# Segregation and Exclusion

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SEGREGATION AND EXCLUSION
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# Segregation and Exclusion

The United Nations defines social inclusion as the "process by which efforts are made to ensure equality of opportunity—that everyone regardless of their origin can reach their full potential in life" (UN DESA, n.d.). Social inclusion is intertwined with social protection policies that promote equal access to vital services by individuals or groups and allow them to participate in activities so that they can make meaningful decisions for themselves (Babajanian and Hagen-Zanker 2012). Yet, in every society, certain groups encounter barriers that prevent them from taking part in activities salient to their economic, political, and social lives. They may be excluded because of structural constraints as well as discriminatory and stigmatizing elements in their environments. They are socially disadvantaged because of age, race or ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status. They are excluded from participating fully in society because of religion, location, disability, or sexual orientation.

State policies and programs play a crucial role in ensuring social inclusion by addressing specific needs of population sectors especially the marginalized sectors of society, reducing barriers that contribute to economic inequality, impediments to access to vital services as well as eliminating discrimination, thus, contributing to sustainable development. Gupta, Pouw, and Ros-Tonen (2015) emphasized the importance of social inclusion for sustainable development. The literature has shown how sustainable development and inclusive development have become synonymous with each other (Pouw and Gupta 2017; Arts, 2017; Dörffel and Schuhmann 2022). Yet, state policies and programs may, at times, lead to segregation and social

exclusion whereby groups find themselves marginalized and deprived of the benefits that these policies and programs aimed to offer. This issue of *Kasarinlan* delves into the specific manifestations of social inclusion/exclusion from state policies and programs as gleaned from history and more recent events in the Philippines and in the broader Asian regional context.

Both Maria Lourdes Rebullida and Naoki Fujiwara investigated housing policies in the Philippines. Rebullida's "Bureaucratic Authoritarianism to Democratic Governance: Philippine Bureaucracy's Governance Mechanisms for Engaging Civil Society in Urban Poor Social Housing" underscores the critical role played by civil society participation along with bureaucratic leadership in the development of democratic governance in the Philippines particularly in the context of social housing policies under different heads of state. She argues for a more inclusive policy design, possibly one that involves civil society to keep watch over the inclusion/exclusion of people's participation in political processes.

Naoki Fujiwara's "Gentrification and Segregation in the Process of Neoliberal Urbanization in Malabon City, Metro Manila," on the other hand, provides a more micro perspective by focusing on an urban poor resettlement project in Malabon. He contends that in the context of neoliberal urbanization, urban poor resettlement in Malabon resulted in the "segregation" of settlers along the riverbanks who were moved out of the supposed "danger zones" or hazard areas to off-city sites in the guise of "benevolent eviction." Resettlement also involved the offer of "slum gentrification" through the promise of improved living conditions in the resettlement site. The article, however, shows that new risks were present in the resettlement site, thereby negating the claim that they were being moved to safer areas.

Two articles exhibit how social groups are excluded from participating in political processes that impact their daily lives in other countries in Southeast Asia. Alexandre Veilleux and Anne-Marie Van Broeck's "The Political Economy of LGBTQ Tourism in Thailand" explores the making of Thailand as an "LGBTQ paradise" and Bangkok as the "gay capital of Asia" and in the process, the marginalization of the voices of Thai LGBTQ in this state project. The authors state that LGBTQ well-being was not incorporated as a vital element of LGBTQ tourism in Thailand and that the tourism promotions benefited only the elite to the "detriment of the small-scale locally owned LGBTQ businesses."

Louis Tanguay did his research work in Central Java, Indonesia on small-scale land grabbing wherein sawah or rice fields were forcibly sold to the state-owned electricity company. His article, "How Preserving Biodiversity Mitigates the Impacts of Small-scale Land Grab on Livelihoods and Agricultural Production in Central Java," discusses a case wherein rice field owners were displaced to give way to an electrification project. He provides a positive note by pointing out how local conservation practices can help build resilience of communities in the face of disturbances in socio-ecological systems such as land grabbing.

Frances Anthea Redison's contribution, "Survival and Atrocity: Remembering the Japanese Occupation of the Province of Aklan, Philippines, 1942–45," underscores this issue's theme of segregation and exclusion not only in its content but also in the research methods she employed, albeit not within the context of state policies or programs. The article examines the atrocities experienced by Filipinos in Aklan province during the Japanese occupation of the Philippines. The author mentions how she specifically chose Aklan province as her study site, veering away from "imperial Manila" and focusing on the subaltern non-Luzon provinces which she contends are hardly covered in the national narrative. She also specifically utilized multiple methods of data gathering to "make Philippine history more inclusive." Moreover, she investigated the experiences of Filipino women whom she mentioned are part of the marginalized groups who have been "hidden" from most historical accounts.

This issue of *Kasarinlan* also contains book reviews by John Edison Ubaldo and Angela Asuncion.

Social exclusion, especially in state policies and programs, is a serious matter that erodes the principles of equity, fairness, and justice. It is the duty of the state to ensure that its citizens, regardless of ethnicity, socioeconomic class, gender, or religion can freely exercise their rights, fully and equitably participate in the activities of society, and build their capacities for self-improvement. This *Kasarinlan* issue provides vignettes where some of the drivers of social exclusion are identified. It is hoped that lessons can be derived therein which may be useful in informing the design and implementation of social protection policies and programs so that no one is left behind.

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# Bureaucratic Authoritarianism to Democratic Governance: Philippine Bureaucracy's Governance Mechanisms for Engaging Civil Society in Urban Poor Social Housing

MARIA LOURDES G. REBULLIDA

ABSTRACT. The Philippine bureaucracy's encounter with authoritarianism from 1972 to1986 underscores its vital role as a political institution of the state and government and the imperative for its transformation for democracy following the critical juncture of the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution and the 1987 Philippine Constitution. This article examines the bureaucracy's institutionalization of democratic governance mechanisms engaging collaboration with civil society organizations, particularly in the case of urban poor social housing, since the ratification of the 1987 Constitution and subsequent landmark legislation and policies. The paper argues that government bureaucracy in the Philippines is a crucial stakeholder either in authoritarianism or democracy in the use of its organizational resources. Given the background of bureaucratic authoritarianism, the paper analyzes the contextual factors of constitutional design, political leadership, civil society dynamism in policy processes, and bureaucratic arrangements for civil society participation that propelled government bureaucracy toward democratic governance, particularly in socialized housing for the urban poor.

KEYWORDS. bureaucracy · civil society · bureaucratic authoritarianism · democratic governance · urban poor housing · socialized housing program

## Introduction

The Philippine bureaucracy encountered the authoritarian political leadership of Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. when he imposed martial law in 1972. Marcos held the country under his strongman rule and one-party government until he was toppled from power by the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution. Corazon Aquino took over political leadership and paved the way for the drafting and ratification of the

1987 Philippine Constitution to restore the institutions and processes of democracy. The deployment of bureaucracy during the authoritarian interlude, and subsequently, in the restoration and institutionalization of democracy (Cariño 1992) provides a useful case for analysis of bureaucracy and its importance in Philippine politics and public management given the framing of democratic governance.

"Who controls bureaucracy" and "who are controlled by bureaucracy" are two-fold aspects of the power dynamics that may account for variations in how government bureaucracy actually works (Meier and O'Toole 2006). Bureaucracy's institutional arrangements observed in country cases demonstrate the shifts to and from authoritarianism and democracy, such as in Latin America and in Asia, particularly the Philippines (O'Donnell 1988; Cariño 1992; Falleti 2011). The bureaucracy has been entangled not only with the ruling political leadership and coalitions but also with contending forces, specifically civil society groups and social movements. Across countries, civil society activism has opposed authoritarian rule and supported democratization (Civicus 2012; Mercer 2002, 7–8; Kohli 2002, 57–84), which emphasize that civil society is a vital contending force. Currently, the character of political rule is difficult to classify due to varying cases that portray democratic types with institutions and processes led by a strongman or controlled by a group, or both, or authoritarian types that allow spaces and responses from citizens and nongovernment or regime groups (Truex 2018; Ortmann and Thomson 2014; Cassani 2012; Diamond 2002; Mufti 2018). Questions may be raised as to whether government institutions' policy responses and efficient and effective actions are attributable to authoritarian or democratic practices; and whether the government provides democratic spaces for engaging citizens and civil society groups.

In the Philippines, the struggle to control state-government institutions involved contestations between political leaders and civil society groups. Martial law and Marcos's one-party regime had engaged the bureaucracy since 1972 until Marcos was deposed in 1986. The political leadership that succeeded Marcos began efforts to include bureaucracy in democratization. This article examines the bureaucracy's shift from bureaucratic authoritarianism to democratic governance since the 1987 Philippine Constitution restored democratic institutions and processes. What bureaucratic arrangements are indicative of bureaucratic authoritarianism and democratic governance? The focus

is delimited to the government's handling of the urban poor housing issue that has been a continuing point of contention and interaction with civil society during and since post-authoritarian democratization. Specifically, how was the shift to democratic governance undertaken by the government bureaucracy designated for urban poor socialized housing since 1987, and eventually since the creation of the Socialized Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC) in 2004? The paper analyzes the mechanisms and processes of the SHFC, the forces and interests involved as well as SHFC's engagement with civil society, government, and political stakeholders.

Related to the post-authoritarian democratic turn, democratic deficits, and civil society activism in countries, the framing of democratic governance offers a theoretical and operational approach for examining state-and-government and civil society interactions (Grindle 2010, 1–3, 6). Bureaucracy's power dynamics is challenged by how it actualizes democracy in its encounters with political and societal actors. Even in a so-called democracy, such as the United States, bureaucracy stands amid continually evolving perspectives and practices in politics, public administration, and management that have a reach of influence even upon the Philippines. Governance perspectives offer alternatives for institutional design and practice particularly in states challenged by democratic deficits. Governance by bureaucracy, and in terms of democratic governance and collaborative governance, may be examined in a historical institutionalist perspective by analyzing structures, processes and outcomes, critical junctures, and time sequence (Pierson and Skocpol 2002, 693–721). Historical institutionalism focuses on rules, norms, and political actors, and how these use resources, strategies, and institutional arrangements (Thelen 1999). Stakeholders' engagement occurs in processes of policy and program formulation, adoption, and implementation, while bureaucracy plays a crucial part by hosting the administrative and operational policy processes (Sabatier 1991).

To provide empirical grounding, this article focuses on the SHFC being the bureaucracy created for socialized housing specifically for the urban poor through the Community Mortgage Program (CMP). Complex development processes and urban poverty in the Philippines (Balisacan 1994) provide the contexts for the continuing dilemma on urban poor housing between government and civil society. Qualitative data collection methods derived evidence from both primary and

secondary evidence, including scholarly literature and secondary sources, legislation and policy documents, government reports and records, and key informant interviews.[1] An online web search was conducted, guided by the use of keywords, i.e., "bureaucracy," "bureaucratic authoritarianism," "democratic governance," and "collaborative governance"; and Philippine data specifically on urban poor housing and the CMP was collected from the website of SHFC and government agencies, and from civil society organizations (CSOs). For key informant interviews, the ethical norms of informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality were observed. Qualitative analysis applied on the primary and secondary data was relied on to extract the contexts and indications of bureaucratic authoritarianism and democratic governance; to surface the interactions and power relations among the concerned housing bureaucracy, civil society organizations and political officials and to highlight the challenges confronting government bureaucracy and civil society in responding to the housing needs of the urban poor.

This article is divided into the following sections: 1) the conceptual and theoretical clarification of "bureaucracy" and "civil society" as autonomous yet interactive institutions in authoritarian and democratizing states, and the nuances of bureaucratic authoritarianism and democratic governance; 2) the critical historical and political junctures in the state-government, bureaucracy, and civil society interactions to track the threshold of democratic governance pertinent to the contentious issue of urban poor housing; 3) the bureaucratic arrangements for civil society engagement, how these were forged, and who were involved; and 4) the analysis of bureaucracy and democratic governance, arising from the case of the SHFC bureaucracy and its urban poor housing programs.

1. The key informants have been engaged for many years in urban poor housing programs and projects in either government or nongovernment organizations, or in both, at high level of management positions and/or in operations, during their respective terms of office. Two key informants were interviewed together by the author on November 29, 2018; three key informants in the group on December 6, 2018; two key informants on December 6, 2019; and one key informant on December 13, 2019. All the group and individual interviews were held in Quezon City. The key informants mutually agreed with the author to withhold their names to observe confidentiality.

## BUREAUCRACY AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN AUTHORITARIAN AND DEMOCRATIZING STATES

### Bureaucracy and Civil Society

An institution, according to March and Olsen (2005, 4; citing their own previous works), "is a relatively enduring collection of rules and organized practices, embedded in structures of meaning and resources that are relatively invariant in the face of turnover of individuals and relatively resilient to the idiosyncratic preferences and expectations of individuals and changing external circumstances." The state, in turn, is a composite of institutions, which may be analyzed for changes over time, interactions, hierarchies, and effects (Kahler 2002, 65–66, 75–78). The institutionalist approach treats government as a political institution of the state, encompassing the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government (March and Olsen 1984, 734; March and Olsen 2005, 7). Government has been regarded as a composite of rulers and personnel whose decisions configure the state (Levi 2002, 53–55). The ideal form of organization for government, according to Max Weber (1946, 77–128), is called "bureaucracy." In Weber's view (1978, 956–63), bureaucracy is a rational and legal form of organization, an administrative body of trained and qualified officials with tenure of office and career track, organized by official jurisdictional areas and duties, according to rules and hierarchy of offices. A "bureaucracy" may refer to a single agency or to a composite of agencies of government, and more specifically refers to the departments, bureaus, and offices in the executive branch of government. Meier and O'Toole (2006) raise the issue of power that controls bureaucracy and power that bureaucracy exercises. Given its locus in government, specifically as the executive's organization for public management to implement policies and render services, bureaucracy is engaged in active relations not only within its organization, but also with the other institutions of government and political actors, private business sectors, and active civil society groups.

Civil society's opposition to authoritarian power and advocacy for democratization has been explained as an expression in the public sphere of their "communitarian," "associational," or societal values and interest (Civicus 2012, 8; Laine 2014, 71–72; Mercer 2002, 7–8; Kohli 2002, 57–84). Civil society has been described as the "arena outside of the family, the state and the market," and it is "created by individual and collective actions, organizations and institutions to

advance shared interests" (Civicus 2012, 8). State and civil society are viewed as autonomous, but interact and create impact upon each other.

In the Philippines, "civil society" has referred to nongovernment organizations (NGOs) considered to be generally cause- and service-oriented, and facilitative of empowerment of people's organizations (POs), which are community-based organizations characterized by being disadvantaged, poor, and marginalized.[2] Government bureaucracy and these civil society organizations were adversarial during and until the end of the Marcos Sr. years, but transitioned into new dynamics of interaction when Corazon Aquino took over the presidential leadership and launched her democratization agenda, using rhetoric such as "bureaucracy for democracy" and "democratizing bureaucracy" (Cariño 2002, 6, 161). Bureaucracy plays an important part in the government's execution of functions and how this happens relates to factors such as the design and use of political power in the state.

## Bureaucratic Authoritarianism and Democratic Governance

Bureaucracy's role in authoritarian states has been examined in the varied experiences of countries. Studying Argentina's case of bureaucratic authoritarianism, O'Donnell (1988, 31–33) highlights some indications, namely: 1) the state power wielders' coercive repression of political democracy by limiting citizen access to government; 2) closure of democratic channels for popular representation, particularly for the working class, while being open to the state civil bureaucracy, armed forces, and large enterprises; 3) depoliticization of social issues by

2. The literature distinguishes NGOs from nonprofit organizations (NPOs) and POs, particularly in the Philippine context (Constantino-David 1997). Among the characteristics of an NGO, it is a private, nonprofit, and voluntary organization; organized and mobilized for public welfare and development concerns; cause-oriented, issue-oriented, advocacy-oriented, and development-oriented; for collective goals of members, not for commercial purposes; and assists POs and mediates between the POs and other entities such as the state (See Clarke 2012, 3; ADB 2013, 3; Cariño 2002; Domingo 2013; Constantino-David 1997). The NPO is also a nuanced term, as to whether the organization is not profit-seeking, nonmonetary, and noncommercial; or shares profit collectively among its members; or obtains funds only by grants or donations (Laine 2014, 67). POs are distinguished by referring to them as "grassroots organizations," "community-based organizations"; being more locally grounded and whose members are disadvantaged (Clarke 2012, 3; ADB 2013, 3).

prohibiting a pertinent class from raising issues; 4) the organized specialists' use of coercive authority to "normalize the economy" and the upper bourgeoisie's domination by strict control over resources; and 5) promotion of capital accumulation, oligopoly of private capital, and economic exclusion of the popular sector. [3]

On the other hand, Falleti (2011, 139) clarifies the variations in authoritarianism exhibited in military regimes to be related to factors as access to power, decision-making, organization of government, conduct of elections, control of opposition, and relations with civil society, among others. These affect the arrangement of state power, bureaucracy, and other political institutions.[4] In cases of authoritarian successions in the Philippines, South Korea, and Thailand, the authoritarian variations were observed to be in the form of dominance, co-equality, or subordination of bureaucracy relative to executive power (Cariño 1992, 152–60). The Philippines offers a case of "bureaucratic sublation" or "bureaucratic subordination" under authoritarian leadership and executive power (Cariño 1992, 5, 140, 155) attributed to the compliance of government agencies to repressive policies.

Transitioning from authoritarianism, democratization begins by enabling rights and liberties, such as those in the "liberal tradition" for individuals and collectivities, and by initiating "minimum procedural"

3. To understand the bureaucratic authoritarian state, O'Donnell (1988, 6) distinguishes regime from government. Regime refers to the "set of effectively prevailing patterns," which for him need not be "legally formalized" but "establish the modalities of recruitment and access to government roles and the criteria for representation and the permissible resources that form the basis for expectations of access to such roles." Government refers to "a set of persons who (a) occupy top positions in the state apparatus"; (b) comply with the rules of the regime; (c) exercise formal entitlement to "[mobilize] resources controlled by the state apparatus" that supports their "directives and prohibitions" (O'Donnell 1988, 6). The bureaucratic authoritarian state, in O'Donnell's (1988, 2–4) study of Argentina from 1966 to 1973, demonstrates a distinct type of authoritarianism whereby the state is "an apparatus" and "a set of institutions" acting as "the guarantor and organizer of capitalist relations of production" observed to be a "part of society" but "seems to stand apart from society." O'Donnell further asserts that the state only "appears to be" but is not an "unbiased guardian and agent of general interest," considering the structure of social classes.
4. Democratic transition and democratization are affected by the type of strategies used by authoritarian military regimes, for example in Argentina and Brazil (Falleti 2011, 157–59).

aspects of democracy, such as the re-emergence of political parties and civil society groups, the holding of elections, and exercise of citizen rights and obligations (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 6–8). The signals of liberal democracy during the post-authoritarian democratizing process are observed in the upholding or restoration of human rights and freedoms, civil and political rights, consent of the governed, and civil society engaging the state in mutually strong standing, or either one or the other being in strong or weak standing (Mercer 2002, 7). Democracy's vital sign is dispersion of power, in contrast to bureaucratic authoritarianism's concentration of state power and use of violence to repress dissent and exercise of rights (Cariño 1992, 163).

However, democracy appears to be difficult to actualize, making it a continuing problematique for substantive and procedural elements of democracy to be translated from theory to praxis. It has been argued that the approximation of democracy lies in the demonstration of minimal procedural and substantive elements, specifically the conduct of elections, citizen voting, political party competition, principles of consent, and representation (Schumpeter 2003, 290–96; Przeworski 1999, 23–35). Democratization is assumed to be a process to actualize a conception of democracy. As informed by O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986), re-democratization takes its course beginning with democratic transition, occurring upon dissolution of an authoritarian regime; then to democratic restoration, when democratic institutions are configured; and democratic consolidation, when institutions deemed to be democratic eventually become sustained in the long term. Some dilemmas are observed, such as when a so-called democracy exhibits some authoritarian strains (Cassani 2012; Diamond 2002; Mufti 2018). On the other hand, authoritarian types attempt to open up to citizens' voices and use democratic features (Truex 2018; Ortmann and Thomson 2014). Hybridity in democratic and authoritarian types of political regimes have been examined in 103 countries in 2001 (Diamond 2002, 26–33). These observations point to the need for examining the nuances of democracy relative to the confluence of authoritarianism.

## Democratic Governance: An Alternative Framework

Recent discourses on governance provide another layer of theory and praxis for democracy. Scholars and academics in comparative politics, public administration, and international relations began conceptualizing

governance in the 1970s (Hydén and Samuel 2011, 8–9). But attention upscaled only in the 1990s related to the upsurge of citizen and civil society mobilization, poor performance of government institutions, and democratic deficits in many states (Grindle 2010, 1–3, 6). The World Bank (1991, 1) initially viewed governance as "the manner in which power is exercised in the management of the country's economic and social resources." The updated definition identifies the role of the bureaucracy, the executive branch of government, and civil society as crucial stakeholders:

> Good governance is epitomized by predictable, open, and enlightened policymaking (that is, transparent processes); a bureaucracy imbued with professional ethos; an executive arm of government accountable for its actions; and a strong civil society participating in public affairs; and all behaving under the rule of law. (World Bank 1994, vii)

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP 2009) further underscored good governance as democratic governance, as indicated by: 1) self-government, transparency, accountability; 2) inclusive, people-centered, and participative decisionmaking; 3) rules, institutions, practices for social interactions; 4) and human rights and gender equality. This suggests that democratic governance embeds the indicators of democracy and good governance. The state-government institutions including bureaucracy and societal institutions are actors and participants in the democratic governance framework.

On the other hand, academics and scholars rendered more nuanced perspectives. In a general sense, governance refers to the social process whereby all social groups interact—public (state, government, bureaucracy), private (market business), and civil society (NGOs and POs). Respective spheres maintain "autonomous status," create rules, and manage their interactions (Tsujinaka, Ahmed, and Kobashi 2013, 413, citing Jan Kooiman's *Governing as Governance* [2003]). Typologies of governance indicate the different ways by which interactions may be designed. Government is a major stakeholder whose initiatives for participative, collaborative, and network arrangements with various stakeholders may improve performance (Ansell and Gash 2007).

## Authoritarian and Democratic Construction of Bureaucracy for Urban Poor Housing

The narrative of bureaucratic construction in the Philippines depicts the forces that shape and control the bureaucracy's norms, form, functions, and responses. This is observable in the contentious case of urban poor housing, which ran its course from the beginning of authoritarian control and until after the restoration of democracy. This section highlights the critical historical and political junctures of authoritarian politics and the democratic turn, and in these contexts, the changes in political leadership, the upsurge of urban poor and civil society mobilization, and related dynamics of policy and bureaucratic change.

### Authoritarian Imprints on Philippine Bureaucracy

To reiterate, the Philippine experience with authoritarianism under then President Marcos Sr. began with the declaration of martial law on September 21, 1972. Though martial law was lifted on January 17, 1981, Marcos persisted in the exercise of power justified by the consolidation of provisions in the 1935 and 1973 constitutions, and amendments in 1976 and 1981. Marcos laid down the rules by way of presidential proclamations, presidential decrees (PDs), letters of instruction (LOIs), executive orders (EOs) and administrative orders (AOs). Marcos's executive domination came by way of reorganizing the bureaucracy and appointing officials from his close circles and the military, and by directing the bureaucracy to implement development plans and programs, despite resistance from societal groups (Rocamora 1993, 3; Cariño 1992, 80–84; Rebullida 2006, 169; Bello, Kinley, and Elinson 1982). In "bureaucracy's subordination" to "executive dominance," Cariño (1992, 83–84) succinctly points out the ambiguity in the authoritarian directive for bureaucracy "to decentralize and seek out citizens" and "to promote people's participation," while suppressing dialogues and negotiations with citizen groups opposing Marcos's development policies and programs. The bureaucracy played a role in implementing Marcos's development plans under the charge of appointed heads of government agencies, some of whom had military backgrounds.

The Marcos regime's directions set the stage for repressive policies and programs that elicited adversarial relations with civil society organizations. This contentious condition is illustrated specifically in

the case of the Marcos Sr. government's interaction with urban poor organizations on the implementation of urban development goals and housing policies and programs. In this narrative, Marcos laid down policies and programs, and created the bureaucracy to undertake the housing component of urban development. A major part of the plan targeted areas for priority development involving urban poor settlements. Prior to Marcos Sr., the People's Homesite and Housing Corporation, created in 1947, administered the government's housing programs involving the relocation of the "squatter"or informal settler settlements, which had grown since the 1940s in areas of Manila and Quezon City (Van Naerssen 1993, 5). Prior to declaring martial law, Marcos created the Central Institute for the Training and Relocation of Urban Squatters in 1967 (EO No. 79, s. 1967). He reorganized the Presidential Committee on Housing and Urban Development (EO No. 215, s. 1970) to pursue development goals, housing and resettlement. By a series of directives, Marcos ordered the removal of dwellings on public and private lands (LOI No. 19, s. 1972) and the removal of persons in "portions of rivers, creeks, esteros, drainage channels," and similar waters and the return to the state of the portions of public domain illegally acquired (PD No. 296, enacted in 1973). Significantly, PD No. 772, enacted in 1975, made squatting a crime, not merely a public nuisance. Section 1 of the law defined the "squatter" as

> [a]ny person who, with the use of force, intimidation or threat, or taking advantage of the absence or tolerance of the landowner, succeeds in occupying or possessing the property of the latter against his will for residential, commercial, or any other purposes, [who] shall be punished by an imprisonment ranging from six months to one year or a fine of not less than one thousand nor more than five thousand pesos at the discretion of the court, with subsidiary imprisonment in case of insolvency.

It pointed out the unlawful occupation of public land and private land owned by the "affluent class" that merit "the government's drive against this illegal and nefarious practice." The Marcos Sr. government targeted the Tondo Foreshore, regarded as "the largest squatter and slum colony in the Greater Manila," and the areas of Vitas, Dagat-Dagatan and those adjacent as "planned areas for new development" (PD No. 814, s. 1975). This overturned the provisions of Republic Act

(RA) No. 1597, which offered dwellers the opportunity to purchase the land at affordable cost.

The bureaucracy to implement the Marcos Sr. plan was laid upon the National Housing Authority (NHA) (PD No. 757, enacted in 1975), to bring in the private sector for housing finance development and undertake resettlement. The Ministry of Human Settlements was created in 1978 via PD no. 1396. It supervised several other housing finance agencies created or reorganized. Eviction and relocation of squatters, arrests of "squatter" association leaders, and the eventual ideological politicization of the urban poor organizations draped the political landscape (Van Naerssen 1993; Karaos 1993, 1998; Honculada 1985). According to Cariño (1992, 83), "Marcos fielded the military even in agencies such as the National Housing Authority" to repress resistance from "ejected squatters" rather than engage in "dialogues and negotiations."

Urban poor associations, alliances, and federations swelled into what had been referred to as an urban poor/"squatter" social movement (Van Naerssen 1993; Karaos 1993). In 1970, urban poor organizations formed their first federation, the Zone One Tondo Organization to clamor for the implementation of RA No. 1597 (Karaos 1993, 72). Politicized and radical urban poor organizations confronted the implementation of policies and programs by government agencies. These civil society formations played well into the next historical moment of democratic restoration, which may help explain the changes in policies, programs, and the agencies of government comprising the housing bureaucracy.

## Constitutional, Policy, and Bureaucratic Changes: Public Sphere for Civil Society

Two critical junctures ushered change in the Philippines: the 1986 EDSA People Power Revolution deposing Marcos Sr. and catapulting Corazon Aquino to political leadership, and subsequently, the drafting of the 1987 Philippine Constitution restoring democratic institutions and processes. Since the repression of civil society organizations proved to be a major grievance against the state, the 1987 Constitution laid down critical breakthroughs that formalized their participation within the sphere of the state. Constitutional provisions acknowledge the rights of NGOs and community-based or sectoral organizations "to pursue and protect, within the democratic framework, their legitimate and collective interests and aspirations through peaceful and lawful

means," while obligating the state to provide the consultative mechanisms (article XIII, sections 15–16). Another landmark legislation, RA No. 7160 or the Local Government Code of 1991, establishes devolution and mandates local government units (LGUs) to engage the NGOs and POs as active partners in various joint and cooperative arrangements, for various purposes of local development, even financially assisting and entering into partnerships and collaboration to pursue local development (sections 34–36).

While the 1987 Constitution does not explicitly use the term "governance" or "democratic governance," its pertinent provisions are in line with the attributes of this new framework. Government is no longer the sole actor in society, nor is it the sole provider of goods and services. It now interacts with and engages other stakeholders in the private sector, societal groups, and individual citizens. Inclusiveness, people-centeredness, and participation of stakeholders in government decision-making and processes became hallmarks for the Philippine government.

In this overall context of widened democratic space, state institutions and civil society organizations re-examined the past regime's contentious issue on urban poor housing. The legislature's enactment of pro-urban poor laws and the creation of programs and agencies by the executive had been attributed to the advocacy of civil society's urban poor organizations and coalitions claiming their housing rights and protesting their homelessness and lack of security in land tenure (Karaos 1998; Magadia 2003, 93–112). As a consequence of the increasing number and activism of urban poor settlements, urban poor organizations, and pro-urban poor NGOs, civil society gained "political leverage" to engage state institutions and officials (Rebullida 2003). State institutions and officials demonstrated their openness to public clamor, in contrast to the toppled Marcos-led government.

Immediately within the year of taking office, Corazon Aquino created the Presidential Committee for the Urban Poor (PCUP) via EO No. 82, s. 1986 to coordinate between government and the urban poor on matters such as planning, policy formulation and implementation, review, monitoring and evaluation of programs and projects relevant to the urban poor. The EO also mandated the accreditation of legitimate urban poor organizations. This initiative starkly contrasts with the repressive and antagonistic approach adopted by Marcos Sr. as president.

Also, as an immediate action, Corazon Aquino created the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) (EO No. 90, s. 1986), identifying government agencies to implement the National Shelter Program of her administration. Four key agencies and three support agencies comprised the HUDCC, mainly to bring together and coordinate the disparate government housing agencies under the president of the Philippines. Further changes made during the Corazon Aquino administration (EO No. 357, s. 1989) aimed to strengthen HUDCC's housing agencies. Aquino's AO No. 111 (1989) directed concerned government departments, agencies, and offices to coordinate with the PCUP and participate in trisectoral dialogues among government, NGOs, and urban poor POs. These presidential directives signaled the executive's openness to popular sectors.

Civil society dynamism and state responsiveness forged the groundbreaking pro-urban poor program, the Community Mortgage Program (CMP), launched in 1988 as an innovative socialized housing finance program for urban poor informal settlers. Subsequently enacted in 1992, the Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA or RA No. 7279) sustained the CMP and provided fund sources for implementation (articles IV, V, VIII). The UDHA also ensured consultation and participation of the urban poor in decision-making and proper processes for demolition, eviction, and resettlement (article IV, section 23; article VII, section 28). The enactment of the Comprehensive and Integrated Shelter and Urban Development Financing Act of 1994 (RA No. 7835) ensured fund support for CMP. A significant milestone, the Anti-Squatting Law Repeal Act of 1997 (RA No. 8368) overturned Marcos Sr.'s PD 772, which sought to erase the stigma of the urban poor as "squatters," and identifying them instead as informal settlers.

Under Marcos Sr., government housing policies and programs dealt with direct housing production, mortgage, development loans, and community programs (Angeles 1985; Llanto et al. 1998, 6–9; Ballesteros 2005). Post-Marcos, the Corazon Aquino administration launched new laws, policies, and programs that enabled civil society participation and security of land tenure for the urban poor.

## Threshold for Democratic Governance

The institutionalization of the CMP by the 1992 UDHA provided the public space for civil society organizations, which actively worked for

its enactment (Magadia 2003, 93–112). The UDHA underscored socialized housing as the

> housing programs and projects covering houses and lots or homelots only undertaken by the Government or the private sector for the underprivileged and homeless citizens which shall include sites and services development, long term financing, liberalized terms on interest payments, and such other benefits in accordance with the [UDHA]. (article I, section 3, paragraph r)

Social housing is deemed appropriate to the urban poor informal settlers compared to economic housing, which is a "type of housing project with lower interest rates and longer amortization periods provided to moderately low-income families, as defined under existing laws, rules and regulations" (RA No. 9904, the Magna Carta for Homeowners and Homeowners Associations, chapter I, section 3, paragraph h).

The CMP's socialized housing was managed by the National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC) since the term of President Corazon Aquino. The NHMFC was created by Marcos Sr.'s PD No. 1267. Bureaucratic changes occurred after President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo signed EO No. 272 in January 2004, creating the SHFC. While the NHMFC shall continue to handle the "secondary market for home mortgages granted by public and/or private home financing institutions," the SHFC as a wholly owned subsidiary of the NHMFC shall distinctly undertake social housing for formal and informal sectors in low income brackets. The SHFC shall be the lead government agency to take charge of developing and administering social housing program schemes, particularly the AKPF Program (amortization support program and developmental financing program) and the CMP, which is differentiated from other housing programs by its financing scheme, governance arrangements, and specific clientele—the urban poor informal settlers.

Both agencies became members of the HUDCC, which was created in 1986 and dissolved on February 14, 2019 on account of RA No. 11201 creating the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development (DHSUD). In this new department, the NHMFC and the SHFC are attached agencies for policy and program coordination. The changes in legislation and policies that abolished,

TABLE 1. Housing-related laws and policies during martial law and authoritarian period (1972–86)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1972 | Proclamation No. 1081 | Declaration of martial law |
| 1972 | Letter of Instruction No. 19 | Removal of dwellings on public and private land |
| 1973 | Presidential Decree (PD) No. 296 | Removal of persons in portions of creeks, esteros, drainage; return of illegally acquired land to the state's public domain |
| 1975 | PD No. 772 | Squatting as a crime not merely public nuisance; penalty for squatting; squatter defined as illegal occupant of land |
| 1975 | PD No. 814 | Overturn of Republic Act No. 1597 by identifying Dagat-dagatan as Area for Priority Development |
| 1975 | PD No. 757 | Creation of the National Housing Authority for housing finance, resettlement development, and private sector involvement |
| 1977 | PD No. 1267 | Creation of the National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC) |
| 1978 | PD No. 1396 | Creation of the Ministry of Human Settlements as an umbrella institution for all housing agencies |

revamped, and created new programs and government agencies are shown in tables 1 and 2.

Given these changes since democratic restoration in 1986, the question turns to bureaucracy's shift to democratic governance with emphasis on civil society participation within the public space. How and in what ways has the housing bureaucracy practiced democratic governance?

## Bureaucracy and Civil Society: Democratic Governance in Urban Poor Socialized Housing

As a major change in bureaucratic practice, CMP demonstrates the formal and institutionalized participation and collaboration of civil society in a government program mandated by the 1992 UDHA. This was perceived to be the state's responsiveness toward civil society's

TABLE 2. Housing-related laws and policies since re-democratization in 1986

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1986 | Executive Order (EO) No. 82 | Creation of the Philippine Commission on the Urban Poor (PCUP) to accredit urban poor organizations |
| 1986 | EO No. 90 | Creation of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) |
| 1987 | Philippine Constitution | Recognition of civil society organizations and human rights |
| 1988 | National Home Mortgage Finance Corporation (NHMFC) | Launch of the Community Mortgage Program (CMP) by NHMFC |
| 1989 | EO No. 357 | Strengthening of the urban housing and development program |
| 1989 | Administrative Order No. 111 | Government departments, agencies, offices to coordinate with PCUP for sectoral dialogues |
| 1991 | Republic Act (RA) No. 7160 | The Local Government Code devolved housing concerns to local government units |
| 1992 | RA No. 7279 | The Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992 provided for the adoption of the CMP as a socialized housing for the urban poor; processes for eviction and demolition; fund sources and agencies involved (article VIII, section 31) |
| 1994 | RA No. 7835 | The Comprehensive and Integrated Shelter Financing Act of 1994 gave funding support for the CMP |
| 1997 | RA No. 8368 | Anti-Squatting Law Repeal Act |
| 2004 | EO No. 272 | Creation of the Social Housing Finance Corporation (SHFC) and transfer of the CMP and other social housing programs from NHMFC to SHFC |
| 2012 | EO No. 69 | Transfer of PCUP to the Office of the President to effectively coordinate, formulate, and evaluate policies and programs concerning the urban poor |
| 2018–19 | RA No. 11201 | The Philippine Congress enacted the Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development Act in 2018; signed into law by President Rodrigo Duterte on February 14, 2019 |

activism on their claims to housing rights for the poor, including security of land tenure, as well as a way to lessen conflict (Karaos 1998, 146). Across the years, the power dynamics has engaged the political spheres of government at the national level, the network of civil society organizations, and the local government since the enactment of the 1991 Local Government Code. This section highlights the ways by which the SHFC, as the bureaucracy for urban poor socialized housing, has provided the platform for engaging civil society in the democratic governance norms of participation, accountability, transparency, and rule of law. The discussion also points out the interplay of presidential politics in the bureaucracy for urban poor housing.

## Structure and Dynamics: Participation, Collaboration, Networking, Accountability, and Leadership

The basic CMP structure, whereby the national government provides funding for land acquisition and serves as process manager for the urban poor informal settlers to avail of community mortgage until the completed transfer of individual land titles, has been sustained since 1988. SHFC renamed the CMP originators into the CMP mobilizers (CMP-M), the CSOs that assist in organizing the urban poor beneficiaries into POs, referred to as homeowners' associations (HOAs) or community housing associations (CHAs). The homeowners' association members initially pay the loan amortizations collectively, then payment becomes individualized after some years to reach full payment and permit the awarding of individual land titles. The POs/HOAs/CHAs may avail of the CMP for any of three purposes: 1) lot acquisition, either for relocation offsite or onsite for land occupied; 2) site development; and 3) housing materials at corresponding loan ceilings and monthly amortization.

The CMP mobilizer may be an accredited CSO, an NGO, a PO, or a non-government association (NGA) or LGU with capacity "to assist, organize and prepare communities for participation in CMP" (SHFC 2019a). From its beginnings, the CMP mainstreamed the self-help and mutual-help practices among NGOs and POs into formal contracts of collaboration to access public funds for land purchase and to mobilize loan repayment (Rebullida, Endriga, and Santos 1999). Over the years, the power dynamics have occurred in the interactive processes among the stakeholders: 1) between the CMP-M, the PO, and the landowner; 2) between the CMP-M and the PO applying for the CMP; 3) between the PO officials and their member-beneficiaries; and 4) between the NHMFC/SHFC and the NGOs. Cooperation and

conflict characterized the relationships between and among the stakeholders in different stages of the program. Surveys and case studies have depicted the conflict resolution and negotiation processes in the stages of land purchase between a landlord and the involved NGO or LGU mobilizer and PO beneficiaries; in loan processing relative to SHFC requirements; and in loan amortization collection among members of the PO/HOA/CHA (Rebullida 1999; Ballesteros, Ramos, and Magtibay 2015; Commission on Audit Management Services 2006; pers. comm.[5]).

The NGOs organized themselves into the National Congress of CMP Originators and Social Development Agencies for Low Income Housing, starting with eight NGOs in Luzon, twelve in Visayas, and eighteen in Mindanao. Under SHFC, this evolved into the National Network of CMP Originators and Social Development Organizations for Low Income Housing consisting of ten NGOs in the Luzon CMP Network,[6] seven in the Visayas CMP Network,[7] and five in the Mindanao CMP Network.[8] The Foundation for Development of the Urban Poor served as the longtime secretariat until it was taken over

5. Author's interviews with three key informants on December 6, 2018 and two key informants on December 6, 2019.
6. The Luzon CMP Network lists the following member NGOs: Center for Community Assistance and Development; Foundation for the Development of the Urban Poor; Foundation for Development Alternatives; Foundation for the Empowerment, Economic Development, and Environmental Recovery; Muntinlupa Development Foundation; People's Alternative Study Center for Research and Education in Social Development; Tulong at Silungan ng Masa Foundation, Inc.; St. Hannibal Empowerment Center; Center for Housing Innovations and Component Services; and Partnership for Integrated Services and Social Development, Inc.
7. The Visayas CMP Network lists the following member NGOs: Iloilo People's Habitat Foundation, Inc. (IPHF); Roxas City Urban Poor Federation, Inc. (RCUPF); Sustained Actions for Community Upliftment, Land Tenure Towards Development, Inc. (SASCULDEF); Julio & Florentina Ledesma Foundation, Inc. (JFLFI); Social Action Center Tagbilaran (SAC Tag); Kaupon Han Paguswag Han Samar, Inc. (KAUSAMAR); and Pagtambayayong–A Foundation for Mutual Aid (PFI).
8. The Mindanao CMP Network lists the following member NGOs: Kahugpungan sa Mindanao, Inc; Hugpong Dabaw with nine member organizations in Davao City, namely Assumption Parish Socio-Economic Development Foundation, Inc. (APSED), CODE, Mindanao Land (MinLand), Gawasnong Pagbalay, Inc. (GPI), Grassroot Institute for Education and Development Foundation (SALROSED), Itinerant Mission for Grassroots Development, Inc. (IMGRADE); in Cagayan de Oro with GROUP Inc. and TOUCH; in Zamboanga City with Katilingban sa Kalambuan, Inc (KKI) and Zamboanga Human Resource Development Inc. (ZHRDI); in Iligan City with SSMI; and General Santos City with KPS Foundation Inc.

by the Pagtambayayong Foundation.[9] Since its inception in 2004 and operations taking-off in 2007, SHFC and the CMP Congress had conducted consultations (SHFC 2007a; 2008a, b; 2016a) and NGOs actively participated in CMP policymaking and implementation, but participation is perceived to have waned since 2016.[10]

Civil society representation in the SHFC Board of Directors enabled the sector to share their voice in policymaking, particularly when one of them was appointed SHFC President[11] from 2011 until 2016 during the term of President Benigno Aquino and until 2017 upon transition to the term of President Rodrigo Duterte. Key informants noted the relative facility by which civil society organizations conveyed their concerns to SHFC and the regularity of consultative processes during the presidency of Ma. Ana Oliveros from the civil society sector, though they also noted some resistance to change among others in the bureaucracy.[12] Some difficulties were encountered related to bureaucratic perspectives and practices that needed to be changed and past adversarial experiences between government and civil society that needed to be overcome to engage in the processes of the CMP.

President Corazon Aquino played a part in democratic restoration and responded to civil society by reframing housing agencies from the Marcos Sr. era and launching the CMP in 1988 managed by the NHMFC. President Macapagal Arroyo created the SHFC in 2004, for a bureaucracy dedicated to socialized housing, and transferred the CMP from the NHMFC. How SHFC practiced participation, transparency, and accountability are highlighted in its consultative processes applied in instituting policy and program changes, particularly in the period of the GO-NGO Budget Partnership Agreement.

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9. Author's interview with two key informants on December 6, 2019.
10. Author's interviews with two key informants on December 6, 2018; two key informants on December 6, 2019; and one key informant on December 13, 2019.
11. For example, Francisco "Bimbo" Fernandez and Ma. Ana Oliveros, from civil society organizations, joined the SHFC for a time as members of the Board of Directors. Subsequently, Ma. Ana Oliveros was appointed President of SHFC (SHFC 2013a, 7, 13–14).
12. Author's interview with two key informants on December 6, 2018; two key informants on December 6, 2019; and one key informant on December 13, 2019.

## Consultative Processes, GO-NGO Budget Partnership and Streamlining Innovation

The SHFC bureaucracy showed resilience in instituting reforms, beset by persistent clamor from the civil society NGO-PO housing network to address inefficiencies and lack of space for participation.[13] The SHFC upheld the governance concepts of "streamlining," "transparency," "accountability," "responsiveness," "participation," and "corporate governance," which was particularly reflected in SHFC annual reports, highlighted in the years 2010–16 related to the GO-NGO budget partnerships. Since the launch of the Localized CMP (L-CMP) in 2007, SHFC has regularly conducted consultations and forged partnerships, particularly "synergy with LGUs" highlighted in 2017 and 2018 (SHFC 2017, 2018a, b).

The 2010 Reform Agenda emerged from SHFC's strategic planning and consultative processes to speed up loan application and create the Community Support Unit for direct assistance to the POs; and in 2011, sustained the regional consultations with CMP partners and Balanced Scorecard for good governance (SHFC 2010, 2011). In 2012, the SHFC and CMP logos were changed to reflect the organization's change processes toward "participation in people's lives through housing" (SHFC 2012, 4). Related to innovative programs in 2015, SHFC emphasized "collaborating for sustainable communities" (SHFC 2015a). Since its twenty-fifth year in 2013, SHFC intensified policy-related and budget consultations with CMP-Ms and other stakeholders for CMP reform, in relation to SHFC's Budget Partnership Agreement with the Partnership of Philippine Support Service Agencies (PHILSSA), a civil society organization composed of several NGOs engaged in urban poor housing, and the CMP Congress, a network of NGO mobilizers for the CMP (SHFC 2013b; 2015b; PHILSSA 2013a, b). In 2016, SHFC dealt with the streamlining of its policies and procedures that were deemed obstructive based on the experiences with CMP and CMP-based housing innovations (SHFC 2016b).

The budget partnership between national government agencies and civil society organizations came about as the latter clamored for open spaces for participation and the former invited them to participate in the budget preparation process during the term of President

13. Author's interview of three key informants on December 6, 2018; two key informants on December 6, 2019; and one key informant on December 13, 2019.

Benigno Aquino (DBM 2011, 2016). Upon assumption of office in 2010, President Aquino allocated PHP 10 billion yearly for housing informal settlers in Metro Manila's waterways and danger zones that are affected by typhoons, floods, disasters, and climate change, and the Deparment of Budget and Management prepared the guidelines for engaging civil society organizations (DBM 2012a, b; pers. comm.[14]). The PHILSSA-CMP Congress Budget Partnership Agreement was signed in 2013. The agreements were twice extended (2014–2015 and 2016) for the civil society organizations to participate in budget planning, utilization, monitoring, and evaluation (SHFC 2013b; SHFC 2015b; SHFC 2015c; pers. comm.[15]).

The CSOs welcomed the budget partnership as an opportunity to increase resources for housing the urban poor informal settler families (ISFs) in waterways and danger zones by creating a new program, the High Density Housing (HDH), inspired by the CMP model. SHFC's HDH adopted the CMP's community-driven approach but differed by engaging the ISF communities to prepare a people's plan for a multi-story vertical housing program rather than horizontal housing (SHFC 2013a, 9; SHFC 2014, 13). The CSOs faced some difficulties in engaging with the government agencies due to the bureaucracy's terminologies and procedures, which they had to learn in the process. The partnership between the CSOs and government bureaucracy posed challenges to their capacities in building trust as partners, no longer as adversaries; and for government to treat the CSOs no longer as loan applicants but as partners in the budget process (pers. comm.[16]; IBP 2018, 38).

SHFC upscaled its budget and policy consultations with CSO and LGU partners. The CSOs learned to prepare the People's Plan, design high density housing, and coordinate with other agencies—the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) since ISFs and sites were within their jurisdiction, the Department of Social Work

14. Author's interviews with two key informants on November 29, 2018; three key informants on December 6, 2018; two key informants on December 6, 2019; and one key informant on December 13, 2019.
15. Author's interviews with two key informants on December 6, 2018; two key informants on December 6, 2019; and one key informant on December 13, 2019.
16. Author's interviews with two key informants on November 29, 2018; three key informants on December 6, 2018; two key informants on December 6, 2019; and one key informant on December 13, 2019.

and Development (DSWD) assisting the ISFs, and the PCUP for the people's plan (NHA 2012; pers. comm.[17]). The CSOs accomplished some targets with SHFC attributed to President Benigno Aquino's budget allocation; and improved their capacities in dealing with the bureaucracy that is not accustomed to dealing with CSOs.[18]

With new CMP variant housing programs, SHFC revised the CMP guidelines to streamline the processes and better serve NGOs, POs, and LGUs; and established inter-agency partnerships called "G2G" (government-to-government) for one-stop-shop offices, common databank, and priority project lists (SHFC 2011, 2013a, 2016a). From twenty-seven previously required documents, only eleven remained, nine of which were indispensable to the loan warranty issuance and two documents for off-site projects (pers. comm.[19]; SHFC 2016c). Streamlining intended to "unburden community associations with their application . . . and acquire security of tenure at the soonest possible time" (SHFC 2016a, 12). The G2G partnerships forged inter-agency facility for faster release of documents. SHFC's LGU partnerships helped speed up the release of documentary requirements sourced from LGUs (SHFC 2016a, 13).

SHFC's 2016 streamlining guidelines were attributed to the fast-tracking pace of Vice President Maria Leonor "Leni" Robredo who became chair of the HUDCC for a short duration. Appointed on July 7, 2016 by President Duterte, Robredo belonged to the opposition party of former President Aquino (HUDCC 2016). Robredo intended to address the housing backlog and streamline the process, but resigned on December 4, 2016 (SHFC 2016a, 12; Robredo 2016).

By June 2017, President Duterte appointed a new SHFC President, Arnolfo Ricardo Cabling, a former Davao LGU official. The SHFC's convergence, collaboration, and synergy noticeably inclined toward LGU partners and their communities' housing gaps (SHFC 2017, 2018a, b). Some observers noted the SHFC's waning consultations with civil society non-government organizations.[20]

17. Author's interviews with two key informants on November 29, 2018; two key informants on December 6, 2018; two key informants on December 6, 2019; and one key informant on December 13, 2019.
18. Author's interviews with two key informants on December 6, 2018 and one key informant on December 13, 2019.
19. Author's interviews with three key informants on December 6, 2018; two key informants on December 6, 2019; and one key informant on December 13, 2019.
20. Author's interviews with two key informants on December 6, 2018; two key informants on December 6, 2019; and one key informant on December 13, 2019.

TABLE 3. Number of accredited CMP mobilizers/NGO, PO and NGA partners, 2016–2021

| Year | National Government Agency (NGA) | Civil Society: Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) | Local Government Units (LGUs) | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2016 | | 45 | 22 | 67 |
| 2017 | 2 | 178 | 63 | 241 |
| 2018 | 1 | 62 | 27 | 90 |
| 2019 | | 80 | —[a] | 80 |
| 2021 | | | | 57 |

*Sources:* SHFC 2016c, 2017, 2018b, 2019a, 2021a.

[a] No LGU data.

## SHFC's CMP Variations, Performance and Challenges

CMP assessments, prior to and since SHFC's creation, acknowledged the program's innovative and pioneering micro-finance social housing features and its benefits to the ISFs' shelter security, but also critiqued operational weaknesses and inadequacies in serving the bottom poorest (Rebullida 1999; Porio et al. 2004, 72–73; Commission on Audit Management Services 2006, 3–4; UN Habitat 2009; Ballesteros, Ramos, and Magtibay 2015, 32–36, 41–43). The CMP demonstrates program sustainability by running thirty years since 1988 to the present. It has inspired the creation of twelve program modalities, such as the L-CMP in 2007 for LGUs, the HDH in 2013, the CMP-Peace Process and Nation-Building for those that gave up their armed struggle, the Culturally Sensitive CMP for indigenous communities, the Post Disaster and Rehabilitation CMP for calamity-stricken communities, and CMP variants for agricultural and industrial workers (SHFC 2018a, 20–21).

In the L-CMP, the SHFC is engaged in consultative processes with partner NGOs and LGUs to reduce the housing backlog in respective areas (SHFC 2007a, b). The partner LGUs provide counterpart funds to at least 25 percent of the CMP project costs. With the national government, SHFC is engaged with the National Housing Authority, which refers their projects for the CMP while it handles other types of

programs for the informal settlers, such as housing production, relocation, and resettlement (NHA 2012).

With refined criteria drawn from the past years' experiences, the SHFC accredited NGO, PO, national and local government partners for participation and accountability as CMP-Mobilizers (table 3).

The Corporate Performance Scorecard sets the metrics for SHFC's social impact performance, internal processes, financial efficiency, and learning growth performance. The Revised Manual on Corporate Governance requires SHFC's compliance (SHFC 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013a, 2014, 2015a, 2016b, 2017, 2018a) with governance indicators. Stakeholder engagement is measured by SHFC's number of partnerships, community associations and institutions capacitated. Social impact is measured by the ISFs receiving shelter security from loan assistance.

SHFC, as the bureaucracy dedicated to socialized housing, sustained its lifespan since its creation in 2004 to become an agency attached to the DHSUD, which was created by RA No. 11201 in 2019, during President Duterte's term. The law's enactment received "qualified support" from the CMP Congress of CMP Originators and Social Development Organizations for Low Income Housing (CMP Congress), which impressed 1) the need for the continued implementation of the Urban Development and Housing Act; 2) the efficiency and responsiveness of bureaucracy given the level of integration of housing agencies; and 3) the "explicit emphasis on the provision of housing for the poorest thirty percent of the population" (CMP Congress 2019). Civil society did not object to the use of "human settlements" in the law, despite its being reminiscent of the "Ministry of Human Settlements" during the Marcos Sr. years.[21] The NGO network argued that the term "human settlements" and "urban development" aptly refer to the broader contexts for socialized housing for urban poor informal settlers.

During President Duterte's term, with the legislation of the DHSUD in 2018, the leadership of SHFC has sustained the CMP as the government's flagship program for urban poor housing, describing this to be people-led, community-driven, for the low income families' security of tenure and for building resilient and sustainable communities, through the legally organized home owners-beneficiaries community

21. Author's interviews with two key informants on December 6, 2019 and one key informant on December 13, 2019.

associations as main civil society actors, and in partnership with national and local government (SHFC 2021b, 2; SHFC 2020, 5, 6, 11). Comparatively, during President Aquino's term, SHFC had more actively engaged civil society organizations such as PHILSSA and the CMP Congress. The HDH program—initiated during Aquino's presidency, and aimed at addressing the housing needs of informal settler families residing in Metro Manila's danger areas through the construction of medium rise buildings—continued toward completion and closure during President Duterte's term as fund allocation ended (SHFC 2021b, 6, 2). The SHFC moved on to the new CMP variant, the so-called Vertical CMP, a type of multi-level housing for informal settler communities; and created the CMP-Marawi for communities affected by the 2017 Marawi Siege (SHFC 2019b; SHFC 2020, 7). The institutional arrangements continue to formally enable civil society's participation and accountability as mobilizers for the informal settler families' housing loan availment, in accordance to legislation and operational policies.

## Analysis and Conclusions

The paper finds salience in the current dilemma of sustaining democratic restoration against the inroads of authoritarianism in government bureaucracy. Passing through a long period of authoritarian period rule (1972–1986) and marching onward to democratic restoration since People Power in 1986 and the new constitution in 1987, the test of institutionalizing democratic governance confronts the considerably large Philippine bureaucracy. In the restoration of democratic institutions, the bureaucracy established for socialized urban poor housing programs offers an illustrative case.

Democratic governance, also referred to as good governance, emphasizes participation, accountability, transparency, rule of law, inclusiveness, efficiency, and effectiveness. In contrast, the bureaucratic authoritarian model derived from Latin America restricts public participation while rendering power to a controlling politico-administrative machinery. For the Philippines, the data indicate bureaucratic authoritarian control during the Marcos Sr. years, specifically toward the urban poor on their housing needs. On the other hand, democratic governance practices evolved since 1988 with a bureaucracy designated for urban poor socialized housing. The two scenarios of bureaucratic authoritarianism and democratic governance

may be explained by the confluence of factors, namely: 1) presidential executive power; 2) civil society activism; and 3) constitutional and policy contexts.

Presidential executive dominance played a crucial role in the bureaucracy's direction and historical junctures. From 1972 to 1986, President Marcos used the powers of the state, changed the constitution, abolished democratic institutions and processes, promulgated policies, and implemented programs with negative impacts on the urban poor. Marcos engaged in an adversarial relationship with CSOs of the urban poor that contested his housing policies and the housing bureaucracy under his power. In contrast, President Corazon Aquino landmarked bureaucracy's openness to civil society organizations during her term from 1986 to 1992, including her executive order to implement the Community Mortgage Program. Legislature at this time enacted ground-breaking laws favorable to civil society's advocacy for urban poor housing. While the succeeding presidents, President Fidel V. Ramos and Joseph Ejercito Estrada, had fostered civil society participation and poverty alleviation, it was President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo who accommodated civil society advocacy for creating the Socialized Housing Finance Corporation in 2004. In the subsequent term of President Benigno Aquino from 2010 to 2016, civil society boosted their participation and access to government funds by their covenant relationship with the president who rendered the funds for government-civil society budget partnership. The executive factor again shows up during the term of President Duterte in his relationship with the legislature for the passage of the law creating the new Department of Human Settlements and Urban Development, to which civil society gave "qualified support" for as long as it sustains SHFC's functionality. These patterns demonstrate the dominance of presidential politics and executive power upon the bureaucracy.

Civil society activism also accounts for the directions taken by the legislature and by the president exercising executive power. Moving beyond their adversarial relationship with government under Marcos Sr., civil society organizations gained capacities to engage the SHFC bureaucracy for participation by partnerships, collaboration, and consultations. One key observation: civil society's activism enabled their organizations' access to government funds leading to increased number of programs and projects, and to increased number of informal settler communities acquiring security of land tenure for housing. Another key observation: policy change (policy and decision

making as rule making) improved operations toward enhanced participation, accountability, transparency, efficiency, and innovations to address the specific conditions of the urban poor. In the last five years, SHFC focused on the housing programs' formalized grassroots community based associations, while previous years had seen the pioneering moves of NGOs for urban poor housing. Continuing the monitoring and evaluation of SHFC to cover the period 2016 to 2022 will likely reveal the gains and gaps in the current dynamics of civil society-bureaucracy collaboration.

The confluence of civil society participation and bureaucratic leadership can facilitate the development of democratic governance practices in government institutions. The appointment of top leadership with expertise in civil society dynamics, even for a term of office and in accord with legal and administrative processes for appointment in government positions, can comparatively respond to democratic governance. While not entirely responsive nor resistant, the SHFC bureaucracy accommodated civil society's advocacies that challenged the government's administrative processes to be responsive to urban poor housing needs.

In a broader context, civil society participation can be enhanced by an enabling policy framework. The Philippines is anchored on the 1987 Philippine Constitution and legislative mandates—the Local Government Code, the UDHA, and the Government-Owned and Controlled Corporations Governance Act (RA No. 10149). The elements of constitutional design, legislative mandates, and executive directives enabled the governance rhetoric on civil society participation, accountability, and transparency. The experience with civil society-government budget partnership agreements, though only spanning from 2010 to 2016, markedly operationalized governance features.

As depicted in historical institutional narratives, a confluence of forces relates to "democratic governance values put to practice." What forces create impact on the bureaucracy's turn to democratic governance? The Philippine experience points at 1) the president's exercise of executive power; 2) civil society organizations' persistent activism; 3) bureaucratic leadership (civil society leaders appointed for a term of office); and 4) the enabling legal and policy contexts which are also sites of state-civil society dynamics.

There are challenges to operationalizing democratic governance emerging from years of bureaucratic authoritarianism. In the Philippine case examined here, executive and administrative interventions are short-lived, whether beneficial or not to stakeholders. Continuous

advocacy from civil society presents itself as part of a long-term political and bureaucratic process. Civil society can control bureaucracy and executive power by watchfulness over inclusion/exclusion of people participation and other deficits in democratic governance. Contemporary cases in China, Singapore, and Malaysia call attention to newer ways of intertwining strong political control with selective liberality toward social sectors using the bureaucracy, while democratic states can embed nuances of strong political control. In the Philippine case, state and urban poor civil society have a long history of struggle, constructive engagement, and collaborative governance. This can stand further scrutiny on the extent and limits of democratic governance.

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# Gentrification and Segregation in the Process of Neoliberal Urbanization in Malabon City, Metro Manila

**NAOKI FUJIWARA**

ABSTRACT. While the developers of urban real estate require new, previously underinvested, in-city frontiers such as informal land in order to grow their capital, national and local governments have to look for outlying "new frontiers" to establish resettlement sites in the provinces for the urban poor. This article explores the relationship between gentrification and segregation in the process of neoliberal urbanization in Metro Manila. First, as a case study, it examines the spatial reconfigurations of Malabon City by tracing its colonial past and subsequent growth of local industries. Second, it explicates how financial capitalism has restructured the contemporary urban space and its history in Malabon causing segregation through resettlement projects. Drawing on the remaking of urban space in Malabon and the resulting resettlement project, the article identifies the relationships that paved the way for Metro Manila to become a "world class" city as well as its limitations.

KEYWORDS. gentrification · segregation · resettlement · neoliberalism · Malabon

## Introduction

The age of globalization brought about many changes, among which is the restructuring of urban spaces. This restructuring deserves special consideration since spatial segregation according to social class simultaneously occurred. The twenty-first century metropolis is seen as a "chameleon," converting urban space into something drastically new (Roy 2009). In Asia, urban real estate megaprojects that have transformed urban spaces were created through state land management leading to land monetization, which creates a revenue stream from the land (Shatkin 2017). In the twenty-first century, all land, whether urban or rural, is deemed a commodity and thus a potential source of revenue for the state. The process of making these urban spaces into what

Caldeira (2000) calls "fortified enclaves" involves invoking "fear" into committing crime to privatized and enclosed land for security.

This rapid urban transformation also entails the resettlement projects done to take care of the urban poor, which also lead to segregation. As Doshi (2012, 846) argued in the case of Mumbai, India, "[n]eoliberal redevelopment policies politically enable the freeing of land for accumulation by offering the displaced the promise of improved living through resettlement." The intimate relationship between economic investment and resettlement projects is also seen in the case of slum resettlement in the highly populous Indian city Ahmedabad (Desai 2012). Such "slum gentrification" is not merely a displacement or resettlement issue, but it is also a way to erase the past (Lees et al. 2016, 169).

In the Philippines, the urban development of Metro Manila, an area composed of sixteen cities and one municipality with a population of 12,877,253 in 2015 (Philippine Statistics Authority 2015), has likewise rapidly played out. In order to allow urban developers to restructure and remake the urban space to foster a real estate boom, local and national governments addressed the issue of massive numbers of informal settlers living in "danger areas"—which include, according to Republic Act 7279, or the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992 (UDHA), "esteros, railroad tracks, garbage dumps, riverbanks, shorelines, [and] waterways"—by relocating them to off-site, near-site, or on-site resettlements. According to statistics released by the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (2015) and the National Housing Authority (NHA) (2011), 104,219 out of 584,425 informal settler families in Metro Manila were slated for resettlement under the five-year Informal Settler Families (ISFs) Program between 2011 and 2016. PHP 50 billion was allocated for the housing program and was set to be implemented over a five-year period expending PHP 10 billion per year.

This paper explores the relationship between gentrification and segregation in the process of neoliberal urbanization in Metro Manila and its limitations, taking up Malabon City as a case study. I use local and national government reports, newspapers, and interviews that I collected during the main field research from 2014 to 2015, and additional research in January 2020. In the next section, I examine the definition of gentrification in the context of the Global South and what segregation means here.

## THE POLITICS OF GENTRIFICATION AND SEGREGATION

Gentrification has become a global urban strategy. This phenomenon is seen worldwide in expanding real estate investment and financial capital. Smith (1996, 32) defines gentrification as "the process . . . by which poor and working-class neighborhoods in the inner city are refurbished via an influx of private capital and middle-class homebuyers and renter-neighborhoods that had previously experienced disinvestment and a middle-class exodus." While gentrification in the Global North plays out under a well-established private property regime, the rent gap that is produced by capital devalorization and urban development invokes reinvestment by developers. This means that "[g]entrification is a structural product of the land and housing markets" (Smith 1996, 70). As the mobilization of urban real estate markets and vehicles of capital accumulation has expanded across the globe, it has simultaneously heightened gentrification causing the fundamental process of urban, economic, political, and geographical restructuring (Smith 2002). Similarly, city culture is a significant part of the gentrification process. Zukin (1995, 83) argues that "[c]ultural strategies of redevelopment are complicated representations of change and desire. Their common element is to create a 'cultural' space connecting tourism, consumption and style of life." Such an urban space refurbished by cultural strategies also removes unsuited elements such as the poor, violence, and social inequality from the newly refurbished urban space. Gentrification not only circulates capital through real estate development, but also entails an exclusive culture of aesthetics and security. At the same time, it involves spatial segregation based on income inequality, and is increasingly reinforced by the inequality of access to employment and social services in numerous expanding cities (Tonkiss 2013, 60–90).

Such a gentrification theory presupposes a well-established private property regime developed in the cities of the Global North, but we need to understand that urban experiences differ between the North and South. In particular, there is a difference in the way that displacement takes place in the wake of gentrification. As Ghertner (2014, 1558) argued, most of the world's informal settlements "are underinvested, not disinvested, areas that find incredibly productive uses of the scarce fixed capital available." Unlike urban experiences in the Global North, the South is characterized as a non-fully privatized regime, a mix of public, common, and customary land uses. Gentrification in the context of the global south also necessitates one to reflect on privatization and displacement through enclosure with violence

(Ghertner 2014, 2015), state management of the land (Shatkin 2017), the legacies of colonialism (Ortega 2016a; 2016b), and "benevolent evictions" through an inclusive mechanism that seeks to save the urban poor from floods and disasters by providing resettlement sites (Alvarez 2019). In the context of Asia's cities, they have experienced population growth and rapid economic growth fostered by foreign investment and international trade, with large condominiums and shopping malls being built, and property values surging, rather than disinvestment and depreciation (Shatkin 2017, 27). In addition to these differences, it is also necessary to pay attention to the particulars of urban change in each city.

In Metro Manila, gentrification-induced displacement has played out through public transportation projects like railway-upgrading and the privatization of urban planning (Choi 2014; Shatkin 2008). Ortega (2016a; 2016b, 285–311) calls such a large-scale displacement "neoliberal warfare against informality" and argues that it exacerbates neoliberal urbanization. It is not only transportation projects and the privatization of urban planning, but also improvements in the urban environment in terms of aesthetics and order undertaken by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) which evoke the image of a globalized and cosmopolitan urbanity as seen in the high-end development called the Rockwell Center (Michel 2010). Such gentrification as experienced in Metro Manila needs increased security and causes various displacements: actual, design, and non-places[1] (Roderos 2013). Furthermore, since Tropical Storm Ondoy in 2009, which devastated much of Metro Manila, discourse on "danger zone" has been increasingly used to reinforce aesthetic governmentality, or "ordering and governing space and populations by deploying aesthetic codes based on 'self-evident facts of sense perception'" (Alvarez and Cardenas 2019, 231) along the riverfront in the name of disaster risk management (Alvarez and Cardenas 2019). In a sense, new urban developments in Metro Manila have made a shift from spaces of exception like gated communities to entirely exclusive developments for the elites (Kleibert 2018). At the same time, the land and social

1. Regarding non-places, Roderos points out that "[a]s one enters such shopping mall, one has to be stopped and searched by security guards at the entrance. The proliferation of urban projects also coincides with the rise of these non-places. Thus, the urban elite are unaware that they too, are being displaced in their very place of residence" (Roderos 2013, 97).

housing program seen in the Community Mortgage Program (CMP), which the government initiated to provide opportunities for the urban poor, has likewise engendered gentrification based on social class (Porio and Crisol 2004).

Previous research also found that the resettlement of the urban poor in Metro Manila creates spatial segregation. Such resettlement projects in the Philippines are not entirely new. They have been taking place through the conversion of agricultural lands in the Bulacan, Cavite, and Laguna provinces surrounding Metro Manila into new resettlement sites from the 1960s onwards (Caoili 1999, 68; Dizon 2019, 110; Pinches 1994, 26–27; Veneracion 2011). It is, however, significant to note that the contemporary large-scale displacement by eviction and resettlement has played out alongside the rise of financial capitalism. Segregation occurs through resettlement projects to the outskirts which have been expanding in the process of spatial growth (Deuskar and Zhang 2015) and producing empty socialized housing based on a market-oriented housing policy (Arcilla 2018).

While I echo many of these arguments, this paper explores how gentrification has played out in a local context focusing on certain processes, i.e., the transformation of urban space to a more "legible space" and the elimination of the "informal" in the process of modern urban planning from above (Scott 1998, 103–46). The limitations entailed in these processes are also examined. I examine these processes and their limitations using land use data and field research. As a case study, I take up the urban development of Malabon City located in the northwestern part of Metro Manila, rather than central business districts or areas with rapidly ongoing urban development. In doing so, what it reveals is that gentrification is not only occurring in urban central areas, but is also becoming more ubiquitous. To support this, I first examine the spatial reconfigurations of Malabon by tracing its colonial past and the growth or expansion of its local industries. Second, I explicate how financial capitalism has restructured the contemporary urban space and its history in Malabon causing segregation through resettlement projects. Drawing on the making of urban space in Malabon and the resulting resettlement projects, this paper identifies the relationships that paved the way for Metro Manila to become a "world class" city as well as its limitations.

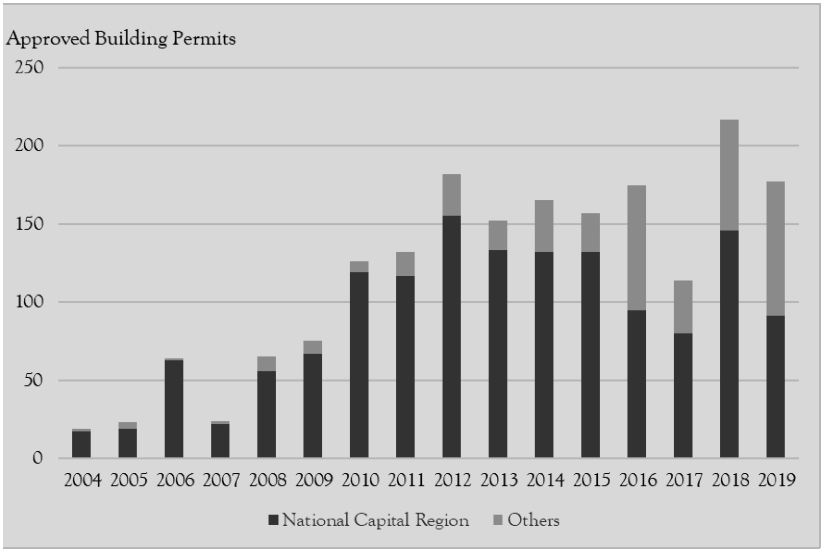


FIGURE 1. The transition in the number of approved building permits of residential condominiums in the Philippines, 2004 to 2019. *Sources:* Philippine Statistics Authority (2004–2019) data compiled by author.

## TRANSFORMATION OF THE PHILIPPINE ECONOMY SINCE THE 1980S

The structural adjustments urged by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank for further liberalization, deregulation, and privatization were significant factors in the transformation of the economies of the Global South. Many countries faced with external debt as a result of political corruption, failure of economic policies, and the oil crisis of the 1970s were forced to adopt such economic policies. As Bello et al. (2009, 12) put it, "[s]tructural adjustment in the Philippines, which was initiated in 1980, sought—at least at the theoretical level—to achieve greater efficiency through thoroughgoing liberalization, deregulation, and privatization." In particular, the Ramos administration in the 1990s adopted the "Philippines 2000" program in order to dismantle the existing structure of protectionism and control, reducing import tariffs and removing a number of restrictions on foreign investment (Pinches 1996, 115–23).

It is necessary to draw attention to shifts in the Philippine economy caused by economic reforms since the 1980s that affected the economic interests and investment patterns of the business elite.

According to Raquiza (2014, 233), there was a twofold change: "Under services, investment poured into banking, real estate, retail, gaming and tourism, education, and health industries. Under industrial concerns, the big ticket investments were in construction and infrastructure, utilities, and energy development." In addition to these, the continued growth of remittances from Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) began to occupy center stage in the economy during the 2000s, and for many new real estate corporations, land reemerged as the cornerstone of Philippine capital's strategy (Cardenas 2014; Raquiza 2014). Some real estate corporations expanded their sales offices to a global scale in order to reach more OFWs who were potential real estate buyers (Ortega 2016b, 81–115). As such, rapid urban development in Metro Manila emerged with the transformation of the Philippine economy. As can be seen in figure 1, which shows the change in the number of approved building permits of residential condominiums per year between 2004 and 2019, a restructuring of urban space has been afoot since the 2000s. In particular, the number exceeds 100 condominiums every year since 2010. This indicates that there was a significant increase in economic investment to the real estate sector, at a time of economic growth under the Benigno Aquino administration (2010–2016).

As Porio (2009, 118) pointed out, national and local politics have very much played a significant role in mediating the insertion of capital flows such as overseas remittances and foreign direct investments into the spatial fabric and social structure of National Capital Region (NCR), and it is significant that the 1991 Local Government Code allowed local governments to take a lead role in land use planning. Thus, the transformation of NCR into a new urban space evolved through different processes in each city.

## HISTORY OF LAND DEVELOPMENT AND URBAN CHANGE IN MALABON

Malabon City is a coastal town located in the northwestern part of Metro Manila. To the northeast is Valenzuela City, and to the southwest is Navotas City. Caloocan City is located southeast of Malabon. Malabon has a total land area of 1,571.40 hectares and 21 barangays.[2] In 2015, the population was 365,525 (Philippine Statistics

2. The barangay is the smallest administrative division in the Philippines.

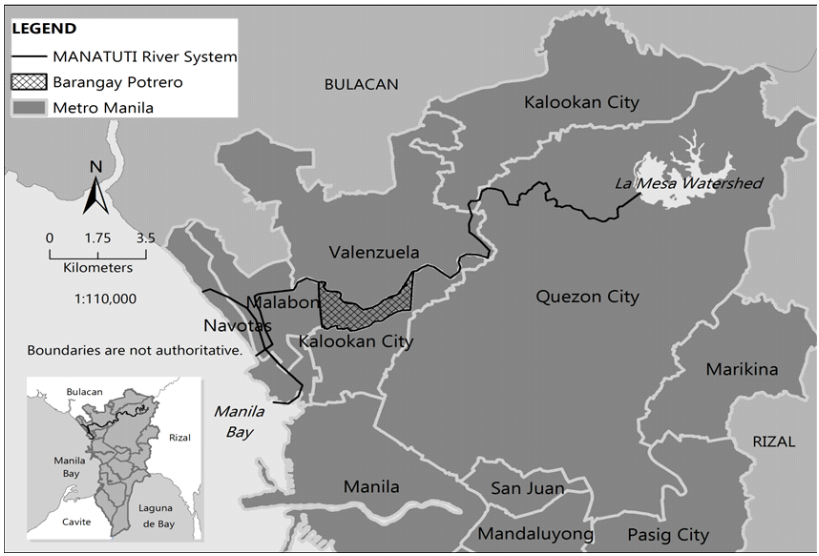


FIGURE 2. The location of Barangay Potrero and MANATUTI River System which includes the Tullahan River. *Source:* PhilGIS. Cartography: Mark Angelo V. Cagampan, created for author.

Authority 2015). On November 7, 1975, Malabon became part of Metro Manila through Presidential Decree No. 824 and the Municipality of Malabon became the City of Malabon through Republic Act 9019 in 2001. There are three major rivers in the city, the Malabon-Navotas, the Tullahan, and the Tinajeros (MANATUTI) rivers (figure 2). These rivers all lead to Manila Bay.

These rivers have been the sites of many colonial-era battles, and later became closely associated with industry. The Spanish government monopolized the cultivation of tobacco in the early 1800s, and there were 20,000 workers in five factories when they were in full operation (Malabon City Government 2003, 2). A local business elite in Malabon emerged as a result of the locality serving as an export-processing site for cash crops like tobacco and sugar (Magno 1993, 208). These industries relied on the waterways for irrigation and for transportation of their goods.

Historically, Malabon initially developed through the fishpond industry. As Doeppers (2016, 174) describes it, "[b]y at least the early twentieth century, Malabon had become a major place where nursery

ponds were raising fingerlings on a commercial basis." Under American colonial rule, however, what used to be public fishponds became private; the old local elite and those who collaborated with the new colonial power were integrated into the new colonial bureaucracy, and they were able to acquire properties meant to be sold to tenants or public lands (Magno 1993, 207–09). "Fishpond ownership was a traditional base of local elite power in Malabon"; several individuals with known ties to the fishponds became mayors of Malabon during the American rule and the post-war era (Magno 1993, 209). During this period, land that was formerly under the control of Augustinian friars during the Spanish colonial era, which includes a body of saltwater called Dagat-dagatan,[3] was "closed off to public fishing and subdivided into private fishponds" owned by local elites (Magno 1993, 209–10). In the late 1970s came the next most significant transformation of the area: the Dagat-dagatan Reclamation Project by Metro Manila Commission and Ministry of Human Settlements—both under First Lady Imelda Marcos during the martial law regime in the 1970s—intended to expropriate land and fishponds in order to convert those into roads and urban poor settlements for the rural migrants and the urban poor (Magno 1993, 209–14).

Malabon also developed as an industrial hinterland. Barangay Potrero (figure 2), in particular, which accounts for 302.71 hectares, representing 19.26 percent of the total land area of Malabon, has played an important role in the growth of local industries. The barangay governance report of Potrero describes the history of the industrialization attained by attracting transnational capital as follows:

> It is the cradle of manufacturing and industrial sites in Manila pioneered by early hardworking and wealthy Chinese who escaped and emigrated from China during the communist inquisition of wealthy Chinese capitalists in mainland China. These Chinese capitalists introduced plastic, steel, glass, confectionery and food manufacturing in the Philippines. During the fifties, businessmen prefer to live in Potrero due to its proximity to Divisoria and Binondo . . . . Today, industrial and business houses are the primary source of income in the Barangay. Other income sources for lower class families are working in factories (garments, sardines, paint, paper, etc), cockpit, carinderias, junk shops, sari-sari stores and

3. "Dagat" is Tagalog for sea.

TABLE 1. Comparative land use in Malabon (in hectare)

| Land Use | 1980[a] | 1997[b] | 2003–2015[c] | 2017[d] |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Residential | 751.02 | 571.22 | 597.29 | 601.96[e] |
| Commercial | 50.00 | 269.65 | 305.64 | 89.57 |
| Industrial | 144.27 | 529.56 | 516.99 | 228.78 |
| Institutional | 62.28 | 86.75 | 99.19 | 41.57 |
| Agricultural/fishponds | 229.52 | 94.19 | 20.00 | 334.62 |
| Open spaces/parks | 196.78 | 12.05 | 14.62 | 8.75 |
| Vacant | — | — | — | 49.64 |
| Planned unit for development | 137.53 | — | — | — |
| Cemetery | — | 7.98 | 17.67 | 6.43 |
| Utilities | — | — | — | 6.15 |
| Roads | — | — | — | 101.71 |
| Waterways | — | — | — | 102.23 |
| Total land area | 1571.40 | 1571.40 | 1571.40 | 1,571.41 |

*Note:* Land use data in 1980 and 1997 were collected by the state agency, not by Malabon City. Despite this, Malabon uses this land use data as its official data. There was no separate land use data for roads and waterways in 1980, 1997, and 2003; they were only classified into residential and industrial uses, and waterways were included in "other" land uses. However, the land use data in 2017 shows roads and waterways separately (Interview, City and Planning Development Department of Malabon, January 29, 2020). The total land area in 2017 was 1,571.41 hectares.

*Source:* Malabon City Government 2003, 14; 2019, 102, 104.

[a] Actual land use.

[b] Actual land use.

[c] Approved land use.

[d] Actual land use.

[e] Formal 506.10, informal 95.86 (in hectares).

transportation services like jeepneys, tricycles, buses and trucks. (Barangay Potrero 2014, 1)

It seems that industrial and private residential houses of businesspersons have been the primary source of income in the barangay; business families continue to live inside gated communities in the vicinity of the factories. The urban poor, some of whom once lived in informal settlements, have provided cheap labor for those businesses as well as a source of housekeepers and security guards in this area.

The 2003 Comprehensive Land Use Plan, however, envisioned a transformation of Malabon into the "Water City of Asia" in its land use development strategy, which discouraged aggressive industrial use. The Malabon local government stated in its master plan that "Malabon's vision of 'people living in harmony together with nature and the environment' will be showcased in its marine sanctuaries, mangroves and rehabilitated river banks and coastline" (Malabon City Government 2003, 97). The concept of "Water City," however, "did not materialize due to the environmental and climatological changes, which were given priority in the existing or actual land uses" (Malabon City Government 2019a, 103). It also affected the decrease of commercial land use in 2017 as well as the undeveloped proposed Central Business District in Malabon (Malabon City Government 2019a,107).

The urban spaces have been transformed into different and more contemporary spaces in this historical context. As table 1 shows, agricultural land and fishponds decreased drastically between 1980 and 1997. Furthermore, the 2003 Comprehensive Land Use Plan proposed that agricultural land and fishponds should be limited to 20 hectares and only 1.3% of the total land in order to convert more land for commercial use or mixed use by 2015. However, the plan did not materialize because fishpond owners would not cooperate and agree to convert their land. Rather, the rate in 2017 has been increasing greatly.[4] It is clear that "[t]he Comprehensive Land Use Plan, having been approved in 2003 by the Housing and Land Use Regulatory Board, has been overtaken by developments" (Malabon City Government 2019a, 102).

While the process of urban development in Malabon, particularly between 1980 and 1997, saw the expansion of commercial and

4. This is partly because the tax on fishpond use is lower than that of commercial use (Interview, City Planning and Development of Malabon, January 29, 2020).

FIGURE 3. In the foreground is East Riverside Community land, and new condominiums built since 2008 on an industrial site along the Tullahan river in the distance on the right. October 28, 2018. Photo by author.

industrial land use, the industrial land use of Malabon has decreased between 1997 and 2017 (table 1). With a policy that discourages industrial land use in Malabon and some conversion to commercial uses, it appears that trade liberalization has all but eliminated protection for manufacturing causing this reduction in industrial land use. Although the rate of industrial use increased between 1980 and 1997, it is significant to note that foreign direct investments, mainly from Japan since the mid-1980s and against the backdrop of the Plaza Accord of 1985, were likely to have affected the reduction of the rate of industrial land use. Such a fundamental restructuring of urban space also implies that the employment of the working-class in factories might have also decreased.

As we have seen, the land in the colonial past was used for fishponds that created a local political power structure based upon this economy. Over fifty years, up to 2000 in the aftermath of the post-war period, overall land use in Malabon transformed it into an industrial hinterland achieved by attracting transnational capital. However, the contemporary reconfiguration of urban space that has emerged out of

the new urban developments in Malabon is more likely to expand residential land use rather than industrial use. Furthermore, it involves the restructuring of riparian communities of the urban poor designated as "danger zones"[5] in urban planning.

## RESTRUCTURING THE "DANGER ZONE" ALONG THE TULLAHAN RIVER

There were 24,357 informal settler families in Malabon in 2012 (Malabon City Government 2019b, 8). The number of those living in hazardous zones or danger areas was estimated at 8,327; 4,181 families along waterways, 4,030 in road right of ways, and 116 in cemeteries. It should be noted that "60.63% of them are found along Tullahan River of Barangay Potrero" (Malabon City Government 2019b, 9). What local residents called the East Riverside Community (ERC) was located on public land along the Tullahan River, Barangay Potrero (figures 2 and 3). Unlike the detailed description of the history of Malabon, the history of the ERC is not formally recorded in either the office of Malabon or in Barangay Potrero due to its "informal" nature. What follows is the oral history of the ERC based on my interview with Mr. Santos[6] who served as the president of the community from 2011 to 2014. He looked back on the history of the community as follows:

> The East Riverside Community began in the 1970s. The pioneer settlers of the community were security guards from Araneta Village.[7] They worked at Araneta Village near the river. They found vacant land along the Tullahan River to build on. Technically, land up to 10 meters from the river is owned by the government. The land beyond 10 meters was private land. So, people started to live closer to the river on the government land, because there was no more private land on offer. In 1980, I and my wife moved to the East Riverside Community at the

5. According to the Malabon City Government (2019b, 1), the definition of "danger zone" is that it "is identified as the 0-3 meter easement from the embankment, which is the priority of the ISF Program, up to ten meters of major waterways in the City."
6. I interviewed Mr. Santos (a pseudonym) in Pandi, Bulacan, on April 19, 2015. Tagalog and English were used by both interviewer and interviewee during the interview.
7. Araneta Village is next to the East Riverside Community.

> suggestion of my wife's brother who was living there at that time. I was from Bicol and my wife was from Visayas. When I arrived, there were only 20 households living along the river. The people living in the East Riverside Community were mainly from Bicol, Ilocos, Visayas, and Mindanao. They worked as policemen, drivers, carpenters, dressmakers, security guards, engineers, teachers, factory workers, and so on. People generally moved to the East Riverside Community through connections with relatives, friends, brothers, or sisters. (Santos, Interview, April 19, 2015)

Mr. Santos recalls that the community began as the gated community was being built along the nearby Tullahan River. Since then, the community has played an important role in the developments in this area by providing a cheap labor force for low-wage jobs. The government, however, implemented a resettlement project for the ERC members located along the Tullahan river, following the Philippine Supreme Court's Writ of Mandamus in December 2008, which decreed an undertaking to clean-up and preserve Manila Bay and other major rivers including connecting waterways and tributaries.

This undertaking to clean-up was further justified by typhoon Ondoy which struck Metro Manila in 2009. After typhoon Ondoy, the government designated the land along the Tullahan as a "danger zone." The Arroyo administration had already ordered the relocation of the families, but it was not until the Benigno Aquino administration in 2010 that a prioritized resettlement program—the Relocation and Resettlement Action Plan, or RRAP—for those affected by Ondoy was initiated (Nicolas 2017). Republic Act 7279—which relates to actions against informal settlers[8] and was enacted to provide resettlement sites with basic needs—was the backbone of the legal bases for the creation of the RRAP.

The total number of families in Malabon who have resettled to off-city resettlement sites from "danger zones" along waterways between 2012–2017 under the RRAP was 975 and this includes 507 that resettled from the ERC (Malabon City Government 2019b). The local

8. With regard to this point, the Interior Secretary Mar Roxas under the Aquino administration refers to Section 28 of the Republic Act no. 7279, which allows "eviction or demolition . . . when persons or entities occupy danger areas" (Calleja et al., 2013).

and national government stated that they had to confront the health risks posed by living along the riverfront from flooding. The resettlement project certainly mitigates these risks yet the local government simultaneously attempts to develop the riverfront in order to generate revenue and encourage economic investment. In fact, the City Mayor's Office of Malabon submitted the Proposed Tullahan Riverbanks Development Project to the Department of the Interior and Local Government in March 2015. While it aims to "plan for the development of the cleared areas along both embankments of the Tullahan River within the jurisdiction of Malabon City into linear parks, bike lanes, walkways and future ferry terminals with provisions for solar panel park lights," it is also "to prevent informal settlers from returning and building illegal structures" (Malabon City Government 2019b,1).

In contrast, the opposite shore, located in Barangay Marulas in Valenzuela City home to one of the biggest industrial sites in Valenzuela,[9] has seen continuous redevelopment of residential condominiums since 2008 (figure 3). In 2008, new residential condominiums rose on the site of the metal manufacturing factory opposite the ERC. The land use shifted from industrial to residential. While both Barangay Marulas and Potrero made up the biggest industrial area in northwest Metro Manila, it has been transformed into a new urban space in accordance with riverfront development and displacement. This is not only a significant transformation of space, but the new condominiums promote new urban life and security in an area where industrial sites had once been developed. The condominiums near the small to middle sized factories have a perimeter fence and security guards deployed in front of the entrance. An advertisement for the condominiums advises: "Located in downtown Valenzuela, the industrial and business hub of north Metro Manila, Fini Homes offers high quality, convenient and affordable living space that meets the demands of today's modern lifestyle" (Fini Homes, n.d.). The residential area consists of 18 condominiums on 2.3 hectares of land with security guards surrounding the perimeter of the new condominiums. As Alvarez and Cardenas (2019) argue, the aesthetics governmentality, by

9. According to the data of City Planning and Development Office of Valenzuela (Valenzuela City Government n.d), as of 2007, Barangay Marulas accounted for 193 industrial establishments out of 1780 industrial establishments in Valenzuela, the largest number of industrial establishments.

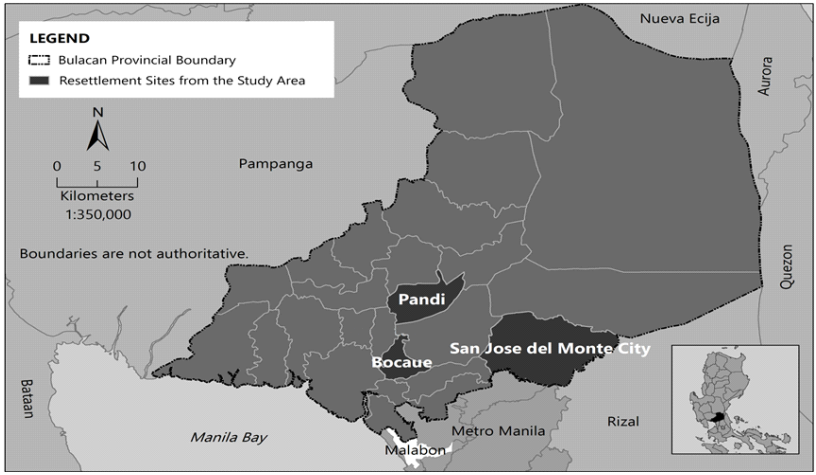


FIGURE 4. Main off-city resettlement sites from the study area. *Source:* PhilGIS. Cartography: Mark Angelo V. Cagampan, created for author.

using the discourse of "danger zone" especially since the typhoon Ondoy in 2009, have increasingly intensified dispossession of land along riverfronts in Metro Manila in the name of disaster risk management, while not questioning the flood risk generated by elite encroachment and rapidly growing infrastructure developments. Furthermore, "benevolent evictions" through inclusive mechanisms have largely fostered a depoliticization of urban dispossession and a national housing crisis in the process of resettlement projects (Alvarez 2019).

When the area that used to be a metal manufacturing plant was repurposed for new condominiums, most of the settlers along the Tullahan River were resettled to off-city resettlement sites established by the government; in-city resettlement projects in Malabon were initiated in 2018. This was effected by turning the informal land use of settlements along waterways into formal land use under state control. As Scott (1998, 103–46) puts it, it is clear that such a conversion process is meant to transform a space into a more legible form by eliminating informal uses, and this process simultaneously proceeds with the rationalization and simplification of land use in the urban planning from above. The process indicates that the urban space has been revamped, intensifying gentrification that attracts new economic

investments and new home buyers on the one hand, while the river rehabilitation projects induce the displacement and resettlement of the residents along the waterways on the other.[10] This reinforces the relationship between gentrification and segregation. It must be emphasized that the latter process done through resettlement projects not only signifies bureaucratic control over informal land use or the desire to make land more profitable, but is also deeply associated with financial capitalism that stimulates the socialized housing industry. This process, however, entails limitations.

## THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESETTLEMENT SITES AND THEIR LIMITATIONS

Resettlement projects in the Philippines have been undertaken since the 1960s. Resettlement has, however, expanded in magnitude in recent years in the wake of neoliberal urbanization following the natural disaster in Metro Manila. Yet it is necessary to consider not only the core resettlement projects, but also their association with the overall economy. In fact, the informal settlements were regarded by developers as new growth areas giving rise to capital investment in the bottom of the pyramid for inclusive growth (Buban 2015). Such a process of privatization and commodification of socialized housing through public-private partnerships caused a "moral hazard" by producing empty socialized housing as well as mortgage housing (Arcilla 2018). In response to this neoliberal housing policy and demands for housing, the urban poor group KADAMAY (Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap or National Alliance of Filipino Urban Poor) launched a campaign which included community consultations in August 2016 and, from March 8, 2017, continued as the Occupy Bulacan Movement to take over about 5,300 socialized housing units

10. In addition to residential and riverfront developments, the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) services, like call centers, are likely to intensify gentrification and segregation. In fact, Malabon City regards BPO services as "possible potential growth drivers," and "opting for BPO services will become an attractive option in the coming years within commercial areas along Mac Arthur Highway, Victoneta Avenue, Governor Pascual Avenue and C-4 road" (Malabon City Government 2019a, 14). This, along with the proposed Central Business District in Malabon, has not yet materialized but we need to pay attention to how BPO services may reconfigure urban space leading to gentrification and segregation against the backdrop of increasing foreign investment.

FIGURE 5. Resettlement site in the Municipality of Pandi, Bulacan Province, December 7, 2014. Photo by author.

set up for uniformed personnel of the government in Pandi (Dizon 2019).[11]

Despite their stated good intentions, resettlement projects entail limitations. The limitations are apparent in the resettlement projects initiated in the 1960s in terms of scarcity of land in the receiving local government areas and the subsequent failure of the projects. Most of the resettlement sites in Bulacan province under the Benigno Aquino

11. As Dizon pointed out, "KADAMAY's initial campaign in Bulacan was not geared toward occupying empty houses, but, more pressingly, toward addressing the needs of the relocatees" (Dizon 2019, 113-114). In recent years, that need has changed to legitimize their occupation of the socialized housing as required under Joint Resolution No. 2 adopted in 2018. The resolution authorizes the NHA to distribute to other qualified beneficiaries the unawarded, canceled or surrendered housing units for uniformed personnel, including those once occupied by KADAMAY. In addition, Pandi Mayor Enrico Roque is willing to legalize the KADAMAY "occupiers" and provide them assurances because "a huge number of people joining the Pandi workforce would bring real economic growth to the town." In fact, the Bulacan provincial government is proceeding with the development of an economic zone and business park in Bulacan province including Pandi (Reyes-Estrope 2019).

FIGURE 6. Abandoned resettlement site in San Jose Del Monte City, Bulacan Province, March 22, 2015. Photo by author.

administration were established in municipalities further away from Metro Manila. The former mayor of San Jose del Monte City, Reynaldo San Pedro, announced that "San Jose Heights in Barangay Muzon, San Jose del Monte, would be the last community to serve as a resettlement area for Metro Manila squatters" (Reyes-Estrope 2015). As land more proximal to Metro Manila became scarce, the establishment of resettlement sites shifted from San Jose del Monte to the municipality of Pandi and other sites.[12] In fact, since 2014, most resettlement from Malabon has been to sites established in Pandi, Bulacan (Malabon City Government 2019b, see figures 4 and 5). Despite a resettlement site being established in Pandi, the failure of resettlement projects had become apparent in the abandoned houses near the new resettlement sites in San Jose Del Monte established by the Benigno Aquino administration[13] (figure 6).

12. Chito Cruz, general manager of the NHA under the Benigno Aquino administration, stated that "the NHA was now studying whether Rizal province and the towns of Pandi and Norzagaray in Bulacan were ready to receive the next batch of informal settlers from the metropolis" (Reyes-Estrope 2015).
13. According to a resident, some relocatees left the resettlement site established by the Arroyo administration and returned to Metro Manila due to a lack of job opportunities near the resettlement site (Personal Communication, March 22, 2015).

In addition, although the resettlement projects were said to be means to protect the urban poor from floods and natural disasters, they are associated with new risks. The main resettlement sites for people living along the Tullahan River were set up in Bulacan province such as San Jose del Monte, Pandi, and Bocaue (figure 4). The RRAP of Malabon has mentioned new risks associated with the resettlement project such as joblessness, education loss, social disarticulation, food insecurity, and increased morbidity (Malabon City Government 2019b, 22–23). This signifies that while resettlement mitigates risks in "danger zones" along waterways designated by the government, it generates new risks in resettlement sites. The national and local governments have to look for new lands in the provinces in order to set up new resettlement sites that lead to segregation, which simultaneously entail internal contradictions and limitations.

## Conclusion

This paper has examined the relationship between gentrification and segregation in the process of the neoliberal urbanization in Metro Manila. The first part of the paper traced the history of land development and urban change in Malabon, which included its colonial past and its subsequent local industrialization achieved by attracting transnational capital. Such urban space has transformed into a new urban space in the wake of gentrification. The transformation of urban space in Malabon was occasioned in both the process of local deindustrialization, and the process of modern urban planning from above as seen in the restructuring of "danger zones" along waterways. While the areas along the riverfront were designated as being "danger zones" resulting in the resettlement of the urban poor, the redevelopment of these "danger zones" enabled real estate investment and an influx of the middle class taking up the reclassified and repurposed space along the riverfront. The relationship between gentrification and segregation indicates that one paved the way for the other in the remaking of a "world class" city in Metro Manila. However, this simultaneously involved the limitations such as the rise of associated risks in resettlement sites and abandoned socialized housing. Two disparate cases of space, upmarket real estate space, and resettlement space in the age of neoliberalism entail the relationship between gentrification and segregation and their limitations.

The rapid urban development of Malabon now involves a rise in sea level that is creating a "water world" (Moya 2014). This is not only

a local issue in the wake of urban development, but also a global issue necessitating the interrogation of global capitalism on its responsibility for provoking the escalating climate crisis. Understanding how a natural disaster was used to promote the rapid urban development that paved the way for Metro Manila to become a "world class" city must also be examined in relation to the effects global capitalism has on the environment.❁

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# The Political Economy of LGBTQ Tourism in Thailand

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ABSTRACT. For several decades, Thailand has been described as an "LGBTQ paradise" by various travel magazines, and Bangkok is often referred to as the "gay capital of Asia." However, LGBTQ tourism was not directly targeted by the Thai government until 2013. Over the past decade, the LGBTQ consumer market has grown steadily to the point where it is considered the fastest-growing market in the world, especially in the tourism industry. As a result, many destinations, such as Thailand, are now adopting policies to promote their destination, specifically to LGBTQ tourists. This article explores the political economy of LGBTQ tourism in Thailand, emphasizing how LGBTQ tourism policies between 1980 and 2020 were defined by the existing structures of power and were used to reinforce them. Specifically, we argue that the development of LGBTQ tourism in Thailand is used by those in power for political and/or economic ends. Since the local LGBTQ community's well-being is not an essential element of LGBTQ tourism, its promotion has not been accompanied by policies that benefit them. Furthermore, as LGBTQ tourists have high purchasing power, the Tourism Authority of Thailand has specifically promoted luxury tourism, thus encouraging the construction of high-end development projects consisting of luxury hotels, condominiums, and shopping malls. Such luxury projects, however, have led to an increased concentration of profits in the hands of the elite, to the detriment of small-scale, locally-owned LGBTQ businesses.

KEYWORDS. LGBTQ tourism · LGBTQ rights · political economy · Thailand

## Introduction

Tourism accounts for 10.4 percent of the global gross domestic product (GDP) and contributes 313 million jobs, or 9.9 percent of total employment (WTTC 2018). Because of the economic benefits associated with tourism, many countries, such as Thailand, have made the sector a top priority. Destinations compete for different niches to attract tourists, one of which is the LGBTQ market, which has been on the rise since the 2010s. In 2013, Out Now Consulting estimated that the LGBTQ tourism market, the fastest-growing consumer market in the world, represented a potential of USD 165 billion. The World

Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) corroborated this, stating that the LGBTQ sector had grown faster than the tourism industry as a whole. While the travel and tourism industry grew by 3 percent in 2012, the LGBTQ segment grew by 10 percent (Scowsill 2013). For this reason, many governments have adopted policies targeting LGBTQ tourists to attract this niche market.

Public policy-making involves political and economic forces, where public and private interests are at stake and are often conflicting. As a result, powerful groups can manipulate the outcome of public policies to pursue their own interest (Rausser 2012). Therefore, those in power can instrumentalize policies on LGBTQ tourism to control how it is developed, who gets access to these spaces, and who is excluded from them. As a result, LGBTQ tourism does not necessarily benefit the local LGBTQ community, especially if they are excluded from the decision-making process. Rooting our research on the heterodox approach of international political economy (IPE) through the case of Thailand, we pose two research questions. Firstly, what were the motives behind the promotion and the policies relating to LGBTQ tourism in Thailand? Secondly, what were the outcomes—and more specifically, who benefitted—from these policies? To answer these questions, the evolution of LGBTQ tourism is divided into five phases: 1980–2000, 2001–2006, 2007–2012, 2013–2017, and 2017–2020. Each phase shows how those in power instrumentalized LGBTQ tourism for economic and/or political gains. In the first three phases, these benefits took the form of economic gains for the police, electorate gains for the government, and legitimization of the army after a coup d'état, respectively. These stakeholders were the main beneficiaries of LGBTQ tourism. The local LGBTQ community only benefited from this niche market if their interests converged with those in power. But their interests were by no means a major concern for policymakers. In the last two phases, the way LGBTQ tourism has been promoted shows a change in the type of tourism Thailand wishes to develop. The country is developing "quality tourism," which aims to attract wealthier tourists. LGBTQ tourism is still promoted, but mainly for luxury vacations. This leads to a decline in small LGBTQ businesses in favor of high-end establishments, thus favoring the economic elite.

This article thus reveals the instrumentalization of LGBTQ tourism for political and economic purposes. It is innovative in its historical approach, analyzing more than forty years of LGBTQ tourism policies in Thailand. This allows for exploring the continuing patterns of

instrumentalization of LGBTQ tourism while documenting how they adapted to the changing political scene. Moreover, there is a serious gap in the literature concerning LGBTQ issues in developing countries because of the scholarly focus on advanced industrialized countries (Siegel 2019). This research partially fills the gap by analyzing how LGBTQ tourism was developed and regulated in Thailand and how these policies were entrenched in and conditioned by power relations.

## THE PROMOTION OF LGBTQ TOURISM

With tourism being built on human relations, motivations behind travel are gendered and sexualized (Hughes 2002). As such, Hughes's (2002) study on gay men[1] noted that gay people can travel equally as other tourists without reference to their sexual identity (non-gay holidays for gay men), but can also be consciously traveling as gay individuals. Although gay men travel frequently as other 'non-gay' tourists, many do search for gay-friendly or gay spaces during their holidays. In this case, they can either show interest only in occasionally visiting gay-friendly places (gay-related holidays) or strongly focus on gay spaces (gay-centric holidays). For many LGBTQ people living in a predominantly heterosexual world, holidays offer the possibility to be themselves and enjoy a gay social setting (Holcomb and Luongo 1996). In addition, through a survey in the United Kingdom, Clift and Forrest (1999) demonstrated that many gay respondents emphasized socializing with other gay people and accessing gay cultures and venues as important aspects of their holidays. Pritchard et al. (2000) also pointed out that there was a greater desire to escape social constraints and intolerance from gay people.

Sexual orientation can also influence not only the type of holiday but also the destination choice. Hughes (2002) noted that gay-friendliness in a destination (safety and tolerance), gay-friendly

1. Since research pieces that include the broader LGBTQ community in tourism studies are quite recent, and since previous research were mostly dedicated to gay men, a considerable part of our literature review is specific to gay men. Even though social, cultural, and political contexts have evolved and expanded to include more people of various sexual orientations and gender identities, we think that several findings on specific segments of the LGBTQ community are relevant for this research. Also, since Thailand is not promoting its destination specifically to gay men but to the broader LGBTQ community, we use this term in this article, except when the literature refers to a specific segment of the LGBTQ community.

accommodation, and gay nightlife were important elements for gay people in their choice of destination. Nevertheless, the presence of gay venues is not the only element considered by gay tourists. Many are conscientious about how local LGBTQ people are treated in their countries. The presence of LGBTQ rights and legal protections is also important. On that matter, the Spartacus Gay Travel Index takes anti-discrimination laws, marriage equality, and transgender rights as factors in ranking the gay-friendliness of different destinations, demonstrating that legal reforms could be a significant element for destinations wishing to market to this community.

Promoting to LGBTQ tourists has both political and economic benefits. Regarding the former, Liberato et al. (2018) argued that progressive policies toward LGBTQ people give a country a powerful brand image of tolerance, inclusiveness, diversity, and progress. In turn, this increases the brand image of the destination, which translates into more LGBTQ visitors. An image of tolerance also leads to loyalty and repeated visits from tourists: "For a group which has suffered and continues to suffer repression in many parts of the world, the element of social solidarity is important at the time of choosing tourism destinations and products" (UNWTO 2012, 11). Ram et al. (2019) also showed that an inclusive policy raises positive attitudes from tourists regardless of their sexual orientation.

The LGBTQ market has grown very rapidly over the past two decades, making economic incentives the second reason why a country markets to LGBTQ tourists. In the early 1990s, very few destinations and tourism suppliers targeted this market segment (CMI 2014). Companies supportive of the LGBTQ community used to put a rainbow flag in the corner of their advertisements, whether or not such advertising generated income. The aim was to support the community rather than gain any economic benefit. At the turn of the century, more and more companies became interested in the LGBTQ market as a potential tool for marketing, given their perceived value. Taylor (2012, 24) argued that in Canada, the average LGBTQ person has 22 percent more spending power than the average Canadian. Holcomb and Luongo (1996) considered LGBTQ people to be a recession-proof market. In the United States, UNWTO (2012, 8) found an overall increase in LGBTQ travels after two years of recession-induced decrease. In addition, Community Marketing, Inc. (2014) estimated that gay men were more likely to take a holiday and were also taking more holidays per year than other segments of the population. In Spain, a

gay tourist spends an average of EUR 130 daily compared to the overall tourism average of EUR 80 per day (Turespaña 2013).

Lesbians are sometimes considered a less attractive market because they have a lower average household income than gay men and heterosexual couples (Schneebaum and Lee Badgett 2019; Sender 2004). According to Sender (2004, 407), another reason for the lack of a lesbian market is that it is "also dogged by the popular image of lesbians as lacking both erotic and acquisitive desire, embodied in the stereotype of anti-consumption, parsimonious, unsexy feminists who resist marketers' interest in them as consumers." Some authors found that gay men have a more consumeristic lifestyle; they have dual income yet have fewer children than 'traditional families' and a high purchasing power (Pritchard et al. 1998).

However, other authors refute these data. For instance, Lee Badgett's (2008, 113) review of the literature found no evidence supporting the claim that lesbian, gay, and bisexual people had a higher income. Yet, whether or not they have a more sizeable income, the perception that they have a more consumeristic lifestyle holds for many marketing companies. Therefore, many tourism destinations now brand specifically to the LGBTQ community in search of the pink dollar, a term generally used to refer to the "supposedly distinctive purchasing patterns of the gay market and its particularly lucrative prospects" (Hughes 2005, 62).

Nonetheless, marketing to LGBTQ people does not necessarily correlate with more LGBTQ rights. Puar (2002) warned that to assume that LGBTQ consumption powers are a sign of queer liberation would be a mistake. She expressed that queer tourism underpins LGBTQ rights when the visibility of LGBTQ people is dependent upon its purchasing power. As Hughes (2005, 69) would put it: "Capitalism was willing to allow gays and lesbians to find freedom through the purchase of goods and services, to buy themselves out to freedom, but only in that way." Therefore, LGBTQ people are free to participate in the economy but do not necessarily have the same legal rights as the rest of the population. Similarly, Ingebretsen (1999, 132) stated:

> Marketplace phenomena, such as gay windows advertising, reflect the extent to which the commercialization of same-sex desire permits marginalized or stigmatized forms of sexual behavior literally to sell their way into consumer culture. This reverse accommodation, economically managed, effectively

> undercuts any political gain that might arguably accrue around such increasing visibility . . . Market politics, then, dangerously reconstitutes the pre-Stonewall closet.

Although a growing number of destinations promote to LGBTQ people, few studies look "behind the scenes" of LGBTQ tourism policies. There is a serious gap in the literature as to why a destination would start to accept and/or more actively promote LGBTQ tourism. Despite possible GDP growth or an improved national branding image, it is unclear who directly benefits from this type of tourism. Carrying out a case study using a political economy approach thus allows us to take a closer look at the power relations that have led to the promotion of LGBTQ tourism. Bianchi (2002, 266) stated that "the central normative preoccupation of such an approach consists of an analysis of the social relations of power which condition the unequal and uneven processes of tourism development, which are reinforced through particular configurations of ideologies and institutions." The central focus is thus on who—or what—is exercising power to modify the choices of others in the economy or the society, and "with what purpose, by what means and with what consequences" (Strange 1996, 42). By extension, which actors have the power to influence the policy choices regarding LGBTQ tourism in Thailand?

The political economy approach has been used in more tourism studies in the last few years when looking at the globalization of tourism and its impacts since neoliberal policies have become increasingly important in tourism development (Zhao and Li 2006; Mosedale 2016). Nevertheless, the sexuality dimension of the political economy of tourism remains understudied. An exception comes from Hartal (2018), who investigated the impact queer tourism had on Israeli LGBTQ politics by using a political economy approach. She concluded that the status of LGBTQ people changed from shameful sexuality to good urban investment, creating economic wealth for the country. However, legislation favoring LGBTQ people is still stagnant, making the value of such a community limited to an economic one. This article aims to complement Hartal's study by offering a historical perspective on the political economy of LGBTQ tourism in Thailand, showing the instrumentalization of LGBTQ tourism in a context quite different from Hartal's case study in Israel.

## METHODOLOGY

This qualitative analysis achieved methodological triangulation, which relied on varied data. This includes semi-structured interviews, participant observation, documents, and discourse analysis. First, document analysis was carried out, involving official sources from states and public organizations, and non-official sources encompassing the rest (Cloke et al. 2004). Official sources included country reports of the situation of LGBTQ people from the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission and the United Nations Development Programme; the evolution of the "life partnership" law drafted in 2012, approved by the Cabinet in 2018, and considered for legislation in the 2019 election; and, the first and second National Tourism Development Plan (2012–2016 and 2017–2021). Non-official sources included local press published in English, such as the *Bangkok Post*, *Pattaya Mail*, and *Pattaya Today*. The reason for choosing an English press is that very few articles in Thai languages related to sexual diversity were published, and they usually had negative connotations (Sanders 2007).

Then, fifteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders in various sectors, such as LGBTQ tourism agencies, small hotel owners targeting LGBTQ people, promoters of high-end LGBTQ events, members of Thai civil society working on LGBTQ-related issues, Thai scholars, a representative from the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), and the manager of the Thai campaign for LGBTQ tourism *Go Thai Be Free*. Interviews lasted between one to two hours. Most of them were recorded and transcribed, except for a few who wished to remain anonymous and asked not to be recorded.

The data were analyzed through content analysis using descriptive coding and thematic analysis to group certain data under broader themes (Saldaña 2013). Based on the data collected, codes have been grouped into categories related to the research questions. Some of these categories, such as "power" and "legislations," were already defined before the interviews since they were related to IPE. However, they were malleable in terms of what emerged from the interviews.

In addition, semiotic theory was used as a data analysis method for the two promotional campaigns of *Go Thai Be Free* in 2013 and 2019. In its broader sense, semiotics is the study of signs and sign systems in language and culture (Coon 2012). The purpose of semiotics is to understand the meaning and the implicit ideological messages contained

within a specific publicity. Semiotics "move beyond the taken-for-granted surface meaning to interrogate underlying ideological meanings" (ibid., 516). Using semiotic theory to understand the message conveyed to LGBTQ people is quite important because it helps to understand the ideologies behind what is actually portrayed. Indeed, Tsai (2006) noted that advertisers have begun to target the LGBTQ market for economic incentives rather than for the social aspects of its advocacy movement. But aside from promotion to LGBTQ customers by private companies, public government agencies are also increasingly promoting their destinations to them, which sends a completely different message: "A private company represents its own interest[;] an entire city, however, is considered a public space, and when a tourism bureau, speaking on behalf of a city, invites gays and lesbians to visit, that invitation is a very public one" (ibid., 524).

## LGBTQ Tourism in Thailand: Sketch at Present

The tourism industry makes a significant economic contribution to Thailand, with this sector contributing nearly 20 percent to the country's GDP and 15.5 percent to its employment rate (Bangkok Bank 2019). Like several other countries, Thailand has been trying to increase its number of tourists for several decades. From 2009 to 2019, its number of tourists doubled and is projected to double again by 2030 to reach 79 million visitors (WTTC 2018). The government also predicted that the tourism sector will represent 30 percent of its GDP by 2030, making the country even more dependent on it. According to LGBT Capital (2018), international LGBTQ travelers in Thailand accounted for USD 5.3 billion, representing 1.15 percent of the country's GDP, showing the importance of LGBTQ tourism for Thailand's economy.

Most of the LGBTQ tourism in Thailand takes place in its capital, Bangkok. The apparent openness of the city to diversity, the LGBTQ-friendly bars and restaurants, popular saunas, and the many drag shows and dynamic nightlife have made Bangkok the "gay capital of Asia." It figures among the top gay-friendly cities for LGBTQ travelers in rankings, such as *HostelWorld*, *CultureTrip*, *Nomadic Boys*, *Hotel.com*, and *GayTravel*. *The Spartacus* listed more than a hundred queer and queer-friendly businesses for LGBTQ tourists, such as bars, restaurants, saunas, etc. But the LGBTQ scene is not limited to Bangkok. There is also a vibrant scene in Patong, on the island of Phuket. Phuket was

listed among the "Top 20 LGBT Destinations for 2020" according to the travel guide *GayTravel*. Moreover, the bloggers *TwoBadTourists* have characterized Phuket as a "Gay Travel Oasis." Indeed, Phuket has many bars and events, such as the Phuket Pride Festival and Tripout, an annual festival for LGBTQ people that hosts beach and boat parties, as well as group events such as yoga and cooking classes. Another Thai city popular with LGBTQ travelers is Pattaya, known for its vibrant nightlife, parties, go-go bars, and cabarets.

The visibility of queer spaces and the openness to people of diverse sexual orientations have given Thailand a reputation as an "LGBTQ paradise" for decades. The popularity of the country for LGBTQ people has been explained by the general attitudes of Thai people regarding homosexuality. This attitude, however, has been characterized as tolerating but unaccepting (Jackson 1997; Morris 1997; USAID and UNDP 2014). Unlike the situation in other countries, taboos regarding homosexuality in Thailand are not based on legal or religious sanctions since it is neither illegal under Thai laws nor immoral according to Buddhist teachings, but on cultural norms of appropriate male behavior (Jackson 1998). In 2019, the Spartacus Gay Travel Index ranked Thailand second in Asia for LGBTQ tourism after Taiwan. The reason that it is not in the pole position is that "although homosexuality is tolerated in society, the legislation needs to be seriously updated" (Spartacus 2019).

Legal protections remain difficult as it is challenging to achieve policy reforms in the country because "lawmakers tend to be conservative, and because the constitution and country's laws are seen as sacred" (USAID and UNDP 2014, 7). Many of those we interviewed expressed that the Thai elite is against the same-sex partnership bill, which would allow people of the same sex to marry. This could explain the very slow progression of legislation protecting LGBTQ rights in the country. The "life partnership" bill was drafted in 2012, but political instability and unsuccessful negotiations about its subtense stalled its legislation. To date, same-sex marriage legislation is still being negotiated and is stagnating. Moreover, the legislation to protect LGBTQ rights is often ineffective or unenforced. For example, the Gender Equality Act, promulgated in 2015, seeks to criminalize discrimination based on gender, including against "those persons whose gender expression does not match their sex assigned at birth." It is the only law that protects LGBTQ people against gender-based discrimination in Thailand. However, it has received the nickname "Thailand's Invisible Gender

Law" because it lacks enforcement and has yet to be used to criminalize entities discriminating against LGBTQ people (UNDP 2020). Many LGBTQ organizations also criticized the law since an exception for discrimination is possible for "education, religion, and the public interest" (Mitsunaga, 2014). This clause opens many loopholes that make discrimination possible. The lack of enforceable legislations protecting LGBTQ people means they are still at risk of facing discrimination. A World Bank (2018) survey showed that discrimination and exclusion against LGBTQ people were also present in seeking jobs, accessing education and healthcare services, buying or renting properties, and seeking legal protection. Such discrimination is often ignored by local Thai media to "protect the image of Thailand being a haven for LGBT individuals" (USAID and UNDP 2014, 43). Despite the stagnation of legislation on LGBTQ rights, the political and economic elite has manipulated LGBTQ tourism for their interests, which we address in the following section.

## LGBTQ Tourism and Tourism Policies in Thailand (1980–2020)

For forty years (1980–2020), Thai LGBTQ tourism policies and marketing strategies witnessed five major transformations. In all of these phases, LGBTQ tourism was used by those in power for political and/or economic benefits. In the end, the well-being of the local LGBTQ community is barely taken into consideration in formulating policies regarding LGBTQ tourism.

### Phase 1—The Rise of an "Underground" Sex Scene through the Power of Bribery (1980–2000)

Prior to the 1980s, Bangkok only had a small queer scene with a few bars that local Thai people frequented. One of the interviewees noted that "the LGBTQ scene in Thailand in general took some time to take off, specifically in terms of tourism. There has always been an underground scene in Thailand that Westerners would never discover. They have their own clubs, bars, and saunas, and we were not welcomed there." Gay spaces that are mostly centered around gay men started to emerge after the Vietnam War. Thailand was a major ally of the US during the war, and the US required an airbase close to Vietnam to avoid the need for air warfare. Thailand leased its air force base at U-Tapao for the use of B52 bombers, which resulted in a large

base of US airmen and their support personnel. The military base of U-Tapao was located near Pattaya, which was just a tiny fishing village at the time. Pattaya soon became a place of entertainment for American soldiers. Soldiers referred to the breaks they were having as I&I (intoxication and intercourse), where they would go to Pattaya to get drunk and have sex with Thais (Baker 2007). Inevitably, Thai entrepreneurs realized there was a market there and established many bars for commercial sex. These bars started by hiring female sex workers. The sex industry shifted its focus to cater to civilian tourists after the Vietnam War and the withdrawal of American troops from Thailand in the late 1970s.

In the 1980s, tourism became more central to the Thai economy as it became the sector generating the most foreign exchange (Richter 1989). This sector gained more importance in the Fifth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1982–1986), in which the government formulated the objective to increase the number of tourists by 8.4 percent per year and the income generated by tourism by 21.5 percent. As a result, Thailand went from 630,000 visitors per year in 1970 to 7.8 million in 1998 (TAT 1999). During that time, one of the main motivations for tourists was the sex industry that was developing in Bangkok and Pattaya. In the early 1980s, nearly 90 percent of foreign tourists were male (TAT 1983). Sexual possibilities in Thailand became the subject of great reverie for tourists, both LGBTQ (mostly gay men) and straight visitors. As Morris (1994, 15) pointed out: "Few nations have been so thoroughly subject to Orientalist fantasies as has Thailand. Famed for its exquisite women and the pleasures of commodified flesh, the Thailand of the tourist literature is a veritable bordello of the Western erotic imaginary." One interviewee also expressed that in the 1980s, many gay men were going to go-go bars, and most of the bars were for male sex workers.

Despite not promoting sex tourism openly, TAT was complicit in that it put heavy emphasis on Thai women and their friendliness in their promotional campaigns (Richter 1989). Sex tourism has become an important part of Thailand's tourism industry and has been accepted by the government because of its importance in earning foreign currency. The importance of the sex industry on tourism and the complicity of the government is best expressed in the Thai song *Welcome to Thailand*, released in 1987 by Carabao, one of Thailand's most popular musical groups. The song referred directly to *farang* (white foreigners) who come to Thailand to satisfy their fantasies in key

places of prostitution, which are Pattaya and Patpong (Formoso 2001):

> Come quickly. Travel. Forget your problems. Let them go.
> The government has really done a good job.
> Everyone is satisfied.
> When asked what they like about Thailand,
> Tourists respond without embarrassment: "I love Pattaya!"
> And in terms of Bangkok, the City of Angels,
> They say, "I love Patpong."

The sex industry for gay and bisexual men was able to develop alongside its heterosexual counterpart because of Thailand's tolerant attitude towards sexuality. Homosexuality is neither illegal under Thai laws nor immoral according to Buddhist teaching (Jackson 1998). The Thai sex industry also became very popular among queer Asians, especially in countries where homosexuality was more repressed than it was in Thailand. For instance, in the 1990s, many Singaporeans chose Thailand as a tourist destination to express their sexual identity, as it was illegal in their country. Thailand was, therefore, a major LGBTQ-centric destination, as many queer tourists came to Thailand for its vibrant queer nightlife.

Notwithstanding, these bars were able to operate on a "black market" because of the bribe given to the police. These bars followed the patterns established by the heterosexual bars in bribing the police to stay open. One of the owners of a bar in Soi Twilight, a popular area for LGBTQ people in Bangkok, noted that the price of a bribe for a regular gay bar was around THB 40,000 per month (around USD 1,100) and that the amount was much higher for go-go bars. Police raids occurred occasionally in both queer and straight bars if the bribe was not paid, but customers were not targeted. This corruption allowed the nightlife business to thrive. The go-go bars only existed because the police tolerated them as they were obtaining money from them. Jackson (2011) refers to this queer nightlife as an underground phenomenon linked to a black market due to the need to bribe the police.

Therefore, LGBTQ tourism (mostly for gay men) in Thailand took off in the 1980s due to the government's desire to increase the number of tourists and the revenue generated by this sector. Sex tourism became an important tool to attract many tourists, including LGBTQ tourists. Gay bars and go-go bars were able to operate and thrive

because of the bribes given to the police. As a result, LGBTQ tourism, especially through the sex industry, could develop not only because it was benefitting those in power due to economic gains coming from bribes but also because of its importance in terms of tourists coming to Thailand and the foreign income it generated.

## Phase 2—Thaksin's Pluto-populism: The Dark Years of Gay Tourism (2001–2006)

Police raids in sex bars were part of a much broader scheme of corruption in Thailand. Economist Paul Krugman (1998) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) argued that Thailand was run by "crony capitalism," referring to the close relationship between business and political sectors, where state power is used to favor the economic elite. Bribes were embedded within these broader schemes of crony capitalism, which allowed the nightlife business to flourish despite Thai officials publicly admitting that it was embarrassing for the country. However, when the Asian financial crisis erupted in 1997, multiple government changes occurred between that year and 2001. In the 2001 elections, Thaksin Shinawatra won a landslide victory by appealing to the resentment of the mass population after the IMF's restructuring policies, which led to job losses. A former high-ranking police officer and one of the richest businessmen in the country, Thaksin had very close connections to many other senior police officials and businesspeople.

One of the major elements of his policies was the social order campaign led by his interior minister, Purachai Piumsombun, which targeted all nightlife establishments. Purachai was a strict family man and a religious character against the sex business. As a result of this new policy, bars were closed at 1:00 a.m., alcohol sales were prohibited after midnight, and a zoning policy controlled the night spots. Police raids were enforced to ensure respect for the policy. Generally, police raids were the same on straight and gay bars. Purachai was not known for being homophobic. On the contrary, he was in favor of legalizing same-sex marriage (Sanders 2007). However, an exception existed from July to September 2001 when gay bars were targeted specifically. Sanders believes that these targeted raids happened because, back in July 2001, *iTV* ran reports regarding live sex shows in gay host bars that were still undergoing, emphasizing the sensational character of some of them. The broadcast came right after the evening television news,

making it very visible to many Thai people. According to Sanders (2007, 20):

> The police feared that this revelation could trigger a major crackdown and they would be one of the targets. It was the police, after all, who had allowed these shows to thrive for extra payments. [...] But a crackdown could threaten the larger patterns of police bribery in the sex industry. Shutting down the scandalous gay bars might be enough to protect the larger patterns of bribery.

As a result, a six-week campaign specifically targeted gay bars, and many of them ended up closing temporarily. Shows did not fully return to business for several weeks. According to Sanders (2007, 6), "six of the fifteen or more gay bars in central Surawong-Patpong area were closed as well as thirteen bars in the more distant Saphan Khwai area. Sex shows involving nudity ended. Even go-go dancing in briefs stopped at certain bars." This campaign affected not only international tourists but also Thai LGBTQ people to a more significant extent. It was widely publicized, and some people we interviewed expressed that many Thai customers felt they could not be seen in these bars anymore.

These policies allowed Thaksin's government to remain very popular among Thais, especially to those living in the countryside. Polls conducted by various Thai universities showed an average of 75 percent support from the population for Purachai's social order campaign, which allowed Thaksin to keep substantial electoral support (Aglionby 2001). Thaksin's political party was the primary beneficiary of the changing policies regarding tourism, to the detriment of local bar owners. In addition, the social order campaign repositioned Thailand's tourism image. Thaksin's tourism policy aimed at repositioning Thailand's image as a world heritage destination rather than a sex destination. In other words, they were escaping from the image of a sex destination and promoting non-gay holidays. Purachai maintained that tourists did not come to see exotic dancers but Thailand's natural beauty (Sanders 2002).

As a result, other Asian destinations were looking to replace Bangkok as the region's hub for entertainment. Destinations such as Singapore and Hong Kong started to develop offers for LGBTQ tourists. Therefore, during Thaksin's government, the gay area slowed down significantly, especially when it came to Asian tourists, who preferred to travel to other newly developed LGBTQ destinations such

as Singapore and Hong Kong, which were now competing against Thailand's queer scene (Jackson 2011).

## Phase 3—The Comeback of LGBTQ Tourism: The Legitimation of a Military Coup d'état (2007–2012)

With growing electoral support, Thaksin Shinawatra's party won another election in March 2005, receiving more than 60 percent of the votes. However, mass mobilization against his government started a few months following his election. On February 4, 2006, popular indignation following the tax-free sale of Thaksin's stake in the Shin Corporation led to a major rally and the creation of a coalition called People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) (Tejapira 2006). The anti-Thaksin movement grew in March 2006, with PAD organizing demonstrations of 50,000 to 300,000 people (Pye and Schaffar 2007). In September 2006, the Royal Thai Army staged a bloodless coup d'état against Thaksin on the grounds of corruption, nepotism, abuse of power, human rights violations, and suppression of press freedom (Prasirtsuk 2007). The military took power and declared martial law, dissolved the parliament, and suspended the 1997 constitution.

The reactions to the coup were mixed. It was criticized by human rights groups such as the Human Rights Watch and the Asian Human Rights Commission, while Amnesty International warned the military to respect human rights. It was also criticized by countries such as the United States, which suspended almost USD 24 million worth of military aid to the Thai government. Therefore, since they were not elected democratically, the military lacked legitimacy despite taking power. To seek legitimacy, the military reasoned that they did the coup to further protect human rights. Thus, concessions granted to the LGBTQ community would allow the military government to gain legitimacy with international and local organizations and convey an image of a protector of human rights to foreign governments. As such, they used LGBTQ rights for political gain (Sanders 2011). One of the interviewees who works closely with local LGBTQ groups stated that some LGBTQ rights organizations worked with the Ministry of Justice under the military government to draft the Life Partnership Bill and the Gender Equality Act and that many sensitive laws were passed under the military government.

The military's search for legitimacy has thus enabled many LGBTQ businesses to flourish since 2007. Unlike previous years, these businesses were not limited to the sex industry or to gay men only. They included

commercial venues and magazines, queer-themed Thai films, etc. Because the military in Thailand has always been pro-capitalist and pro-market (Jackson 2011), the military government allowed LGBTQ businesses to thrive and develop, which was not only beneficial for the Thai economy but also gave more legitimacy to the non-elected military government as a protector of human rights.

The military's legitimation strategy has protected the tourism industry from a shock caused by the coup d'état. Many studies have shown the negative impact coup d'états and political instability can have on tourism (Musavengane and Zhou 2021; Poirier 1997; Teye 1988). However, tourist arrivals in Thailand grew annually from 2005 to 2011, except in 2009 because of a global recession (TAT 2012). The travel agencies we interviewed reported very few cancellations and a continuous rise in tourist arrivals in 2010 despite a series of political protests against Vejjajiva's government, which has been referred to by Human Rights Watch (2011) as "the most prolific censor in recent Thai history."

However, there is a difference between the government allowing queer spaces to further develop to increase their legitimacy and promoting them specifically. As such, there was no public policy explicitly targeting LGBTQ tourists. In 1999, Phuket had its first Pride Parade. One owner of an LGBTQ hotel in Phuket stated that he and other activists contacted TAT, a state-owned enterprise responsible for promoting tourism, to get support from them in vain. A decade ago, the travel agency Purple Dragon tried to convince the government tourism agency to target LGBTQ tourists, but TAT objected. It is one thing to accept and tolerate LGBTQ people, but another to openly promote LGBTQ tourism. Many respondents expressed that TAT feared that promoting specifically to LGBTQ people would not be welcomed by Thai people, whose society was still quite conservative. As stated before, Thailand is tolerant but not necessarily accepting of homosexuality. But as tourists visiting the country see many *Kathoeys*,[2] observe the acceptance of LGBTQ people in many businesses within the tourist areas, and witness no apparent discrimination, they may be left with the false impression that Thailand accepts homosexuality—an impression amplified by the fact that Thais are not confrontational, leading foreigners to believe that there is no discrimination.

2. The term is similar but much broader than the notion of transgender, and has changed significantly over time, but there is no specific English word to translate this term (see Jackson 2000).

## Phase 4—The Government Slowly Gets Out of the Closet (2013–2017)

In the last few years, other Asian destinations, such as Taiwan and Hong Kong, have become more tolerant towards LGBTQ people. Other destinations, such as Singapore, have a rapidly developing queer nightlife. The island of Boracay in the Philippines also became very popular among LGBTQ people. Since 2015, the Jungle Circuit Party regularly organizes queer parties on the island, gradually increasing its reputation among LGBTQ tourists. As these other Asian destinations were blossoming for LGBTQ tourists, the Thai government slowly started to promote its destination to this niche market to avoid losing it.

TAT started to promote Thailand to LGBTQ tourists in 2013. It created the website *GoThaiBeFree.com*, which specifically targets members of the LGBTQ community worldwide. The website of this campaign proposes travel ideas in seven different cities based on different themes such as adventure, art, culture, honeymoon, local experiences, luxury, nature, and nightlife. On their website, they market themselves as "the most LGBTQ-welcoming country in Asia," wishing people of the LGBTQ community to feel free when traveling in Thailand. Not only do they propose queer-centric events but also "regular" attractions such as culture, food, and local experiences, so that LGBTQ tourists can visit the same things as everyone else. By doing this, the emphasis is less on LGBTQ-centric holidays centered around sex but rather on an overall LGBTQ-friendly tourism scene. As such, the presence of queer-specific spaces is quite limited on their website, as straight tourists could enjoy the same attractions.

TAT released its first campaign, mainly targeting LGBTQ people, in 2013. The promotional video was mainly broadcasted in Western countries, where there was a strong presence of LGBTQ communities and are generally accepted. Characters presented in this campaign also show lesbian or bisexual women, thus encompassing a broader segment than what was previously mostly articulated around gay men. The campaign was run by the TAT office in New York and started by the then director of the New York City office, Srisuda Wanipanvosak, who saw how the LGBTQ community in the United States had made significant gains with the acceptance of equal LGBTQ marriage in many states. However, the TAT headquarters in Thailand did not push this campaign; instead, it was done outside the country. Another interviewee stated: "You don't see much of the promotion from the Thai head

office. It is pushed by the TAT office outside of Thailand." Many Western expats denounced this contradiction between the promotion that they witnessed in their country of origin as opposed to the lack of attention towards LGBTQ tourism businesses in Thailand.

As such, economic incentives seemed to have been the main reason for targeting LGBTQ tourists in 2013. From his New York office, a marketing manager of the campaign explained that they were targeting LGBTQ people since they often have high levels of income (Fuller 2013). Another member of the campaign stated during an interview that:

> The program "Go Thai Be Free" recognized that LGBTQ tourism could bring strong economic and social interest to the country, particularly with a strong LGBTQ community like North America. Economic interest was the primary driver—LGBTQ travelers are likely to spend more, be more brand loyal, and travel with greater frequency than their mainstream/straight counterparts. Particularly for North America, audience segmenting needed to focus on those with the greatest propensity and ability to travel. The LGBTQ market was an obvious target.

Therefore, the objectives of TAT were twofold: benefiting from the pink dollar without shocking the conservative Thai population. In addition to promoting the campaign mostly in Western countries from the New York office, the video is very cautious in the way it shows affectionate scenes between people of the same sex. When the images are taken out of context, the pictures do not seem to be queer anymore. Indeed, same-sex couples are rarely shown in highly affectionate poses. They are vague enough that these people could be perceived as relatives or friends. Most of the images can only be perceived as queer when it is specifically known that the promotional video is for same-sex couples. Indeed, only two scenes showed intimacy between people of the same sex, and this contact was only holding hands, and one of these scenes does not make it very visible (see figure 1). In other words, the pictures are not too sexualized in a way that could shock the more conservative Thai society. This campaign shows that TAT was interested in the economic benefits associated with LGBTQ tourism but would not risk offending the Thai population nor adopt any concrete policies supporting local LGBTQ organizations. In fact, "organizations working on LGBT human rights were vastly underfunded and understaffed [...]

This can be attributed to the lack of attention and importance paid to LGBT human rights until very recently" (USAID and UNDP 2014, 44). Civil society organizations further expressed that most of their funding comes from foreign donors and that very little support comes from the Thai government.

## Phase 5—Targeting the Rich, Targeting the Queer (2017–2020)

In recent years, tourism in Thailand kept growing at a very high rate. The number of tourists doubled in a decade, from 15.94 million in 2010 to 39.8 million in 2019. This rapid growth had major negative impacts on the environment and the population. The latest Thailand Tourism Confidence Index of TAT, TCT, and Chulalongkorn University (2019) estimated that Chiang Mai and Bangkok were facing overtourism issues. Aware of these problems, the government has taken actions inscribed within a broader context of sustainable tourism. The Second National Tourism Development Plan 2017–2021 defined a long-term vision for tourism in the country, stipulating that "[b]y 2036, Thailand will be a World's [*sic*] leading quality destination" (Ministry of Tourism and Sports of Thailand 2017, 13). The Ministry adopted many initiatives to achieve this vision, such as supporting "the development of tourism that targets quality tourist segments" (ibid., 20). In other words, Thailand has turned away from mass tourism to encourage revenue-generating quality tourists.

International LGBTQ travelers, because of their important purchasing power, are one of the market segments considered as "quality tourists" (Liang-Pholsena 2018). TAT even participated in more LGBTQ events worldwide, such as Pride Parades in New York and Tel Aviv, and had a booth at the International Tourism Fair in Madrid to promote specifically to LGBTQ travelers. Moreover, in 2019, TAT set to market Thailand as an LGBTQ-friendly destination in Latin America. As expressed by TAT representative to South America Jefferson Santos in an interview with *Bangkok Post*: "We aim to promote Thailand as an LGBT-friendly destination and show them a safe tourism space by participating in the LGBT travel forum in São Paulo, Brazil this June [2019]" (Worrachaddejchai 2019). The government and the travel industry also united for the first LGBTQ Travel Symposium in 2018, organized in partnership with TAT to promote diversity and inclusion in the Thai travel industry and forge links between Thailand's travel providers and the rest of the world. The


FIGURE 1. Images from the 2013 *GoThaiBeFree* campaign showing very few affectionate poses.

event welcomed LGBTQ buyers and media from North America, Europe, Israel, Australia, and Southeast Asia.

In addition, *GoThaiBeFree* released a new promotional video in 2019, indicating a striking difference in how LGBTQ tourism was promoted in 2013 (figure 1). In their new campaign, it is clear that they specifically target the richest segment of the LGBTQ community (figure 2). At the 2019 LGBTQ travel symposium, it was shown that

FIGURE 2. The luxury behind the 2019 *GoThaiBeFree* campaign.

the second spending priority of LGBTQ travelers was high-quality hotels, following food and drink as the top priority. This could explain why their promotional website mostly showcased high-end hotels and resorts. There are no small LGBTQ guesthouses or cheaper hotels targeted directly to LGBTQ people, showing that TAT is rather promoting big LGBTQ-friendly businesses than small LGBTQ-specific spaces. As such, the website promotes hotels like Sofitel, Le Méridien, Hyatt, and the Hype Luxury Boat Club. The *GoThaiBeFree* website states that "from luxurious superbrands, to intimate high-end villas, to designer boutiques, to experiential resorts, to unforgettable budget options, Thailand has something for every taste and budget." However, this budget seems to be between the expensive and very expensive range. This is seen in their promotional videos, which showed well-dressed people in suits and ties shopping in expensive shops, swimming

in rooftop pools, getting a massage in luxurious hotels, ordering room service, and drinking champagne by the beach. No backpackers or cheaper hotels were shown. The emphasis on luxury was not as present in the 2013 promotional video (figure 1), where people were dressed much more simply, with casual t-shirts and shorts. This also clearly shows that they are marketing to a very specific segment of the LGBTQ community, namely, the wealthy and good-looking LGBTQ people, thus reinforcing the fantasy of the ideal queer consumer.

As a result, many small queer-owned businesses are pushed off the market to make place for new luxurious development projects. Many small hotel owners expressed frustration, and several long-time tourists were disappointed that some businesses had to close their doors. In Bangkok, many new development projects have emerged on Rama IV Road since 2017, including luxury hotels, retail outlets, offices, and luxury condominiums, turning it into a finance and commerce hub catering to more high-end tourists. Some small-scale business owners operating in the Soi Twilight district, a popular area for queer nightlife, reported that in 2019, they had been informed that their leases were not going to be renewed, buildings would be destroyed, and some bars would be forced to relocate elsewhere. A luxury hotel and a shopping mall, which would be developed by Dusit Thani Group (a Thai multinational hospitality company) and Central Group (a conglomerate holding company whose CEO is among the richest families in Thailand), would replace the small-scale businesses along the Soi Twilight district (Kongcheep 2018). A similar pattern of removing small-scale LGBTQ businesses to make space for luxury hotels and condominiums is happening in Pattaya. *Pattaya Today* (2017) reports that "[t]he former red-light districts have either been bulldozed for redevelopment or have been toned down [...] Night-time districts such as Walking Street and Sunee Plaza are nowhere near as popular as they once were and both have vacant properties for rent and lease." The city now has five-star hotels, condominiums, water parks, and fine dining. Local LGBTQ businesses are, therefore, declining to give place to new industrial estates.

Promotion to the wealthier segment of the LGBTQ community goes in line with the latest National Tourism Development Plan (2017–2021), in which the Ministry of Tourism and Sports has shifted its focus from the quantity of tourists to the quality of tourists with higher incomes (Ministry of Tourism and Sports of Thailand 2017). In addition, TAT wants to downplay sex tourism and prostitution,

which was very popular among travelers, both queer and straight, for many decades. By downplaying overt displays of sexuality and promoting hotels that are LGBTQ-friendly rather than specifically queer, the materials minimize the difference between LGBTQ and heterosexual travelers. TAT now expects LGBTQ travelers to visit the same attractions as everyone else. As such, Thailand is positioning itself as an LGBTQ-related destination, downsizing LGBTQ-specific bars and businesses, where queer space is not the main component sought after by LGBTQ people, but a pre-requisite for other tourism features, be it sun, culture, or heritage. Indeed, most of what is promoted could be enjoyed by both LGBTQ and heterosexual travelers. It shows a clear difference from the previous decades, where LGBTQ people were coming to Thailand for LGBTQ-centric holidays when LGBTQ tourists were focusing on queer spaces.

This trend has been exacerbated during the Covid-19 pandemic. Luxury tourism was part of the government's strategy to revive post-Covid-19 tourism. To this end, the country started by reopening its borders specifically to more high-end travelers. Minister of Tourism and Sports Phiphat Ratchakitprakarn reported that "the government will initially allow a small number of arrivals, such as some business executives and medical tourists. It is also working with the travel industry to identify and invite individuals in target demographics, which will probably include previous visitors to luxury resorts" (Chuwiruch 2020).

However, it needs to be clarified how such a policy will help small-scale and LGBTQ-owned businesses. The United Nations's (2020) *Social Impact Assessment of Covid-19 in Thailand* noted that LGBTQ people were at an increased risk due to Covid-19 measures, with the main impact being the job loss since many people of this community work in industries most affected by the virus. The Stranger Bar, one of the most famous LGBTQ bars in Bangkok, had to launch a *GoFundMe* to stay in business, as it received no financial support from the government. Similarly, in Pattaya, several LGBTQ bars and restaurants have closed for good. Some of the most popular bars in the Boyztown district had to open only on Fridays and Saturdays due to the plummeting number of customers. Moreover, many workers in these bars could not benefit from the government's emergency aid because they operate in the informal economy.

There is, therefore, a strange dichotomy between the growing promotion to LGBTQ tourists by TAT and an increasing closure of

LGBTQ tourist businesses. Many LGBTQ businesses do not have the financial capacity to compete against economic giants promoted on the *GoThaiBeFree* website. It seems that the government does not mind washing away local LGBTQ businesses as long as large LGBTQ-friendly businesses are present to avoid losing this niche market to neighboring countries. It shows that bringing tourists to the country is the most important factor for TAT, not the well-being of small-scale local entrepreneurs. When LGBTQ businesses were profitable to the elite, they were undisturbed. It was when an opportunity for more profits opened that LGBTQ businesses became endangered.

Closing LGBTQ businesses could have negative consequences not only for tourism but also for local LGBTQ workers. The International Labor Organization (ILO) report *Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation in Thailand* highlighted that many LGBTQ Thais face discrimination and stigma in the workplace (Suriyasarn 2014). There are barriers in recruitment, fewer prospects for job advancement, sometimes hostile working environments, and a greater risk of being unfairly laid off. The ILO report also stressed that most transgender people are left with stereotypical jobs in the informal sector, especially in the entertainment industry or as sex workers. Therefore, by tossing aside these small-scale queer businesses, the government could be removing an important source of employment for LGBTQ people. As such, the way LGBTQ tourism was promoted in recent years has ended up being detrimental to local LGBTQ workers.

## Conclusion: Who Loses? Who Benefits?

> I come from quite a small village in Thailand's countryside. I always knew that I liked men. So I decided to move to Bangkok some 20–30 years ago. I started working as a bartender at one of Bangkok's famous gay bars that was catering mostly to Western tourists. I've seen so much there… that's when my gay life really opened up (personal communication 2019).

This story shows the benefits that an LGBTQ tourist space can have on the local LGBTQ population, especially in a country where LGBTQ issues were not, at the time, a public subject of discussion. For many years, the development of LGBTQ tourism in Thailand was somewhat beneficial for small owners and workers. They were able to do business quite freely, provided they paid bribes.

However, the main objective of LGBTQ tourism development in Thailand has never been the well-being of local communities. As such, these stakeholders were never consulted for the promulgation of LGBTQ tourism policies. Indeed, the decision whether or not to promote LGBTQ tourism—to whom and how—has been influenced by economic and/or political agendas benefiting those already in power rather than showing any real concern for LGBTQ people. For decades, LGBTQ tourism was instrumentalized by political and economic groups to generate more money for the state and the economic elite, or as a way to gain more legitimacy. In the 1980s, LGBTQ tourism was tolerated underground because of the money that it was generating for the police through a system of bribery. Later on, LGBTQ tourism was targeted to promote a conservative political agenda by the Thaksin government in 2001, which appealed to the rural masses. It was tolerated again in 2007 to provide further legitimacy to a military government that had not been democratically elected. LGBTQ tourism finally started to be officially promoted by TAT in 2013, when the government realized this market's economic potential and started to face competition from neighboring countries that were rapidly developing their destinations for the LGBTQ market.

However, TAT has recently begun to promote a luxurious form of tourism for this niche market, perceived as a wealthier demographic (dual income, no kids) with a consumeristic lifestyle. As such, promotions to this community mostly showcase high-end hotels and luxury experiences. This shows that the promotion of LGBTQ tourism is not as much a tool to help the local LGBTQ community as it is about economic and political benefits. As shown by the cases of Pattaya and Soi Twilight in Bangkok, many small-scale businesses are forced out to make space for high-end development and luxury resorts, further concentrating the profit in the hands of the elite. The promotion of LGBTQ tourism is beneficial to the country in the sense that it gives Thailand a more liberal image regarding LGBTQ rights while increasing its tourism income. Promoting luxurious holidays for LGBTQ people also serves to veer the image of Thailand away from an LGBTQ-centric destination known for its sex industry. All of this is a perfect outcome for the Thai government and the elite: smaller, locally-owned queer businesses are disappearing to expand the market controlled by the economic elite, while the government keeps its destination popular among LGBTQ tourists.

In the end, the promotion and policies surrounding LGBTQ tourism in Thailand are not a sign of social progress per se. Rather, it is developing within the lines of capitalism, economic gains, and a political agenda. The findings of this research go in the same line with Hartal's (2018) case study of queer tourism in Tel-Aviv, showing the similarities in how those in power exploit LGBTQ tourism for their own benefit. When queer businesses are profitable to the elite, they remain undisturbed. It is when the opportunity for more profit surges that LGBTQ businesses become endangered, putting LGBTQ establishments at the mercy of the elite's interests. It shows how LGBTQ tourism has been and still is used by those in power to organize who controls the development of queer tourism space and who decides who has access to it. A wealthy LGBTQ foreigner might enjoy this opportunity to travel openly to Thailand, but for the local LGBTQ person, whose voice is rarely heard, the outcome is not quite as beneficial.❁

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# How Preserving Biodiversity Mitigates the Impacts of Small-scale Land Grab on Livelihoods and Agricultural Production in Central Java

LOUIS TANGUAY

ABSTRACT. Large-scale land grabbing has had much attention in the literature in recent years, leaving little room for research on small-scale land grabbing and its impacts. Notably, because of the varied contexts in which these small-scale land grabs have happened, few studies have focused on the different mitigation strategies that can either be adopted by communities or are simply inherent in rural communities. This article contributes to filling this gap by presenting a case of small-scale land grab in the highlands of Central Java, and by using a landscape approach within the framework of ecoagriculture. First, the community of Soko Kembang hamlet and the surrounding landscape, located in the subdistrict of Petungkriyono, district of Pekalongan, are described, as well as their multifaceted dynamics. Second, it is shown that the drawbacks in the community brought about by a land grab in 2013, where all rice fields were forcibly sold for a low price to the state electricity enterprise, are somewhat compensated by the benefits associated with a local biodiversity conservation project. More precisely, the agroforestry systems promoted within this project are sustained harmoniously with the natural environment and its primate populations, while being directly beneficial to the community. Thus, although this mitigation strategy has not been adopted directly in response to the rice fields grab, this study shows how complex socio-ecological systems can help enhance the resilience of rural communities in the face of social disturbances. And it also shows how an analysis based on a landscape approach, more precisely within the framework of ecoagriculture in this very case, can shed some light on such complex systems.

KEYWORDS. land grabbing · socio-ecological landscapes · mitigation strategies · biodiversity conservation · dynamic resilience · Central Java

## Introduction

Land grabbing has been extensively covered in the literature, as processes of national and transnational land acquisitions and transactions are now happening at a greater scale than ever, a reality

often referred to as "global land grabbing" (Vermeulen and Cotula 2010; Borras and Franco 2012; Edelman 2013; Messerli et al. 2013, 2014). Apart from the mining sector, the majority of land grabbing cases occurring around the world is linked to the agro-food sector where croplands, forests, or grasslands are being acquired mainly for the production of export crops, biofuels, or timber (Borras and Franco 2012; Messerli et al. 2014). Most of the time, reported land grabs are located in the tropics, with studies often focusing on large-scale land grabs and presenting cases as quantified problems rather than focusing on the social impacts and their implications (Edelman 2013; Messerli et al. 2014; Zoomers et al. 2017). Still, the importance of considering and proposing solutions to alleviate such negative social impacts is generally recognized (Daniel and Mittal 2009; De Schutter 2011). But lesser importance is given to small-scale land grabs, or at the very least to the local impacts of larger-scale land acquisitions (Edelman 2013). And yet, studying social impacts on a local scale is the best way to understand how such transactions can affect local communities, and through which means the associated negative impacts can be mitigated, at least to some extent. Hence, in this article, a case of small-scale land grab is presented, and its impacts described. The objective of the article is to present the mitigation strategies that were observed in the community submitted to this land grab, with a focus on the surrounding natural, agricultural, and socioeconomic contexts.

The term "land grabbing," being a "catch-all phrase" as pointed out by Borras and Franco (2012), can incorporate different phenomena involving different parties, and it may even be perceived as a result of land schemes developed by the state or other entities (Borras and Franco 2012; McCarthy et al. 2012; Semedi and Bakker 2014). Given the broad context under which land grabs can be described, it is relevant to provide a more precise definition for the purpose of this article. Thus, in this publication, "land grabbing" will refer to a context where powerful entities or parties exert some sort of coercive pressure on less powerful parties or individuals in order to gain access to or obtain these individuals' lands without their full consent. It must be noted that the local smallholders' perspective is privileged here and that the more legalistic definition of land grabbing is not within this paper's scope.

Many studies that focus on small-scale land acquisitions, or on the local impacts of larger-scale acquisitions, report that one of the main impacts of land grabbing is the weakening of food security, which is

partly a result of the modification of agricultural production activities (Daniel and Mittal 2009; Shete and Rutten 2015; Marks et al. 2015; Friis and Nielsen 2016). Agricultural lands will often be planted with cash crops and export crops rather than food crops, threatening the food security and livelihoods of local communities. Several ways for mitigating such negative impacts have been reported in the literature (e.g., Qian 2015; Schoneveld 2017; Zoomers and Otsuki 2017). Many mitigation strategies are proposed by either governments or foreign investors to the farmers whose lands have been grabbed. And although in some cases these compensations can genuinely help farmers ensure their well-being, it is not always so. In many cases, compensations are either insufficient or even nonexistent. As have been largely observed in Indonesia, especially on the outer islands, and even more so since the beginning of the palm oil boom (McCarthy et al. 2012; Gellert 2015). Losing one's land, even though it might be part of the state spatial planning processes, has a particular impact on traditional landowners whose livelihoods are rooted in their lands. However, whether these land acquisitions are perceived as "grabs" by local smallholders tend to vary with the benefits they receive from these transactions and their own perception of fairness (McCarthy et al. 2012; Semedi and Bakker 2014).

Responses "from below," as reported by Hall et al. (2015) to illustrate how farmers or local governments respond to land grabs, are rather diverse. They can go from powerful social mobilizations with the sole purpose of disconnecting a given community from the liberal market, to demands for a greater incorporation into agri-food value chains. An interesting avenue, which is less explored in the literature as a potential mitigation strategy, is the possibility for a community to evolve and become dynamically resilient with and within its surrounding environment. Such resilience could allow a community to maintain its livelihoods when faced with disturbances instead of adopting strategies that would force its inhabitants out of their current customs. One way for communities to achieve this is by taking advantage of new opportunities in the surrounding environment while ensuring that the fundamental functions of the landscapes are maintained, which corresponds precisely to the definition of dynamic resilience (Young 2010; Messerli et al. 2013). McNeely and Scherr (2001), as well as Buck et al. (2006), have argued that in any given rural landscape where natural attributes are present, such as is often the case in most tropical landscapes dominated by small agricultural communities, pursuing

multiple objectives jointly might be a more efficient management strategy than treating the landscape's subsystems separately. The objectives brought about by these authors were presented within the framework of the ecoagriculture approach, and they focus on agricultural productivity, biodiversity conservation, and local livelihoods. Thus, such an approach, based on the study of socio-ecological systems, can provide an understanding of the different dynamics that might help alleviate the impacts of land grabbing in a given landscape (Messerli et al. 2013; Hunsberger et al. 2017).

This article presents a case where mitigation of the impacts of a small-scale land grab results from the important dynamic resilience observed in the surrounding socio-ecological landscape. Such mitigation was possible through a local, collaborative effort between a former hunter from the local community and two Javanese researchers with a common purpose: preserving the local biodiversity. The case presented here was first studied in a broader research project focusing on multiple landscapes in the highlands of Central Java. But given the unique context encountered, it is being described here as a separate case.

## Study Site and Methods

The research was carried out in the Dieng Mountains, north of the Dieng Plateau, Central Java. The forests covering these mountains form one of the greatest remnant forested area in Central Java, and they arrive second in importance in terms of biodiversity in the province after Mount Slamet (Nijman and van Balen 1998; Widhiono 2009a, 2009b; Setiawan et al. 2010, 2012). The area was initially protected by the Dutch as a water reservoir for the cities on the north coast (Pujo Semedi, pers. comm., July 2014). But nowadays, none of these forests are part of an official protected area, and they are all owned by the government and managed by the Perusahaan Umum Kehutanan Negara, or Perum Perhutani for short, locally called Perhutani, the state forest enterprise (Whitten et al. 1996; Coad et al. 2015; UNEP-WCMC 2016a, 2016b).

In July and August of 2014, and from March to June of 2015, landscape evaluations were undertaken as part of a larger research project (see Tanguay 2018). The study was carried out in the subdistrict of Petungkriyono, district of Pekalongan, which was chosen because contacts with local communities had already been established by Javanese researchers (figure 1). This subdistrict is in the western part of

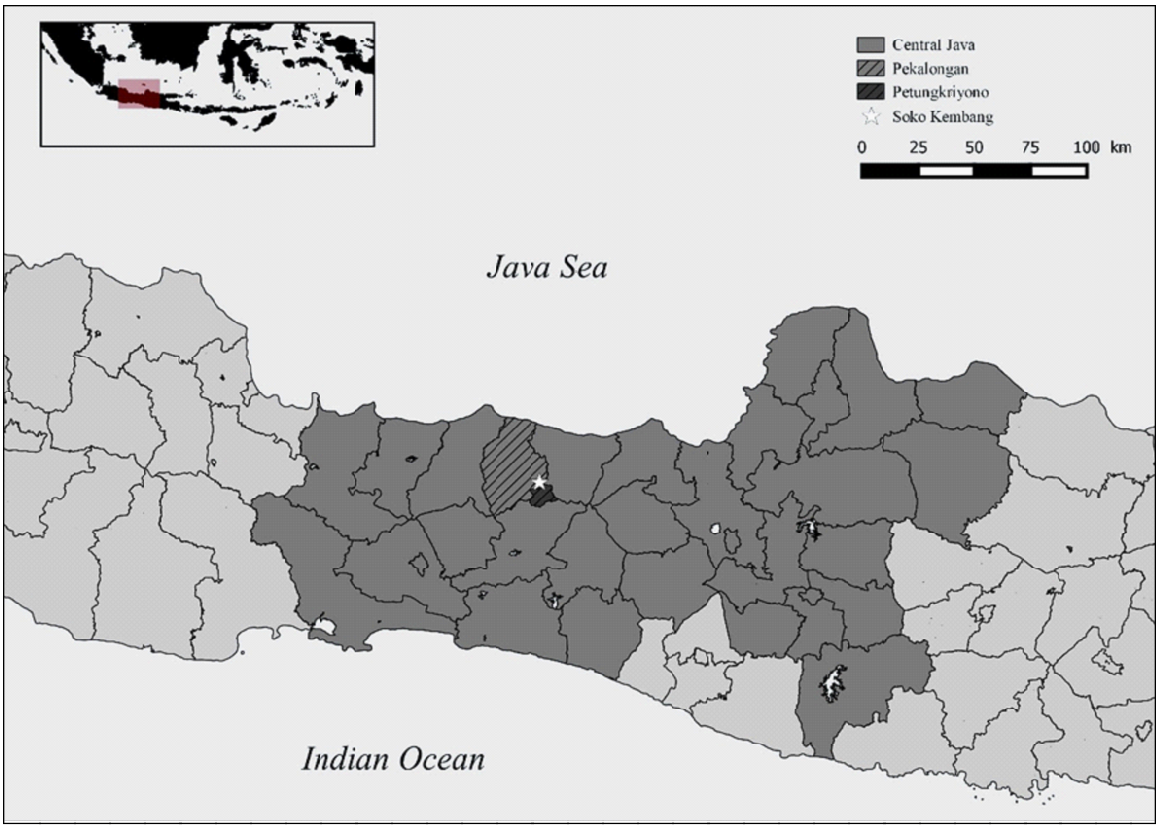


FIGURE 1. Soko Kembang hamlet, subdistrict of Petungkriyono, Pekalongan district, Central Java. (Tanguay 2018)

the Dieng Mountains, between 500 and 2,100 meters above sea level, and it covers an area of 7,358.5 hectares, including 5,190 hectares of forests, and 2,003.6 hectares of agricultural or private agroforest lands (Hamintoko et al. 2014; BPS Kabupaten Pekalongan 2015, 2016).

The main objective of the research project in Petungkriyono was to study how local communities, their agricultural systems, and the surrounding forests interact while analyzing the benefits and inconveniences that each entity can bring to each other. This article focuses on only one of the studied landscapes. This landscape lies in the Welo River valley at the northern edge of the subdistrict. It is in Kayu Puring village, covering only one hamlet named Soko Kembang (figure 1). This hamlet is surrounded by natural and seminatural forests where coffee is harvested and where most daily activities take place. Seminatural forests refer here to forests with many natural attributes but which include some attributes managed by humans, such as shadow crops. Rice fields (*sawah*) are in the vicinity of the hamlet and cover a rather small portion of the landscape (figure 2). Some very sparse private agroforests are also present, but their presence is insignificant when compared to other areas of the subdistrict. And as was discovered during fieldwork, the community of Soko Kembang had suffered the impacts of land grabbing one year before the research project started. For this article, the objective is to analyze how the livelihoods and agricultural production of the community were affected by this land grab, and what processes or strategies helped the community to mitigate the negative effects. In the present case, the land transaction that occurred in Soko Kembang in 2013 is described as a land grab because it was generally perceived as such by the inhabitants of the community who were subjected to it.

Most of the data were gathered through unstructured interviews with farmers from Soko Kembang, originally met for the abovementioned prior larger research project. Some interviews were also had with several researchers from Gadjah Mada University (UGM) in Yogyakarta. Other experts and government officials were met for the same purpose. This study relied on forty-one interviewees, including five who were met regularly and were considered key respondents. Respondents were either met randomly in the fields and hamlet, or they were sometimes chosen because their production activities were relevant in completing or complementing some of the data already acquired. This was not to gather a representative sample of respondents, but rather to collect information from many knowledgeable people

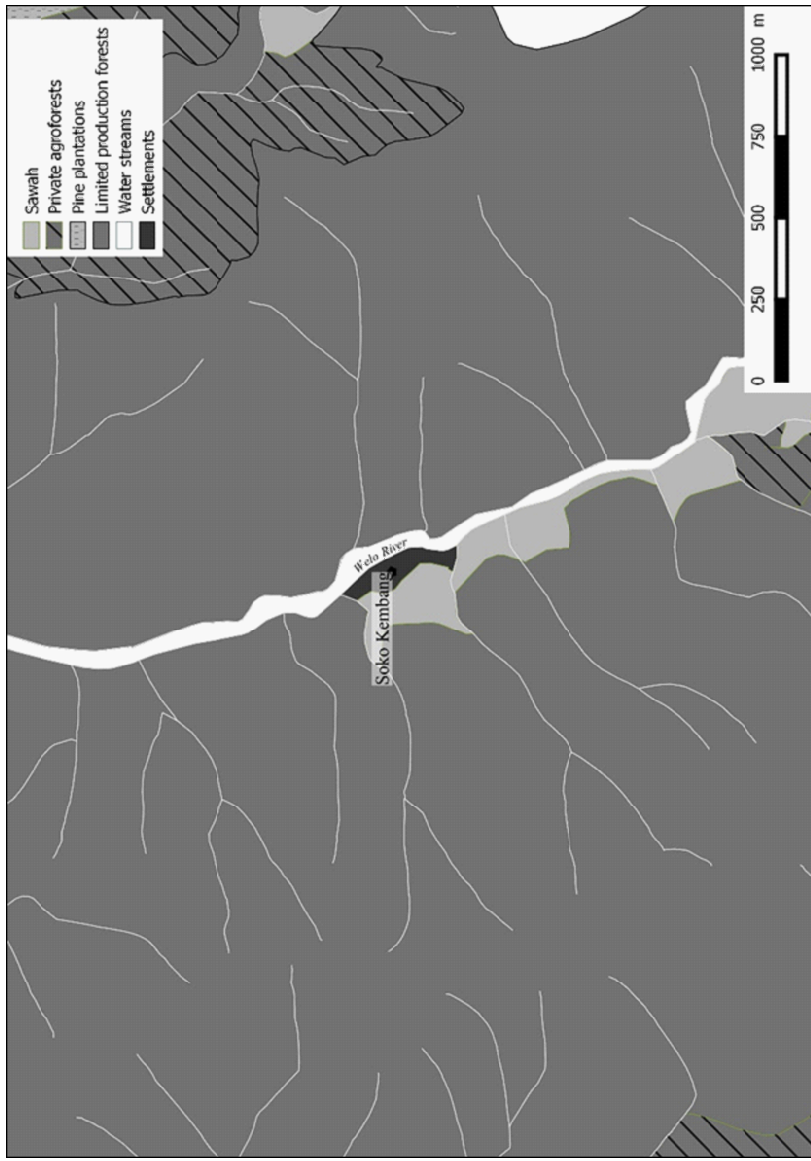


FIGURE 2. The landscape around Soko Kembang hamlet. (Tanguay 2018, PPIK 2015)

who could provide general information on the whole hamlet or landscape as well as share their personal circumstance and attributes. Interviews were completed by the main researcher with the help of a Javanese counterpart and addressed different subjects ranging from social to economic and environmental aspects of the landscape and community. These themes were derived and adapted from De Koninck et al. (1977) and Buck et al. (2006). Local documents and statistics were also collected from the village head office and from the district statistical office in Pekalongan City. Perhutani maps indicating forest lots were obtained from different sources, and land use and geographical shapefiles were obtained from the GIS service center (Pusat Pelayanan Informasi Kebumian, PPIK) in UGM.

Visual assessments of the environment, including vegetation structure, and soil quality and water quality evaluations, were carried out in agricultural and agroforestry systems in order to estimate the impact of these systems on the natural environment. Vegetation structure was assessed by estimating the canopy closure and canopy cover. The first one was evaluated with the help of a densiometer while the second one was assessed by dividing the canopy into six strata inspired by Simons et al. (2006) and Muhamad et al. (2013), and by estimating the percent cover of each stratum with percentage ranges proposed by Daubenmire (1959). Soil quality was assessed with the help of nine visual indicators proposed by Shepherd (2000), Nicholls et al. (2004), and McGarry (2006), while water quality and water channel quality were evaluated with the help of seventeen indicators described by Ball (1982), USDA (1998), Barbour et al. (1999), Bjorkland et al. (2001), and CWT (2011). For length reasons, methods about these visual assessments will not be further discussed here, but more information can be found in the publications mentioned above, or in Tanguay (2018).

These visual assessments provided a more complete picture of Soko Kembang's surrounding landscape, complementing, validating, or adding new information to the data obtained from the interviews. The combination of both sets of data was thus necessary to understand the greater dynamics within the studied landscape. Hence, all data was compiled and analyzed using a landscape approach and within the framework proposed by ecoagriculture proponents, which allows us to integrate information coming from many different disciplines. Indeed, a landscape approach, or landscape perspective, allows us to focus the analysis of a given system on a broader scale than most usual livelihoods

or agro-schemes indicators by incorporating the many different aspects of a landscape and its interactions into a coherent whole (Tscharntke et al. 2005; Buck et al. 2006). The ecoagriculture approach, which is a more specific approach using a landscape perspective, was described by McNeely and Scherr (2001) as a way to recognize the interdependence between the economic, social, and ecological spheres (McNeely and Scherr 2001; Buck et al. 2004; Scherr and McNeely 2008). This approach promotes the merging of agricultural development, biodiversity conservation, and social development objectives, allowing farmers to fulfill their agricultural production needs and maintain or increase their well-being without negatively impacting natural ecosystems. These latter would in turn ensure the sustainability of agricultural production on a landscape scale as a result of the fundamental ecosystem services that they provide (Brussaard et al. 2010).

Thus, the data obtained during interviews, as well as from visual assessments of the environment, were analyzed within the ecoagriculture objectives. The three main objectives established by McNeely and Scherr (2001) were used as guidelines, namely: ensure profitable agricultural development, maintain or improve community's well-being, and ensure biodiversity conservation. A fourth objective concerns the existence of adequate institutions to support ecoagriculture initiatives. This objective, proposed by Buck et al. (2006) in the landscape monitoring and evaluation framework, was also considered. However, for the purpose of this article, only the results obtained for the first two objectives will be presented as the other objectives were less affected by the impacts of land grabbing in Soko Kembang. For each objective, several criteria were established, and they were measured during fieldwork with the help of several indicators. Most criteria were derived from those suggested by Buck et al. (2006), but they were modified and adapted to the study site. Criteria that were irrelevant for the study site were eliminated, some that were lacking were added, and others were rephrased to better depict the reality of Soko Kembang.

## SOKO KEMBANG AND THE SURROUNDING LANDSCAPE

This section describes Soko Kembang hamlet and the different social and natural attributes that were observed in the surrounding landscape during fieldwork. Unless stated otherwise, all the descriptions that follow are based on the data acquired during fieldwork, either through interviews, visual assessments of the environment, statistics, or map

analysis. For a more detailed depiction of Petungkriyono landscapes, see Tanguay (2018).

## Forest Categories and Governance

The subdistrict of Petungkriyono lies in a densely forested region, as mentioned above, and the landscape around Soko Kembang hamlet illustrates this fact perfectly. This landscape's forests surround all agricultural lands and infrastructure, and they are divided into two categories: limited production forests and production forests. Natural and semi-natural ecosystems constitute limited production forests. Forest preservation is locally believed to be one of the objectives of such a category, as Perhutani employees called *mandor,* in theory, visit these forests for surveillance and rehabilitation programs. But no such program has been undertaken in Petungkriyono since the late 1980s, and the conservation status of these forests is weaker in the country since the Perhutani is mainly concerned with the profitability of production forests, not the preservation of their natural attributes. Inhabitants of the subdistrict have been granted the right to access these limited production forests, but natural resources cannot be harvested nor used, once again theoretically. Production forests of the entire subdistrict account for around 2,000 hectares, and they are planted with pine trees managed by the Perhutani for the benefit of the state. Pine trees are cultivated for their resin and used in the making of many transformed products. Income obtained from the marketization of this resin is mainly beneficial for the state and the Perhutani, although local communities can benefit from this activity to some extent, as described below.

Until the end of the twentieth century, the Perhutani had full authority on the government's lands. But starting in 2002, and as a result of the regional autonomy promoted by the national government, a new program was established to allow a shared governance of forests between the Perhutani and local communities. This program, called *Pengelolaan Hutan Bersama Masyarakat* (PHBM, Forest Management in Collaboration with Communities), was a solution brought about by the government to resolve the numerous conflicts that had defined most relationships between the Perhutani and communities living around state-owned forests (Julmansyah 2007; McCarthy and Warren 2009; Maryudi 2011). The PHBM was based on ten founding principles (see LPF 2007) which all highlight the same fact. That is, the Perhutani was trying to be a collaborative, positive force for the population.

In January of 2004, a *Lembaga Masyarakat Desa Hutan* (LMDH, Community Institution for Forest Villages) was created in Petungkriyono by several members of seven villages, and in collaboration with the Perhutani. One LMDH head was elected in each village by LMDH members, with the head office for the subdistrict being established in Tlogo Pakis village. Up to this day, the LMDH's mandate is precisely to implement the PHBM program. The LMDH's role is to help and improve communication and understanding between local communities and the Perhutani. The organization also has the responsibility to protect the forest and monitor all activities related to it. However, even though the LMDH's head in Tlogo Pakis seems convinced that the organization, being a community institution, maintains good relationships with the people, most farmers interviewed do not agree. Most think that the main purpose of the LMDH is to ensure the management of plantation forests for the Perhutani, which significantly narrows the original objectives of the PHBM. Worse, local communal initiatives that prove economically profitable can be seized by the Perhutani through the LMDH, if that initiative happens to be on state-owned land. And whether the Perhutani manages to exert control over these initiatives or not seems to depend solely on the goodwill of the LMDH's local heads. These kinds of situation did not improve the relationships between communities, the LMDH, and the Perhutani. Fear and suspicion persisted between these different actors at the time of fieldwork, as was the case before the PHBM program was initiated.

These defective relationships left room for different situations that vary from one village to another. In Tlogo Pakis village, where the head office of the LMDH is located, the organization is rather active, and as a result, the inhabitants of this village feel less responsible towards the forest as they consider them LMDH's and the Perhutani's domain. On the contrary, in Kayu Puring village, where Soko Kembang hamlet is located, the LMDH is, in essence, idle. Some respondents were not even aware of its existence in their own village at the time of fieldwork. Therefore, Soko Kembang's inhabitants feel much closer to the forest, and much more responsible for its protection, stating that it is their duty to care for it. These are merely generalizations, but explaining these relationships in more detail would go beyond the scope of the present article. More details can be found concerning these relationships in Tanguay (2018). Based on the observations made in Petungkriyono, the Perhutani still seems to be the only authority able to influence state-

owned forests' management plans, except for the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. And the communities' influence on these forests is still very limited, even with the establishment of the PHBM program. Based on one key respondent, it would also be in the enterprise's power to convert limited production forests into production forests, at the risk of compromising the livelihoods of the people living in the area, as well as the remnant natural ecosystems within these forests.

## Forest Use and Conservation

Officially, the only resource that local communities can extract from forests is pine resin. This labor is non-mandatory for the villagers, even though a certain pressure is put on the village's head to make sure that plantation work is promoted in the communities, for instance by presenting production targets. In the entire subdistrict, around 300 farmers are working in plantations to harvest pine resin. But this number is decreasing as the young prefer to seek employment elsewhere, judging that the remuneration for harvesting resin is too small. One gets IDR 3,500 given per kilogram of resin harvested.

Even though the use of other resources on state-owned lands is theoretically forbidden, a memorandum of understanding has been established between local communities and the Perhutani to guide and monitor the communities' activities in state-owned forests. It is thus possible for farmers to grow crops in these forests in exchange for IDR 10,000 per year and per parcel of land, with the size of these parcels being highly variable. Consequently, the payment given to the Perhutani changes depending on the farmers' honesty. It has been reported that some farmers may use many forest parcels but declare only one. The understanding between the Perhutani and communities also requires each entity to share profits with the other. The Perhutani must share 5 percent of the profits obtained from transformed resin with the harvesters and the LMDH. In exchange, farmers must hand over a significant part of the profits they gain from selling products that grow on government lands. It is not clear how much of this memorandum of understanding has been negotiated and how much has been forced upon the communities. What is certain is that it is not similarly implemented in all villages. In Tlogo Pakis village where the LMDH is strong, the share of profits is strictly applied as described above. But in Kayu Puring village, only the first payment of IDR 10,000 is demanded

by the local LMDH head. Therefore, in this latter village, many respondents considered that it was highly beneficial to grow crops in state-owned forests since the payment demanded is lower than property taxes.

Even with the existence of a memorandum of understanding, it remains forbidden to cut down trees in state-owned forests. And most respondents restrain themselves from doing so, but not necessarily because of existing regulations. They are in fact aware of the risks of landslides associated with forest clearing, a constant natural threat in the region. Notwithstanding, rumors of illegal logging persist in the subdistrict, although they are muffled by fear of retribution from the Perhutani. Illegal logging by the employees of the Perhutani themselves might also have occurred, but once more these rumors are hard to verify. Apart from logwood, *rumput gajah* (elephant grass) is harvested and used for fodder by all farmers who possess livestock. This grass grows in pine plantations and in limited production forests where it spreads naturally, although some care can be provided for transplanting sprouts to optimize yield.

Most farmers of Soko Kembang also grow other products in state forests, primarily coffee. Soko Kembang coffee grows in limited production forests where it can be either grafted or reproduced naturally. This represents the community's main source of income coming from either agricultural or agroforestry activities. The return on investment is quite significant since almost no investment is needed to start growing coffee, and no chemicals nor any other external inputs are used in these systems. Coffee beans are mostly harvested unripe and are brought to the regional market of Doro, either by farmers or by a middleman. However, this practice differs for a small group of farmers who learned to harvest ripe beans instead of unripe ones, and to sell them locally, a knowledge transfer gained from a local organization.

This group of farmers learned their new knowledge from a local Javanese gibbon conservation project, which will be called the Soko Kembang conservation project in this article. This project was instituted by a former hunter from the hamlet who worked with two anonymous Javanese researchers—both independent from the present study—in order to protect the surrounding forests, as these latter are home to the greatest metapopulation of gibbons in Central Java. Javanese gibbons live in the surrounding limited production forests where shade coffee is grown. Although the organization's authority is rather limited and cannot ensure the gibbons' preservation per se in the face of governmental

decisions, it promotes respectful agroforestry practices and informs the community about the natural environment in Soko Kembang hamlet as well as elsewhere in the subdistrict. Hence, in exchange for the protection of local gibbon populations ensured by the community, the two researchers associated with the project provided some capacity-building activities. They researched agroforestry practices and taught the former hunter and other farmers how to better benefit from their agroforestry production, notably by preserving the natural equilibrium of the forests and by selecting red coffee beans to sell at a higher price. The former hunter, who now considers himself a protector of the forest, has since opened a small coffee shop along the road, a *warung kopi*. There, he brews and sells his own coffee, as well as several other farmers' coffee, directly to local tourists to make better profit. Many farmers of Soko Kembang are now aware of the importance of protecting the primate populations around them, and several of them joined the former hunter to help and actively protect the biodiversity of local forests to enhance the quality of habitats for primates. The activities of the Soko Kembang conservation project are being further developed. At the time of fieldwork, its members were actively working at bringing awareness of the natural environment into schools, and at supporting other ecotourism initiatives, which were booming in the subdistrict of Petungkriyono.

## Agriculture and the Rice Fields Grab

Apart from agroforestry activities, agricultural production is rather modest in Soko Kembang. No private agroforests nor significant vegetable fields are present around Soko Kembang. Only rice fields, locally known as *sawah*, are present. These are in the vicinity of the hamlet and of Welo River, and they are surrounded by limited production forests. This makes it almost impossible for any farmer of Soko Kembang, and of the subdistrict for that matter, to expand his production activities within the subdistrict itself. Indeed, all lands are already owned and used, either by other farmers or by the state. Very few farmers are landless, but for those in this situation, they are usually able to borrow some lands belonging to the village or to other farmers. However, no farmer seems to possess the land titles associated with their property, as these are too expensive to obtain.

Rice in Soko Kembang hamlet is mostly produced for self-consumption, as is the case in most of the subdistrict. Two rice crops are usually grown per year, with the help of irrigation systems that work

exclusively by gravity, through means of small dams, canals, and hoses. Most agricultural techniques were transmitted either as cultural heritage or through informal Javanese networks, which take many forms and allow farmers to share their experiences and knowledge. The workload is also slightly unbalanced in rice production systems as women tend to accomplish more tasks than men, while the workload is more fairly shared in agroforestry systems. Most seeds for rice production can be bought locally, but for the few who choose to grow their own vegetables, in home gardens for instance, seedlings must be bought in markets. Rice production requires significant amounts of fertilizers, both natural and chemical ones, as well as pesticides in order to grow successfully. It has thus a more negative impact on the natural environment when compared with shade coffee production systems. However, since *sawah* cover a relatively small area in the landscape, the environmental impact can only be assessed directly in the rice fields, as observed in soil visual assessments, while no impacts could be observed downstream of the fields in water visual assessments.

During fieldwork, rice fields in Soko Kembang were scarcely cultivated, which was due to a land grab that occurred in 2013. At that time, Soko Kembang's farmers had been pressured into selling their rice fields to the state electricity enterprise, *PT Perusahaan Listrik Negara* (PLN, State Electricity Company). And according to respondents, most farmers did so unwillingly. The PLN is planning to build a hydroelectric power plant near the hamlet and to install the necessary infrastructure in the actual rice fields, hence the grab. These fields were forcibly sold for IDR 65,000 per square meter, a much lower price than the market price which, in 2016, could go anywhere from IDR 90,000 per square meter to IDR 1 million per square meter in Pekalongan district (Mitula 2016). Even though some farmers sold their fields voluntarily for a quick monetary gain, which allowed some to invest in a new house or to buy other expensive goods, many felt forced to sell their lands because of social and governmental pressure. Indeed, according to one respondent, a local head informed farmers that they could either sell their lands willingly, or they could refuse to do so, but the PLN would build the power plant on their land regardless, and those who did not sell their lands initially would lose them without any compensation.

At the time of fieldwork, the power plant project was suspended because of territorial conflicts between the PLN and the Perhutani, as the PLN infrastructures would need to pass through the lands managed

by the Perhutani. Hence, Soko Kembang farmers can still cultivate their rice fields, although sooner or later they will have to stop, as many already did. Indeed, during the field research, many inhabitants of the hamlet were already buying rice in the regional markets instead of growing it as they felt that it was pointless to care for fields that they would eventually lose.

## Other Activities and State Support

Other economic activities are becoming increasingly important in the subdistrict, as is the case in the rest of Java. Livestock, especially cattle, represents one of the recent and more lucrative activity for Petungkriyono farmers. Although it requires a substantial initial investment, it provides an important security net after a few years of care. Indeed, cattle heads are fed with free resources—elephant grass and agricultural by-products—and can be sold at high prices in case of need. However, although increasingly popular in the subdistrict, livestock is somewhat rarer in Soko Kembang hamlet and does not represent a security net as important as in other hamlets or villages.

The short distance between Soko Kembang hamlet and the district capital, Pekalongan, allows many men and youngsters to work in the city as construction laborers, notably in textile factories or in government offices. In fact, more often than not, these other occupations represent the main source of income for local households. Other opportunities exist in the subdistrict, for instance in schools, in health centers, in government offices, or in the ecotourism industry which is booming in the region. Many inhabitants can now benefit from this latter sector by either working in newly developed ecotourism projects, selling handicrafts, or opening small shops called *warung* near ecotourism sites. These *warung* offer food, coffee, or other goods to the public. Thus, pluriactivity is the norm for Soko Kembang households. And this pluriactivity, together with improving health care, adequate nutrition and education, and generally improved infrastructure in the subdistrict, is responsible for the people's wealth in the hamlet, as well as in the entire subdistrict. Indeed, based on a three-level wealth scale used by the national government, Petungkriyono households fall between the middle and high wealth levels.

The main state support system, which also contributes to the well-being of Soko Kembang inhabitants, comes from the *Program Nasional Pemberdayaan Masyarakat Mandiri Perdesaan* (PNPM, National Program for Community Empowerment), and from the forestry extension

service. To obtain such support, farmer organizations must be created to submit applications to these services. But farmer organizations are generally only formed for this sole purpose and are either dissolved or ignored by farmers afterwards. Help used to be provided in three ways through the PNPM: as microcredit, as support for health and education, and as infrastructure improvement, which was the most appreciated kind of support at the time. However, the change of government in 2014 also engendered a change in national support programs. Support previously for the PNPM program started focusing on the *Pengembangan Penghidupan Berkelanjutan* (P2B, sustainable livelihoods approach) program. This latter program provides support exclusively under the form of microcredit, savings assistance, and workshops for the poor. A notable issue with the microcredit program is that only farmers who are part of a borrowing organization have access to the provided credit, while the others do not. Thus, in the entire village of Kayu Puring, only 20 percent of all households have had access to such credit during the first half of 2015, and this percentage was even lower in other villages.

The forestry extension service is the local office established by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. Support to the community is provided through the distribution of seedlings, demonstration fields, and workshops. Tree seedlings are rather commonly provided, notably for the acacia tree, as the state tries to promote agroforestry to increase the economic opportunities of rural communities. Seedlings can be provided to local heads or to farmer organizations, and, as opposed to microcredit, these are usually equally distributed among all farmers of a given hamlet. Demonstration fields, combined with workshops, are also quite commonly organized and allow farmers to learn about specific agroforestry production systems.

Support from the state also take several other forms which were less thoroughly researched but are worth a mention. Examples of such supports are: local health centers, *danah alokasi khusus,* which is a special kind of subsidy that can be accessed by village heads for specific development projects, or rice distribution through the Raskin program (World Bank 2012).

## LANDSCAPE EVALUATION THROUGH THE ECOAGRICULTURE APPROACH

The description of Soko Kembang community and of the surrounding landscape, provided in the preceding section, as well as all the

TABLE 1. Satisfaction of indicators and criteria associated with the objective of ensuring profitable agricultural development

| Criteria | Indicators | SK | S1 | S2 | S3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agricultural production systems satisfy food security and nutrition requirements of producers and consumers in the region | Total per capita and per household production of different products | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Percent of production used for local subsistence, local markets, and outside markets | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | Percent of income expended on food, fuel, and other needs | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| | Nutritional status | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | Criterion mean | 1.25 | 1 | 1.5 | 1.75 |
| Agricultural production systems are financially viable and can dynamically respond to economic and demographic changes | Aggregate value of agricultural output | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| | Agricultural profits | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | Returns to labor, capital, land, energy, water, germplasm, nutritional amendments, and pest and disease control inputs | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | Security of market linkages for products and services | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | Criterion mean | 1.75 | 1.25 | 1.5 | 2 |

corresponding data thereby summarized, are used in this section for a landscape analysis within the ecoagriculture framework. Data is thus classified here within the two ecoagriculture objectives relevant for this article: ensuring profitable agricultural development (agriculture objective); and maintaining or increasing the community's well-being

TABLE 1. (*continued*)

| Criteria | Indicators | SK | S1 | S2 | S3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agricultural production systems are resilient to natural and anthropogenic disturbances | Percent of production inputs that are locally derived | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| | Introduction of alternative agricultural techniques | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | Introduction of integrated pest management | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | Diversity of agricultural products at farm, community, and landscape scales | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Diversity and origin of agricultural products sold in the region | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| | Soil health | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | Animal/crop health and disease | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| | Criterion mean | 1.71 | 1.43 | 1.29 | 1.57 |
| Agrobiodiversity is optimally managed for current and future use | Conservation status of land races and crop wild relatives | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Diversity of varieties, land races, cultivars used on the farm | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Abundance of parasites, pests, and pathogens that diminish agricultural productivity | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| | Criterion mean | 1 | 1 | 0.67 | 0.67 |
| Objective mean | | 1.43 | 1.17 | 1.24 | 1.5 |
| Objective verdict | | P | P | P | G |

TABLE 2. Satisfaction of indicators and criteria associated with the objective of maintaining or increasing community well-being

| Criteria | Indicators | SK | S1 | S2 | S3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Households and communities are able to meet their basic needs while sustaining natural resources | Nutritional status | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | Availability and quality of housing | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| | Portion of households living in poverty | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | Presence of social safety nets | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Proportion of income spent on food, fuel, and other needs | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| | Diversity of income sources within communities | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Viability of non-agricultural economic activity | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Profitability of production activity | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | Criterion mean | 1.5 | 1.38 | 1.38 | 1.5 |

(livelihoods objective). Based on the acquired data, all indicators included within the framework were given a score of 0, 1, or 2, indicating respectively negative data, mixed data, and positive data for the objectives' satisfaction. Means were calculated for each criterion, and then for each of the two objectives presented here, illustrating their satisfaction level in the landscape. Hence, the objectives were considered either unsatisfied (U) if means were under 0.5, lightly satisfied (L) if means were between 0.5 and 0.99 inclusively, partially satisfied (P) if means were between 1 and 1.49, or greatly satisfied (G) if means were equal to or above 1.5.

TABLE 2. (*continued*)

| Criteria | Indicators | SK | S1 | S2 | S3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| The value of household and community assets increases | Level of public infrastructure | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Level of social services | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Returns to labor, capital, land, energy, water, germplasm, nutritional amendments, and pest and disease control inputs | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | Education levels of respondents and officers | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | Level of social capital | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | Extent of private forests, grasslands, and economically valuable plants | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Land value | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | Criterion mean | 1.14 | 1 | 1.29 | 1.43 |
| Households and communities have sustainable and equitable access to critical natural resource stocks and flows | Extent and strength of access rights to different economic and cultural groups | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Access to fields, forests, and wild products | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| | Fair chore distribution within households | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| | Access to agricultural inputs | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | Access to water | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | Criterion mean | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.6 | 1.6 |

The same exercise is also realized with three different hypothetical scenarios. These scenarios evaluate the same objectives for the same landscape, but by looking at the results if: (1) the Soko Kembang

TABLE 2. (*continued*)

| Criteria | Indicators | SK | S1 | S2 | S3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Local economies and livelihoods are resilient to external perturbations and to changes in human and non-human population dynamics | Degree of household income diversification | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | Degree of community economic diversification | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Land use plans and regulations | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Level of social capital | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| | Presence of social safety nets | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | Criterion mean | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 | 1.4 |
| Objective mean | | 1.41 | 1.35 | 1.42 | 1.48 |
| Objective verdict | | P | P | P | P |

conservation project had not been instituted (S1), (2) the Soko Kembang conservation project had not been instituted but rice fields had not been grabbed and farmers were still able to cultivate their own rice (S2), and (3), rice fields had not been grabbed and the conservation project had been instituted (S3). Tables 1 and 2 present the result for the landscape of Soko Kembang as observed during fieldwork (SK) as well as for these three scenarios.

## Discussion

Results presented within the ecoagriculture framework in the preceding section show that both the agriculture and the livelihoods objectives were partially satisfied in the landscape surrounding Soko Kembang. Many different landscape attributes contribute to this partial satisfaction, as described above, namely pluriactivity, traditional social capital, state support, shade coffee production, biodiversity conservation through a local organization, quality of infrastructure, and proximity of the provincial capital. Moreover, as noted by one of the key respondents, shade coffee production and the local conservation organization could

provide even further benefits to the community if more farmers were inclined to engage in the new associated economic activities, such as the production of higher quality coffee and ecotourism opportunities. Nonetheless, these activities still represent a significant benefit for the community. And overall, all these attributes contribute to the high dynamism of the community and to the associated high resilience of the landscape.

Several factors also prevent the landscape from reaching a greatly satisfactory status within these two objectives. Rice fields, which were forcedly sold to the PLN, were the only fields available for the community. And even though some respondents enjoyed the sudden monetary gain, food sovereignty has decreased in the hamlet since then. Farmers had to start buying rice instead of growing their own because they have no more fields to do so and cannot clear new ones as they are surrounded by state forests. Thus, the loss of rice fields led to a notable decrease in agricultural production and in the community's well-being. This is in line with the literature which, as seen above, reports decreases in food sovereignty as one of the major impacts of land grabbing for rural communities (Daniel and Mittal 2009; Shete and Rutten 2015; Marks et al. 2015; Friis and Nielsen 2016). Other factors that negatively impacted the satisfaction of the ecoagriculture objectives are the small diversity of agricultural or agroforestry products, the more feeble security nets when compared to other hamlets, as well as the instability of the state support system and of several economic institutions and activities. The institutional capacity surrounding the landscape was in fact the most significant weakness reported within the greater research project on which this article is based (Tanguay 2018). This underlines the importance of including governance systems within a landscape analysis, as argued by Buck et al. (2006).

The three scenarios proposed above show a slightly different picture for the studied landscape. Within both objectives, the satisfaction level would have been lower if the Soko Kembang conservation project was absent from the community (S1), while it would have been better off if rice fields had not been grabbed (S3). Indeed, on one hand, the presence of the conservation project allows for an improved productivity within production systems as a whole, a more profitable use of products, a better return on investment as a result of the shade coffee production and of improved coffee price, as well as more environmentally respectful production systems. On the other hand, the rice fields grab led to smaller diversity of production,

dependency on the market and hence more money spent for sustenance, and smaller land value per household. However, the decrease in rice production also led to less diseases in the production systems and a smaller need for chemical inputs, which are both beneficial for the satisfaction of the present objectives. If rice fields had not been grabbed, the agriculture objective in the landscape of Soko Kembang would still have been better off and considered greatly satisfied.

S2 shows how the landscape would have been analyzed if the Soko Kembang conservation project and the associated systems had not been adopted in the community, but if the rice fields had not been grabbed either. This scenario is of special interest because, when compared to the actual state of the landscape, it shows how the impact of rice fields on agriculture and livelihoods compares to the impacts of the Soko Kembang conservation project. Interestingly, the agriculture objective is better satisfied when only the conservation project is present, with a satisfaction level of 1.43, compared to a scenario where it is absent but rice fields have not been grabbed, which shows a satisfaction level of 1.24. This is mainly due to better marketization of shade coffee cultivated in the forests where gibbon populations thrive, to less diseases associated with these agroforestry systems, and to more environmentally respectful techniques. As for the livelihoods objective, the decrease in food sovereignty and in access to land is compensated by an increase in profitability of the production and in production systems, and techniques less harmful to the farmers' health. Thus, the actual state of the forest (SK in tables 1 and 2) and S2 come very close in terms of satisfaction for the livelihood objective, with 1.41 and 1.42 respectively. This shows that, for both objectives, the Soko Kembang conservation project can compensate or even improve on the drawbacks brought about by the rice fields grab. However, it is noteworthy to mention that conservation activities are not, by themselves, responsible for this compensation. Rather, the beneficial factors come from: the associated production systems resulting from traditional agroforestry systems improved and promoted by the Soko Kembang conservation project, the complex socio-ecological dynamics within the landscape, and education of the community through the expanding activities of the conservation project.

Differences in the satisfaction level of the objectives between the real state of the landscape and the different scenarios are rather small, but they are meaningful nonetheless. These small differences can be attributed to the complexity of the landscape as observed through a

landscape approach. As mentioned above, many different attributes contribute to the satisfaction of these objectives, thus the community of Soko Kembang have many ways of satisfying their social and agricultural needs. In a different context, for instance in a community more dependent on its production systems, differences in agricultural production and in the well-being of the community brought about by the recent land grab, as well as by the presence or absence of the conservation organization, could have been much greater. This illustrates once again how important dynamic resilience is for rural communities, and how a complex socio-ecological system can help sustain basic functions in the face of disturbances, as described by Young (2010) and Messerli et al. (2013).

This latter assessment also shows the strengths of a landscape approach for socio-ecological research. Indeed, a more focused research could have led to other conclusions and have analyzed the situation to be more critical than it really is. For instance, an approach based on agroecology, as novel as the concept is, would have focused solely on the dynamics within agricultural parcels (Altieri 2002), while providing little to no analysis of the surrounding socioeconomic context and of the community's mitigation strategies. On the other hand, an approach based solely on socioeconomic analysis of the households might have omitted the benefits brought about by the surrounding landscape. But here, a landscape approach allowed us to have a more appropriate perspective on the situation by highlighting the many different dynamics that influence diverse aspects of the system, and to understand that the recent land grab did not represent, after all, a catastrophic event for Soko Kembang households. This approach also allowed us to understand how focusing efforts on the preservation of the natural integrity of forests that surround Soko Kembang hamlet led to beneficial interactions, which provided benefits to both the community and their production activities. Finally, this shows how a well-balanced socio-ecological landscape can indeed improve the dynamic resilience of communities and landscapes in the face of social disturbances, as rightfully argued by McNeely and Scherr (2001), and Buck et al. (2006).

## Conclusion

This article presented the landscape located around the hamlet of Soko Kembang as a highly dynamic socio-ecological system. The many

dynamics that define this landscape and the local community were reviewed, with a focus on the impacts of a recent land grab that occurred in Soko Kembang where farmers were forced to sell their rice fields to the state electricity enterprise. The article highlighted the importance of agroforestry systems around the hamlet, of their preservation by a local conservation organization as well as their contribution to the well-being of the community. Using a modified version of the landscape monitoring and evaluation framework, as proposed within the ecoagriculture approach, the article showed that the negative impacts brought about by the loss of rice fields, in terms of agricultural production and livelihoods, were compensated by the creation of a local conservation organization. The latter was shown to work on the preservation of local Javanese gibbon populations by encouraging the preservation and good governance of agroforestry production systems where these primates thrive.

The case presented here is very specific to a small area within the subdistrict of Petungkriyono, and even though similar dynamics might exist elsewhere in the subdistrict, in the province or on the island, generalizations cannot be made easily. However, what this case does show is that production systems associated with certain conservation practices, and particularly in socio-ecological systems, can provide significant benefits to local communities and increase their resilience to environmental or social disturbances, as observed in Soko Kembang community which was subject to a recent land grab. Since these benefits are not directly derived from conservation practices but rather from associated production systems, similar benefits can probably be observed within other alternative agricultural systems, whether they exist for conservation purposes or other purposes. Marketable products, as well as products that come from integrated systems, less dependent on external inputs and which are better integrated with natural cycles, can assuredly enhance rural communities' livelihoods and agricultural profitability. Just as well-balanced, complex socio-ecological systems can help improve the resilience of the system's attributes in the face of disturbances. ❁

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# Survival and Atrocity: Remembering the Japanese Occupation of the Province of Aklan, Philippines, 1942–45

FRANCES ANTHEA R. REDISON

ABSTRACT. This article documents the local narratives of the Japanese occupation of Aklan from 1942–1945 through the use of primary (oral history) and secondary (Historical Data Papers [HDP]) sources. In 1951, President Elpidio Quirino issued an executive order that directed the Division Superintendent of Schools to gather collected histories, which produced the HDP. The World War II section of the HDP focused on the activities of the guerrilla resistance movement in Panay and the war atrocities by the Japanese on the civilian population. Similarly, these anecdotes were mentioned in the oral histories of the people interviewed for this study. Moreover, the newer accounts depict more personal experiences such as daily activities, food security, religious beliefs, the inconvenience of moving, and the informants' family responsibilities. Given the proximity from the war of the data gathering for the production of the HDP, it is evident that there is a strong anti-Japanese representation in the materials. This research has found that oral history interviews and the HDP are important complementary sources in retelling the local stories of World War II in the province of Aklan.

KEYWORDS. Aklan · Japanese occupation · postwar · Historical Data Papers · oral history

## Introduction

Although one of the most dramatic periods of Philippine history, the distant narrative of the Japanese occupation is starting to vanish from the memory of Filipinos. Despite not having the same level of attention in Philippine historiography given to the Philippine Revolution (Jose 2012, 185), the occupation years should still be recognized as one of the few collective memories that we have had as a nation. Since the start of the postwar period, commemorations of World War II have been celebrated annually all over the country. Still, our knowledge on the war focuses mostly on persons and events in Luzon. This limitation

leaves the accounts from non-Luzon provinces as mere mentions or absent in the national narrative. The lack of scholarly attention given to the stories of war from these localities create a disparity in historical writing as many of the communities look at their war experiences as less relevant and unimportant vis-à-vis the national politico-military chronicles.

The war brought traumatic experiences and important lessons, and documentation of these stories of survival, of daily life during a time of strife, are vital in our historical consciousness as a nation. One way to address this problem is to examine local histories and utilize multiple methods to make Philippine history writing more inclusive. The province of Aklan in the island of Panay has rich but untapped sources on the occupation years. The documentation on life during the war in Aklan has remained inadequate as collected stories lacked in-depth analysis or were treated as isolated experiences from other towns and provinces. This is evident in the number of undergraduate theses that focused on the war time years and books by war veterans that mentioned Aklan's experience in passing. Given this issue, this article aims to enrich the local narratives of the Japanese occupation of Aklan from 1942–45 through the use of primary (oral history) and secondary (Historical Data Papers [HDP]) sources. By reconstructing war narratives, this paper hopes to add more knowledge on and greater understanding of the community's war experience, including their strategies for providing for necessities and their perspective on war-time scarcity.

Following a discussion of this article's research questions, objects of study, and methodology is a section that provides a background on the war in Panay. From the data collected, the narratives of Aklan during the war are thematically divided into sections on daily life, evacuation, and atrocities. These sections highlight previously undocumented personal experiences of the war. The discussion focuses on the attitudes toward the Japanese based on the recollection of the respondents. By using oral history, this article acknowledges the subjectivity and selectivity of memories in the attempt to record the Japanese occupation years. Though the political and military aspects of the Japanese occupation was common in the sources, the oral history accounts provided insight into how the people survived and went about their everyday lives during the three years of war. After documenting the daily lives of the informants, their individual stories were weaved together to allow better insights in the collective experiences of the province. Their narratives complement secondary sources that also help give life to these narratives.

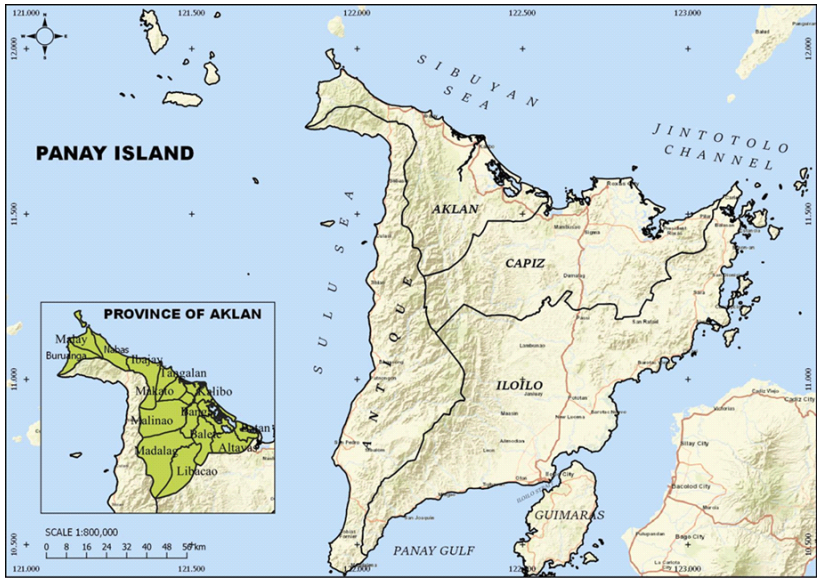



FIGURE 1. Map of Panay Island, Philippines showing the province of Aklan and its seventeen municipalities. *Source:* Map by Celdre Alpas Larot using Quantum Geographic Information System (QGIS).

## SITUATING THE LOCAL

Aklan was originally constituted as the third congressional district of the province of Capiz. On April 25, 1956, it became a separate province by virtue of Republic Act 1414 (An Act to Create the Province of Aklan). The province is situated in the northwestern part of Panay island, bordered by the Sibuyan Sea on the north, the province of Antique on the west, and the province of Capiz on the south and southwest (figure 1). It has seventeen municipalities, with 312 barrios (villages, now referred to as barangays) and a population of 176,625 in 1939 (Regalado and Franco 1973, 41; Philippines [Commonwealth] Commission of the Census1939, 81). The coast bordering the Visayan Sea is swampy (Mancenido 1971, 3) and the province mainly relies on agriculture and fisheries. Its plains are devoted primarily to rice cultivation, while a few of its rivers and streams are navigable by bamboo rafts and pump boats (Allied Forces South West Pacific Area Allied Geographical Section 1944, 13–15).

Existing literature suggests that accounts regarding the war follow a predominantly Manila-centric and politico-military perspective. Apilado (1999, 73) and Foronda (1991, 311), for instance, posit that there is a lack of understanding of the narratives of constituent towns and provinces. In order to understand the complexity of national history, Alfred McCoy and Ed de Jesus (1982, 3) urged scholars to move beyond the Manila-centric vision, and saw regional history as an analytical approach appropriate to an archipelagic nation like the Philippines. The war narratives of Aklan, for example, are often linked with its geographical setting, i.e., its swamps and thick mountains that became a refuge for the civilians, rice fields that sustained the food supply, several ports that served as landing sites, and rivers that became witnesses of executions. To reiterate, the history of the Japanese occupation of Aklan is understudied; my aim as an Akeanon is to contribute to the dearth of literature on the province's World War II history.

## Research Questions and Methodology

As previously mentioned, this study utilized oral interviews conducted in Aklan between April 13, 2017 until March 22, 2018 and the Japanese occupation of the Philippines section of the Historical Data Papers, which are written accounts collected in the early 1950s. As a native Akeanon, the language spoken by the informants is accessible to me and I did not need the help of translators. During the research process, this positionality shaped my interactions and relationship with the informants. My aim for this article is to make room for narratives that have not been recorded before to be part of written history. The article intends to document how the informants from Aklan remembered their war experiences and compare the content of the HDP with the oral history sources.

### Oral History

This study relies heavily on oral accounts in writing the history of the Japanese occupation. According to Ricardo Jose (2012), there is no central repository of war-related materials and many of the primary sources are either difficult to access or unavailable to researchers. Thus, literature on the war is based largely on memory (Jose 2012, 62). The Oral History Association defines oral history both as a field of study and a methodology that preserves and interprets the voices and

memories of people, communities, and participants in past events (Barber and Peniston-Bird 2009, 113). Social historians often use oral history with the aim of allowing the narratives of ordinary people to be part of written documents.

There are a number of studies that dwell on the collective experiences of the war, focusing mainly on those in Luzon. Sofia Logarta (1996) found that most of the women members of the underground resistance against the Japanese came from the peasantry. Based on her interviews, none of the women joined because of the influence of their husbands. In contrast, Vina Lanzona's *Amazons of the Huk Rebellion* (2009) uncovered the membership of women and described the importance of gender issues in the movement. Lanzona examined the political and personal factors behind women's membership in the anti-Japanese struggle and found that few women advanced to high positions, with the majority being relegated to traditional roles like housekeeping. Thelma Kintanar et al. (2006) deal with the situations and experiences of ordinary people as they lived from day to day. Their work was concerned with the social rather than the political aspects of the war. Using in-depth interviews and open-ended questionnaires, Kintanar et al. (2006) were able to analyze the collective experiences of people from different social backgrounds. Though the work claims to be comprehensive, the bulk of Kintanar et al.'s interviews and collected questionnaires were from Luzon; the study had no data from Western Visayas.

Through the oral history method, the studies above created a space for common folk, women, and marginalized groups who have been hidden from history to be represented. Moreover, the history of their lives can be written from their own perspective and in their own words. It serves as a democratic alternative to the dominant historical tradition and helps recover the voices of historically silent actors (Tosh 2010, 315–19; Gloria 2011, 28–29). This study is less concerned with the accuracy of the oral accounts, focusing instead on the way in which the informants recounted their personal experiences of the war. More importantly, it is necessary to retell the wartime experiences of survivors before the generation that experienced the war disappears (Constantino 1995, 1–2).

This study used in-depth exploratory and semi-structured interviews in Akeanon, the language spoken by the interviewees. I designed the interview to last from sixty to ninety minutes of conversation, employing participant observation and note-taking strategies. With the consent of

informants, interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. I met my informants through relatives and friends who facilitated our interviews. During the conduct of the research, the study documented the narratives of six Akeanon respondents (two males and four females): with three from Ibajay, and the other three from the towns of Malinao, Lezo, and Batan. The age of informants ranges from eighty-five to ninety-nine years old at the time they were interviewed.

## Profiles of Interviewees

Lourdes Igoy-Inac was a high school student from Malinao when the war broke out. As a teenager, she remembered stories about her friends and classmates who perished during the 1943 Japanese punitive drive. After the war, she married a member of the Philippine Scouts who survived the Death March. I interviewed Lourdes on December 26, 2017 and March 20, 2018. In the town of Batan, I was cordially welcomed in the home of Maria Padios-Urquiola on December 29, 2017. She was attending the mass of the Immaculate Conception when the news of the bombing of Pearl Harbor reached them. Their family evacuated early 1942, transferring from one barrio to another. They survived the war through farming and raising livestock. Maria lost her brother, a prelate who served in the United States Army Forces in the Far East (USAFFE) but died of illness at Camp O'Donnell in Tarlac.

In Ibajay, I visited the house of Luz Elinon in Barangay Maloco on December 27, 2017 and March 22, 2018. Born and raised in Brgy. Unat, Luz was nine years old when the Japanese occupied Panay in 1942. As the eldest child, Luz had to take care of her younger siblings as they evacuated their home to escape the Japanese. A few blocks away from Luz was the house of ninety-three-year-old Castora Salido who shared her experiences with me on December 27, 2017. Castora, who was seventeen years old during the war farmed their fields with her family in Maloco. They evacuated not far from their home when the Japanese mopping-up operations in Ibajay became frequent. During the duration of the war, she mentioned that food was abundant, and hunger was not a problem for their family.

I rode a motorcycle and crossed the Ibajay river on a bamboo raft to talk to Cenon Placio during my visits on April 13 and December 27, 2017, and March 22, 2018. Unable to walk without holding two long canes, Cenon, at the age of ninety-seven, lived in the interior barrio of Naile, Ibajay where he once served as the barrio captain. During the

three occasions that he was visited, I needed to write down my questions on a piece of paper because he had a hearing problem but was still able to read. It was difficult to converse properly, however; when he read questions about his experiences about the war, he would recite the names of his commander and occasionally answer in straight English. Unlike others who were forced by the circumstances, Cenon was proud that he signed up to liberate the country from the Japanese. During the war, he was assigned as a messenger in Pandan, Antique not far from his hometown of Ibajay. The resistance movement actively recruited men in the province of Aklan. Cenon shared, *"Kung di ka man mag-eakot hay dudahan ka. Intra lang ron."* (If you refused to join, they will be suspicious. It was better to join.)

In the town of Lezo, I met the ninety-nine-year-old Ramon Baldomero on December 26, 2017 while he was playing solitaire at the corner of a makeshift room inside his house. He could no longer hear properly, so whenever I asked a question, his daughter Remy relayed it to him loudly. He often retorted, *"Bungoe ako"* (I am deaf). My companions inside the room including his two grandchildren would burst into laughter as he would not answer the questions directly. Unintentionally, his responses to some questions became humorous especially when he shared stories about their experiences with the Japanese. My interview with him was one of the most memorable. When he joined the underground movement, he was around twenty-three years old. He was assigned in Cabatuan, Iloilo, *"Nag-abot ro Hapon riya sa Aklan . . . Nagbuhay sanda sa Kalibo. Nadestino man kami sa Malinao. Hay pagtakas nanda sa New Washington hay gin-ambusan namon. Sa ulihe hay nagpa-Iloilo sanda, idto man kami ag nagsukoe it inaway kanda."* (When the Japanese arrived in Aklan, they stayed in Kalibo for a long time. We were assigned in Malinao. When they [Japanese] transferred to Iloilo, we followed to fight them there). The pressure to join the guerillas was possibly caused by the overwhelming presence of the anti-resistance movement in the province. Ibajay was the headquarters of the 2nd military district where Cenon is a resident while Ramon who hailed from Lezo is a neighboring town of Malinao which was the stronghold of the 1st Military District.

The study recognized the potential discomforts and risks on the interviewees brought by recalling their memories of the war as some of them had experienced loss of loved ones and may have undergone psychological distress. It was made sure that at least one family member was present during the interview.

Malinao and Ibajay served as the headquarters for the 1st and 2nd Military Districts of the Aklan sector. After the surrender of Brig. Gen. Christie, the guerrillas were first organized in the town of Malinao. Ibajay, which belonged to the 2nd Military District, became the stronghold Japanese garrison in Aklan in the latter part of 1943 with reported 150 Japanese soldiers in September 1944. Many of the informants' recollections referred to the presence of garrisons and the 1943 punitive attacks of the Batsu Group of the Japanese Military Administration (JMA). Based on Manikan's (1977) map on "Enemy Punitive Drives" (July–December 1943), the mopping-up operations were part of the third phase of the Japanese campaign, which happened from October 15 to December 31, 1943. The town of Batan recorded massacres during the October mopping-up operations while the town of Lezo was identified as a commercial center during the war, where merchants all over Panay island came to trade.

Given that the respondents were aged eighty-five to ninety-nine years old, they heavily relied on distant memories. As argued by Jose (2012, 62), because the oral histories were written so close to the war, many of the stories were of common knowledge and had insufficient primary sources to use. As discussed earlier, the paper does not scrutinize their narratives as factual vis-à-vis the "official" history of the war. Rather, among the aims of this study is to document war survivors' recollections of the war.

## Historical Data Papers

In response to the need to supplement government records destroyed during the Japanese occupation, President Elpidio Quirino issued Executive Order (EO) 0486, entitled "Providing for the Collection and Compilation of Historical Data Regarding Barrios, Towns, Cities, and Provinces." The aim of the HDP was to regather the important documents on Philippine history and culture that were lost during the war. By compiling these materials again, it was hoped that the HDP would be "a source of inspirations and guidance for our future generations, as well as source materials for historians, investigators and researchers." The EO also encouraged all government agencies and private organizations who possess any pertinent historical data to join the national project. Quirino signed the document on December 7, 1951 and directed the Division Superintendent of Schools to put

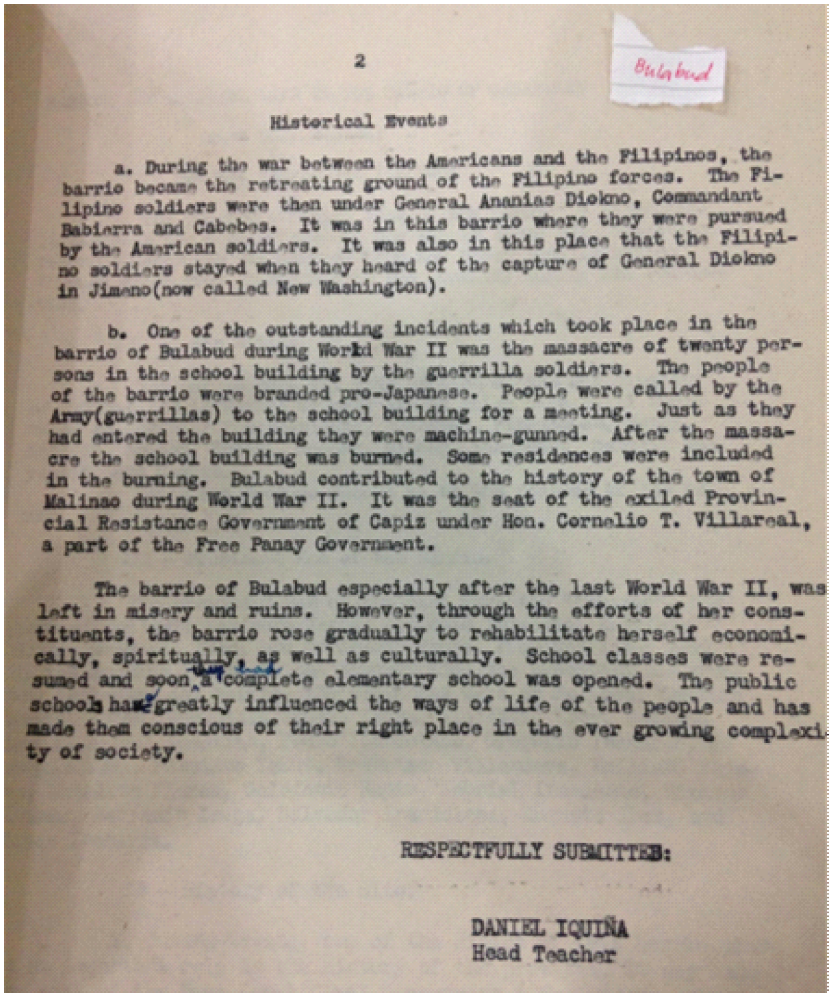
together what has come to be known as the Historical Data Papers or Provincial Histories.[1]

The Secretary of the Department of Education Cecilio Kapirig Putong thereafter issued General Memorandum No. 34, series of 1952 entrusting to all school officials and teachers the execution of the president's executive order (HDP Guide, Preface). The teachers were specifically entrusted to work on the data collection of HDP because there were public school teachers in every barrio. They were easily mobilized because they were from the communities and were directly accountable to their district supervisors.

There was a total of 105 compiled volumes, covering practically all the provinces of the Philippines except for Negros Occidental, Ilocos Sur, Sorsogon, Isabela, Cotabato Lanao, and some chartered cities (Philippine Social Science Council 1993, 81–82). The seventeen towns of Aklan are included in the four volumes on the province of Capiz, which they were still part of at the time. Among the 200 submissions on barrios, 146 had documented war experiences; only fifty-four barrios had no accounts.

The HDP is primarily based on documentary sources and oral interviews. Originally, the intention was to document materials from each barrio following an outline that was divided into three parts. The first section, "History," includes the bulk of the gathered data that contains the town or the barrio's official/popular name, territorial jurisdiction, date of establishment, original families, list of *tenientes* from earliest date, historical sites, important facts, incidents or events that took place during the Spanish, American, Japanese occupation, and the postwar years (figure 2). The HDP highlights the destruction of lives, property, and institutions during wars, especially in 1896–1900 (the Philippine Revolution) and 1941–45. It also documented the efforts toward rehabilitation and reconstruction after World War II. The outline lays out the periodization used for each locality. The teachers arranged their data based on the prescribed outline intended for the readers' perusal. The second section, "Folkways," chronicles customs on birth, baptism, courtship, marriage, death, burial, beliefs and superstitions, local games, amusements, native songs, puzzles, riddles, and proverbs. The last part, often with the least amount of details, provides references, documents, and authors who were from the community. Since the attempt to gather data stretches to almost

1. Office of the Philippine President. *Executive Order 486*. 1951.



2

Bulabud

Historical Events

a. During the war between the Americans and the Filipinos, the barrio became the retreating ground of the Filipino forces. The Filipino soldiers were then under General Ananias Diokno, Commandant Babierra and Cabebes. It was in this barrio where they were pursued by the American soldiers. It was also in this place that the Filipino soldiers stayed when they heard of the capture of General Diokno in Jimeno(now called New Washington).

b. One of the outstanding incidents which took place in the barrio of Bulabud during World War II was the massacre of twenty persons in the school building by the guerrilla soldiers. The people of the barrio were branded pro-Japanese. People were called by the Army(guerrillas) to the school building for a meeting. Just as they had entered the building they were machine-gunned. After the massacre the school building was burned. Some residences were included in the burning. Bulabud contributed to the history of the town of Malinao during World War II. It was the seat of the exiled Provincial Resistance Government of Capiz under Hon. Cornelio T. Villareal, a part of the Free Panay Government.

The barrio of Bulabud especially after the last World War II, was left in misery and ruins. However, through the efforts of her constituents, the barrio rose gradually to rehabilitate herself economically, spiritually, as well as culturally. School classes were resumed and soon a complete elementary school was opened. The public schools have greatly influenced the ways of life of the people and has made them conscious of their right place in the ever growing complexity of society.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

DANIEL IQUIÑA
Head Teacher

FIGURE 2. Photo of a sample account on the Japanese Occupation in barrio Bulabud, Malinao from the Historical Data Papers. Photo taken by author.

four centuries worth of history, the outline was not strictly followed. The teachers were also given a short span of time to collect data as they were required to submit their outputs before July 4, 1953, i.e., they had less than two years to complete their fieldwork.

According to R.B. Cruikshank (1973, 15–16), the main weaknesses of the HDP are the poor nature of the material and writing, and the inconsistency of the quality and quantity of the gathered materials. Based on the content of the HDP, most of the available information

FIGURE 3. Photo of the Historical Data Papers stored in the Restricted Section, seventh floor, National Library of the Philippines (NLP). Photo taken by Loradel Martinez of NLP.

used by the teachers were folk stories and legends and lacked reliable sources. This issue is understandable given the ambitiousness of HDP's goal of covering four hundred years of colonial history. The teachers who collected the data, he continued, did not have any background in historical methodology—they gathered the documents and conducted interviews only for the sake of compliance. Cruikshank's judgment is particularly right if one looks at the value of the HDP as documentation on general history, given the serious flaws therein regarding earlier historical periods, i.e., precolonial times, the era of Spanish colonization,

and the American occupation. On the other hand, as this paper argues, the data about the Japanese occupation should be given a different reading. The information collected during this period is reliable inasmuch as it reflects, for instance, the attitudes of the public toward the Japanese. Because data gathering was conducted within five years from when the war ended, the accounts in the HDP were able to capture the sentiments of the public at the time. Despite the limitations of the HDP, it is still useful for this specific study.

The HDP is stored both in original and digital formats at the National Library of the Philippines (NLP) (figure 3). There are a total of 126 hard-bound volumes from the then forty-nine provinces and their towns and barrios, arranged alphabetically. The documents were typewritten on legal size paper. The page numbers were either inconsistent or not indicated at all. From January to March 2017, I accessed the three volumes on the province of Capiz (figure 4). Though the volumes are available in digitized microfilm rolls, most of the copies are unreadable. Thus, the original documents were preferred. After visiting the NLP in September 2019, I found out that the original HDP can no longer be accessed and are now stored in the restricted and rare collections at the seventh floor of the building.

The barrios covered by HDP are based on the submission of the teachers. All the seventeen towns of Aklan have records. The quality and quantity of information per municipality are not uniform, with most of the accounts about World War II usually adding up to only a few sentences. The data from 152 barrios were organized according to what they revealed about the initial stages of the occupation, evacuation and atrocities, daily life, and attitudes toward the Japanese.

## World War II in Panay

Hours after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941, important bases were heavily bombed in Luzon and Mindanao. In a matter of days, the Japanese established air and naval supremacy. To save Manila from destruction, Gen. Douglas MacArthur, commander-in-chief of the USAFFE, declared Manila an "open city" but the Japanese refused to recognize this (Legarda 2007, 180). There was complete chaos as hundreds of people fled the city. Looting was rampant as there was no peace and order (Agoncillo 1965, 513). On April 16, 1942, the Japanese army led by Maj. Gen. Saburo Kawamura made a three-point landing in the island of Panay—in Oton (Iloilo), San Jose de Buenavista

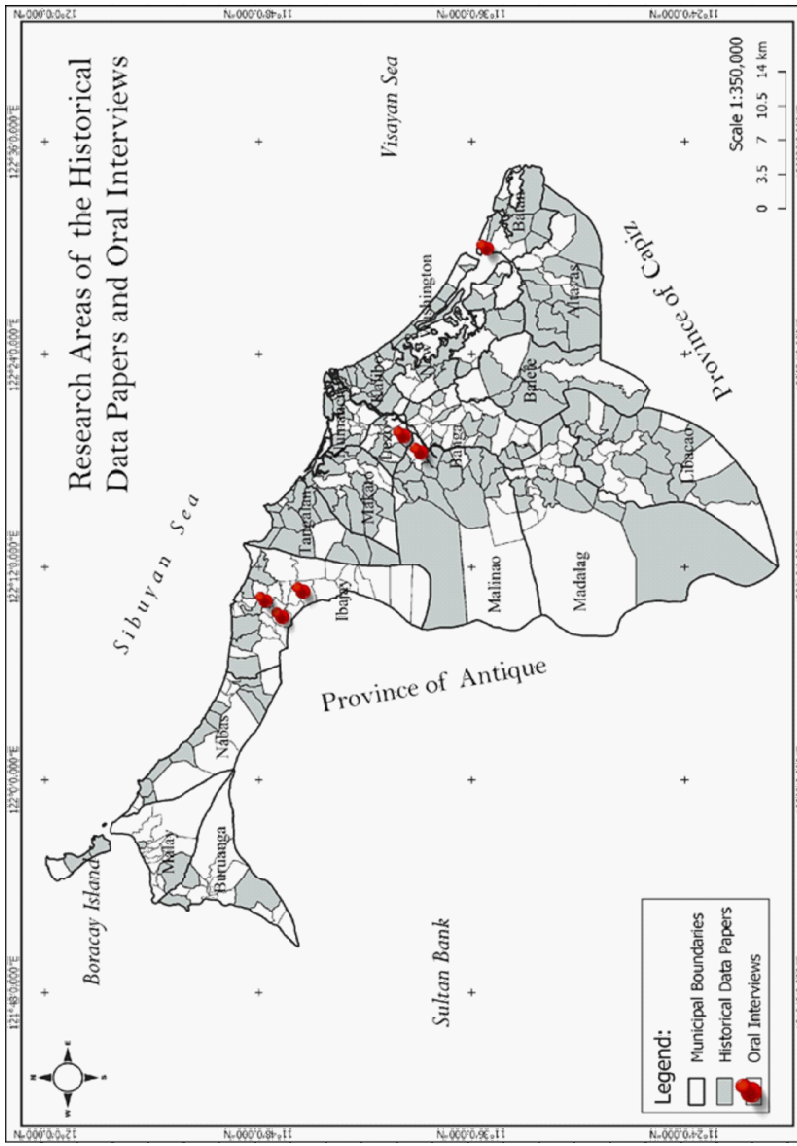



FIGURE 4. Map of the research areas per municipality based on accounts from the Historical Data Papers and Oral Interviews. *Source:* Map by Celdre Alpas Larot using Quantum Geographic Information System (QGIS).

(Antique), and Capiz (Capiz) (McCoy 1977, 270). With the Fall of Bataan on April 9, 1942, the Japanese continued their assault in the last pocket of resistance in Corregidor. The Japanese forced Gen. Jonathan M. Wainwright, who was in command of Corregidor and the Manila Bay harbor forts, to cause the defense forces in the Philippines to surrender. A few days after, the generals of Visayas and Mindanao laid down their arms (Kumai 2009, 28; Legarda 2003, 79–80).

After the surrender of Brig. Gen. Albert F. Christie, the division chief of staff of the 61st Division of the USAFFE in Panay, around 5,000 men of the 61st Division did not submit to the Japanese and later formed the underground movement in the island (Doromal 1952, 6–9). An estimated one thousand men from the Japanese forces were stationed in Iloilo and five hundred each in Capiz and Antique. With a small number of Japanese troops and with the guerillas controlling the island interiors, Japanese policy and impact was limited in Iloilo City and the milling district of Negros (McCoy 1977, 209; Doromal 1952, 19).

On June 1, 1942, Lt. Col. Macario Peralta Jr. issued his first general order assuming the command of all USAFFE forces in Panay. The 61st Division was divided into the three provincial commands of Capiz, Iloilo, and Antique. The Capiz Provincial Command was split into Ilayan and Aklan sectors. Under the Aklan sector were the 1st Military District in Malinao headed by Capt. Pedro Yatar, while the 2nd Military District stationed in Ibajay was under Capt. Jose Miraflores (Manikan 1977, 57, 89–90). About the same time in June 1942, Iloilo Governor Tomas Confesor organized the civil resistance government. By July 10, 1942, both Peralta and Confesor's representatives met in a conference and agreed that the former would handle the military aspect of the underground resistance while the latter will deal with the civil affairs (Agoncillo 1965, 682).

The guerillas preferred conducting intelligence work and maintained the secrecy of their large force in order not to encourage the Japanese to strengthen their forces (Manikan 1977, 89–90; 103). Since American dollars and Commonwealth pesos were banned, the underground civilian government headed by Governor Tomas Confesor authorized the issuance of emergency money to provide small change in Aklan. These emergency notes, however, were only useful outside the garrisoned poblacion of Kalibo as the Japanese imposed their military notes, which civilians later called "Mickey Mouse money" because it had no assigned value and was often considered worthless. Provincial folk also

called it "gurami," which is a species of fish that was abundant during the war (Pick 1995, 829; Agoncillo 1965, 483).

After nearly a year of occupation, the JMA was still unsuccessful in forcing Peralta's 61st Military Division to surrender. Moreover, the civilians were unconvinced of Japan's colonial agenda, such that they continued to aid the underground resistance movement by providing food to the guerrillas and sharing intelligence information. Thus, as part of a large-scale effort to pacify Panay island by the last quarter of 1943, the Batsu Group under the command of Lt. Gen. Kawano Takeshi launched a penetration operation in Panay and Guimaras, which resulted in more than 10,000 civilian deaths (Doromal 1952, 93–95; Manikan 1977, 403–9; Nakano 1999, 55). The punitive drive lasted for five months. While there were no more than 1,000 to 2,000 Japanese Army soldiers in the island, the casualties were equivalent to almost one percent of Panay's 1.3 million population (McCoy 1977, 331). From August to September 1943, the Japanese Army penetrated the island of Guimaras across the Iloilo Strait; made an amphibious landing in Sara, Iloilo by September; and conducted a large-scale massacre of civilians in Aklan and Capiz by October (McCoy 1980, 215). By the third week of October 1943, two Japanese forces came from Capiz and Pandan, Antique. They massacred hundreds of civilians, among whom were people who were beheaded and stabbed to death; burned public buildings; and occupied and garrisoned strategic towns of Aklan that had a strong guerrilla base. The goal of the scorched-earth policy was to deprive the population and the guerrillas of resources they can utilize to continue the resistance. Through demoralization brought by Japanese atrocities, the JMA hoped to force the surrender of guerrilla-controlled towns.

Upon establishing contact with Panay guerrillas, Gen. MacArthur directed Peralta in his order dated December 18, 1942 to postpone offensive guerrilla activity to avoid a major clash with the Japanese. The 61st Division in Panay then adopted a strict "lie-low" policy and focused on gathering enemy intelligence (Doromal 1952, 99). Although guerrilla and Japanese encounters were inevitable throughout the occupation, Peralta insisted that the guerrillas follow the policy to discourage the Japanese to increase their reinforcements. However, the 1943 Japanese punitive drive in Panay and Guimaras that killed thousands of civilians challenged this command policy. The butchery and devastation led to the frustration and low morale of the army who wanted to retaliate (McCoy 1977, 335).

Peralta insisted on continuing to abide by the lie-low policy and ordered civilians to show allegiance to the Japanese Army to avoid more brutalities (Kumai 2009, 67; McCoy 1977, 334). On December 20, 1943, Peralta sent messages to the 64th and 66th Infantry Regiments of the USAFFE, telling them "to lie low as much as possible," further stating: "With the possible exception of HUBAG [Aklan] area, probably Japs are thru w/ serious mopping operations. Japs seems to have really a policy of using Filipinos (PC [Philippine Constabulary] & CDC [Civilian Defense Corps]) to maintain peace and order. Most of the puppets [local collaborators] are not worrying us. We have them under control" (Manikan 1977, 418). In January 1944, Peralta instructed Col. Leopoldo R. Relunia, Chief of Staff of the Division and Commander of the 63rd Infantry Regiment of Iloilo, via a letter to "LIE LOW, but if any Jap patrol commits atrocities, go after that patrol with a vengeance" (Manikan 1977, 450; Doromal 1952, 16). Notwithstanding the success of the Batsu Group in instilling fear in the civilian population, their actions made little impact on the guerrillas (Nakano 1999, 55). In effect, the guerrillas' lie-low policy led to greater focus on espionage activities before the reoccupation of the Americans (Doromal 1952, 104–7).

By the end of October 1944, Lt. Col. Peralta ordered an island-wide offensive drive in Panay (Manikan 1977, 561–63). Following the successful landing of the US Forces in Leyte, the JMA forces in Panay Island weakened. In the morning of March 18, 1945, the US 40th Division commanded by Maj. Gen. Rapp Brush landed on Tigbauan, Iloilo. By September 1, 1945, the Japanese Army Headquarters surrendered to the US 160th Regiment at Maasin, Iloilo.

## Evacuation and Atrocities

On December 8, 1941, people of the town of Batan were celebrating their town fiesta in honor of the Immaculate Conception. After attending mass, Maria recalled the moment when she heard from the only radio at the municipal building the news about the bombing of Pearl Harbor. The procession was cancelled, and people frantically ran home. The ninety-five-year-old recalled, *"Wa eon kami it kalibutan kun siin kami manago. May akon nga sister nga idto sa Iloilo gatuon. Nakoebaan baea kami kun ano matabo abi ano? Wa kami sa among painu-ino kun siin kami manago ag kun siin maadto. Ag ro among igmanghod nga wa iya hay nakoebaan baea. Kun siin imaw masaka . . ."* (We had no idea where to go and what to do, we were all scared of what might happen. We were

worried about the whereabouts of our siblings since they were away from home.)

On that same day, Lourdes, together with other fellow students from Malinao, were crossing the Aklan River because they had a class on Monday at Banga Rural High School. They met a man by the river who told them about the bombing. *"Gaalin pa mana kamo? Hambae it eaki ngato. Ginbombahan eon mana ro Pearl Harbor. Nagproceed kami sa among boarding house, ag ginhimos among things ag nag-uli eon kami."* (He said, "What are you still doing? Do you not know that Pearl Harbor was bombed?" We immediately went to our boarding house to gather our belongings and hurriedly went home.) When Lourdes and her companions arrived in Malinao, the situation was still normal as people were still playing softball near the church. According to Lourdes, teenagers like her were not as fearful compared to the older folks who experienced the Philippine Revolution. At the time, they did not have any idea of what war could bring, *"Nag-obra kami it* air raid. *Nagpakutkot it 2 x 3* meters, ag *1 meter* deep. *Haron do* advise *kato sa kada pamaeay agod kun may eroplano, may daeaganan. Hapa mana kamo idto. Matsa ignorante pat a ro mga tawo kato."* (We were advised to build an air raid shelter so that if there is a plane flying, we can duck and cover. People seemed to be ignorant back then.)

When the Japanese landed in Aklan, they garrisoned the town center of Kalibo. They surrounded the town with barbed wires.[2] Although the Japanese were primarily stationed in Kalibo, they went out weekly to other neighboring towns to campaign and penetrate the different barrios.[3] On August 28, 1942, Capt. Pedro Y. Yatar led the organized guerrillas of Aklan at Sitio Buntilao, San Roque, Malinao. By October, the Free Local Civil Government of Malinao was established under the Resistance Government of Capiz led by Governor Cornelio Villareal.[4]

There was no immediate evacuation in the earlier part of the war in Ibajay. Despite living in fear, the people continued with their day-to-day lives but remained alert.[5] However, after learning that the Japanese were ruthless, many municipalities became deserted as people vacated their homes to seek refuge in the swamps, forests, and the

2. Kalibo 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
3. Libacao and Numancia 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
4. Malinao 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
5. Ibajay 1953, National Library of the Philippines.

mountains. People dug holes which served as underground bomb shelters.[6] Luz was ten years old when her family left their home in barrio Unat, Ibajay to escape the Japanese. They moved to other far-flung barrios together with other members of the community; Luz said, "*Aga-aga pat a hay nag-bakwit,* December *nag-umpisa eon it bakwit . . . Indi ko matandaan basta* December *nagtakas ro Hapon sa Ibajay una sa Aslum, sa may banwa . . . Hay kundi ro taga banwa bakwit eagi. Kami ngato ay wa anay maghalin.*" (It was early morning of December when people from the lowland started to evacuate because the Japanese arrived in barrio Aslum, an area adjacent to the city center. But we did not evacuate right away [because we live near the hinterlands].) During the war, Castora, a resident of the interior barrio of Maloco, Ibajay, stayed in a forest not far away from home; *"Nagbakwit man ron. Una malang sa lapit sa nunok. Mabuhay a ron kami idto. Sobra a sang dag-on."* (We also evacuated near the big tree in the forest. We remained there for more than a year.) From the town proper of Batan, Maria's family transferred from one barrio to another in search of better living conditions, *"Halin kami sa Ambueong tapos nagpa-Angas mga sang dag-on man guro kami idto ag naghalin sa Napti. Kun malisod ro kahimtangan gahalin-halin man kami."* (From Ambueong we transferred to Angas and stayed there for a year before we moved to Napti. We often moved to another place if the condition was difficult.)

Two of the informants had family members who endured the Death March—Lourdes' future husband and Maria's elder brother. The two men survived the long march but became ill with malaria and dysentery. Unfortunately, Maria's brother, who served as one of the military's chaplains, did not survive. It was difficult for Maria's family to bear the pain of losing their family's sole breadwinner. During my interview with her, she was in tears while she remembered her brother: *"Wa abi imaw kauli. Nabalitaan eot a ku ulihe nga namatay imaw. Kada gabie pirme kami gapinamintana ag among ginadumdom nga si Manong nga mauli sa baeay. Gatinangis dayon kami karon. Kun gabie hay ginapinanamgo kami kana ag pukawon kami dayon ni Nanay."* (He never came home after he left for the war. We just learned later that he died. Every night, we looked out our window hoping that Manong would come home, and we would start crying. Nanay would sometimes wake us up whenever we dreamt of Manong.)

6. Numancia 1953, National Library of the Philippines.

The Japanese's scorched-earth policy was executed in Aklan, leaving a trail of burned-down towns. In October 1943, the Japanese commenced the third phase of their ruthless attacks in the province. These massacres were known to the public as *juez de cuchillo* (justice by the knife) because the Japanese slaughtered their victims using their blades. Coming from Pandan, Antique, the Japanese ransacked the town of Ibajay and beheaded twenty-eight Ibayjanons.[7] Luz recounted this event and revealed that there was a sole survivor. When the Japanese reached the neighboring town of Tangalan, they killed fifty residents. The church of Tangalan was spared from burning because of the intervention of the parish priest. Later, the church became the barracks of the Japanese.[8] Lourdes recalled that the Japanese were patrolling around the nipa hut where she and her companions were hiding. Fearing for her life, she rolled her body inside a mat. She considers herself lucky that the Japanese did not stay long and left. While gathering her thoughts, she remembered a classmate who was one of the victims of the massacre in the town of Banga: "*Iba ko nga* classmates *nga nagkaeamatay. Tanda mo tag ginmasaccre sa Banga, may akong* classmate *idto. Masubo man kami.*" (We were sad that some of my classmates were victims in the Banga massacre.)

Upon the order from higher command, many of the towns' public buildings were burned to prevent them from being used by the Japanese.[9] The guerrillas also destroyed many of the bridges to delay the Japanese from making rapid advances and burned houses so they could not loot from the towns.[10] As a form of retaliation, the Japanese also burned deserted communities.[11] They dismantled the school buildings' iron gates in Numancia, Lezo, Buruanga, and Altavas and used the wood floors as fuel. Although reportedly no persons were killed in Lezo, the Japanese took domesticated animals such as carabaos, cows, pigs, chickens, and ducks. Around 135 perished in Altavas and seventy civilians including two priests and two teachers were massacred in Batan.[12] Maria's first encounter with the Japanese was when they were forced to gather in the church of Batan. They were told that if they did

7. Ibajay 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
8. Tangalan 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
9. Lezo, Malinao, and Nabas 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
10. Buruanga and Makato 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
11. Altavas, Kalibo, Madalag, and Makato 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
12. Altavas and Bataan 1953, National Library of the Philippines.

not leave the mountains, they would be severely punished. She shared a story of people who were imprisoned for days and later were burned alive. She remembered a man named Dikoy who was one of the two people who had managed to escape by slowly crawling away from where they were held.

Ramon narrated about folks being shot by the Japanese. His daughter even recalled that their mother was struck by a bayonet in the head. He mentioned comrades who were severely punished by the Japanese: *"Andang gindakop ag ginpatikang sa baga. Hapon ro nag-dap-ong, si Into ag nalipat ako sa sambilog."* (My comrades were caught and forced to walk on fire. [He recalled that the Japanese stabbed someone he knew.]) He continued, *"Ro andang pagwarang riya sa aton hay nagturaw sanda sa bukid, andang ginbuno si Rosing sa dughan. Eaom nanda hay patay eot ah hay wa gahueag. Nabuhi mat a imaw."* (When they were patrolling, they went to the mountains, and they stabbed Rosing. They thought she was dead because she was not moving. She managed to survive.)

The Japanese also conscripted men for forced labor. In Tangalan, the Japanese drafted men from barrios of Afga and Dumatad who were forced to carry palay from their barrio to Sitio Boboc-on[13] and Pandan, Antique.[14] They tortured those who they suspected to have guerrilla connections and extracted information from them.[15] For their amusement, the Japanese soldiers ordered civilians to run after chickens and pigs. Some were told to run with hands tied and were shot.[16] A man who was caught dismantling his house was beaten, tied to a cart loaded with wood, then hanged upside down until he died.[17] Women also fell victims to the cruelties of the Japanese, as evidenced by rape cases that were recorded in Libacao and Malinao.[18]

## Daily Life: Food Security, Religiosity, and Entertainment

As people left their houses, their day-to-day survival was their major concern. Many families clustered and aided each other. Since Lourdes' family had land in Cabayugan, Malinao, they resided in their aunt's

13. This is a sitio in Ibajay, which is approximately 20 km from Tangalan.
14. This is around 10 km away from Ibajay. Tangalan 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
15. Madalag 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
16. Malay 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
17. Banga 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
18. Malinao 1953, National Library of the Philippines.

house in that place. During the war, the family survived through farming. "*Sa ubos hay may* rice field. *Ga-uma ron, may anwang kami, may ga-arado,* not so much *kami nga kaagi it* hunger unlike *sa iba nga owa it bugas.*" (We had a rice field and carabaos thus we continued to farm. We did not experience hunger compared to others.) Even during periods of military incursions, the town of Lezo became an alternate trading hub in Aklan. As a result of the war, traders from different towns and other provinces like Iloilo and Antique sold their goods near Tayhawan Creek. The Japanese did not destroy the town because it served as an evacuation area for local civilians. However, the Japanese were unaware that the town served as the food storage warehouse of the guerrillas.[19] Lourdes recalled that her mother weaved sinamay while her elder brother sold cigarettes: "*Hay ro akon nga* dictionary *hay* white ash, *maw ta ro ana nga nagamit, ro tabako hay ginasi-ad it manipis ag ginapack ag ginabaligya nana sa tindahan kato hay Tayhawan, Lezo. Ro among mga suea hay idto gahalin. Idto gapanindahan, mga ibis ngaron.*" (My brother would cut the tobacco into small pieces and use my dictionary to make cigarettes. He sold them in Tayhawan, Lezo where we also buy our food like dried fish.)

In the town of Banga, records show that there was a shortage of salt used to preserve food. The Banganons saved themselves from impending hunger through farming and tilling their lands.[20] Rice was abundant in Habana, Buruanga and people also planted bananas, root crops, and vegetables for sustenance.[21] Many of the fisherfolks in New Washington continued to go fishing and earned for their families. Some Japanese soldiers unknowingly bought fish alongside guerrillas.[22]

Maria's family got through by producing coconut oil, cultivating rice, and raising farm animals. Whenever they heard news of Japanese intrusion, her mother butchered and cooked their chickens and ducks to prevent the Japanese from stealing them, thus saving their poultry for the family's consumption. They also pounded and sold rice: "*Gatipid kami sa pagkaon,* two meals a day. *Wa eot a it pamahaw, makaon ka it alas diyes, ag umihapon ka it alas cinco. Pag-alas cuatro ron hay napukaw eon kami nanay ag makuskos it niyog.*" (We only ate twice a day, first at ten in the morning then five in the afternoon. By four in the morning, mother would wake us up to scrape coconut meat.) According to

19. Lezo 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
20. Banga 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
21. Buruanga 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
22. New Washington 1953, National Library of the Philippines.

Ramon, bananas became a staple food for the guerrillas because Japanese surveillance limited their movement to obtain a variety of food: *"Mga saging, di man makauli sa baeay, hay andang ginalibod ro mga kabaeayan gabi-gabie. Anay kaulihe nagtinir sanda sa Kalibo hay gin-ambusan sanda sa karsada."* (We ate bananas, because the Japanese keep on tailing the houses every night that people could not go back to their houses. In the later part, they stayed in Kalibo where the guerrillas ambushed them.)

Luz fondly reminisced: *"Abong humay ag suea, pirme gapatay it anwang o baka hay pirme gabuoe si Tata, ag paeay baea ing bayad. Ro iba karon hay gina-asinan ni Tata ag puston it eukab ngaron indi maalin ron. Kun mayad mat a du tiempo, may galibot mat a nga isda."* (Rice and food was abundant. Some people butchered their cattle and my father bartered meat in exchange for rice. He used to cover the meat with salt and conceal it with palm leaves in order to preserve it. When the weather was fine, fish was sold.) Castora added, *"Owa a kami gingutom, abo ta kami nga paeay."* (We didn't starve. We had plenty of rice.) Since some barrios were far from the fishing villages, Cenon caught freshwater fish from the river, at the risk of being spotted by the Japanese, *"Gapangisda man kami sa suba, hay kun una ro Hapon, manago ka ron."* (We fished in the river. If you spot the Japanese, you have to hide.)

People tended to continue to practice their religion in many parts of the province. The accounts in Balete recorded that Seventh-day Adventists and Jehovah's Witnesses were still able to attend church services.[23] On the other hand, the people in Malinao had to celebrate masses in temporary chapels and in the forests. In the ten-month stay of the parish priest, Fr. Anacleto Selorio in the town, he celebrated masses every day in the forest of Cuyapnit. He also officiated weddings and baptisms in private houses that served as temporary chapels.[24] Lourdes shared that her cousin's wedding was almost cancelled because some Japanese tried to cross Malinao through Aklan River: *"Hay tag gabie pa eang hay may tinug-on sa kueon ag om ga suea ngato hay gindaea ro humay sa Manhanip ag idto kami mag-ihapon.* Memorable *ta ay Nang Terry [Pering] nga kasae ron hay mayad eang wa sanda magtabok."* (Nang Terry's [Pering] wedding was memorable. We already prepared the food the night before the wedding day and brought it to Manhanip where we

23. Balete 1953, National Library of the Philippines.
24. Malinao 1953, National Library of the Philippines.

had dinner. It was fortunate that upon the arrival of Japanese, they did not cross the river going to Malinao.)

Lourdes even emphasized what she believed to be the intervention of their patron saint: flooding the Aklan River, disallowing the Japanese to encroach Malinao and saving the town from destruction. She said, *"Gusto kunta nanda magtabok sa Malinao halin sa Banga galing baha ro Aklan River. Gin-abangan ta it among patron, Sr. San Jose, haron du* belief *it mga tawo, wa ta iya katabok ro Hapon. Matya* gratitude *ron ay."* (The Japanese from Banga wanted to cross the river but it was flooded. It is the people's belief that St. Joseph protected the people of Malinao. We are very grateful.) Ramon recited his nightly prayers: *"Gapangadi mat a ako. Gapangamuyo mat ang sa Diyos nga mag-eawig ro ang kabuhi. Kabay pa gid nga mabuhi ako."* (I always pray to God for a longer life. I hope I live longer.) His daughter Remy relayed how her father always prays the rosary every evening while listening to the radio. For Maria, the war taught her to have faith in God. She commended her mother for being religious. Two of her brothers became priests and one sister became a nun. Overall, what was evident in the six interviews was that they believed that their strong faith protected them from brutalities and the misfortunes of war.

Although the people were in constant fear of the Japanese, it did not stop them from having a sense of normalcy during the war. The children, though scared of the war, continued playing games. Luz warmly described how they would go to the river when it was peaceful to *eaya* (a fishing method). They played *taksi,* a game of coins, as well as hide and seek within the evacuation areas when there was no news of Japanese operations. Maria and her sisters spent their free time taking lice off their hair while they sang Christmas songs. Lourdes accepted suitors who serenaded her at night: "*Ga-age* sixteen *eon abi kato hay madya* blooming *eot a, may gaadto eot a sa amon hay may gaharana eot a."* (I was already blooming at the age of sixteen so there were men who serenaded me.)

Dances were also common in many localities. For instance, dances were regularly held on the bridge at the poblacion of Makato. People lit burnt copra at the corner of the streets and on cement pathways. At one instance, the people hired two bands for a nighttime affair at a high cost; the men and women danced from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m.[25] Women were

25. Makato 1953, National Library of the Philippines.

also active in holding benefit dances held in guerilla camps or guerilla-controlled areas in order to raise money and funds to buy food and clothing for the resistance movement.[26] Cenon recalled, *"May mga binayle man ro* army, *ag may mga daeaga."* (There were dances to which the guerillas invited young maidens.) Other combatants visited their girlfriends in between encounters even if they had to cross enemy lines.

## Discussion

I asked my informants about their thoughts on their war experiences more than seven decades after the war. Ramon, with a smile on his face, told a story about an instance when his comrade almost tricked him into eating a Japanese person. Since food was scarce in Cabatuan, Iloilo, his friend offered to look for food and cook. *"Naga-usoy sanda it pagkaon hay andang hakita ro patay sa daean hay ginhilab ra anang nga pa-a, anang panuok ag daehon. Gin-eaha nanda ag ginpakaon kamon. Hay kasayod kami nga Hapon gali, hay owa gid magkaon. Idto sa Tiring, Cabatuan. Owa mat akon magkaon. Wa man sanda nagkaon. Wa man nagkaon ro nag-eaha. Sadyaan gid mat ah ro pag-eaha."* (They were looking for food when they found a dead body on the road. This was in Tiring, Cabatuan. They took the leg part and cooked it for us. We knew it was a Japanese, so we did not eat it. My friends and the one who cooked the meal also did not eat, but the cooking seems good.) This story was brought up when Ramon was asked about his feelings toward the Japanese. The war made a visceral impact on him as he survived a gunshot which left him with a head injury: *"Inigo ako it bala sa ueo . . . mga katapusan tong inaway, cuarenta y cinco natapos ro gyera, cuarenta y cuatro ako gin-igo it bala."* (I was shot in the head in 1944, towards the end of the war in 1945.) As much as he wanted to remain vindictive, Ramon said he cannot do anything about what had already happened and what matters now is that he is alive: *"Naakig kunta ron hay alinon ay di ako makahueag. Wa mat akon naakig makaron ay buhi mat ang. Mayad mat akon."* (I want to be angry, but I could no longer move. I am not angry anymore for I am alive and well.)

For Lourdes, it is a situation that war survivors had to accept. However, one cannot deny that if the Japanese did not occupy the country, the lives of the people would not be difficult. According to Lourdes, *"Ga-*obey *malang it* orders *sanda galing hay alinon wa man sanda*

26. Ibajay 1953, National Library of the Philippines.

*kunta naila karon pero kun may pamilya ka nga namatay syempre gadumot kat imo ron."* (The Japanese were just obeying orders. Given the chance, they would not want to do the acts they had committed. But if you have family members who were killed, definitely you will be vengeful against them.) Maria was thankful that her brother, who died of dysentery in a concentration camp, did not experience torture. She no longer felt animosity against the Japanese: *"Ga-amat amat man ngani it duea man. Ag ro Hapon madya nag-ayad ayad man sa Philippines no?* They learned to love our country. They have contributed something to the Filipino people. *Maayad-ayad ro Hapon, mahugod."* (The animosity is disappearing. The Japanese are hardworking. They have contributed to the Filipinos and they have learned to love our country.)

The recent oral accounts still reveal Japanese atrocities in the memories of the survivors nearly seventy-five years after the war. Since they were given the opportunity to talk about their experiences, the respondents tended to remember their daily experiences such as having to move to safer places, their strong faith, games and activities, food security, and their responsibilities in the family. As Jose (2012, 186) suggests, "war memories are determined more by one's present perceptions of the war, rather than delving into past facts." This observation is especially true for war survivors who were interviewed with a relative distance from the event. Although the people continue to regard the war as a tragic memory, because of the distance of the event, they were able to look at the experience from different perspectives. When asked about their attitudes toward the Japanese, they had a way of contextualizing their experience as a result of the wartime conditions that they had no control of. Their perceptions of Japan differed today because of its economic ties with the Philippine government, which they find indispensable to our country. Nevertheless, this attitude does not mean that they have absolved the Japanese of their atrocities. They look back at those experiences that shaped who they are today and are grateful to have survived a perilous time in history.

Although the respondents recalled their more personal experiences, the common experience of violence brought by the war still lingered in their memories. Consistent in the two sets of historical sources are the guerrilla operations and Japanese atrocities. The respondents have identified the brutalities of the punitive drive of October 1943 as a prevailing narrative but there was confusion on the exact year of the incursions. Counterchecking with published accounts, Aklan was relatively free from Japanese control except for the occupation of

Kalibo between April–May 1942, as the Japanese left for Capiz by August. The absence of Japanese forces during the early period of the occupation was one of the reasons why Aklan experienced a relatively peaceful situation. The Japanese reoccupied Aklan during the last quarter of 1943 during their planned punitive drive. Following the October 1943 *juez de cuchillo,* they garrisoned the towns of Kalibo, Ibajay, New Washington, Altavas, Balete, and Batan while the remaining towns were relatively free of Japanese forces. The study shows that the terrors of the war still resonate in their individual and collective reckonings and the distance of time enabled them to reflect on these experiences and the learnings embodied in their lives. They narrated how their religious beliefs played a significant role in their day-to-day lives as the respondents linked their survival and long life with their strong faith. Informants also associated their war memories with other people's ordeals by way of citing several anecdotes contributing to the collective memory of the war in Aklan.

After the Second World War, Japan became one of the world's largest economies and had utilized its official development aid to exercise its influence over Southeast Asian countries which received the largest share from the 1970s to 1990s. The Philippines is among the top three recipients (Rivera 2003, 509–11; Villacorta 2003, 593). For the respondents, the former colonizer is now seen as an important economic power that is aiding the Philippines. The interviews revealed how they negotiated their attitudes toward Japan with the contemporary times by contextualizing their past experiences as a consequence of history. With the distance of the war and the changing attitudes toward Japan, it is even more important to gather these stories from the survivors whose memories are starting to wither.

## Conclusion

The immediate postwar years concentrated on getting reparations from Japan, achieving justice at the war crime trials, and acquiring war damage claims from the United States. During the 1960s, the Philippine government began to be more open to Japan because of its growing economic importance to the Southeast Asian region. As we look back to this part of our past, what have we learned from the wartime years? For this study's respondents, they believe that war should never happen again because everyone suffers. However, if it is inevitable, every Filipino should always fight for their sovereignty until the very end. The story of the lives of ordinary folks in this study gave us insights on how

Filipinos survived an extraordinary period in history. Both historical accounts suggest the pain and horror that the people of Aklan experienced during the occupation. There might be some changes in their attitudes because they were eager to get a sense of closure and may have been influenced by the Philippine-Japan relations. Still the atrocities will never be justified and should always be remembered by the younger generations. As the great political and military narratives continue to dominate the history of the Japanese occupation, there is a need for more studies that focus on the accounts of the ordinary people.

This paper shows how both the HDP and oral history accounts have significant potential in revealing the nuances of local narratives, yet have serious methodological limitations given the weaknesses of each source. With the limited time of data collection, the teachers who did not have training in historical research in the 1950s were forced to produce the HDP. However, the Japanese occupation section of the HDP discloses relevant information about local communities and how they responded to the challenges of the war collectively. Although Japanese atrocities were commonly documented in HDP, it also recorded the state of food security, identified evacuation areas where families lived together and aided one another, and how religion played an important part in the sense of normalcy of the civilians. The data from the HDP still resonated with the oral history sources collected more than seven decades from respondents with fading memories and selective remembering. Yet, when used as complementary sources, the two historical accounts provide a more informed and multifaceted analysis of survival in a time of great adversity, scarcity, and atrocity. In this study, I also attempted to map out barrios who have records about the war based on the HDP to provide a visual representation of the data using GIS. Perhaps, a project such as this can be of interest to researchers given that the HDP is digitally available. Also, the Central Philippine University (CPU) in Jaro, Iloilo digitized their guerrilla papers as part of the Roderick Hall Collection of the Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati, Metro Manila. Although not utilized in this study, these guerrilla papers are important primary sources for the World War II history of Panay. The collection included personal letters and correspondence with the guerrillas and can provide more insights about the civilian population.

Panay Island was the home of one of the most successful anti-Japanese guerrilla resistance movements that is well documented. But

many of the stories of the ordinary folks in Panay during the war who remained nameless and faceless in history are merely part of footnotes and brief mentions. Studies about ordinary life is the gap in our literature about the war. The study shows that the two sources present the history of Filipino resilience and solidarity. By giving war survivors a space for their lives to be recorded, we are democratizing the production of knowledge from the communities. We allow these actors to retell their stories from their perspectives and use their own words to converse with the people they belong to and represent. Many of the local stories similar to what this study had recorded were lost or became unknown to many because very few histories are written about the ordinary folks. As of this writing, I already lost two of my informants; Castora and Cenon both died in 2021. I hope to honor their stories of survival and heroism through this study. The generation of war survivors will soon be gone, and if their narratives are not documented, we will be detached from our collective history that shaped us as a people.❁

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# REVIEWS

**Hickel, Jason. 2018. *The Divide: Global Inequality from Conquest to Free Markets*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company. 344 pp.**

Jason Hickel, an anthropologist, in his book *The Divide: Global Inequality from Conquest to Free Markets*, focuses on postdevelopment and the global political economy. Native to Swaziland, Hickel uses critical analyses from his personal experiences with the development sector to explain the historical origins of poverty, and failures of the economic system. The author's positionality as a racialized Western-educated individual (from the London School of Economics) holding extensive experience in development work offers a unique perspective to explaining uneven global development. The book emphasizes how progress, in face of the fight against poverty, remains a façade as global leaders continue to market the "good-news" narrative of development without actualizing tangible socioeconomic change for the Global South. *The Divide* explains that through philanthropic disguise, this development narrative enables the oligarchy of powerful actors including government officials, corporations, and international financial institutions to work in tandem to continue socially, environmentally, and economically oppressing the Global South through a hidden agenda of Western-centric capitalistic growth. This book discusses the historically dominant paradigms of Western colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism that have manifested the socioeconomic conditions of the so-called developing world.

The book's nine chapters are sectioned into four parts. The first three parts, "The Divide," "Concerning Violence," and the "New Colonialism," provide a timeline for explaining the evolution of the flaws in our global economic order. The last section, "Closing the Divide," focuses on recommended solutions.

"The Divide" presents a historical analysis of the good-news narrative of development. Hickel describes the inception of this ideology stemming from a public relations gimmick by the 33rd President of the United States, Harry Truman. Specifically, the good-news narrative was born through his 1949 inaugural speech, which invoked nationalism and hope in the American people through a compelling narrative of foreign aid provision to the Third World. The book continues to analyze the proclaimed successes and inherent failures within the Millennium Development Goals, specifically those in which statistics are manipulated in light of political interests. "Concerning Violence" gives a historical review of how developed states created the conditions of the Third World, defining draconian episodes surrounding war, conflict, and violence as characteristics of the West's development success story. Hickel describes how the wealth of the developed comes at the cost of plundering underdeveloped nations for the raw materials that allow their power to persist. This section continues to explain the Western neocolonial implementation of market fundamentalism amongst the underdeveloped world. Hickel draws our attention to the resistance of developing nations to neoliberalism and the resulting impacts of rampant political corruption. US intervention, coups, assassinations and the installation of military juntas and puppet authoritarian dictators led to the replacement of developmentalist movements with free market regimes that served the commercial interests of the West.

"The New Colonialism," Hickel describes how neocolonialism emerged alongside the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization. The author explains that during the post-liberalization era following colonialism, the economic exploitation and political control exercised by Western powers are dressed up as debt, tax evasion, patent monopolies, structural adjustment programs (SAPs), institutional legal immunity, and oligarchies within multilateral trade agreements. The concluding section, "Closing the Divide," introduces a strategy for global economic restructuring that will allow for global equity to be achievable. Amongst Hickel's progressive political economy recommendations are: debt cancellation among underdeveloped nations; democratization and equal representation within global governance systems; the implementation of fair international trade systems that allow sovereign developing countries to create policies in their own interests; a global minimum wage; and, the protection of public resources and the commons.

Furthermore, Hickel describes how the good-news narrative explains the development divide as solvable through the installation of the right institutions and policies. As mentioned in the book, theorists such as Rostow (1959) illustrate development as countries experiencing different stages in their linear lives. This argument fails to take into consideration that these socioeconomic disparities lie beyond the nations' borders, with underdevelopment a result of Global North vs. Global South asymmetric power dynamics that have organized an inequitable global economy. The book's common theme refers to parasitic relationships, where development for some results in underdevelopment for others—poverty for profit. However, through the dominance of the good-news narrative, statistical manipulation, and underestimation of poverty conditions, Global North actors have been able to dismiss the idea of the rich impoverishing the poor to the general public.

His recommendations aside, the most significant contribution of the book is Hickel's foundational explanation of capitalism through primitive accumulation and colonization—a product of genocides, slavery, displacement, and extirpation. His arguments align with critical development literature that describe imperialism and the exploitation of the periphery by the core as fundamental within the process of industrializing capitalist systems (Williams 1944; Davis 2008; Hoogvelt 1997). The book defines development as directly associated with economic growth in that the foundation of orthodox economics disregards anything that cannot be commodified for economic profit. As a consequence, capitalism has been molded alongside ecological and social unsustainability, with the degradation of ecosystem services and traditional values in exchange for the Western social construct of economic prosperity.

Hickel effectively described the era where newly sovereign nations adopted Western-Keynesian economic frameworks, using state-led development and nationalization to improve the socioeconomic indicators in the region. Meanwhile, powerful actors in the Global North resisted against developing nations' new wealth distribution. Global North actors viewed national industrialization for developing nations as reaping the West's economic gains and investments in the South's raw materials. Hickel delves into the idea of Keynesianism, explaining how state intervention was demonized by the West and was replaced with the glorification of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism was marketed by the developed world as the ultimate guide to individual liberty and economic prosperity, even if development literature and

empirical evidence say otherwise (Singer 2008; Sneyd 2015). Once the periphery acknowledged the backwardness of neoliberalism, the core used dictatorship and fearmongering to manifest complacency against dissent. As someone who has done research on and participated in development work in the Philippines, I agree with this line of reasoning given the extensive examples of violent power asymmetries between the Global North and the Global South that the author provides, illustrating varying legislative instruments and military force that have been used to ensure that the Global North maintains influence and power over the domestic regulatory affairs of developing nations.

Particularly notorious, Hickel highlights SAPs for their exorbitant compound interest rates on loans that followed the surrendering of national economic policymaking from state governments to Washington technocrats and bankers. Again, as someone familiar with the consequences of these SAPs in debt-ridden developing countries, I agree with Hickel in terms of the hypocrisy of the International Monetary Fund's mission statement of reducing global poverty, as SAPs have led to forceful national social spending to go towards debt repayments rather than poverty alleviation and development. Hickel identifies how free market economies are inefficient for the majority in relation to the Prebisch-Singer hypothesis and lack of state intervention. He distinguishes how primary commodity-based economies deteriorate as the price of raw materials decreases relative to the price of manufactured goods. Challenging market fundamentalism, the book describes how every developed nation has grown through state-led protectionist measures, using China and East Asia as examples, which interestingly were the only regions where SAPs were not implemented. Critical work by Rodrik (2008) reinforces Hickel's main arguments when stating that China experienced rapid economic growth and poverty reduction through unconventional policies such as trade protection and nationalization. Moreover, critical literature in this field by Heilbroner (1970) strengthens these arguments through his analysis of the contradictions within neoliberalism with respect to capitalism's growing government presence focused on coercion and the emergence of science and technology as public controls.

From here, Hickel claims that at the heart of the global capitalist structure is ecological dependency. The climate crisis stands at the forefront of today's issues, with developing states being the most vulnerable to the repercussions of climate change despite their relatively low contribution to global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. As

nations strive for modernization, nonrenewable resources are increasingly exploited, resulting in spillover effects related to rising GHG emissions and exacerbated impacts of climate change such as rising sea levels, food scarcity, and increasing severity of natural disasters. These statements align with Dauvergne's (2010) work, which exposes the global system of unsustainable production and shadow effects of consumption, with inefficiencies related to social and environmental costs not being captured in the market. Hickel identifies the global economic transformations necessary to combat global inequality through policies that adhere to debt resistance, global democracy, fair trade, just wages, and protecting the commons. I believe that the radical socioeconomic and political transformations and global reforms described are necessary and paramount to combatting interrelated issues of climate change and societally embedded capitalistic consumption.

Though Hickel's work presents a brief overview of decades' worth of development history origins and contributions, it failed to provide an analysis of a crucial component—gender and development. Although intersectionality was not mentioned within the initial objectives or preliminary pages of the book, I believe it remains critical to understanding uneven global development. This book is limited in its ability to provide an intersectional lens on the inequities of development. Specifically, it is deficient in examining the systemic failures that have perpetrated individual experiences of oppression related to class, race, gender, sex, ethnicity, amongst other social locations. Another limitation to Hickel's work is his take on global progressive leftist recommendations. Although it is evidently clear that systematic change is imperative for poverty alleviation, his call for action on global restructuring may seem radical and utopian to many, especially alongside the rise of authoritarian populism evident in today's global society. Specifically, implementing global reform related to democracy and a worldwide living wage can be seen as unrealistic solutions to uneven development. Due to a lack of global congruence on political stances within nations on this manner, the divisive ideologies which make implementing such policies on the global level can be recognized as nearly impossible. Providing a section focusing on guidelines for compliance to the restructuring of international policy could enhance credibility and ease resistance against these reforms.

In addition, and in the face of the contentious debates Hickel puts forth throughout the book, a greater effort to engage relevant development literature could have reinforced his main arguments. In

the early pages of the book, Hickel points out that the global economic system perpetuates poverty and relinquishes the ability for meaningful development to persist. The international systems of patents, trade, and debt that provide philanthropists the capital to provide aid, according to Hickel, are the very ones that plunge the developing world into impoverishment. These statements can be strengthened by works such as Rodney (1972) that focus on dual societies and underdevelopment as a result of exploitation and capitalist systems rather than implicit beliefs related to the Third World's archaic institutions and capital shortage. The book states that development aid lacks the capacity to provide reparations for the injustices the Global South have incurred in relation to colonization, debt, and slavery, amongst other variables of inequity. Hickel's arguments could also be strengthened by Escobar (2008), specifically his examination of development discourse as a tool to exercise power over the Global South. Escobar (1995) identified that through the creation of a universally understood homogenized representation of the poor, the West used this discourse to commodify poverty and dominate the social, environmental, and economic aspects of the Third World. If nothing else, referencing such works would further underscore how persistent the problems described by Hickel have been.

Overall, *The Divide* remains highly readable, with its intended audience targeting both academics and nonexperts. Despite its flaws, the book helps increase public awareness of global inequities, helping explain how development aid is a neoliberal façade that allows the rich to profit from poverty. This profiteering occurs while painting the benevolent story that they have been fixing the issues they have caused through charity. This book unveils global consciousness to historical injustices and provides recommendations to combat inequality through global democracy, political action, and mobilization. Future research building upon books such as this can focus on revitalizing the economic order through intersectional development, destabilizing Western imperialism, and proactive strategies to global systemic change and wealth redistribution.—**Angela Asuncion**, *Technical Consultant, Bantay Kita.*

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**Wright, Sarah, and Ma. Diosa Labiste. 2018. *Stories of Struggle: Experiences of Land Reform in Negros Island, Philippines*. Quezon City, Philippines: University of the Philippines Press. ix, 165 pp.**

On a tragic night in November 2018, human rights lawyer Benjamin Ramos was attacked and killed by "riding-in-tandem"[1] assailants in a Southern Negros city (Espina 2018). Ramos was the secretary-general of the National Union of Peoples' Lawyers–Negros Island and a long-time volunteer worker at the Paghidaet sa Kauswagan[2] Development Group (PDG), a nonprofit organization formed in 1987 that has worked with local farmers in Southern Negros. PDG was the main local partner of authors Sarah Wright and Ma. Diosa Labiste for the book *Stories of Struggle: Experiences of Land Reform in Negros Island, Philippines*. Ramos was a key contact. The book's dedication page was devoted to

1. Riding-in-tandem in the Philippine context refers to "two persons riding in a motorcycle who commit crime, usually robbery and paid kill" (Viray 2014).
2. Paghidaet sa Kauswagan is Hiligaynon for "Peace in Development."

the commemoration of his contributions and legacy in the land reform history of Negros Occidental.

The book provides an overview of land reform program in Negros Occidental, specifically looking at sugar plantation communities. The authors used different case studies in different municipalities to describe the dynamics that farmers, together with partner nongovernment organizations (NGOs) and people's organizations (POs), need to navigate in order to achieve the end goal of land redistribution. It highlights the successes of agrarian change in the province by looking at the experience of PDG partner communities. They argue, through the case studies, that land reform in Negros has been more pro-landlord than pro-farmer, thus veering away from the program's core principle of social justice. In summary, the discussions are clustered around three main themes: (1) the central role of struggle in the land reform process; (2) the negative role of landlord resistance and the ongoing trend toward a market-led approach; and, (3) the need for genuine land reform that supports tillers beyond the distribution of the land.

*Stories of Struggle* contributes to the ongoing debate on the approaches toward a successful land reform program through the case studies which highlight the role of POs and their struggles in the land reform process. The book is divided into eight chapters. An introductory chapter is followed by one discussing the history of sugar and land reform. The third chapter is specifically concerned with the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). Chapter four gives a narrative history of PDG. The next three chapters contain three specific case studies chosen by the authors followed by a concluding chapter that summarizes the findings of the book.

The first three chapters establish the overarching themes and situation that the case studies are boxed in, discussing relevant national laws, dynamics within government agencies, land statistics, and local history and politics. Chapter two is divided into a section focusing on the history of sugar in the Philippines and a section on how land reform was fought for after independence. Chapter three details CARP, identifying loopholes in the laws passed pursuant to the program and the mechanisms used by the landed elites to evade land reform. Chapter four features PDG, the organization that worked with the authors in doing fieldwork and interviews, along with its historical involvement in the areas visited. These chapters provide analysis of the land issues in the Philippines and Negros as a backgrounder for the case studies in chapters five to seven.

The case studies rely on oral accounts described by the authors. The authors provide a helpful brief synthesis to conclude each case study. Chapter five cites different struggles and challenges that farmers faced to gain access to land. Chapter six dissects the corporate schemes used by a politically powerful landlord to oppose the full implementation of land reform and harass farmers. Chapter seven showcases two communities with contrasting achievements on the struggle for land reform. The quotes taken from farmers highlight their views on what genuine land reform should be.

Generally, the first three chapters were very informative and provided sufficient data for understanding the case studies. These chapters brought forth commendable efforts to highlight loopholes within policies that threatened farmers trying to access or acquire lands to till. Notably, chapter three provides a clear distinction of the mechanisms on how land was distributed specifically in Negros and the agreements and options that can be pursued under the program, helping to set the tone in analyzing the succeeding chapters. However, the discussion in chapter two on the worsening land reform aspect could have been improved. Adding a section about the situation of sugar and how the worsening sugar economy aided the rise of insurgency in Southern Negros in the 1980s would have better established the chapter's connection to the themes of the later chapters. Such an addition would have provided reasons why some organizations mentioned in the case studies were red-tagged or labeled as affiliates of the communist insurgency. This would also connect to the general narrative of the case studies where Negros is left in a sorry state of land reform despite the debatable claim of doing "best efforts" from the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR), the agency in charge of implementing CARP. The Negros Federation of Sugar Workers (NFSW), for example, was cited as a good resource group for training and orientation for hacienda workers but was discredited through red-tagging. Such discussion would have provided a deeper context with regard to the results of the election of farm workers' union as discussed by Wright and Labiste:

> The NFSW began organizing on the hacienda (Bino—one of the case studies). Of the 400 workers on the hacienda, 235 joined the union after the union familiarized them with the Labor Code that outlined their legal rights and entitlements as laborers. . . . [P]ropaganda was widely distributed labeling

> the NFSW as a "red union" and the puppet of the CPP-NPA. The NFSW lost the election and was plagued with internal conflict. (80)

In the same chapter, the authors discuss specifics of how land reform was evaded, a particularly enlightening discussion for readers not familiar with land reform issues:

> The loopholes in the law have been used by landowners to stall distribution or contest valuations in court. Corporations could evade land distribution if workers agreed to buy company stocks, as provided for by Executive Order No. 229 . . . . Private lands leased to domestic and foreign corporations were also exempt for ten years or until their lease expired. The law stated that, "In case it is not economically feasible and sound to divide the land, then they shall form a workers' cooperative or association which will deal with the corporation or business association or any other proper party for the purpose of entering into a lease or growers agreement and for all other legitimate purposes." This opened the door to notorious lease-back arrangements. (37)

The lifted quote describes how landed elites use their influence and access to legal expertise to subjugate land reform implementation. This establishes the initial proof of exploitation. Discussing the history of PDG in chapter four was a good complement to this, detailing how involved the organization and volunteer workers were with the local communities. This discussion provides a prelude into how NGOs or partner organizations should work to be effective in introducing programs in subject communities. PDG was established by volunteers; they were not funded by any external funding source/aid so their authenticity as an organization made the case studies even more interesting. They were deeply rooted with the community; they shared meals together, and the community willfully provided them food and other necessities (60–62).

Generally, the details provided by the authors paint a clear picture of the whole process by which the beneficiaries' lack of access to certain resources are used against them by landed elites to evade the land reform process. Despite this abundance of details, the initial chapters still fail to provide a deeper analysis on why agrarian reform communities (ARCs), a sub-project under CARP, failed. The authors mention the

"government pouring its resources into this program, neglecting other aspects of CARP," which came across to me as an important issue to look into in the land reform process. I was looking for something to explain this failure similar to how Elvinia (2011) problematized the loopholes and deficiencies of CARP implementation and provided context for those issues. The findings would have been useful in juxtaposing the successful and failed case studies tackled in the succeeding chapters.

A lot of issues analyzed in chapters five to seven were overlapping to a certain degree, like how the issue of ejectment recurred among case studies and the similar legal troubles they had to overcome. In all, in each case study, farmers had to have access to legal aid to be able to support their cause for effective land reform implementation. One can assume that the claim from chapter one that each study is thematically distinct means that the three case studies are quite different, but their similarities in content and discussions are readily apparent. It was evident in the case studies that landlord resistance was always present and support for post-land redistribution was always lacking.

Chapters five and six both showcase the perception of the respondents as to how they viewed and understood "struggle" in their own perspective as derived from their experiences. The placing of these toward the end, though, was a bit misplaced as the definition of struggle derived from these responses should have been the primary theme of the chapters. The answers were very interesting; they could have become the basis of how the subjects saw and understood struggle. It would have added context to their responses and narration of experiences in the book.

These chapters best reflect the book's title; the case studies described are distinct "stories of struggle." The subjects of the case studies defined "struggle" differently as each of them faced different difficulties. Some struggled against violence. Some struggled against their fellow farmers. Some of them failed; others succeeded. The case studies are good references for future interventions by members of the civil society in extending help to farmers under the current land reform program or whatever succeeds it. Overall, the book is valuable for showcasing the rich personal experience of farmers as well as partner organizations (PDG, in particular) and depicts strong inequality and dependency of farmers to landlords even after land was distributed. As was said by farmers in the book, the struggle for land reform does not

end with land acquisition.—**John Edison Ubaldo**, *Knowledge Mobilization Officer, Bantay Kita.*

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