a pinga," 1899.

Location: Manila, Manila

[dw59b003]

Images of urban, Westernized Filipinos—like this vivacious young actress from the northern Philippine province of Abra—were rare in Worcester's collection, which focused on the rural and tribal Filipinos of the country's more remote regions.

Worcester's caption: "An Ilocano actress laughing. Full length front view," 1905.

Location: Bangued, Abra

[dw39b012] detail





Taken as a whole, the Worcester Collection does not evenly represent the ethnic diversity and cultures of the Philippines in the early-20th century. By contrast, it clearly reflects Worcester's preoccupation with classifying the "primitive" racial types that he encountered in the mountain highlands and distant islands. Despite his day-to-day interactions with urban Filipinos, Worcester took the overwhelming majority of his photographs in the most remote regions of the Philippines.

No one told Dean Worcester to collect these photographs, but the adventure of travel, the technical challenge and excitement of camera work, and the documentary evidence that it produced must have appealed to Worcester's larger-than-life personality and outsized physical presence. With the authority he held as head of the Philippine Bureau of Science, Worcester set out to amass thousands of photographs of people and places in America's new colony. The Bureau of Science, which Cameron Forbes, another American colonial official, described as "a great science library serving as a storehouse of knowledge not only for the Philippines, but for much of the East," took its camera work seriously. As Forbes noted, "[i]f a photograph were needed, this bureau not only took it, but filed it away so that it might be available in years to come." [2]

Worcester's motives were simultaneously scholarly and political. "Now that the Philippine islands are definitely ours," wrote anthropologist Daniel Brinton in 1899, "it behooves us to give them that scientific investigation which alone can afford a true guide to their proper management. ... [A] thorough acquaintance with the diverse inhabitants of the archipelago should be sought by everyone interested in its development." [3] Dean Worcester took up the challenge of documenting the diversity of the Philippines, with the goal of both understanding the Filipino people and learning how to govern them.

Worcester focused his attention on the most rural groups. "[T]here are probably no regions in the world," he later explained, "where ... there dwell so large a number of distinct peoples as are to be found in northern Luzon and in the interior of Mindanao." [4] A catalogue of his collection arranged by ethnic group shows a preponderance of images taken among mountain-dwelling Igorots and Tingian Islanders, and relatively few images taken of urban Ilocanos and Tagalogs.

Number of Photos by Social Group:

Bagobos (3)
Batanes Islanders (12)
Benguet Igorots (97)
Bontoc Igorots (60)
Bukidnon (17)
Ifugaos (53)
Ilocanos (27)
Ilongotes (13)
Kalingas (46)
Lepanto Igorots (26)
Mangyans (17)
Manobos (20)
Moros (26)
Negritos (49)
Pampangans (2)
Pangasinanes (7)
Spaniards (15)
Spanish/German Mestizos (10)
Tagalogs (23)
Tagbanuas (15)
Tinguianes (83)
Tirurayes (1)
Visayans (12)
Zamboangueños (1)

Using Worcester's photographs along with maps and documents, American officials began to chart the new colony's ethnic landscape. But their scholarly confusion showed the impossibility of their undertaking; in 1900, Dean Worcester asserted that the population of the Philippines included three "races" and 84 "tribes," while three years later the Philippine census counted 24 tribes—eight of them "civilized" and 16 of them "wild." [5] The world that Dean Worcester mapped was at least partly a landscape that he himself had imagined.



Map titled "Races and Tribes of the Philippines," from Herbert W. Krieger, *Peoples of the Philippines* (1942). Dean Worcester's efforts to map the ethnic landscape of the Philippines shaped American anthropological knowledge of the

region for decades. In 1942, when the Smithsonian Institution published a series titled War Background Studies, Herbert W. Krieger drew this map based on Worcester's earlier reports.

In a memoir written at the end of his career, Worcester reflected on his time with the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes.

At the outset we did not so much as know with certainty the names of the several wild and savage tribes. ... As I was unable to obtain reliable information concerning them on which to base legislation for their control and uplifting, I proceeded to get such information for myself by visiting their territory, much of which was quite unexplored. [6]

The spirit of adventure and exploration that had brought the young man to the Philippines in the 1880s had become a technique of colonial governance. Worcester's fascination with the rural Philippines reflected his official role as head of the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes as well as the paternalism of empire and the romance of agrarian lifestyles that he saw disappearing before the progress of Western civilization. When comparing rural indigenous Philippine ethnic groups to urban Filipinos, Worcester noted that:

[a]t present the pagan tribes consider themselves to be the ones who are better off, and I am bound to say I believe they are right. [7]

Just as important as what Worcester and other colonial photographers saw through their camera lenses is the question of how they looked through them in the first place.

On viewing images of a potentially disturbing nature: [click here](#).

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THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL GAZE

Photography was a way of seeing the Philippines that emerged out of the political and military needs of the U.S. colonial government. As such, it was part of a constellation of governance techniques that included mapping, census taking, and cultural observation.

The photographs in the Worcester archive reflect the visual and cultural concerns of the emerging social science of anthropology, a field that initially took as its subject the study of so-called "primitive" societies. At the turn of the century, anthropology had emerged as a professional field of study; scholars formed the American Anthropological Association in 1902. But many of its practitioners were people like Dean Worcester, amateur scholars who sought to document, analyze, and classify cultures in regions of the world that were increasingly coming under colonial control.

Ethnography in the Philippines had begun in the 19th century as Spanish writer Pedro Paterno and German Ferdinand Blumentritt traveled to the region. But these works were almost completely unknown in the United States before 1898. In the Bureau of Science and the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes, founded in October 1901, Dean Worcester gave ethnographic study an official home, charged to "conduct systematic investigations" [1].

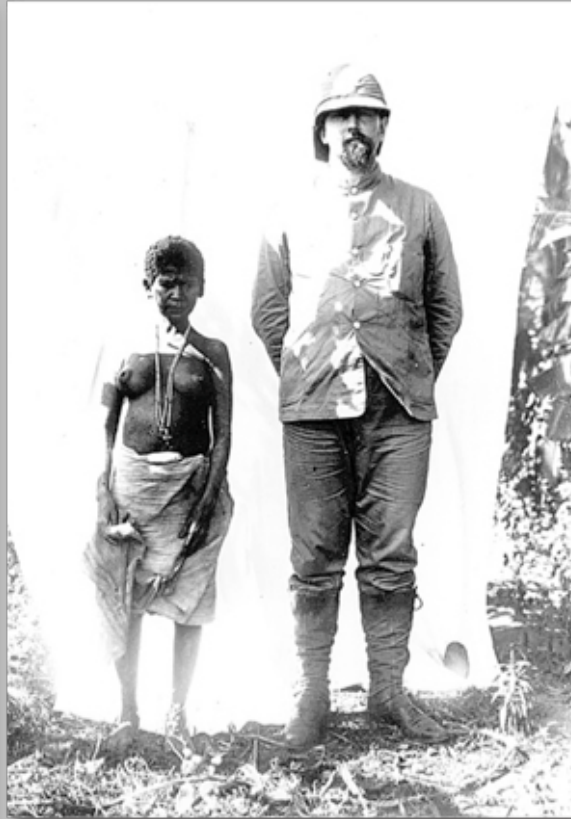
Early ethnographers' methods ranged from observation and interviews to archaeological fieldwork, but in 1900 some of the most exciting new work in anthropology took advantage of the portability and ease of use of the hand-held camera. Within a year of its founding, the Bureau of Science had hired Charles Martin, Dean Worcester's photographic assistant, as the first civilian "government photographer" in the Philippines.

Many of the images in the Worcester archive reflect a way of looking that is specific to visual anthropology. How does a photographer look at his subjects when trying to document a "race" or "tribe"? When an anthropologist looks through the camera lens, what does he or she see? The anthropological gaze is first and foremost an act of looking. Whether the photograph taken is a formally posed portrait or an instantaneous snapshot, the photographer looks at his or her subject with a direct and intense gaze that would generally be deemed impolite if no camera stood between them. The distance between them makes the photographic subject into the other—the thing that is to be photographed—but a necessary intimacy remains in the personal relationship between the photographer and his or her subject.

“Yardstick” Photos

Dean Worcester does not appear to have engaged in the formal anthropometric measurement that many professional ethnographers used. Instead, Worcester and his fellow photographers used juxtaposition in their photographs in order to convey size, and sometimes even used their own bodies as yardsticks. Such depictions of scale can be found throughout the Worcester archive.

Photographs of Dean Worcester and, in the bottom two photos, Governor William F. Pack of Benguet Province, posed next to Filipinos as an ad-hoc yardstick measure meant, as his notes indicated, “to show relative size.” The images compared Pack and Worcester, relatively tall men, with Filipinos of the Negrito tribe—among the shorter people in the Philippines—making for a sharp contrast.



top left:

Worcester caption:

“Negrito man, type 1, and myself, to show relative size,” 1901.

Location: Mariveles, Bataan

[dw001A002]

top right:

Worcester caption:

“Negrito [wo]man, type 12, and myself showing relative size,” 1901.

Location: Mariveles, Bataan

[dw01A041]

middle left:

Worcester caption:

“Negrito man, type 3, and myself, showing relative size. Full length front view,” 1900.

Location: Dolores, Pampanga

[dw01H003]

middle right:

Worcester caption:

“Negrito woman, type 5, and myself, showing relative size. Full length front view,” 1900.

Location: Dolores, Pampanga

[dw01H010]

bottom left:

Worcester caption:

“Two Negrito men with Governor Pack. Full length front view, standing,” 1909.

Location: Palanan, Isabela, Cagayan

[dw01Z002]

bottom right:

Worcester caption:

“Two Negrito men with Governor Pack. Full length front view, standing,” 1909.

Location: Palanan, Isabela, Cagayan

[dw01Z003]

Objects and Objectification

Turn-of-the-century anthropologists did not merely scrutinize, but also sought to document and to collect, another impulse that would have come as second nature to Dean Worcester. As a trained ornithologist, Worcester was familiar with the imperatives of collection, classification, and cataloguing. He had done that on his initial voyage to the Philippines as an undergraduate birdwatcher, and he continued it after his gaze turned from Filipino birds to Filipino people.

To see Filipinos as specimens for scientific study, Worcester had to turn human societies into laboratories.



dw07b003.jpg



dw07b007.jpg



dw07b009.jpg



dw07b029.jpg



dw07b030.jpg



dw07b037.jpg

These images from Dean Worcester's collection convey his impulse to catalogue and classify the Philippine culture around him, objectifying both people and cultural artifacts in the process.

[dw07_grid]

In one image taken in 1901, Worcester posed a young woman and her child before a white sheet draped to form a makeshift photo studio. Separated from her home, her community, and even from the culture that her portrait was meant to represent, the woman becomes an object of scientific scrutiny.

While Worcester and his team used a cloth backdrop in many photographs, many images feature subjects in natural environments. The varying degrees of posed and spontaneous scenes suggest additional complexities in the relationship between observer and observed.

Worcester frequently



photographed his subjects in front of a hastily draped white sheet. This common photographic technique helped him take clearly-focused pictures, but also had the effect of separating his subjects from their cultures and communities.

*Worcester's caption: "Negrito mother with child in her arms. Full length side view," 1901.
Location: Mariveles, Bataan*

[dw01A098]



Here, by contrast, this mother and child were photographed without a backdrop.

*Worcester's caption: "Mangyan woman, type 8, with child. Full length front view, standing," 1906.
Location: Lalauigan, Mindoro*

[dw03I012] detail



A white backdrop is apparent in this photo portraying Worcester's colleagues and Filipinos—"observers" and "observed."

Worcester's caption: "Three Negrito women with Winthrop, LeRoy and Dr. Kneeder," 1901.

Location: Mariveles, Bataan

[dw01A113] detail

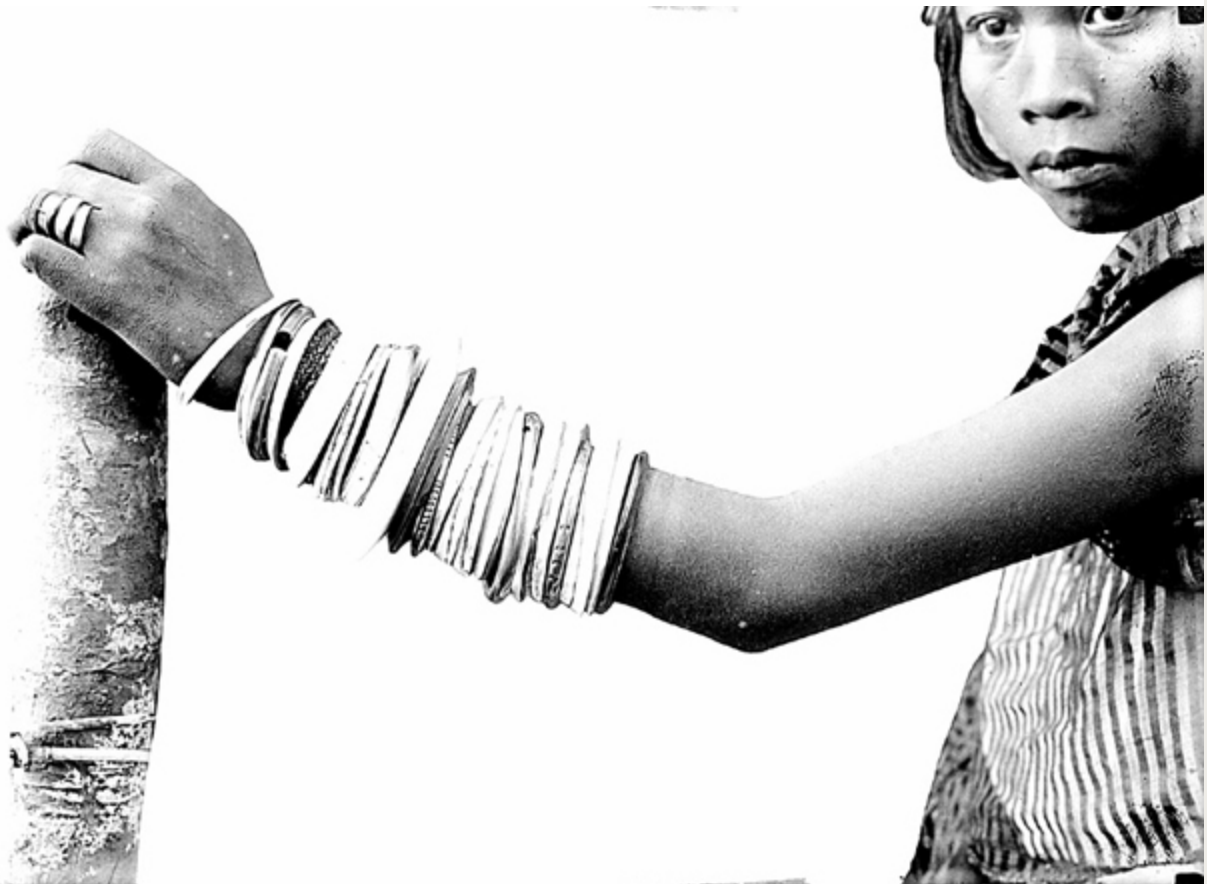
Close observation of objects and objectification of individuals went hand in hand. Approximately 35 images in the collection depict ornaments, some photographed as details, as in this image of a hand with a "fresh tattoo."



Worcester's caption: "Hand of Tinguiane woman showing fresh tattoo," 1908.

Location: (Old Tait) Burayutan, Apayao

[dw06HH002]



The striking appearance of the young woman within the photographic frame belies Worcester's effort to depict a disembodied image of bodily ornamentation.

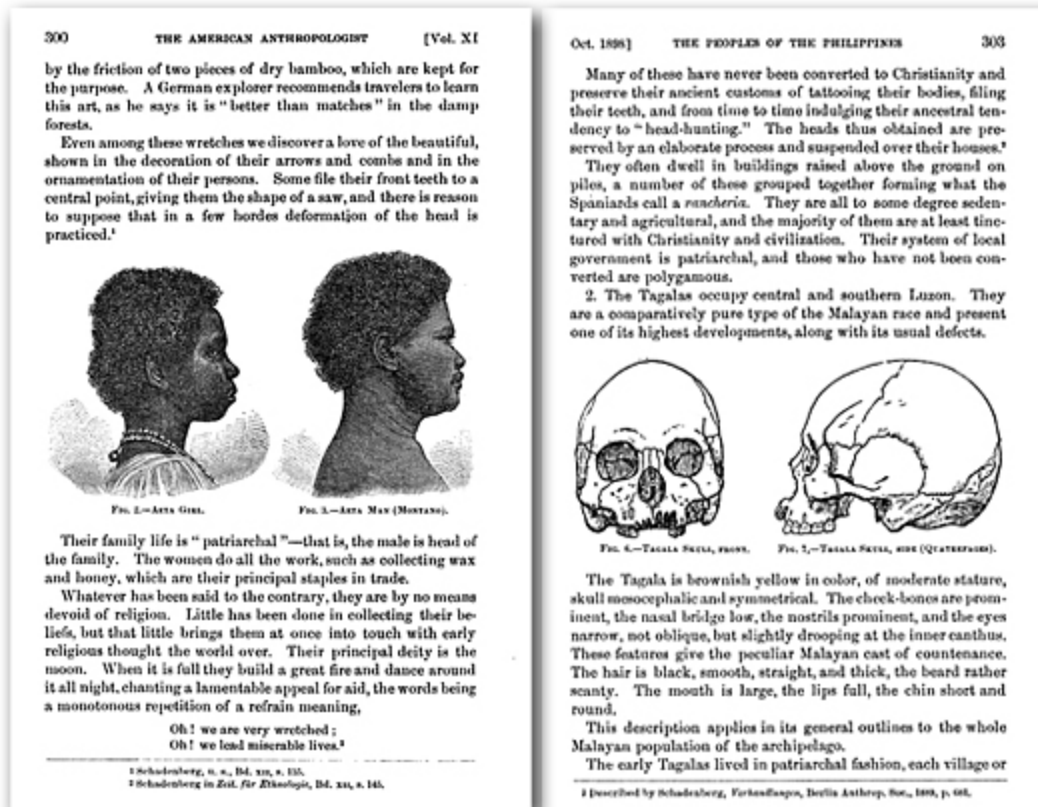
Many photographs in the Worcester collection document clothing, jewelry, and headgear, or document “exotic” cultural practices.

Worcester’s caption: “Left arm of Manobo girl, type 5. Showing ornaments,” 1908.

Location: Bakua, Butuan

[dw13B010]

Photographs such as those in the Dean Worcester collection emerged from the practice of anthropometry, the scientific definition of races by use of measurements of the physical body. This effort drew on the latest techniques of criminology; indeed, the mugshot had only emerged in European photography in 1883. For Worcester, and for many of his readers back in the United States, such photographs were not only scientifically sound, but on the technological cutting edge. For Worcester, who would have been aware of the military and police uses of photography that were occurring in this era, the blend of anthropology and criminology that these photographs represent would have come as second nature.



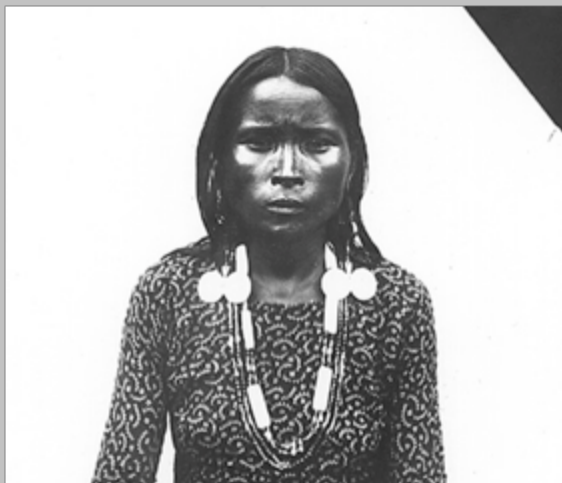
Scholarly studies of the Philippines by turn-of-the-century anthropologists included measurement of Filipinos’ bodies. Explicit (and usually unfavorable) comparison with European bodies confirmed white Americans’ sense of racial superiority.

Pages from Daniel G. Brinton, “The Peoples of the Philippines,”
American Anthropologist 11 (October 1898): p. 300, p. 303.

[1898_AmAnthropologist_p300_p303]

Anthropology Meets the Mugshot

Observing Filipinos could also include measuring and documenting their bodies, as with the images of these members of the Kalinga tribe. Worcester frequently photographed his subjects seated in front and side views to document their clothing, jewelry, and hairstyles, but also to depict facial features that scholars would have used to classify them into races. Part of the developing science of anthropology, this photographic practice shared much with the criminal mugshots that were also common in this era.



Top pair to bottom pair:

Worcester's caption: "Kalinga man named Lauagan. This man followed us for three days with a head axe, constantly sneaking behind us and undoubtedly seeking an opportunity to kill us," January 1905.

Location: Bunuan

[dw05a007] [dw05a008]

Kalinga man named Saking, January 1905.

Location: Bunuan

[dw05a005] [dw05a006]

Kalinga woman, August 1901, Island/Region: Cagayan

Location: near Tuguegarao

[dw05e006] [dw05e007]

Staging the Primitive

Taxonomic organization of races, anthropometric measurement, painstaking documentation of objects and cultural practices were all attempts by Dean Worcester to stage his mastery of modern racial science. But the anthropological gaze could also look at "primitive" peoples to evoke Western stories of colonial adventure and romance.

Worcester's journeys brought him into close contact with rural Philippine tribes, and he used his cameras to document the objects that he and other Americans found exotic and intriguing. Examining these photographs of the "head-axe"—a weapon that was typically used for hunting or harvesting but was sometimes used in the ritualized warfare that Americans called "headhunting"—reveals some of the attraction that violence and danger had for Worcester as he undertook his photographic work.

The Story of an Axe

Americans were fascinated by the tool that they called the "head-axe." Generally used for hunting or reaping crops, the axe's sharp blade could also serve other purposes, including ritualized warfare that anthropologists described as "headhunting." In this striking image of a young Kalinga man holding a head-axe, Worcester conveys a sense of danger and violence.

Worcester's caption: "Young Kalinga warrior; type 3. Holding head axe. Belonged to party which attempted to



*ambush us,” 1905.
Location: Bontoc, Cagayan*

[dw05b004] detail



Stories of colonial adventure highlighted Americans' ability to interact with the "primitive" peoples they met. Here, Worcester (seated on the left) and his traveling party appear with a group of Kalingas in the northern Philippine village of Pinakpook, but their head-axe is shown posing no threat to the American explorer.

*Worcester's caption: "Our party at house of Doget," 1905.
Location: Pinakpook, Cagayan*

[dw05d027] detail

Here, a Kalinga elder named Doget, Worcester's host in the village of Pinakpook, poses for the camera in battle dress. In reality, most Filipinos



would have used this axe as
a tool, not a weapon.

Worcester's caption:
"Kalinga man named
Doget,"
January 1905
Island/Region: Cagayan.
Location: Pinakpook

[dw05d001]



Whether shown in the hands of a Filipino warrior or isolated against a backdrop, images of the head-axe conveyed the romance and danger of America's colonial undertaking.

Worcester's caption: "Three types of head axes in common use among the Tinguianes of the Abulug River," 1906.

Location: Bolo, Cagayan

[dw06ee013] detail

Eroticizing Native Women

In contrast to his photographs of axe-wielding male warriors, Worcester's images of women often feature an exoticism and danger of a different sort. For many American men, travel in the Philippines prompted fantasies of escape from the dictates of Victorian society. Worcester made several series of paired photographs of women that juxtaposed them with and without blouses.





Top left:

Worcester's caption:

*"Three girls from Kapangan, types
5, 6, and 7. Full length front views," 1907.*

Location: Trinidad, Benguet

[dw10L012]

Above left:

Worcester's caption:

"Kalinga woman," 1901.

Location: near Ilagan, Isabela

[dw05F030]



Top right:

Worcester's caption:

"Three girls from Kapangan," 1907.

Location: Trinidad, Benguet

[dw10L011]

Above right:

Worcester's caption:

"Kalinga woman, type 11.

Full length front view," 1901.

Location: near Ilagan, Isabela

[dw05f031]

In this series of images of women by a stream, Worcester seeks to convey an erotically primitive state reminiscent of the "Garden of Eden." But the images of these Gauguin-like nudes are highly artificial stagings on Worcester's part; note the woman's clothing at her feet in the upper left photograph.



Upper Left:

Worcester's caption: "Benguet Igorot girl, type 19. Full length front view, reclining near stream," 1904.

Location: Baguio, Benguet
[dw10A071]

Upper Right:

Worcester's caption: "Igorot woman, type 23. Reclining near stream," 1904.

Location: Baguio, Benguet
[dw10A181]

Lower Left:

Worcester's caption: "Benguet Igorot women, types 18 and 19. Squatting on bank of stream," 1904.

Location: Baguio, Benguet
[dw10A082]

Lower Right:

Worcester's caption: "Benguet Igorot women, types 18 and 19 in bath, nude," 1904.

Location: Baguio, Benguet
[dw10A087]

We know little about how these images came to be staged or who was meant to see them, but it is clear here that Worcester's gaze had jumped from the documentary impulse of the scientific photographer to the narrative imagination of the storyteller, even as the unequal power relations of colonialism made these images possible.

On viewing images of a potentially disturbing nature: [click here](#).

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Worcester's caption: "Bontoc Igorots in automobile," 1904. Location: Manila

[dw08A112] detail

COLONIAL COUNTERPOINT

The American colonial experience in the Philippines was full of contradictions, as officials sought simultaneously to control the Filipinos and to engage and uplift them. Dean Worcester cast himself as the nation's leading expert on the Philippines, and took plenty of credit for that work: "not one single measure for their betterment has ever been proposed by anyone but myself," he insisted in a letter to Secretary of War William Howard Taft in 1908. [1] Dean Worcester's mixed motives appear in his photographic collection, which combined romance and condescension. Worcester's official job as head of the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes was to defend indigenous Filipinos; he found himself committed to changing Filipinos' ways of life even as he wished them to stay frozen in time. Ultimately, the only way he could imagine to protect them was to put them—and their culture—into a museum.



In addition to taking photographic images, Worcester and his colleagues also recorded Filipino voices. But visual accounts of Filipinos using Western technologies—as in this image of a phonograph—often suggested the cultural inferiority of Filipinos.

Worcester's caption: "Making a phonograph record. Group of Lubuagan men singing," 1908. Location: Lubuagan, Bontoc

[dw008F021] detail



ENTERTAINING THE KALINGAS.

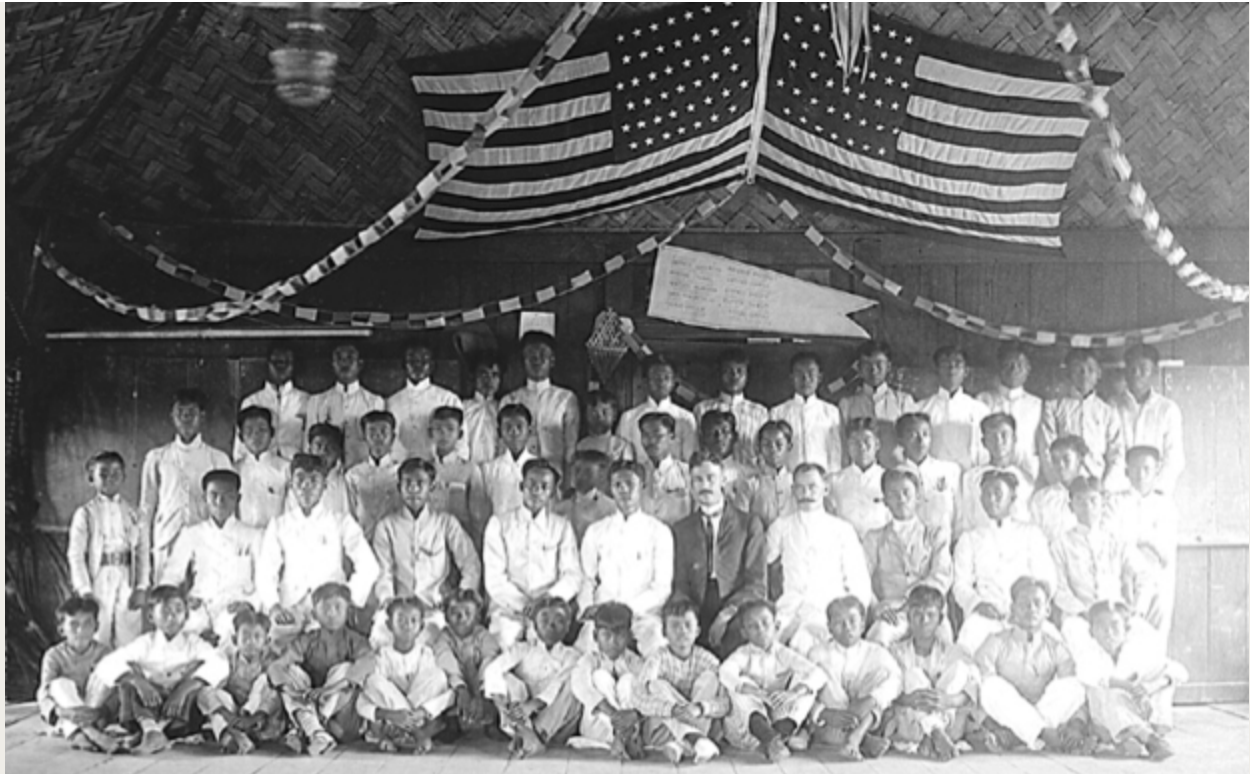
They are listening with great interest to the reproduction of a speech which one of their chiefs has just made into the receiving horn of a dictaphone.

Depictions of rural Filipinos encountering American colonial officials often showed Filipinos awed by western technology, juxtaposing two ways of life, one marked as advanced, the other as backward.

Book illustration and caption: "Entertaining the Kalingas. They are listening with great interest to the reproduction of a speech which one of their chiefs has just made into the receiving horn of a dictaphone." from Dean C. Worcester, The Philippines Past and Present (New York: Macmillan, 1914), vol. 1, p. 464.

[PPP_v1_dictaphone]

Through institutions such as schools, churches, workshops, and military training camps, American colonial officials sought to transform Filipinos. The institutions that aimed at uplifting Filipinos taught them not about their own culture, but that of the Americans: teaching English rather than Philippine languages, celebrating the Fourth of July rather than the outlawed Philippine national holidays, and decorating classrooms with portraits of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.



Colonial officials such as Dean Worcester boasted of the civilizing effect of American education. American flags decorate this classroom in the northeastern province of Isabela. Display of the Philippine flag had been outlawed a few years earlier.

Worcester's caption: "Group of Ilocano and Gad-Dane school boys, with their American teachers," 1905. Location: Echague, Isabela

[1898_AmAnthropologist_p300_p303]

The colonial military was among the most transformative institutions. Its two main branches, the Philippine Scouts and Philippine Constabulary began as temporary military expedients during the Philippine-American War, as American officers sought to suppress the insurgency by recruiting men from some ethnic groups to fight as soldiers against others. But in the years after the war, colonial officials touted the value of the Scouts and the Constabulary as schools for citizenship. Frederick Chamberlin, an American journalist, wrote that "[n]ext to baseball, many are inclined to believe that the constabulary is the most active single civilizing agent in our administration." [2]



Images such as this pair of photographs—in which a Constabulary soldier is photographed “in uniform” and “without uniform”—helped Worcester show the transformation of tribal Filipinos through military service.

Far left: Worcester’s caption: “A Bontoc Igorot Constabulary soldier, without uniform.,” 1903. Location: Bontoc, Bontoc

[dw08A055]

Left: Worcester’s caption: “A Bontoc Igorot Constabulary soldier in uniform.,” 1903. Location: Bontoc, Bontoc

[dw08A054]

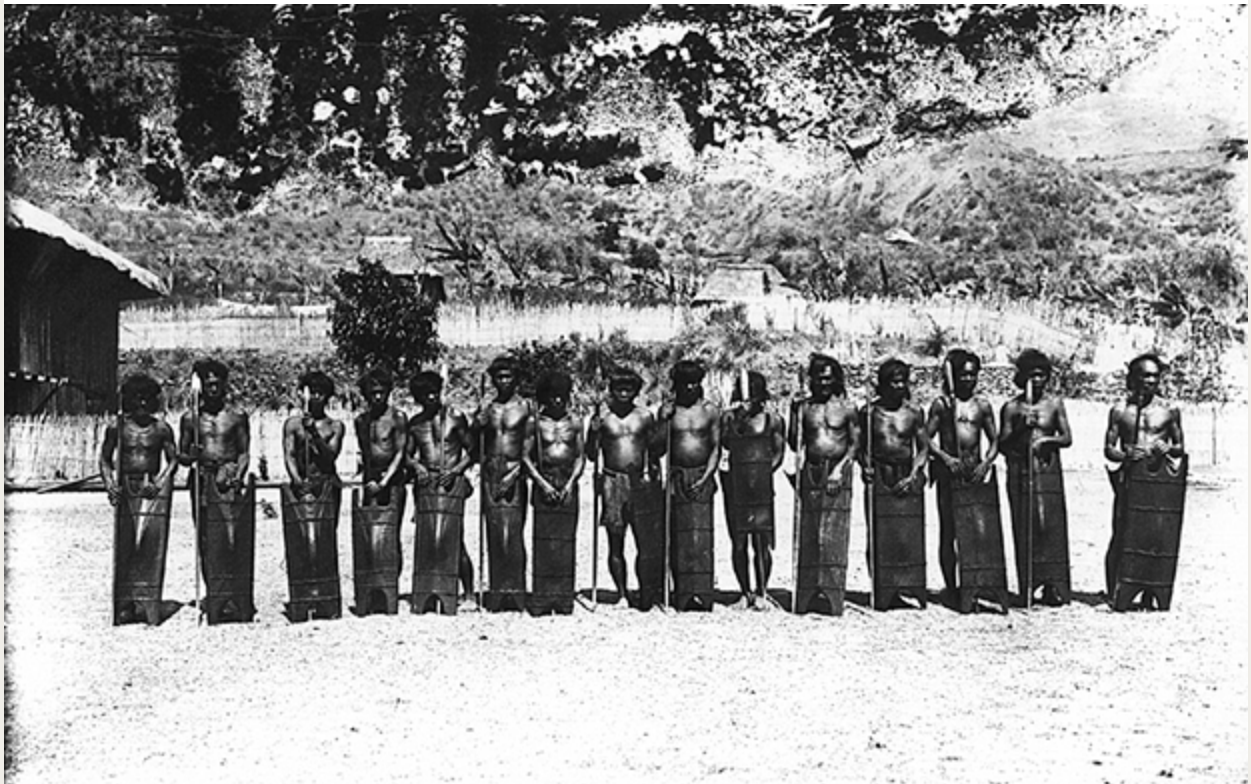
*Worcester believed the Philippine Constabulary was both a civilizing influence and a more cost-efficient way to run an army. This chart, in Worcester’s 1914 book *The Philippines Past and Present*, shows how the U.S. military relied on Filipino soldiers’ local knowledge, and also shows the discrepancy between their low salaries and those of the Americans.*

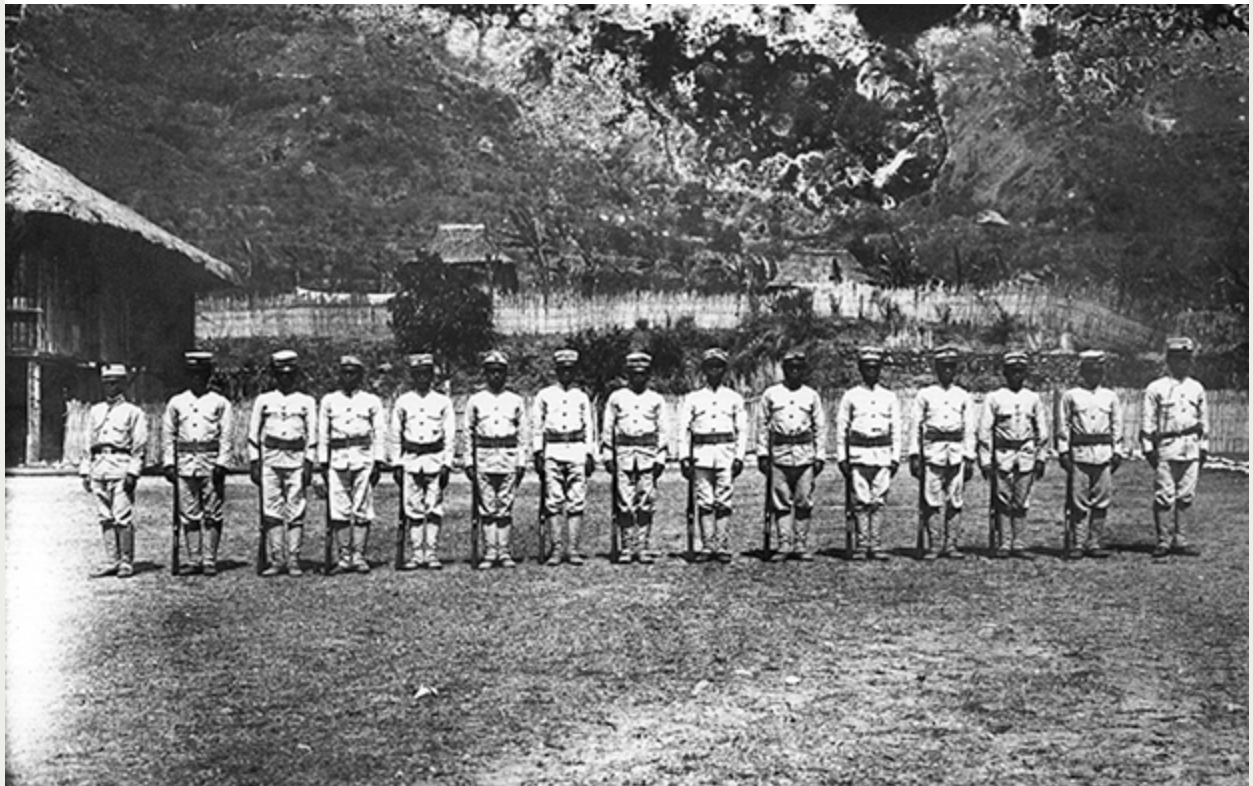
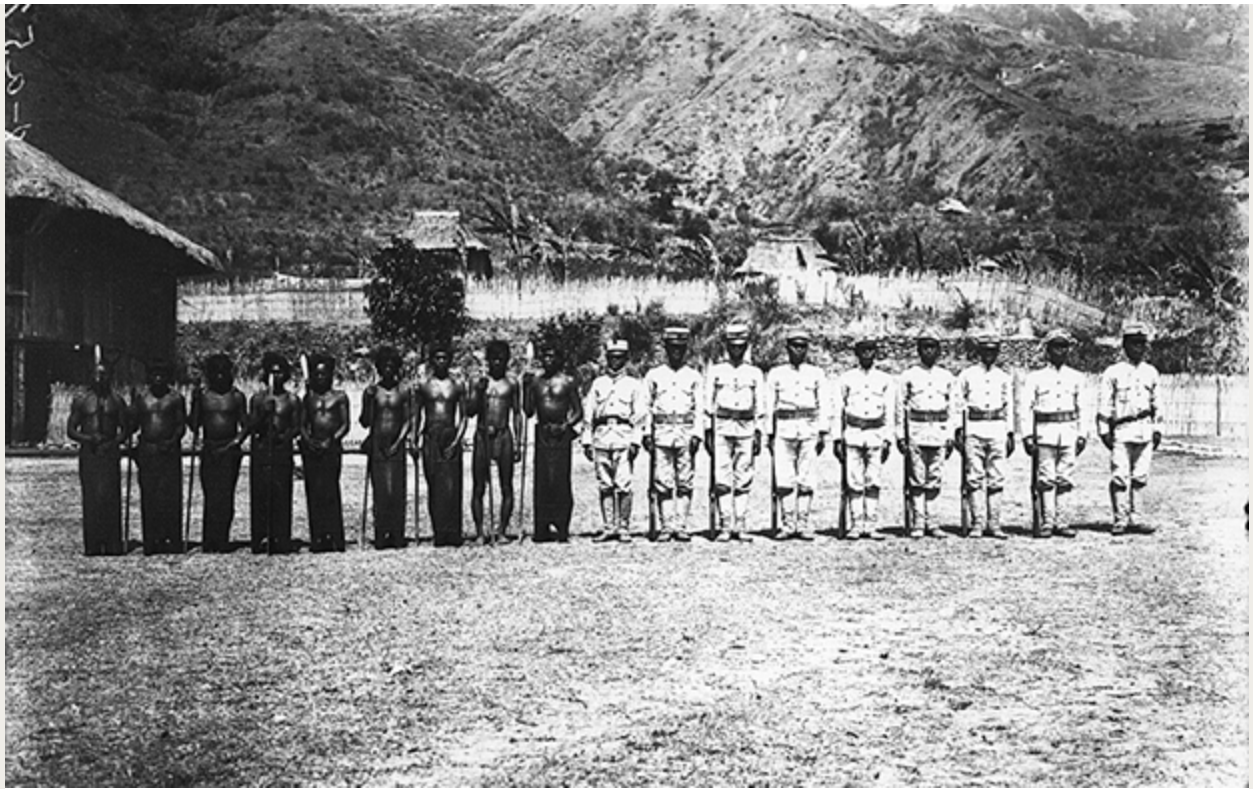
[PPP_v1_constabulary_chart]

The following parallel will make clear some of the reasons why it was determined to use constabulary instead of American soldiers in policing the Philippines from the time the insurrection officially ended :—

| UNITED STATES ARMY | PHILIPPINE CONSTABULARY |
|--|--|
| Soldier costs per annum \$1400. (Authority: Adjutant General Heistand in 1910.) | Soldier costs per annum \$363.50. |
| American soldiers come from America. | Constabulary soldiers are enlisted in the province where they are to serve. |
| Few American soldiers speak the local dialects. | All constabulary soldiers speak local dialects. |
| Few American soldiers speak any Spanish. | All educated constabulary soldiers speak Spanish. |
| American soldiers usually have but a slight knowledge of local geography and topography. | Constabulary soldiers, native to the country, know the geography and topography of their respective provinces. |
| Few American soldiers have had enough contact with Filipinos to understand them. | The Filipino soldier certainly knows his own kind better than the American does. |

In the following series of three photographs, which Dean Worcester noted were evidence of the transformation of "old school" Igorot warriors into "new school" soldiers. He arranged photographs in specific ways to tell a story of colonial uplift.





Worcester identified this 1903 series “Bontoc Igorot warriors of the old school and new school.” Showing the men first in traditional dress with shields and spears, and then in U.S. military uniforms, the series boasts of the elimination of their traditional Filipino ways of life.

1903. Location: Bontoc

[dw08A051] [dw08A052] [dw08A053]

As his tenure as a colonial administrator continued, Worcester traveled to remote regions of the Philippines on almost-yearly tours, but as he grew more comfortable in his government offices in Manila, his travels were shorter, more ritualized, attended by an ever-larger retinue of colonial officials, and restricted to ceremonial encounters with tribal chiefs. The photographic record reveals these visits less as cultural exchanges and close observations, but public spectacles. They were increasingly staged performances of a way of life that was already disappearing.



Colonial officials went to great lengths to teach Filipinos Western athletic games, such as this foot race with an American flag (on left) at the finish line. At the same time, they suppressed Philippine popular sports.

Worcester's caption: "Finish of the long distance run," 1908.

Location: Quiangan, Nueva Vizcaya

[dw07A034] detail



The traditions behind tribal cultures were suppressed, but the spectacle was not. This image of war games in the southern Sulu archipelago shows how U.S. officials such as Dean Worcester could look with approval on Filipino traditions, but only when they were confined to ceremonial performances.

Worcester's caption: "Jolo Moros fencing with shield and wooden barong," 1901. Location: Jolo, Sulu

[dw23D023] detail

Worcester went out of his way to document styles of dress. Even under Spanish rule, rural Filipinos moved between traditional and Western styles of dress. Anthropologist Albert Jenks noted that among the Tingian people, "[t]he men commonly wear only the breech-cloth, though they usually possess trousers and shirts which may be worn on festival occasions." [3] Worcester noted in his diary that "most of the Igorrote headmen had coats of white or blue or other color (frequently a khaki coat they had got off a soldier) and some of them also wore trousers of remarkable patterns." [4] Whether for soldiers or schoolchildren, clothing was a powerful marker of progress toward "civilization," and the Dean Worcester collection documents the importance of clothing in a narrative of colonial uplift.



Paired images such as these sought to use clothing as markers of cultural progress, favorably comparing “Sunday clothes” with “every-day clothes.” But sometimes images told different stories than the narratives of civilization in their captions. On closer examination, these men did not look very different in their Sunday dress than their everyday clothes.

Worcester’s caption: “Group of Tagbanua men in their Sunday clothes,” 1905

Worcester’s caption: “Group of Tagbanua men in their every-day clothes.”

[dw04B003] detail [dw04B004] detail

During a 1909 tour of Bukidnon, a mountainous region in the southern island of Mindanao, Worcester was greeted by women who had clearly donned their finest clothing for the arrival of the colonial officer.



By 1909, Dean Worcester's visits to provincial capitals were carefully choreographed affairs. Women in the southern province of Bukidnon appear here in Western dresses to greet Worcester and his traveling party, and to show off their own mastery of the norms of Western cultural behavior.

Worcester's caption: "Bukidnon women dancing in the street to welcome us," 1909.

Location: Impalutao, Bukidnon

[dw11I006] detail

But the women of Bukidnon had clearly learned that civilization required putting away their traditional clothes, even if they brought them out for special occasions "to show that they had them." If the anthropological gaze sought to turn a "primitive" society into a laboratory in order to study it, sometimes it was too successful. Increasingly, traditional indigenous Philippine cultures were being turned into a museum—displaying clothes that people no longer wore.



Even as Bukidnon women chose their clothes to please Worcester, they also knew of his interest in traditional Philippine cultures. These women displayed an older costume during his ceremonial visit, but did not wear it “lest they displease” the Americans.

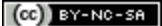
Worcester’s caption: “One of the dummies at the foot of the arch shown in 11j003. The people were afraid to wear these clothes lest they displease us, but wanted to show that they had them,” 1909.

Location: Kalasungay, Bukidnon

[dw11j004] detail

On viewing images of a potentially disturbing nature: [click here](#).

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Photography & Power in the Colonial Philippines – 2

Dean Worcester's Ethnographic Images of Filipinos (1898-1912)

by Christopher Capozzola

Dean
Worcester's
World

Anthropological
Gaze

Colonial
Counterpoint

Recasting
"Natives"

Looking
& Looking
Back

Sources
& Credits

RECASTING "NATIVES"

Dean Worcester's images of the Philippines circulated widely in the United States, from the halls of Capitol Hill in Washington to the St. Louis World's Fair of 1904 to the parlors of middle-class Americans. As they circulated, the images changed—and even when they didn't, the changing contexts of their presentation told new stories about the American colonial experience. Photographic images moved from the darkroom to the printed pages of official state documents, most notably with the publication in 1905 of the *Census of the Philippine Islands*. Here the surveillance powers of the state that had been so crucial in pacifying the islands now joined with the documenting, collecting, and classifying impulses of the anthropological gaze.

The Career of an Image

Tracing one photographic encounter as it moved from Dean Worcester's field work to its other public uses shows how the uneasy but necessary intimacy of the colonial encounter was frequently stripped away by the time images circulated back to the metropole and were put to other political uses.



In this 1905 photograph, E. Y. Miller, an officer in the U.S. Army and the colonial governor of the Palawan province, holds on his lap a Moro child. The boy was the son of Datu Batarosa, a powerful local chief with whom Miller would have worked on a regular basis.

Worcester's caption: "Moro boy, type 1. Son of Datu Batarasa, with Governor E. Y. Miller," 1905. Location: Bona-Bona, Palawan

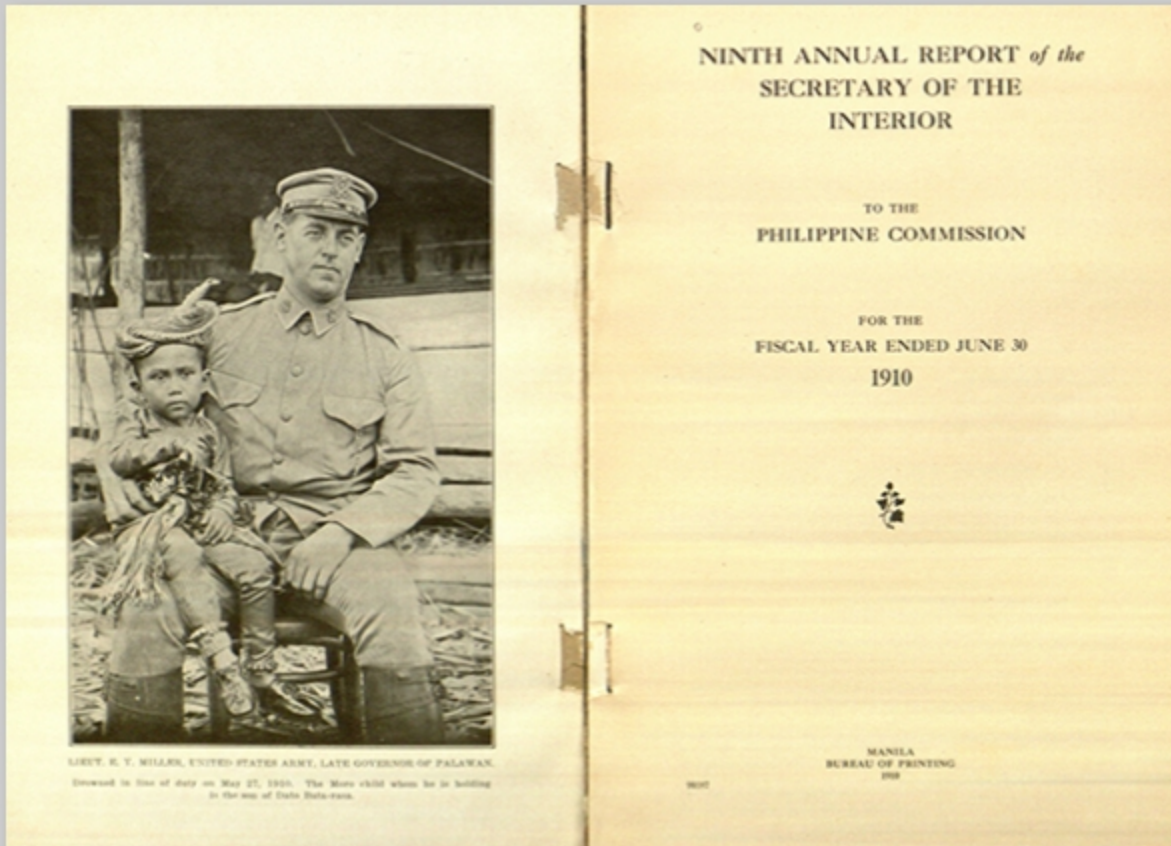
[dw23A003]



A photo of the same boy with other children in the background creates a different impression.

*Worcester's caption: "Moro boy, type 1. Son of Datu Batarasa. Full length front view," 1905
Location: Bona-Bona, Palawan*

[dw23A001]



Miller drowned in 1910, and Worcester's annual report as secretary of the interior reproduced this image as its frontispiece, noting that the "provincial service and the work for the non-Christian inhabitants of Palawan have suffered

an irreparable loss.” Worcester’s image of Lieutenant Miller extended one man’s benevolence to that of the entire American colonial undertaking.

Title page and frontispiece, Ninth Annual Report of the Secretary of the Interior to the Philippine Commission for the Fiscal Year Ended July 30, 1910 (Manila: Bureau of Printing, 1910).

[Sec_Int_1910]



In November 1913, National Geographic featured a hand-colored version of the photo. The caption focuses on the Moros, describing them as “treacherous and unreliable” and stresses the need to bring them under control.

By now, Captain Miller’s photograph has begun to tell a new story, much less personal, more simplified, and far out of Dean Worcester’s power to control.

National Geographic caption: “A MORO BOY. The son of Dato Bata Rosa seated on the knee of Captain E. G. Miller [sic], who lost his life while serving as Governor of Palawan. The Moros are found in their greatest strength in the Island of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago. They are unexcelled pirates and slave traders, treacherous and unreliable to the last degree. The whole race numbers about 300,000, has never been brought under complete control and its pacification presents one of the most difficult problems before the Philippine government.”

[ng1189_1913_Nov_27]

Worcester as Storyteller

Like most colonial officials, Worcester returned regularly to the United States. By 1913, he had hired a booking agent who arranged paid lectures across the country. During his two-year tour, Worcester’s images reappeared as lantern slides (sometimes

hand-colored), projected in public auditoriums as a backdrop to Worcester's own booming voice that spoke with great authority about the colonial project. In December 1913 and January 1914, Worcester packed Carnegie Hall with a series of lectures on such topics as "The Picturesque Philippines" and "Wild Tribes of the Philippines." The *New York Times* praised the lectures for including both photographs and films:

Each picture told a story of the marvelous progress made by Americans in teaching civilization to the savage tribes of the Philippines.... The savage, naked, dirty, and unkempt, was shown in still photographs, while that same one-time savage, clothed, intelligent in appearance, and clean, later was shown in moving pictures. [1]

Worcester's visual extravaganza wowed not only the crowds at his lectures, but government officials as well. One of the final stops on Dean Worcester's U.S. speaking tour was in Washington, D.C., where he appeared before the Senate Committee on the Philippines. His testimony was both oral and visual: on December 30, 1914, he lectured the senators for two hours in a darkened committee room illuminated by the glow of his lantern slides.

Old / New

As the photographs that Dean Worcester and others took in the Philippines were collected, sorted, and circulated throughout the United States, one style emerged as a visual habit that shows the power of photography as its anthropological aims were put to storytelling ends. Published works about the Philippines—by Dean Worcester or others—regularly featured images of transformation, both of the Philippine landscape and its inhabitants: a paved road replaces a meandering footpath; a modern schoolhouse stands next to a thatch-roofed hut; a long-haired boy returns as a white-suited man. The visual trope of sequential transformation was among the most popular ways of depicting America's colonial enterprise, appearing in books, magazines, and even in official government reports.

Putting images in a sequence creates a narrative—with a beginning, a middle, and an end. In an era that cherished progress, uplift, and evolution as keywords of civilization, photographic sequences told persuasive stories to Americans about the nation's new imperial endeavors in the Philippines. Several can be found in Dean Worcester's massive account of U.S. colonial policy, *The Philippines: Past and Present*, published in 1914 (below).



Two photographs of a Pit-a-pit, a Bontoc Igorot boy. The second was taken nine years after the first.

THE PHILIPPINES PAST AND PRESENT

BY

DEAN C. WORCESTER

SECRETARY OF THE OFFICE OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS
1901-1913; MEMBER OF THE PHILIPPINE
COMMISSION, 1906-1913

AUTHOR OF "THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS
AND THEIR PEOPLE"

IN TWO VOLUMES—WITH 126 PLATES

VOLUME II

MILLS & BOON, LIMITED
49 RUPERT STREET
LONDON, W.



THE METAMORPHOSIS OF A BONTOC IGOROT.

Two photographs of a Pit-a-pit, a Bontoc Igorot boy. The second was taken nine years after the first.

*The caption of the frontispiece to Worcester's 1914 book reads:
"The Metamorphosis of a Bontoc Igorot. Two photographs of a Pit-a-pit, a
Bontoc Igorot boy. The second was taken nine years after the first."*

The text explains that the man became a doctor. By including the contrasting images of a barefoot boy and a white-suited man as the first pictures in his book, Dean Worcester presented images as evidence of the achievements of the colonial project.

*Title page and frontispiece, Dean C. Worcester,
The Philippines Past and Present (1914).*

[1914_PhilPstPres_v2] [1914_PhilPstPres_v2_frontis]

Dean Worcester not only used images to document personal transformation, but also the remaking of the Philippine landscape. Roads, bridges, trains, and farm equipment appear in his photograph collection as signs of modernization.

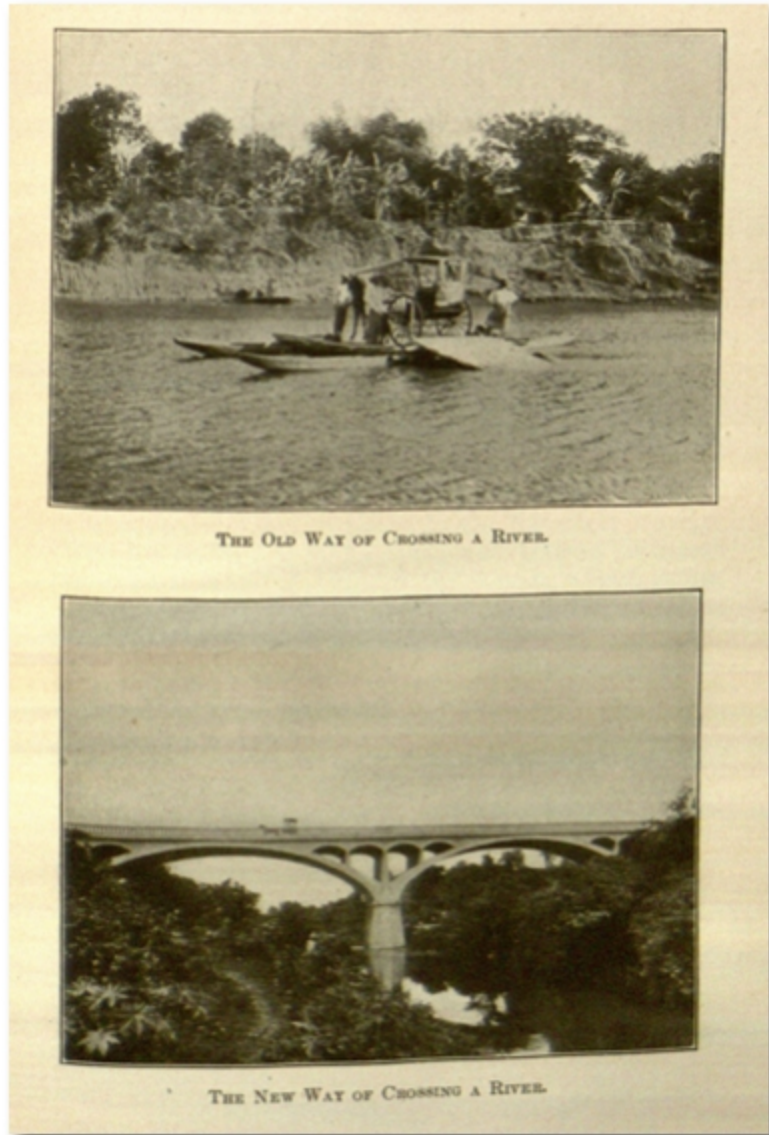
captions:

top: "The Old Way of Crossing a River."

bottom: "The New Way of Crossing a River."

*Dean C. Worcester,
The Philippines Past and Present (1914).*

[dw_ppp_v2_006]



*captions:
top: "Old-style Road across
Lowlands. Tracks of this sort
become completely impassable
during the rainy season."*

*bottom: "New-style Road across
Lowlands. Roads like this are
passable at all times."*

*Dean C. Worcester,
The Philippines Past
and Present (1914).*

[dw_ppp_v2_004]



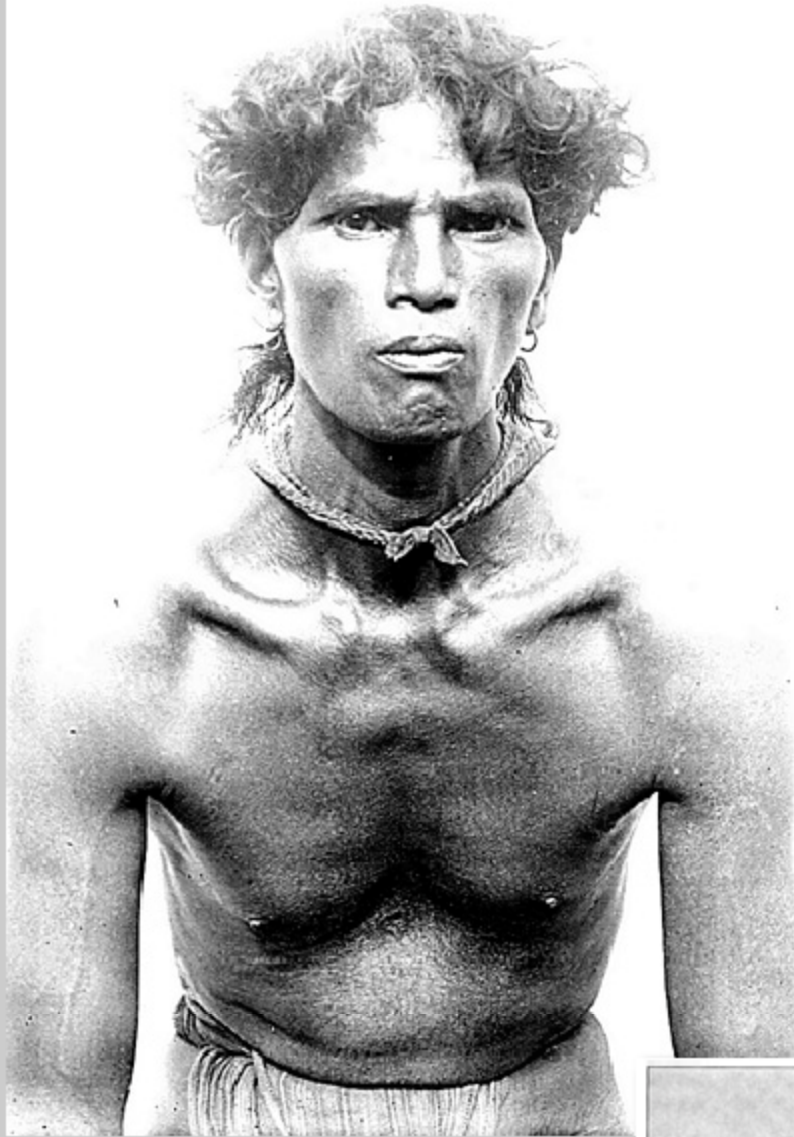
OLD-STYLE ROAD ACROSS LOWLANDS.
Tracks of this sort become completely impassable during the rainy season.



NEW-STYLE ROAD ACROSS LOWLANDS.
Roads like this are passable at all times.

Bakidan

Bakidan was a Kalinga chief whom Worcester knew well from his travels in the mountains of Luzon. Over time, however, as Worcester published accounts of his time in the Philippines, descriptions of his relationship to Bakidan changed from depictions that highlighted close and personal relations to stories that erased Bakidan's individuality and highlighted his tribal and "savage" identity.



This photograph of Bakidan, a Kalinga chief, was taken in 1905 during an extended stay by Worcester in the village of Bunuan in the northern Philippines.

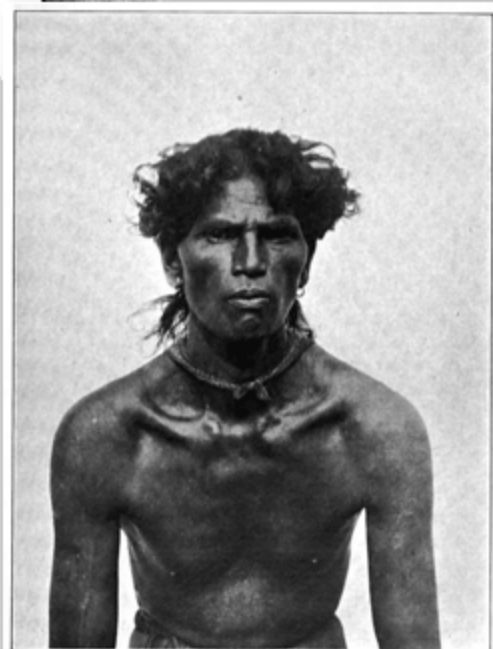
*Worcester's caption:
"Kalinga man named Bakidan, type 1. Half length front view," 1905
Location: Bunuan, Cagayan*

[dw23A001]

Worcester reproduced this image of Bakidan in The Philippines Past and Present with a caption stating that he "saved the lives" of Worcester and others during their first trip to Kalinga country.

Book caption: "Bakidan. This Kalinga chief saved the lives of Colonel Blas Villamor, Mr. Samuel E. Kane, and the author during the first trip ever made through the Kalinga country by outsiders."

[PPP_v1_Bakidan]



BAKIDAN.

This Kalinga chief saved the lives of Colonel Blas Villamor, Mr. Samuel E. Kane, and the author during the first trip ever made through the Kalinga country by outsiders.



Taken during his 1905 journey to Bunuan, this photograph shows Bakidan (highlighted in red) with three other chiefs, and, at the center, Worcester and Colonel Villamor. These four chiefs appear elsewhere in Worcester's photographic collection, but not identified as chiefs or brothers.

Worcester's caption: "Blas Villamor, Bakidan, Saking, and two other brothers of Bakidan, and myself. There are six brothers in this family and they rule the upper Nabuagan River valley. Bakidan is the most powerful," 1905.

Location: Bunuan, Cagayan

[dw05A010]



IN HOSTILE COUNTRY.
Colonel Villamor and the author at Bakidan's place in the Kalinga country. The four chiefs were not as yet ready to lay down their shields or head-axes.

In his 1914 book, Worcester depicted his trip to the Kalinga as a journey “In Hostile Country” rather than a visit to a leading local politician. Worcester noted that “the four chiefs were not as yet ready to lay down their shields or head-axes.”

Book caption: “In Hostile Country. Colonel Villamor and the author at Bakidan's place in the Kalinga country. The four chiefs were not as yet ready to lay down their shields or head-axes.”

[dw05A010]

From Fact to Fiction

Sometimes the images in the Dean Worcester collection were simplified or altered by Worcester to serve his own political ends—he took them for political purposes, of course. But Worcester—a politician, anthropologist, scientist, and photographer—was unique. Sometimes images of Filipinos were used by other authors and publishers, many of whom had little connection to the Philippines and felt less compunction about playing fast and loose with the photographic record. Consider the following depiction of the “educational value of the constabulary,” published in Frederick Chamberlin’s *The Philippine Problem, 1898–1913* (1913).



EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF THE CONSTABULARY.

1. Bontoc Igorot on entering the service, 1901.
2. After a year's service, 1902.
3. After two years' service, 1903.

This sequence of photographs was published in the 1910s both in a government report and a popular account of U.S. Philippine policy. At first glance, the series appears to tell a story of benevolent colonialism by tracing the transformation of a soldier after “a year in jail.” But the photographic archive suggests a more complicated history.

*Illustration in Frederick Chamberlin, The Philippine Problem, 1898–1913
(Boston: Little, Brown, 1913).*

Book caption: “Educational Value of the Constabulary. 1. Bontoc Igorot on entering the service, 1901. 2. After a year’s service, 1902. 3. After two years’ service, 1903.”

[Chamberlin_Feb_03_000005_EdConst]

This sequence was a famous image of U.S. colonialism in the Philippines, depicted in government documents and popular publications. But when we trace the narrative back from the printed page to the moment of photographic encounter, the story gets more complicated. Worcester’s notes and archives tell a different story of transformation, in which he took four different photographs in 1901, and only arranged them much later in a sequence with a narrative of colonial uplift.

Worcester’s notes show that the first photograph in the reprinted sequence was taken in February 1901 in Manila, and that Worcester had gone out of his way to recruit sitters. “Took the Igorrotes home, fed them up and photographed them,” he noted on February 6. [2]

*Worcester's caption:
"Bontoc Igorot man, type 5.
Half length profile view," 1901.
Location: Manila, Manila*

[dw08A026]



The second photograph of the sequence —along with the one shown below—were both taken in Manila in June 1901, and thus could not have reflected “a year’s service” in the Philippine Constabulary, as the series caption claimed.

*Worcester's caption:
"Bontoc Igorot man, type 5.
2/3 length profile view," 1901.
Location: Manila, Manila*

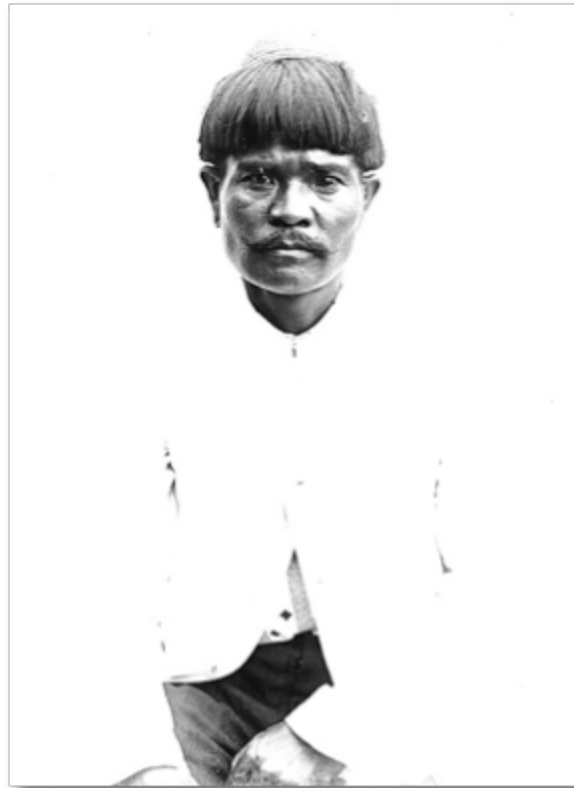
[dw08A028]



The front view of this man, clearly taken at the same time as the middle picture above, allows his face to be seen.

*Worcester's caption:
"Bontoc Igorot man, type 5.
Half length front view," 1901.
Location: Manila, Manila*

[dw08A027]



It is unclear when or where the third photograph in the sequence was taken. It may have been taken in Manila in 1901 or in the highland province of Bontoc in 1903. While this appears to be Francisco, the same man depicted in the first of the three photographs of the sequence, it was not taken "after a year in jail," as Worcester reported in published writings accompanying these images.

*Worcester's caption:
"Bontoc Igorot man, type 5.
After a year in jail.
Half length profile view," 1901.
Location: Bontoc, Bontoc*

[dw08A029]



In his diary for June 21, 1901, Worcester noted that “Francisco had on a full rig of cloths [sic]—white coat, trousers made out of a pair of miner’s Alaska drawers, army leggings and American shoes,” closely matching this image of a constabulary uniform (above). But in Manila that June, Worcester also photographed Francisco in a more “primitive” state (right).



*Worcester’s caption:
“Bontoc Igorot man, type 5.
Called Francisco.
Half length front view,” 1901.
Location: Manila*

[dw08A025]

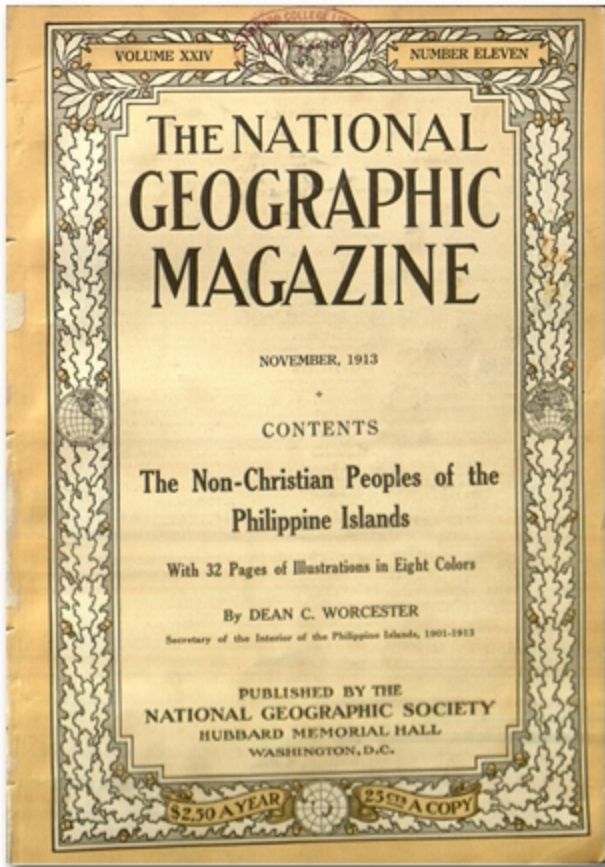
These images show the power of photographic manipulation, and cause us to ask why an author might have wanted to shuffle photographs in service of a good story. But they also make us wonder whether Dean Worcester was not so much a puppet-master but also entranced by his own narrative of colonial control and uplift. Evidence suggests that he only put the images into this narrative in a government report in 1910, but that he used the images quite often afterward, even in his congressional testimony in 1914, when he told Congress that “I will show you the evolution of the first Bontoc soldier who ever enlisted.... This man is a chief named ‘Francisco,’ dressed as he had been when I first saw him. [indicating] This slide shows how he looked a year after, after he had been in contact with the Americans.” [3] Colonial storytelling was a complicated matter that was never entirely under the storytellers’ control.

Recasting “Natives” for the *National Geographic*

The blend of the scientific and the touristic, the official and the private that marked colonial Philippine photography reached its apotheosis in the pages of *National Geographic*, the iconic magazine that brought the world to the parlors of Victorian America. Founded in 1888, the National Geographic Society initially found few readers for its dry and scholarly publications. But subscriptions to *The National Geographic Magazine* skyrocketed after the U.S. embarked on overseas colonization, and a revolution in printing technology enlivened the pages with photographs—many of them painstakingly tinted and reproduced in full color. Articles on the Philippines appeared with regularity after 1898—over 30 were published between 1898 and 1908—and photographs from Dean Worcester’s collection illustrated many of them.

The connections between Worcester’s entourage and the National Geographic Society were thick and deep: photographer Charles Martin, who appears often in Worcester Collection photographs (he took many of them as well) became head of the NGS Photographic Laboratory in 1915 after he left the U.S. Army.

In the pages of the magazine, Worcester shared his familiar stories of colonial uplift, and readers delighted at the array of images that illustrated his articles. His photographic essays were not without controversy, however; a 1903 article by another author that depicted bare-breasted Filipina women prompted debate among the magazine's editors about its propriety. Worcester made a claim for the images' scientific value, won the argument, and revolutionized the magazine's editorial practices.



*In November 1913,
National Geographic juxtaposed the
familiar and the exotic in an article by
Dean Worcester, with a run of
hand-colored photographic illustrations
of rural Filipinos.*

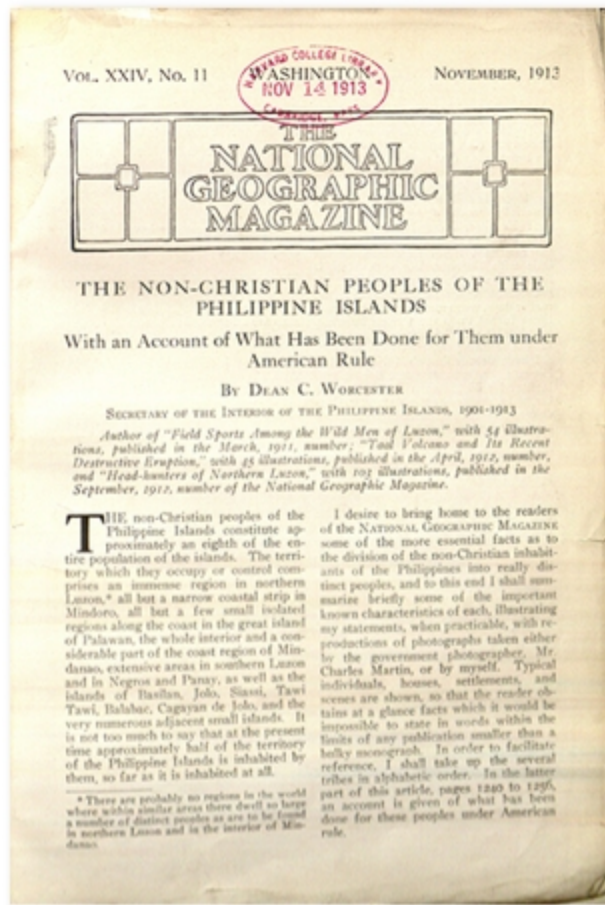
cover; The National Geographic
Magazine, November 1913

[ng0001_Nov1913]

The title of Dean Worcester's article:
"The Non-Christian Peoples of the
Philippine Islands
With an Account of What Has Been
Done for Them under American Rule"

The National Geographic Magazine,
November 1913

[ng0002_Nov1913]





Thumbnails show the layout of the photographs selected and colorized for Worcester's article.

The National Geographic Magazine, November 1913

[ng0002_Nov1913]

Presenting “Peoples”

Through his text and images—carefully hand-colored by National Geographic staffers—Dean Worcester conveyed to a mass audience of American readers his sense of the racial landscape of the Philippines and boasted of “what has been done for them under American rule.” The images selected for his November 1913 National Geographic article introduced appealing figures representing tribes rather than individuals; vibrant colors accentuated the sense of the exotic for American readers.



“A Mandaya Warrior” and “A Mandaya Woman”

[ng1170-1171_Nov1913]



MANGYANS

This is a wild people of the mountains of Mindanao, very much lighter in color than other Philippine tribes. This is probably due to the fact that they have lived for generations in the depths of the forests, though there is a tradition, probably of no value, that they are descendants of some white race. They are a nomadic people having no idea of agriculture or of the value of money. Knowledgeably timid, they take to flight on the approach of a stranger.



ILONGOT WOMAN AND GIRLS

The Ilongots are a small tribe, probably less than 8,000 in number, living in northern Luzon. They are forest dwellers in the eastern areas of the tribe, living in small groups in the woods and moving their villages very frequently. They build fairly large bamboo houses of primitive design, elevated from 4 to 9 feet above the ground, where the floor there is usually a wide bamboo platform like that shown in the picture.

“Mangyans” (above) and “Ilongot Woman and Girls”

[ng1178-1179_Nov1913]



A NEGRIPO

The original inhabitants of the Philippines were the Negritos, of whom about 25,000 still remain. They are a pigmy people, the tallest men being seldom above 4 feet, 10 inches high. They are a copper dark brown or black in color, have wavy hair and can see their way almost as well as their dogs. These people are probably the lowest type of human beings known and have been described as "not far above the anthropoid apes."



A TAGAKAULO

Living to the south of the English on the west side of the Gulf of Davao in Mindanao are the Tagakaolo, a small tribe having a bright green and a plowlike face than most of the tribes of that island. Little or nothing is known about them.



A LUBUAGAN IGOROT WOMAN

Her skirt hangs out at the waist where it is supported by a "beam depressor" made of woven cotton. Members of this tribe are often referred to as Kalingsas, but they differ from them now in various essential particulars, although they probably have a good proportion of Kalingsas blood.



A LUBUAGAN IGOROT WOMAN

She is in broad color and has her face painted after a fashion entirely conforming to the people of this region. These people dwell in a sort of "No Man's Land," where the territories of the Kalingsas, Igorots, English and English meet.

"A Negrito" (top left); "A Tagakaolo" (top right)
 "A Lubuagan Igorot Woman" (bottom two images)

[ng1180-1181_Nov1913]



TIRURAY WOMEN

In the west of Mindanao is a small tribe called the Tiruray, who dwell between the Maranao and the Bilian. They do not understand the arts of spinning and weaving and so depend upon their Maranao neighbors for their clothes. The women wear the sarong or loose skirt with a very tight jacket. Around the waist are girdles of spiral brass plates encircled with beads, and their ankles are loaded with brass rings. They blacken and file the teeth and frequently color their lips a vivid red. The tribe is poor, having no industries, and depend upon their crops of rice, coconuts and sweet potatoes, which they produce by the most primitive and laborious methods of husbandry.



A TINGIAN GIRL

Along among the head hunting tribes of Luzon, the Tingian women are careful never to expose the upper part of the body, the sole exception being during the period of mourning when no upper garments are worn. They are passionately fond of bead necklaces and of large silver ear ornaments, some of them being very beautifully made.



A TINGIAN GIRL IN MOURNING

She belongs to the more civilized branch of the tribe. Note her peculiar arm ornaments and the construction of the headdress which they produce. This is unusual and very beautiful.

“Tiruray Women” (top)

“A Tingian Girl” (bottom left); “A Tingian Girl in Mourning” (bottom right)

[ng1184-1185_Nov1913]



AN ILONGOT FAMILY

Unlike the women who are rather partial to clothes, the Ilongot men seldom wear more than a loincloth. He is a skilled hunter depending on the chase for his supply of meat, and with bow and arrow transmits his prey and wild fowl which are plentiful. Agriculture is left to the women who grow sweet potatoes, the principal article of food, a little rice, corn and bananas. The man finds a kind of recreation in sugar cane and in some kind of handicrafting. Each village is generally at war with the next and fighting is conducted by ambush, never in the open. Poisoned arrows are used and they are skilled bowmen and spring guns for their enemies to procure which are likely to be grown.

1186



WILD TINGLIANS OF APAYAO

This tribe is noted for the affection existing between husband and wife and for the high moral tone of its women. Their domestic customs are peculiar. A wife detests her sugar garments, loins, and shoes and has to go a period of six months, but the period may be shortened by offering the head of an enemy to the spirit of the dead man, a ceremony which is supposed to insure peaceful rest in the hereafter.

1187

“An Ilongot Family” (left) and “Wild Tinglians of Apayao” (right)

[ng1186-1187_Nov1913]



A TINGLIAN MAN

Although a comparatively civilized race the Tinglians have been classed as head hunters. For generations they have had to fight for their existence against the Ilongots and the Kankajans and they have borrowed their head from their enemies. They show great skill in the use of the bow, a typical example being shown in the picture. Note the machine hat and the waterproof rain made of plant skin.

1188



A MORO BOY

The son of Datto Batu was seated on the knee of Captain R. G. Miller, who lost his life while serving as Governor of Palawan. The Moro are found in their greatest strength in the island of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago. They are cannibals, pirates and slave traders, headhunters and contribute to the bad reputation. The whole race numbers about 200,000, has never been brought under complete control and its pacification promises one of the most difficult problems before the Philippine government.


1189

“A Tingian Man” (left) and “A Moro Boy” (right)

[ng1188-1189_Nov1913]

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MIT VISUALIZING CULTURES

Photography & Power in the Colonial Philippines – 2

Dean Worcester's Ethnographic Images of Filipinos (1898-1912)

by Christopher Capozzola

Dean
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LOOKING & LOOKING BACK

The U.S. imperial agenda that emerged from the Spanish-American War in 1898 was always controversial and critics of American colonial policy continued to voice their concerns. Many focused their attention on Dean Worcester, a vigorous supporter of U.S. policy in the Philippines and temperamentally one of the most divisive figures in the islands. James H. Blount, a vocal anti-imperialist, questioned Dean Worcester's pretensions to scientific authority and mocked him for "discovering, getting acquainted with, classifying, tabulating, enumerating, and otherwise preparing for salvation, the various non-Christian tribes." Blount felt that Worcester used photography to manipulate both Filipino subjects and American readers, trying to convince both groups that the Philippines was unprepared for political independence. "Professor Worcester," he wrote, "is the P.T. Barnum of the 'non-Christian tribe' industry." [1]

We know very little about the men and women who sat for Dean Worcester's camera. Most of them could not read or write, and so a century later we are left to decipher their emotions and motivations from the images themselves.

Many of the images feature defiant resistance, sullenness, evasion, even obvious boredom; a stubborn refusal to look at the photographer; or a testy stare directly back at the camera and the political power that it embodied. There were few options for the residents of the hill tribes who posed for Worcester and his companions, but the photographs show their efforts to act, even within that limited range.



We know little about what the men and women who sat for Worcester's photographs thought about the experience. We do know that some opposed his efforts, and in images such as this, it is possible to imagine how resistance, boredom, or testiness might have made their way into the photographic archive.

*Worcester's caption: "Group of three Tagbanua men.
Half length front view," 1905*

[dw04B001]

Some responded well, and evidence shows that Worcester's photo-making was often a collaborative undertaking. In his diary on February 7, 1901, he wrote that he "Made one print from each negative before breakfast in order to show them to the Igorrotes," suggesting a willingness to engage in dialogue with his photographic subjects. The next day, he noted in his diary that he had "Made prints of negatives before breakfast, so as to give them to the Igorrotes, who were much pleased with them." [2]

But from Worcester's own writings, we know that some Filipinos did not appreciate his efforts to photograph them, and sometimes his relationships with sitters were less egalitarian.



“This girl was badly frightened,” Worcester noted in reference to the photo on the left.

Images such as this highlight the power of the photographer over the sitter. And the role of the viewer: when reproduced and distributed, such images conveyed messages about the Filipino as “primitive” without calling into question the right of the photographer to take pictures of unwilling subjects.

Worcester’s caption: Bontoc Igorot girl, 1903.

Location: Mayinit, Bontoc

[dw08C008]

Worcester wrote of the Muslim inhabitants of the southern Philippines,

We had great difficulty in getting photographs of the Moros. They were unduly influenced by the remarks in the Koran concerning the making of pictures of living things.... We were obliged to steal most of our pictures, and we found it difficult and dangerous work....

Worcester occasionally used deception to get hold of his photographs. Attending a Moro wedding in one of his early voyages in the early 1890s, he noted:

[w]e were very anxious to get pictures of the guests, and that evening smuggled in our dismantled camera, together with some magnesium powders and a flashlight lamp. Under pretext of contributing our share to the entertainment, we showed them how to make artificial lightning. Bourns focussed by guess, I touched off magnesium powders, and in this way we made a number of exposures, only two of which gave us negatives that would print. [3]

Worcester's blurry photograph appears below.



This overexposed photograph is one of the earliest in the Dean Worcester collection, taken on his trip to the Philippines in 1891. In his writings, Worcester explained how he and fellow traveler Frank Bourns schemed to photograph these pious Muslims without their consent. According to Worcester, this group of guests at a wedding in the Sulu province did not know that they were being photographed.

Worcester's caption: "Interior of a Moro house with a woman and girls in the foreground," 1891. Location: Jolo, Sulu

[dw23D029]

Filipinos also resisted Worcester's Kodak by using the limited powers that were available to them in the political arena. In 1907, in an effort to co-opt political opposition in the islands and to delegate some of the routine tasks of governance, the U.S. established the Philippine Assembly, a legislative body based on extremely limited voting rights. On numerous occasions, the Filipino elites who dominated the Assembly used that forum to object to the visual representations of the Philippines that circulated around the world in publications like *National Geographic*. In 1914, the Assembly took a remarkable step and voted to outlaw "the taking, exhibiting, or possession of photographs of naked Filipinos" on the ground that these images "tended to make it appear that the Philippines were inhabited by people in the nude." [4]

The legislators in Manila were hardly friends of the rural highland Filipinos on whose behalf they claimed to speak—in fact, they may have been embarrassed that images of "uncivilized tribes" stood in for the Philippines as a whole in the visual record upon which Americans gazed. Journalist Vicente Ilustre wrote in 1914 criticizing Worcester for showing images of "these unfortunates." [5]

Filipinos' efforts to control the camera's power drew a rebuke from Dean Worcester. In testimony before Congress in 1914, Worcester told the Senate:

[w]e have twice had bills passed ... intended to make it a criminal offense for any person to take a photograph of those fellows up in the hills. The Filipinos want to conceal the very fact of the existence of such people. There has been agitation in favor of the destruction of the whole series of Government negatives showing the customs of the non-Christian people, the conditions which we found among them and the conditions which prevail today."^[6]

The proposed bill never became a law. Through most of the colonial period, legislation required the approval of the Philippine Commission (on which Dean Worcester served) or the governor-general, and calls for modesty in rural photography were outvoted by an insistence on the value of the images for ethnographic research. The shape-shifting of visual anthropology—at once political surveillance, savage romance, and colonial fantasy, always cloaked under the gaze of science—allowed it to elude the attacks of critics.

Looking Back

The photographic encounters between Worcester and his sitters range from friendly and easygoing to violent and unwilling. But the collection is massive and among its images are striking views of men and women who lived through revolution, war, and colonialism at the turn of the century and looked back at the camera in ways that capture our attention today, reminding us that the photographic archive is never completely at the mercy of the storyteller.



[dw01h007]



[dw08f006]



[dw11d004]



[dw08c001]



[dw03j015]



[dw02d018]



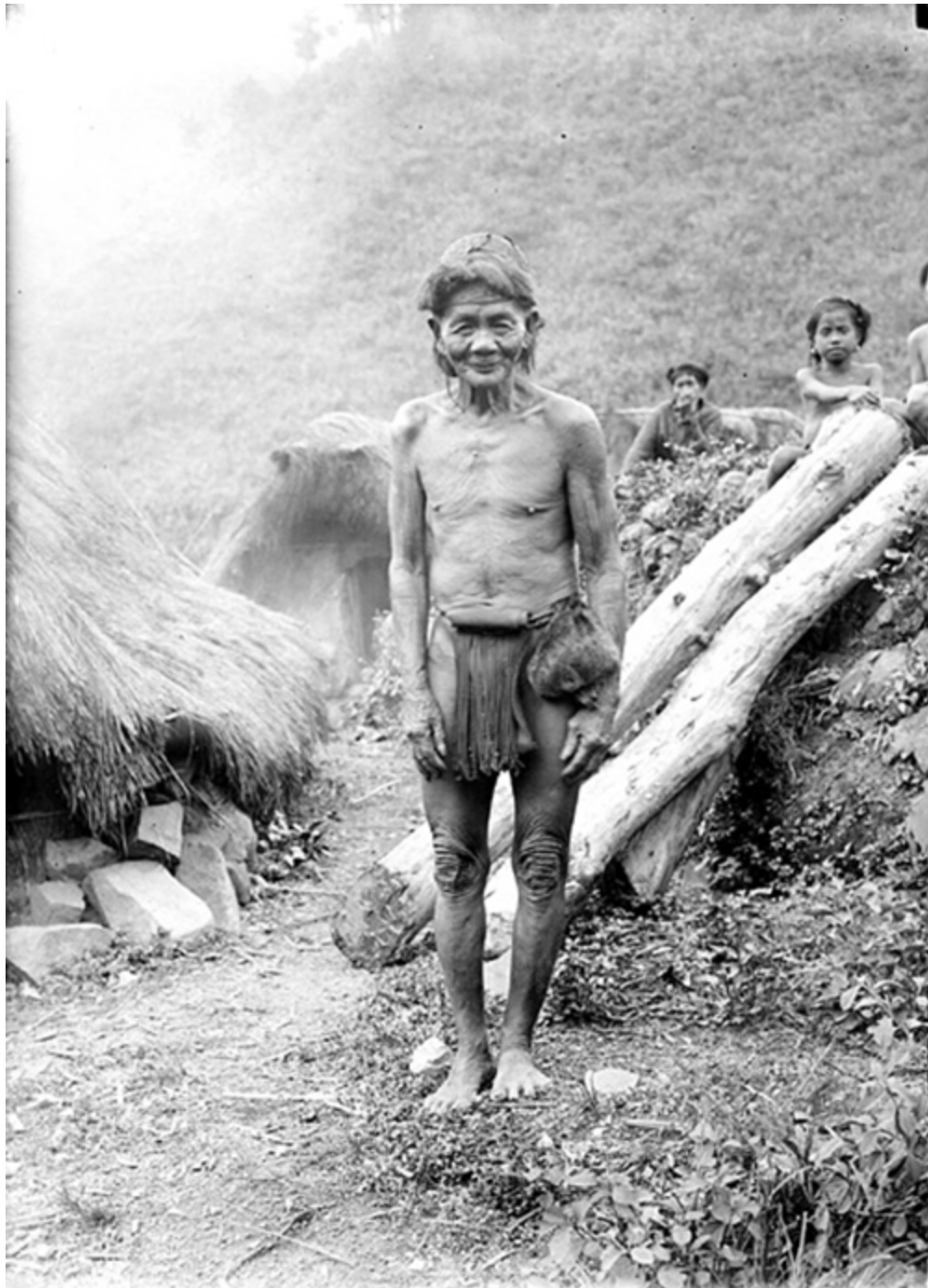
[dw05g002]



[dw05k004]



[dw06cc002]



[dw08d002]

Closing up Shop

Dean Worcester never stopped taking photographs, but in the final years of his life he no longer took them in an official capacity. In 1913, President Woodrow Wilson and the Democrats took office and promised a new departure for America's Philippine policy; longtime colonial officials—most of them known to be Republicans and devotees of former presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William Howard Taft—found themselves out of jobs. Worcester offered his resignation in September 1913 and by the 1920s had moved to the province of Bukidnon in the southern Philippines, where he tried his hand as a ranch owner.

By the time Worcester left government service in 1913, the camera was ubiquitous in the Philippines. It was no longer the sole property of colonial officers. Photographic images were part of the day-to-day experience of American colonial officials, and they increasingly surrounded Filipinos as well. As a global consumer culture increasingly penetrated Southeast Asia, photo studios popped up along the streets of Manila's fashionable shopping districts, and photographers soon set up shop in small towns throughout the colony. Filipinos increasingly took their own photographs, depicting their own lives and communities away from the gaze of colonial officials. In fact, there was decreasing interest in photographic accounts of the Philippines, and after Worcester's departure, little support for ethnographic study of the colony. The Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes closed in the 1930s, and Worcester's photo collection was donated to the Museum of Natural History in New York City, and then transferred to the University of Michigan Museum of Anthropology.

Meanwhile, viewed from a century's distance, the photographs in the Dean Worcester Collection teach us invaluable lessons: foremost, they underline the need to consider the power relations in any visual encounter, but particularly in those interactions that take place on a visual terrain marked by inequalities of status, gender, and race. Second, these photographs remind us to pay attention to the circulation of such images. Even a century later, they must be handled with respect for the people and the cultures they depict.

But perhaps the final lesson is that these photographs teach no easy lessons. As viewers scrutinize these images, wondering what was going through the minds of Dean Worcester and other photographers, wondering how these images were collected and circulated, wondering what it was like to sit for such a photograph or to come across it later—we must tread carefully, forego the impulse of the snapshot and its easy legibility, and start to look in new and more egalitarian ways.

Dean Worcester's captions for the images in "Looking Back"

[dw01h007]

Unmarried Negrito woman, type 4. Half length front view. 1900

Location: Dolores, Pampanga

[dw08f006]

Young Lubuagan man, type 4. Half length front view, sitting. 1908

Location: Lubuagan, Bontoc

[dw11d004]

Bukidnon man, type 2. 1/2 length front view, sitting. 1907

Location: Nanca, Bukidnon

[dw08c001]

Bontoc Igorot, type 1. The Presidente of Mayinit, holding his child. 1903

Location: Mayinit, Bontoc

[dw03j015]

Mangyan girl, type 7. Full length side view, squatting. 1906

Location: Bonganay, Mindoro

[dw02d018]

Ilongote woman, type 12. Half length front view. 1900

Location: Dumabato, Isabela

[dw05g002]

Kalinga man, type 2. Called Captain Sabaoay. Guided two military expeditions sent to capture Aguinaldo. Half length front view. 1905

Location: Salecsec, Bontoc

[dw05k004]

Kalinga woman, type 3. 2/3 length front view. 1906

Location: Dalig, Isabela

[dw06cc002]

One of the three chiefs of Masimut, type 3. Front view, sitting. 1905

Location: Masimut, Cagayan

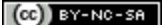
[dw08d002]

Old man. Full length front view. Type 1. 1907

Location: Talubin, Bontoc

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On Dean Worcester's Collection

After Dean Worcester's death in 1924 and the closure of the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes in the 1930s, the photographs in his collection—taken by Worcester, Frank Bourns, Charles Martin, and other anonymous photographers—were returned to the United States and now are held by the University of Michigan Museum of Anthropology.

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