SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES

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Editorial Note

Recalling the period right after the 2016 national elections in the Philippines, I cannot forget the disappointment of a friend who flew from Manila to Tokyo for a short stay. As a student studying pockets of efficacy in Philippine politics, whose gloomy picture has been highlighted by other scholars, I scrambled to convince her that the country had achieved a series of policy reforms that one administration could hardly dismantle. However, my efforts were in vain. The conversation stayed in my mind for a long time and pushed me to consider a new perspective on Philippine politics.

The 2016 election was indeed a great starting point for reconsidering our perspective on Philippine politics. Newly elected President Rodrigo Duterte was apparently a typical reminder of local bosses whose stories have been compiled and discussed for many years within the circles of academia and investigative journalists. The victory of Leni Robredo as vice president, however, rejected any black-and-white judgment on Philippine politics. Her late husband had been a symbol of reform at the local level in restored Philippine democracy, and research on civil society mushroomed after the Philippine democratization in 1986. The cruel picture presented by President Duterte and the rosy picture symbolized by the late husband of Vice President Robredo are at opposite ends of the spectrum of Philippine local politics.

To begin with, research team members got together at the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) in March 2017 and sought pockets of efficacy or bright spots in local politics. At the second meeting, at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, in July 2017, I explained the idea of policy coalitions to shed new light on Philippine politics, and we discussed several examples of bright spots in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. At the last meeting at GRIPS in March 2018, we discussed the findings. The contributors submitted their drafts and revised them through a peer review process. The results form the chapters of this special issue.

In the first chapter, Takagi Yusuke reviews existing literature on local politics in the Philippines and proposes the concepts of coalition politics and policy coalitions to appreciate the role of human agency in making a difference in various areas, rather than presenting snapshots of success stories.

The next four chapters are detailed case studies on local development. Chapter 2 captures the dynamics of how local leadership sought business-friendly governance and achieved economic growth in San Nicolas, Ilocos Norte. Chapter 3 scrutinizes the politics of disciplinarian leadership to achieve eco-friendly local governance and the continuous efforts of reform policy by successive mayors in Marikina City, National Capital Region. Chapter 4 studies the endeavor of a governor to eradicate poverty and insurgencies by promoting ecotourism in Bohol, Central Visayas Region. Meanwhile, Chapter 5 shows a different face of the military in "governing" Sulu, where the military engaged in civil-military operations and brought about a certain stability.

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Policy Making after Revolution:
The Faces of Local Transformation of the Philippines

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The decentralization process triggered by the Local Government Code of 1991 resulted in local politicians rising to the national political arena in the 2016 Philippine elections. A former mayor of Davao City was elected to the presidency and the widow of a former Naga City mayor to the vice presidency. These cases reflect various political dynamics, including bossism, patronage politics, a developmental authoritarian regime, and a grassroots democracy. Beyond typological studies on local politics, this chapter reveals the transforming nature of local politics by scrutinizing policy making and policy implementation at the local level. Local policy makers become policy entrepreneurs when they find innovative ways to implement existing policies in particular local contexts or when they create new local policies. The policies may take on their own nature, or a built-in nature, via new institutions and changing expectations that outlast the term of political leaders. After reviewing conventional knowledge to understand the transforming nature of local politics, this chapter provides a brief case study of the coalition politics behind the Local Government Code of 1991. Policy coalitions—made up of politicians, bureaucrats, civil society activists, and businesspeople—work to make and implement policies at the national and local levels.

Keywords: local politics, reform policy, policy entrepreneurs, policy coalition, decentralization, built-in nature, local transformation, the Philippines

Introduction

The decentralization process triggered by the Local Government Code of 1991 resulted in local politicians rising to the national political arena in 2016. A former mayor of Davao City was elected to the presidency, and the widow of a former Naga City mayor was elected to the vice presidency. A former mayor of Makati City also led the presidential race in 2015, but he lost in the end. The 2016 election results were more striking than previous election results. Almost all the presidents prior to the implementation of the

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local government code had experience serving as senators with nationwide electoral districts.

It is, however, misleading to paint the fruits of the reform as one color. President Rodrigo Duterte and Vice President Leni Robredo represented two different types of local leadership after decentralization. Mayor Duterte was famous for his iron-fisted approach toward rebels and vigilantes in Davao City, and his ruling style was investigated by the national government's Commission on Human Rights. Meanwhile, Mayor Jesse Robredo, the vice president's late husband, was known for a reform-oriented governance that empowered local residents, which was admired by local and international observers (Kawanaka 2013; Parreño 2019). Local politics are diverse enough to allow iron rule by strongmen as well as a democratic governance that encourages citizens' participation.

The early literature on local governments is dominated by claims that bossism characterized local governments. In a compilation about local political bosses, Alfred McCoy (1994) emphasizes that the weak Philippine state has failed to penetrate into society. Political families, also called clans or dynasties, have maintained their power bases through illegal or extralegal ways, such as violence. McCoy emphasizes social forces such as family, while John Sidel (1999) points out the significance of the American colonial state's institutional legacy of elected local officials who dominate economic resources and administrative prerogatives.

The discourse based on the weak state, or bossism, does not cover Philippine politics' entire nature. The investigative journalism exposing bossism and warlordism represents a space for freedom of speech and a right to know, a space sustained by brave journalists. Based on Sidel's bossism framework, leading Filipino journalists have exposed stories about local bosses throughout the country (Lacaba 1995).

Moreover, the story of policy making reveals an interesting context where policy makers exploit bossism or warlordism in reform politics. Jose Almonte, an influential presidential adviser to President Fidel Ramos, pointed out the use of publications on dynastic rule to generate public support for dismantling the telecommunication sector's monopoly in the early 1990s (Almonte 2015, 241). Policy makers such as Almonte exploited studies on dynastic rule to carry out reform and successfully dismantled the telecommunication industry's monopoly, revealing the political dynamics beyond those of a simple oligarchy.

We can expect contested politics among oligarchs, bosses, and reformers (cf. Quimpo 2008). Against the dominant discourse of a weak state, several policy reforms appear in tax laws, peace building, social policy, and budgeting at the local level (Sidel 2014; Takagi 2017; Hara 2019). McCoy (1994) refers to the Mafia's resilience in Italy to highlight illicit activities in Philippine local politics. Italian local politics, however, were

characterized not only by the Mafia but also by a rich history of social capital accumulated by the local civil community (cf. Putnam 1993). Local politics in the Philippines may be as diverse as Italian local politics.

As shown in Jose Magadia's (2003) study on social capital, citizens actively engage with public issues in places with a dense civic community. In a study on social capital in local Philippine politics, Kobayashi Jun and Osaki Hiroko (2019) found that local political leaders with strong ties to residents performed well in social service delivery, while those with strong ties to the central government performed well in administration. Using the same data set, Nishimura Kenichi (2019) argues that most local governments with councils performed better than those without.

In the following sections, this chapter seeks to appreciate various local political practices and to understand the transformation of local politics by highlighting policy making. The first section critically reviews existing literature on local politics and argues that there may be pockets of local transformation where policy entrepreneurs work locally for reform, despite the presence of a developmental authoritarian state, a patronage-driven state, and a weak state in other parts of the country. The second section elaborates the concept of policy entrepreneurs and coalition politics to shed new light on Philippine politics through a case study on making the Local Government Code of 1991. The third section examines the cases studied and clarifies the practices of local policy entrepreneurs and the nature of local coalition politics in each case.

I Varieties of Local Political Practices: Beyond the Weak State

A critical review of the existing literature reveals some clues about political development in local settings. In his insightful paper on local Philippine political economies, Emmanuel de Dios classifies local leadership into three types: patrons and patronage (clientelism), bosses and violence (warlordism), and brokers and national resources (De Dios 2007, 166–177).

First, local leaders in a system of clientelism often depend on landownership and exploit the huge socioeconomic gap between themselves and their constituencies. Patrons can dominate physical forces by appointing local police or by organizing private militias; they can achieve political stability but cannot provide socioeconomic development. De Dios (2007) repeatedly mentions cases where landlords dominate large farm areas and exploit patron-client relations with minimal social burden to their clients. Other scholars point to machine politics, in which professional politicians provide material benefits only to constituencies in cities (Machado 1972). Patrons in rural areas and machine

politicians in cities both engage in patronage politics, whose ideals oppose politics based on contested programs or platforms of political parties (Kitschelt 2000).

Second, bosses are local leaders who maximize violence to stay in power. In his influential study on bossism in the Philippines, Sidel (1999) emphasizes the political legacy of American colonial state building after independence. As a result of the peculiar sequence of colonial state building—introducing local elections before making a national bureaucracy—elected officials dominate the nation's economic and coercive resources. Thereafter, local political leaders consolidate their power against the national administration because national politicians depend on local politicians for voter mobilization. Based on bossism, the Philippines has a predatory state that mostly fails to use legitimate violence and fails to consolidate the rule of law.

Third, brokers are local leaders who excel at bringing national resources to local areas. They impose initiatives from above and fail to represent the people's voices through political parties. De Dios highlights Mayor Tomas Osmeña of Cebu, who developed the city by establishing a special economic zone and consolidating his power base as the head of the Osmeña family.

The typology of de Dios is an excellent starting point to consider a new perspective on local politics and the Philippine state.[1] Tellingly, he recognizes the economic development under brokers and bosses while criticizing socioeconomic performance under patronage politics or clientelism. For instance, de Dios recognizes socioeconomic development under the rule of strongmen such as Mayor Rodrigo Duterte of Davao City and Governor Juanito Remulla of Cavite Province. We can hardly expect socioeconomic and political development within a weak state and oligarchy, so de Dios provides a hint of a new perspective.

Fig. 1 highlights the differences between de Dios's argument and the previous weak state argument, which also differs from his trifold typology of local leadership.

The y axis shows the degree of socioeconomic development, and the x axis shows authoritarian versus democratic regimes.

The first quadrant depicts socioeconomic development and no political violence. The detailed case studies on each leadership type reveal a mixture of individual initiatives, supporter organizations, and policy sets. In the case study on Mayor Osmeña of Cebu City, Sakuma Miho (2012) describes an evolving developmental strategy led by the mayor. Osmeña worked hard for the Metro Cebu Developmental Project to grow Cebu

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1) De Dios criticizes all three types of leaders because they do not guarantee accountability for leadership as a functional party system does. Party politics might guarantee accountability, but party systems have failed to capture the changing nature of constituencies even in older European democracies and the United States.
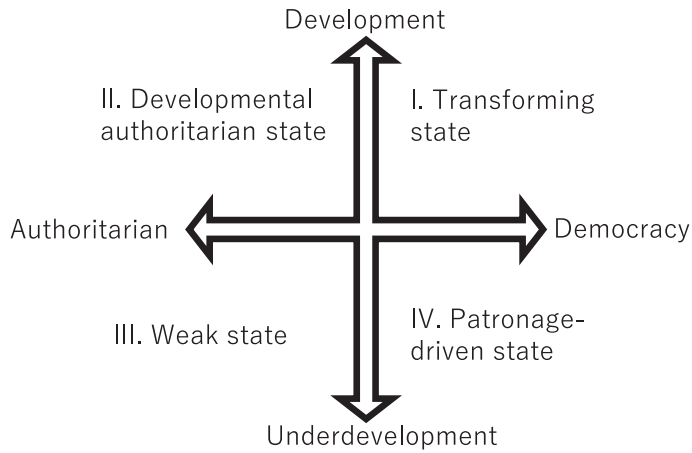
Fig. 1 Varieties of Local Political Leadership and the State beyond the Weak State
Source: Author based on De Dios (2007).

City's coastal area after the 1987 elections. Learning from the failed project in the 1960s, Osmeña designed the government-led developmental project and successfully borrowed 12.3 billion yen from Japan's Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund. Osmeña maximized the Local Government Code of 1991, which allows local governments to contract a loan without intervention by the national government. In 2008, Cebu City finally turned its deficit into a surplus to manage the economic zone and provide social services to its citizens. One may argue that the mayor represents the Osmeña clan's dynastic rule, but the Osmeña clan also has competition. The Garcias emerged as a competing political force in Cebu politics from the early 2000s (Pabico 2007).

Mayor Robredo's much-lauded leadership of Naga City could be a better example of the first quadrant. Robredo built his professional career before running for political office. He created an innovative financial scheme for owners of small- and medium-sized businesses while raising tax collections from the big businesses in the city. He also invented a conditional aid scheme to help the urban poor with medicine and funerals (Kawanaka 2013). Kawanaka Takeshi criticizes Robredo's machine politics, but we cannot underestimate Robredo's innovative policy-making achievements when considering other local machine politics.

Mayors Osmeña and Robredo achieved socioeconomic development, but others in machine politics or family politics failed at developmental projects. Two types of family politics and machine politics apparently exist: static and transformative. In the static politics of Fig. 1's fourth quadrant, leaders focusing on redistributing existing pies merely transferred slices of pie from the central government to local governments and repro-

duced the existing socioeconomic stagnation. Meanwhile, in transformative politics, political leaders do not depend on the existing socioeconomic structure but rather seek transformation, which may lead to the area's socioeconomic development. Notably, Osmeña supported the local government code's creation, while some politicians opposed decentralization to avoid disturbing local power bases (Katayama 2001, 117).

In the second quadrant, political leaders achieve socioeconomic development but depend on violence and suppression. This combination typifies a developmental authoritarian leadership, which was historically a common type of national leadership in Southeast Asia, such as Indonesia under Suharto, Thailand under Sarit and Thanom, and so forth. As de Dios points out, economic development in Cavite Province fits into this type of leadership. Governor Remulla of Cavite Province exploited experts' knowledge of the Japan International Cooperation Agency when he invited Japanese foreign direct investment (FDI) in the 1980s.[2] Besides, Remulla worked with the top Filipino technocrat at the time, Cesar Virata, who was born in Cavite and served as finance minister and prime minister under the Marcos administration (Coronel 1995, 4, 11). He obtained FDI while suppressing opposition with an iron fist (Coronel 1995).

Another famous example of a local developmental authoritarian regime can be found in Davao City under Mayor Duterte. Duterte was first appointed by the revolutionary government of President Corazon Aquino in 1986 and was then elected in 1988, when the city of Davao was called the "murder capital" of the Philippines because of its clashes among the Communist insurgents, anti-Communist cults like Alsa Masa, and several criminal syndicates. Aside from empowering the local police, Mayor Duterte apparently "outsourced" an anti-criminal campaign to private gunmen, which evolved into the so-called Davao Death Squad (Parreño 2019, 128–131, 177–195). While he adopted an iron-fisted approach against violence in the city, he sought economic development through FDI following the model of Singapore under Lee Kwan Yew (Parreño 2019, 173–174). Highlighting the achievements in Davao, Duterte climbed the ladder to the presidency of the Philippines in 2016.

In the third quadrant, we can assume a classic type of weak state that has failed in democracy and socioeconomic development. We may also call such a state predatory since it emphasizes the role of institutions rather than the social structure (Sidel 1999). Differences exist between developmental authoritarian leadership and predatory authoritarian leadership, with the latter failing to achieve economic development. Nationally, President Ferdinand Marcos failed socioeconomically, especially in the 1980s, but he might have equaled other leaders, such as Suharto and Sarit, in abuse of political power.

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2) I appreciate Miriam Grace Go for her insights on the local development of Cavite.

In the Philippines, lists of bosses exist in the weak state at the national and local levels (cf. McCoy 1994; Lacaba 1995).

In the fourth quadrant, de Dios distinguishes local economic development under patrons from a developmental authoritarian state (the second quadrant), using the examples of Tarlac and Cavite Provinces (De Dios 2007, 182). In both provinces, Japanese capital provided direct investments in the 1980s. In Tarlac, the Japanese electronics company Sanyo had relations with then President Aquino, who did not dismantle her family's plantation (Hacienda Luista) in the province. Tarlac and the surrounding provinces failed to maximize opportunities from being adjacent to the National Capital Region, but Cavite became a center for manufacturing exports and enjoyed economic growth. According to de Dios, the difference might have resulted from differing political leaderships in the two provinces: the Remullas could not dominate Cavite's urban political economy, while the Aquino and Cojuangco clans maintained dominance through landownership (De Dios 2007, 182). Not much could be expected from the patronage-driven state leadership in Tarlac.

With examples fitted into each quadrant of Fig. 1, we now shift the discussion from why the Philippines has a weak state in general to why some areas have successfully freed themselves from authoritarian rule and socioeconomic underdevelopment—toward the first quadrant in Fig. 1. In the following section, we highlight the transformative role of policy making in emerging states.

II Policy Making as Institution Making

II-1 *Policy Entrepreneurs in Local Politics*

In transforming states in Fig. 1, someone made a difference. In this special issue, we focus on the role of policy makers who become policy entrepreneurs by creating new policies or finding new ways to implement existing policies. In his classic work on policy studies, John Kingdon (2003, 196–208) highlights the roles of certain policy makers, calling them policy entrepreneurs. Policy entrepreneurs invest their resources into policy-making processes because of certain interests and values, and for the simple joy of participating in the process (Kingdon 2003, 123). Lobbyists work for existing interests, but policy entrepreneurs make a difference through policy making. Scholars focusing on the role of policy entrepreneurs, therefore, highlight policy-making innovations.

Kingdon focuses on national policy entrepreneurs, while this special issue looks at local policy entrepreneurs. Locally, policy entrepreneurs may find new ways to implement existing policies. The Philippine Local Government Code of 1991, for instance,

allows local governments to carry out various initiatives, but it is poorly utilized by local practitioners. Local policy entrepreneurs are not necessarily the same as policy makers with new ideas. Policy entrepreneurs interpret an existing policy in a local context to create a new local policy initiative.

We examine policy entrepreneurship in its implementation and creation. Local policy entrepreneurs find ways to implement national laws locally. Those who helped make economic zones in the Calabarzon area exemplify policy entrepreneurs who utilized the national government's development policy to enhance the local economy. Policy makers also create new laws at the national and local levels that are designed for local development via the national government's actions. Those who worked on the Local Government Code of 1991 exemplify this type of policy entrepreneurship.

II-2 *The Built-in Nature of Reform Policy at the Local Level*

In the weak state framework, political players do not focus on policy making and implementation. They may neglect the achievements of their predecessors and fail to consolidate reform initiatives, resulting in a weak state. Against this backdrop, Filomeno Sta. Ana, who has worked for tax reform beyond the administration, argues that policy making is part of institution making. If institutions are sets of rules shaping people's behavior, public policy is an example of an institution (Sta. Ana 2010).

The built-in nature of reform policy may appear in institutions, organizations, and people's expectations. Ma. Regina M. Hechanova *et al.* (2017) provide a candid collection of transformations in eight local governments—provinces, cities, and municipalities—that received a Galing Pook Award. Table 1 summarizes their findings.

Reviewing this rich case study shows some instances of consolidation of the reform policy beyond the terms of individual politicians, whose terms are limited by law to a maximum of three (or nine years in total). In other words, case studies of local transformation reveal a series of continuous reforms beyond the term limits of particular politicians, as a result of the built-in nature of local policy making.

Local policy entrepreneurs succeeded in ensuring the continuation of their policy innovations beyond their limited terms in office in two ways. First, the successors came from the incumbents' families or close aides and followed their predecessors' initiatives, as expected. The cases of Marikina in 2001 and Mandaluyong, Bohol, and Naga exemplify this pattern.

More intriguing are the cases where competitors simply followed or expanded upon their predecessors' policies. Notably, the successor of the reform-oriented mayor of Marikina City actually ran against the candidate nominated by the mayor, but the successor maintained similar policy initiatives as the previous mayor after winning the 2010

Table 1 Transformation of Local Governments

	Place	Main Issues	Strategies	Institutions	Singled-Out External Partners	Outcomes	Succession
1	Albay Province	Disaster	Disaster risk reduction program	Newly established Provincial Development Management Office and Provincial Disaster Operating Center	Program by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (1989–92)	Fewer casualties	Upgraded into Climate Change Academy–DRR program under successive governors
2	Bohol Province	Inefficient governance Poverty	Human relations reform Ecotourism Agro-industrialization	Separation of Human Relations Office from the governor's office and setting up of an independent Human Resource Management and Development Division (through an executive order) Bohol Environment Code of 1998 Bohol Program Framework for Poverty Reduction	GOLD project by USAID Philippines Australia Human Resources and Organisational Development Facility Congressman from the province ODAs from Belgium, Germany, Japan, Spain, Canada, and others UP Advisory Council	Reduction of poverty incidence (from 50.2% in 2000 to 21.7% in 2015) Promotion from the Club 20 (20 of the poorest provinces) in 1995 to 41st among 85 local governments in 2015	Three successive governors worked for the same goal (Gov. Edgar Chatto, who was the vice mayor for Gov. Relampagos, organized clusters to improve the management) Close cooperation between the local government and congressmen from Bohol (e.g., RA 9593, Tourism Law of 2009)
3	Mandaluyong City	Inefficient governance Congestion	BOT Automation through IT	Introduction of simplified business registration process Introduction of automation in tax collection system	Private businesses and NGOs	Renovation of Kalentong Market Reduction in steps to register a business from 13 to 3 steps Leasing to SM Megamall with annual P15 million payment Framework to provide support to 600 children with special needs	Successive reforms over almost 30 years with three mayors
4	Marikina City	Environmental deterioration	Environmental protection (modeled after Subic, Baguio, and Singapore)	Garbage segregation Ordinance, Discipline on the Sidewalks, to clean up the sidewalk Ordinance to assign deputized apprehending officer (environmental police)	N.A.	7,000-family resettlement from Marikina riverside P50 million grants from the World Bank for a bike lane	Successive reforms over more than 20 years with three mayors
5	San Jose City	Inefficient governance Poverty	Linking small farmers to the JFC (Jollibee Food Corporation) Supply Chain Program	Kalasag Farmers Producers Cooperative	Ateneo School of Governance and the Center for Education Development Catholic Relief Services Jollibee Group Foundation	Increasing onion delivery by Kalasag from 60 metric tons in 2009 to 450 metric tons with P15 million pesos in 2014 180 employed at a peeling factory 46th out of 136 cities in the National Competitiveness Council in 2014	Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007 Mayor ended her three successive terms in 2016
6	Naga City	Poverty	Participatory governance Promotion of professionalism Promotion of numerical targets of reform	City Youth Officials (CYO) Program in 1989 Empowerment Ordinance of Naga City of 1995 to establish the Naga City's People's Council Naga i-Governance Program of 2002	Members of civil society organizations	Promotion from third-class city to first-class city Third out of 136 cities in the National Competitiveness Council in 2014 Some of the 800 alumni from the CYO programs are working in the local government and city council	Successive reforms for almost 30 years with three mayors
7	Dumingag City	Poverty in agricultural sector Gambling and smoking	Organic farming "Cultural revolution" Building schools in the ancestral domain area	Dumingag Institute of Sustainable Organic Agriculture	Farmers	Increased number of organic farming practitioners from 20 in 2007 to 532 in 2015 Increased tax collection from 20% in 2007 to 98% in 2008 100% tobacco-free municipality	Reform through ordinances
8	Municipality of Upi	Poverty	Empowering tri-people of Muslims, Teduray, and Christians	Setting up of Upi People's Council (modeled after the People's Council of Naga) Creation of Mayor's Council	Growth with Equity in Mindanao funded by USAID JICA Zuellig Foundation and Jollibee Foundation	Promotion from fourth-class municipality to first-class municipality	Anti-Red Tape Act of 2007

Source: Based on Hechanova *et al.* (2017).

elections (see Chapter 3).

How did policy initiatives survive a political power struggle in the latter cases? Succession comes from the reform policy's built-in nature. For instance, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation introduced a community-based disaster prepared- ness program in Albay Province under Governor Romeo Salalima in 1989 (Amo and Felipe 2010; Alampay 2017, 15). After Joey S. Salceda was elected governor in 2007, he added climate change to the existing disaster risk reduction and management program and established the Climate Change Academy–Disaster Risk Reduction Training Insti- tute. Salceda advanced the program and was elected co-chair of the board of the Green Climate Fund of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2011 (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, n.d.). Salceda once again fought against Salalima in the 1998 elections and improved upon, instead of abolishing, his predecessor's initiative, illustrating how the issue survived a political power struggle.

II-3 *The Policy Entrepreneurs' Coalition for the Local Government Code of 1991*
   Coalitions of Policy Entrepreneurs
When policy entrepreneurs form a coalition to make a new law, they can make a big dif- ference. In his study on educational reform and reproductive health lawmaking, Takagi Yusuke reveals that policy coalitions under the Benigno Aquino administration were made up of policy entrepreneurs from within and outside the government. The policy coalitions achieved policy reform in certain areas even without a program-oriented polit- ical party with a party platform to formulate a full set of reform policies. This was because policy coalitions can play a similar role as political parties in a certain program through continuous efforts for policy advocacy, making, and implementation (Takagi 2017).

Policy coalitions become especially powerful when they can go beyond the immedi- ate stakeholders. In educational reform and reproductive health lawmaking, advocates can enlarge their coalitions by framing issues in terms that the business community understands (Takagi 2017). In this subsection, we review the creation process of the Local Government Code of 1991 to see an emergence of policy coalitions comprising advocates with local autonomy, anti-Marcos politicians, and technocrats working for liberalization and privatization.

   Economic Bureaucracy
Significantly, some economic planners worked for decentralization before the democra- tization (Hill *et al.* 2007, 11–12). As Alex Brillantes and Abigail Modino point out, policy makers under the authoritarian regime could achieve administrative dis-concentration but not political decentralization (Brillantes and Modino 2015). The planners prepared

for reform despite neglect or political machinations by then President Marcos.

In December 1986, after democratization that February, the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) published the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan, 1987–1992. The planners clearly identified "decentralization, checks and balances, and minimal government intervention in economic activities, as well as the need to provide for necessary infrastructure facilities and basic social services" as the principles governing the government's role and structure (Republic of the Philippines, NEDA 1986, 38). The plan mentioned three paths to achieving decentralization. First, more power would devolve from the central government to local governments. Second, regional and local governments would be strengthened as focal points for local development. Third, the government would encourage people's participation.

Notably, the NEDA proposed this plan when the government was under heavy pressure to avoid expansionist fiscal measures. The NEDA discussed, for instance, the employment implications of market-oriented reforms, such as trade liberalization, tax reform, and public sector reform, and some cabinet members emphasized an employment-oriented economic policy (Republic of the Philippines, NEDA 1986, 36). The planners prioritized market-oriented reform over poverty eradication, although they recognized poverty eradication as "the ultimate aim of development efforts" (Republic of the Philippines, NEDA 1986, 3).

The planners discussed regional development in greater depth in the plan's second chapter, titled "Regional Development and Physical Planning Framework," but they did not forget about fiscal constraints. In the chapter, the planners examined problems and strategies to deal with each of the 13 geographical regions' issues in Fig. 2.

First, the planners highlighted poverty as a critical problem throughout the country, and they pointed to the widespread poverty in the Visayas area, or Regions VI, VII, and VIII (Republic of the Philippines, NEDA 1986, 50). They also mentioned the gap in the incidence of poverty within the country: the National Capital Region had a 43.9 percent poverty incidence, but Region V's (Bicol's) hit 73.2 percent (Republic of the Philippines, NEDA 1986, 50). In poverty-stricken regions such as Bicol, planners suggested developing the rural hinterlands and upland areas by diversifying crops (Republic of the Philippines, NEDA 1986, 71). To achieve this goal, they proposed developing off-farm employment opportunities in livestock-based enterprises in Masbate, in agroforestry industries in Catanduanes, in wood-based industries in Sorsogon and Camarines Norte, and so on.

Second, when it came to productivity, only the National Capital Region and Region IV (Southern Tagalog) exceeded the national average; Regions II (Cagayan Valley), V (Bicol), and VIII (Eastern Visayas) remained the least productive (Republic of the Philippines, NEDA 1986, 50). The planners suggested utilizing existing resources more
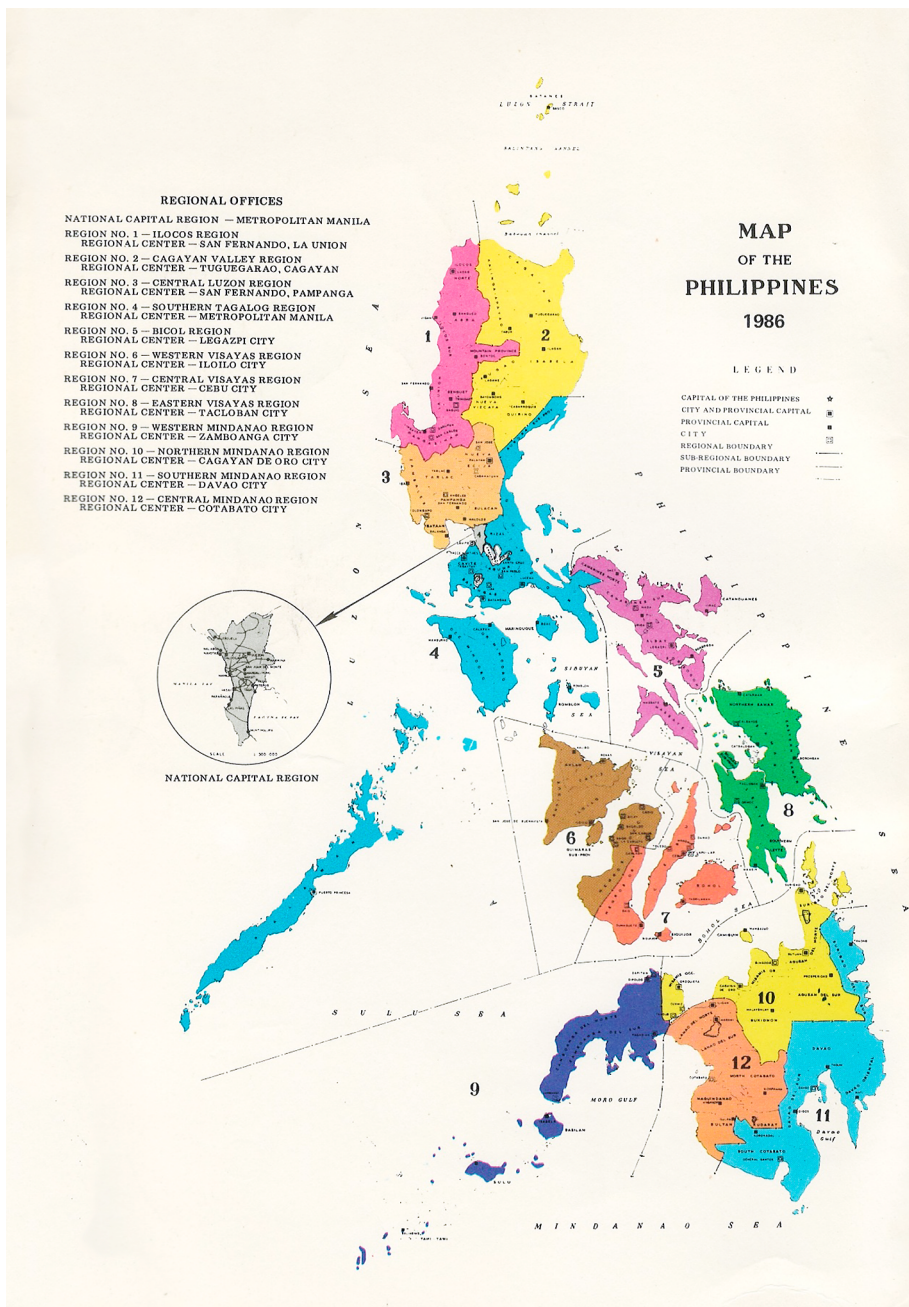
Fig. 2　Map of the Philippines

Source: Republic of the Philippines, NEDA (1986, back cover).

efficiently in low-productivity regions. In Region II (Cagayan Valley), for instance, the authorities prescribed expanding and intensifying unutilized and underutilized croplands via irrigation, farm-to-market roads, and so forth (Republic of the Philippines, NEDA 1986, 67). The planners presented three categories of agricultural products to be promoted: products with existing comparative advantages (such as unhusked rice and white corn), products with linkage potential (such as tobacco and coffee), and products with high nutrients. The last category reflects the lack of highly nutritious foods in the region.

Third, off-farm income, indicating economic transformation from an agrarian economy, ranged from 61 percent in Regions IV (Southern Tagalog) and VII (Central Visayas) to 33 percent in Region XII (Central Mindanao).[3] The Cavite–Laguna–Batangas Growth Corridor was established in Region IV so that provinces could absorb FDI. Region VII's Cebu City is an urban center, along with Mactan International Airport, which has an export-processing zone.

The NEDA plan's last chapter points out the necessity of administrative reform. The planners criticized previous decentralization efforts for their "conflicting tendencies" of reform orientation and stated that "greater and meaningful decentralization, therefore, will have to be a major policy agenda for this plan period" (Republic of the Philippines, NEDA 1986, 393). In its recommendations, the NEDA listed issues to consider, such as transferring authority over social services and local infrastructure projects from the central government to local governments, increasing Internal Revenue Allotments (IRA), increasing freedom for local development plan making, and so forth (Republic of the Philippines, NEDA 1986, 404).

In addition to the reform's possible positive outcomes, planners worried about bossism. The plan, in fact, refers to "the need to minimize the evils of local oligarchies, nepotism, and corruption" (Republic of the Philippines, NEDA 1986, 405). The planners suggested policy makers should encourage citizens' participation to mitigate the evils, though they did not elaborate further. The policy makers recognized the issues of local politics, which were addressed by the Aquino cabinet's local minister, as discussed below.

Revolutionary Government

Another significant development toward local governance reform evolved within the Corazon Aquino administration and gained special momentum from the People Power Revolution. Minister Aquilino Pimentel Jr. began purging incumbent elective officials in local governments that were dominated by affiliates of the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL, New Society Movement), President Marcos's party, and appointing officers in

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3) Data on the NCR's off-farm income are not shown in the plan, but statistics for the country in general are shown: 50.2 percent (Republic of the Philippines, NEDA 1986, 53).

charge (Nemenzo 1988, 227). With Pimentel's draconian measures, 76.3 percent of governors, 66.7 percent of mayors, and 42.7 percent of town mayors were purged within two months (Asano 1992, 239). Pimentel's actions were controversial because he aggressively removed local KBL politicians and seemed to have appointed close affiliates of his party, PDP-Laban. Within anti-Marcos factions, the United Nationalist Democratic Organization, led by Vice President Doy Laurel, had 37 seats, and Pimentel's PDP-Laban had only 10. The KBL, however, occupied 124 seats in the assembly (Asano 1992, 233). Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile Sr. accused President Aquino of working toward peace with the Communist Party and its New People's Army and demanded that some of the officers in charge in local governments be replaced (Nozawa 1987, 293).

Over time, Pimentel lost influence in both the cabinet and his own party. He was forced out by Peping Cojuanco Jr., brother of Corazon Aquino, as the president of PDP-Laban in October 1986 and subsequently resigned from the cabinet amid the power struggle between President Aquino and Defense Minister Enrile in December the same year (Asano 1992, 241, 244). Pimentel would be elected senator in 1987 and play a vital role in making the Local Government Code of 1991, but his being once replaced by the president shows he was not the only policy maker working for decentralization.

Pimentel was not the sole voice for local autonomy within the administration. Aquino appointed members of the constitutional commission, which supported decentralization. Article X of the 1987 Constitution covers local government. Section 3 of the article states, "The Congress shall enact a local government code which shall provide for a more responsive and accountable local government structure instituted through a system of decentralization." In the articles, the framers clearly state that local government units can create their own resources via taxation, fees, and charges in addition to a certain allotment from national taxes (Sections 5 and 6, Art. X, Constitution).

Aquino actively promoted decentralization and organized the Cabinet Action Committee on Decentralization to examine powers and responsibilities to be given to local governments in May 1988. The committee implemented the Pilot Decentralization Project to examine the feasibility of reform (Matsuda 2011, 6). Notably, President Aquino worked closely with Dr. Ediberto de Jesus, who established and managed the Rural Development Management Program at the Asian Institute of Management in 1977. President Aquino appointed de Jesus as the presidential adviser on rural development and asked for a government-wide nongovernmental organization liaison system, including the NEDA Focal Point in 1988 (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization 1994, 48). The presidential office was heavily involved in rural development, and on September 8, 1988 the president certified several administrative measures to increase the IRA to local governments (House of Representatives, July 24, 1990, 93).

Congress and the Making of the Local Government Code of 1991

Pimentel, who resigned as local government minister and was elected senator in 1987, worked in the senate to establish the local government code (Brillantes 2003; Matsuda 2011). Meanwhile, in the lower house, the Committee on Local Government prepared the bill for two years before submitting it to congress on June 6, 1990 (House of Representatives, June 7, 1990, 761). Crafting the code took time, and the bill's deliberation was delayed because some members of congress feared losing influence in their own local constituencies (Fukushima 1991, 328). After continuous criticism from her own administration, President Aquino convinced congress to work on the local government code in 1990.

Congressman Celestino Martinez of Cebu served as chair of the Committee on Local Government and sponsored the bill in a speech on June 7, 1990 (House of Representatives, June 7, 1990, 755). Martinez emphasized four points: fiscal decentralization via IRA reforms and decentralization via deconcentration, devolution, and citizen empowerment.

Through deconcentration, lawmakers stipulated how national departments delegated authority to regional, district, and field offices. This reflected criticism of the previous Local Government Code of 1983, which prescribed that national departments and agencies could delegate authority only to their own local branches (House of Representatives, June 7, 1990, 757).

A distinguishing feature of the code is its trust in the electoral process rather than in meritocracy or technocracy. In his sponsorship remarks, for instance, Congressman Hilario L. De Pedro III of South Cotabato clarified the difference between administrative decentralization and political devolution by quoting Speaker Ramon Mitra:

> As Speaker Ramon Mitra himself has observed, the bulk of power in government is concentrated in the sectoral line agencies which are run by nonelective Manila-based functionaries with little empathy for ordinary Filipinos. . . . It is high time that the fulcrum of political power shifts away from imperial Manila to our local governments. (House of Representatives, June 7, 1990, 758)

De Pedro's emphasis on politics rather than administration is intriguing, and it aligns with his support of the local government code. Lawmakers apparently believed in the legitimacy and capacity of elected officials rather than in a professional bureaucracy.

Devolution confers a national government's power and authority to a local government (House of Representatives, June 7, 1990, 756). The local governments' functions cover a range of activities, including the construction of administrative halls, roads, bridges, and schools and the establishment of day care centers, health centers, public markets, and cemeteries (House of Representatives, June 6, 1990, Sec. 20).

Concerns about local oligarchs arose during discussions on this issue. Congress-

woman Socorro Acosta of Bukidnon, who founded a local NGO for microcredit in her region and was one of the sponsors of the bill, spoke about the risk of domination by political elites and countermeasures against this risk in the code (House of Representatives, June 7, 1990, 761–762; Mukherjee 2007). She argued that lawmakers had prepared a recall mechanism and used NGO participation in local development councils as safeguards against domination. Additionally, she expected the local government code would provide opportunities for political education and enhance political leaders' capabilities.

Generally speaking, lawmakers were optimistic about their trust in NGOs, reflecting the atmosphere right after democratization led by the People Power Revolution. Regarding citizen participation, lawmakers mentioned the arrangements of elections, the recall of local politicians, the participation of local education boards' management, and the participation of NGOs in the planning processes for development (House of Representatives, June 7, 1990, 756).

While the Local Government Code of 1991 was being made, a coalition advocating for local autonomy began emerging. First, economic managers concerned about the country's financial conditions prepared a medium-term development plan that clearly promoted decentralization to enhance local governing capacities without large government expenditure. Second, President Aquino and Local Government Minister Pimentel were very interested in local autonomy in the context of democratization or departure from dictatorship and supported the constitution, which promoted the same principles. Third, Senator Pimentel and some legislators worked in congress to institutionalize decentralization by highlighting the role of local politicians and civic participation in governance.

II-4 *Local Development after Decentralization*

The policy coalitions for decentralization helped local governments to see the fruits of reform through the passage of the Local Government Code of 1991. Brillantes, who was instrumental in decentralization, argued that it yielded good and best practices in many local governments (Brillantes 2003). Good practices properly implemented existing policies, and the best practices were creative policy making by local practitioners. Resonating with the Local Government Code of 1991, the Galing Pook Foundation assessed local governments' performance. Figs. 3 and 4 show the achievements of local governments.

Fig. 3 illustrates the activity fields awarded by the foundation. Environmental protection, health and sanitation, and local economic development were the top three areas awarded. When it comes to indigenous people and labor dispute resolution, however, good and best practices appear difficult to find.

Water Supply
Sustainable Agriculture
Sports Development
Socialized Housing
Social Welfare and Development
Population
Indigenous Peoples
Health and Sanitation
Gender Sensitivity
Environmental Protection
Education
Disaster Management
Culture and Tourism
Child Welfare and Protection
Tourism
Public Infrastructure
Power and Telecommunications Program
Local Economic Development
Livelihood/Income Generation
Protective Services
Peace and Security
Multi-sectoral Cooperation
Local Governance
Local Administration and Management
Labor Dispute Resolution
Justice System
Inter-LGU Cooperation
Integrated Area Development
Information Technology
Capability Building
Advocacy

0   10   20   30   40   50   60

Fig. 3   Galing Pook Awardees by Category (1994–2014, $n = 392$)
Source: Galing Pook Foundation (various years).

Fig. 4 shows the awarded local governments by region. As of 2018, the Philippines had 16 regions. According to Fig. 4, Region VII (Central Visayas) received the most awards. In our case study, we examine Bohol in this region, focusing on its ecotourism promotion and poverty eradication measures. The National Capital Region received the second-largest number of awards. In our case studies, Marikina City exemplifies reform-oriented governance and environmental protection in this region. Meanwhile, two autonomous regions, the Cordillera Autonomous Region and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), were the lowest performers. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, people in the ARMM face more difficulties than those in other regions, but some people are moving forward to make a difference by cooperating with military officers implementing civil-military operations.

In terms of human development, we can observe improvement in general, although
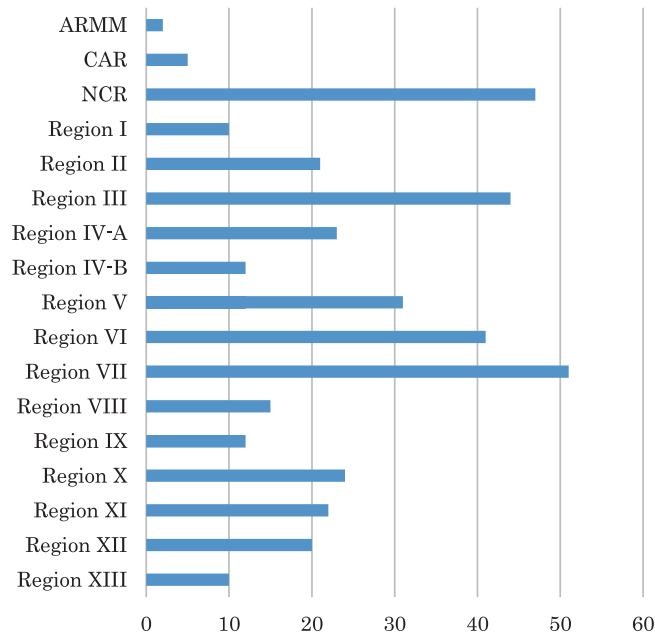
Fig. 4   Galing Pook Awards by Region (1994–2014, $n = 392$)
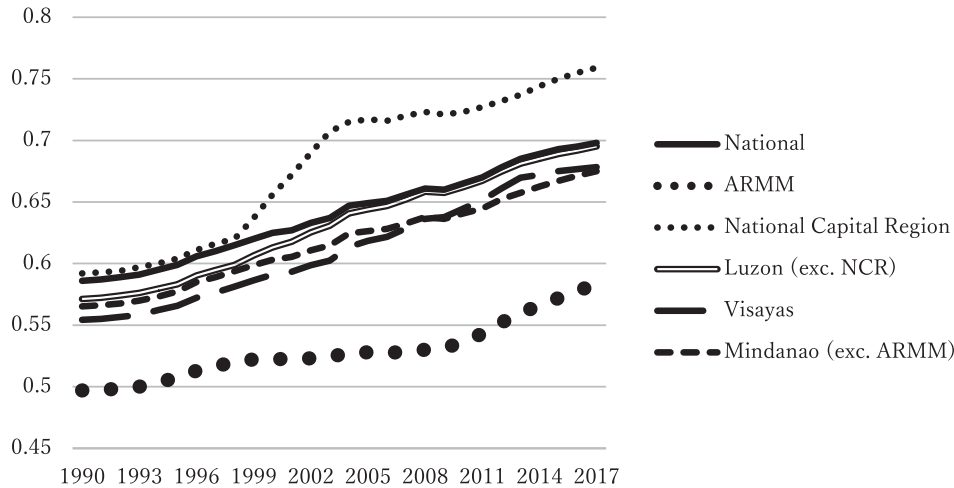Source: Galing Pook Foundation (various years).

Fig. 5   Philippine Subnational Human Development, 1990–2017
Source: Global Data Lab (n.d.).

the gap between the national average and Muslim Mindanao is still wide, according to Fig. 5.

While moderate improvement in human development may be observed throughout the country, improvement does not occur automatically. As we will see from the summary in the next section and more details in succeeding chapters, policy entrepreneurs and their coalitions make a difference at the local level.

III   In Search of Local Policy Entrepreneurs

In this special issue, we encounter policy entrepreneurs with and without policy coalitions. Chapter 2, on San Nicolas, Ilocos Norte, details Mayor Alfredo Valdez's innovative leadership. Valdez worked toward business-friendly governance to encourage local and international investments. Valdez's administration built the Valdez Center to entice one of the country's largest retailers: Robinsons. Working coalitions led by mayoral initiatives and supported by private businesses began to emerge. Further, the administration took advantage of opportunities presented by the growth in the local economy via remittances from Filipinos working abroad. The San Nicolas case exemplifies the uncoordinated efforts of policy entrepreneurs and private businesses.

In Chapter 3, on Marikina City in the National Capital Region, the author finds that reform-oriented governance originated with a couple who retained power for almost two decades. The mayors maximized opportunities created by the Local Government Code of 1991 by encouraging local governments to work directly with international donors to improve the city's socioeconomic conditions. In this chapter, Mendoza argues that the successive mayors were not trapped by "cancel culture" but developed reform policy based on their predecessors. This case exemplifies a coalition of local politicians, business leaders, and labor leaders who collaborated to mitigate liberalization's negative impact.

Chapter 4, on Bohol Province, highlights coordinated efforts among the provincial, city, and municipal governments to eradicate poverty by promoting ecotourism. Bohol Province orchestrated efforts to promote ecotourism, which increased economic development and freedom from a Communist insurgency. It is an impressive successful case of local transformation through policy entrepreneurship.

Finding coalitions is difficult in Sulu, in the ARMM, where civil authority largely failed to provide peace and order, as the author discusses in Chapter 5. Instead, the military provides de facto governance in Sulu by emphasizing a civil-military operation promoting social welfare. The governance, however, depends on a military leadership

that is usually stationed in Sulu for two years or less and can change the operation's emphasis from a "search and destroy" operation to a civil-military operation or vice versa.

Conclusion

As a critical review of the literature on local politics, this chapter sheds new light on local practices in the transforming Philippine state. In a transforming state, policy entrepreneurs and policy coalitions may collaborate to make a difference through policy making. Policy entrepreneurs may be able to build in reform initiatives through innovative policy making and policy implementation.

Policy entrepreneurs can make a bigger impact when they create a coalition covering various societal interests. The Local Government Code of 1991 resulted from continuous efforts by various policy makers, including economic planners, legislators, the president, and professionals working for rural development. The policy coalition established foundations for local development, some of which have been awarded by the Galing Pook Foundation.

The following chapters will show the practices of various local actors in creating a transforming state at the local level. They reveal individual policy entrepreneurs or coalitions of practitioners who collaborate to make a difference in local governance.

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Rise of "Business-Friendly" Local Elite Rule in the Philippines:
How the Valdezes Developed San Nicolas, Ilocos Norte

Kusaka Wataru*

This paper aims to explain why reform-oriented local politics has gained ground in the Philippines. It has been argued that local politics in the Philippines is characterized by dynastic elites who employ a patron–client relationship, exploitive rent-seeking, and coercion and violence. However, a more reform-oriented local politics has emerged in many parts of the country since around the 2000s. What is the driver for the rise of reform-oriented local politics? Does this form of politics weaken or strengthen the local political dynasties? This paper answers the first question by arguing that links between the global neoliberal economy and local policy entrepreneurs have facilitated the rise of reform-oriented and business-friendly local politics. For the second question, it claims that local elites who become successful policy entrepreneurs adopting the new business-friendly politics are likely to further entrench themselves and perpetuate their dynasty by utilizing private capital investment. These arguments are based on the case of the Valdez family in the municipality of San Nicolas, Ilocos Norte.

Keywords: local politics, business-friendly, good governance, rent-seeking, elite democracy, political economy, real estate business

Introduction

Researchers have observed that Philippine local politics is characterized by an "elite democracy" in which oligarchic elites monopolize political power by controlling poor constituents through clientelism coupled with coercion and violence; they also accumulate wealth through exploitive rent-seeking. However, this traditional view cannot explain the rise of more reform-oriented local politics in which local elites seek good governance and local economic development. This paper aims to address two questions related to the change.

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First, what is the driver for the rise of reform-oriented local politics? Previous studies have emphasized the importance of political leadership. Aser Javier (2002) attributes the emergence of local governments' public entrepreneurship to the initiative of local chief executives who make use of the opportunities and power given to them by decentralization, with case studies of Marikina City, the province of Bulacan, and the municipality of Irosin. Emma Porio (2012) also emphasizes the initiatives of city mayors in Metro Manila in implementing networked governance with NGOs and business groups, emphasizing discourses of participation, empowerment, capacity building, and consensus building to deliver better services to constituents in order to be competitive to demands for economic growth and social and environmental governance. Agarie Hideo (2017) reports that in General Santos City, a new reform-oriented politician emerged due to the initiative of NGOs, people's associations, professionals, and civil servants' trade unions. Ma. Regina M. Hechanova *et al.* (2017), examining eight reform-oriented local governments—Albay Province, Bohol Province, Mandaluyong City, Marikina City, Naga City, San Jose City (Nueva Ecija), Municipality of Dumingag (Zamboanga del Sur), and Municipality of Upi (Maguindanao)—identify transformative leadership with visions, strategic programs and initiatives, and citizen engagement as drivers of change. Hara Tamiki (2019) demonstrates how a progressive political coalition composed of the Liberal Party and Akbayan defeated a political dynasty in Siquijor Province through "People Power volunteers" and bottom-up budgeting projects during the Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino administration. A quantitative study by a Japanese research team asserts that mayors who frequently meet their constituents and hold development councils are likely to achieve good performance (Kobayashi and Osaki 2019; Nishimura 2019).

These explanations highlighting political leadership and initiative are convincing but, do not explain the structural factors that have allowed local elites to become more reform-oriented. This paper argues that economic liberalization and the global economy have created a new political arena in which the pursuit of enticing investments from the private sector through business-friendly politics has become more critical for local elites than adhering to traditional exploitative rent-seeking. In other words, the nexus between the changes in economic structure and initiatives of local "policy entrepreneurs" (Takagi 2021) has facilitated the rise of reform-oriented and business-friendly local politics.

Second, do the new economic structure and the rise of reform-oriented local politics weaken or strengthen local political dynasties? To answer the question, it is important to note that local elites' power bases have shifted from a reliance on landownership and state resources to private resources of investors. With this shift, local political dynasties may become less stable as the importance of monopoly over state resources decreases. Also, economic development can enable constituents become more independent from

the local elites by providing them of new private resources. For instance, Raymund John P. Rosuelo (2017) clarifies that urbanization and influx of the middle class into gated subdivisions formed new local constituents, who eroded a political clan's long-standing dominance in Cainta, Rizal. However, it is also possible for local political dynasties to utilize the flow of private capital to strengthen their power base; this is supported by case studies. Sakuma Miho (2012) notes the continued dynastic rule of the Osmeñas in Cebu City, who successfully created jobs and increased tax revenue by attracting foreign investment to the special economic zone of Cebu Bay reclaimed with official development assistance from Japan. Porio (2012) identifies the paradox that local governments with traditional leadership in Metro Manila tend to transform local governance to become more efficient, innovative, transparent, and accountable to the needs of their constituents in order to remain competitive.

This study supports the latter scenario based on the case in Ilocos Norte, where I confirmed that local elites adopted the new mode of business-friendly governance and succeeded in enticing private capital investment to entrench themselves and perpetuate their dynasty. I also explore conditions that would frustrate the continuation of business-friendly elites' rule and usher in more open and competitive local politics. For this research, I carried out a total of five field surveys lasting about two weeks between 2007 and 2018 in the municipality of San Nicolas and Laoag City, in the province of Ilocos Norte.[1]

I Changing Landscape of Political Economy

I-1 *Shifting of Local Elites' Power Base*
Many studies have tried to identify the power bases of Filipino local elites who successfully captured the state and maintained their power for generations. The origin of traditional elites can be traced back to the early American colonial era, when emerging Filipino-Chinese mestizos purchased huge plantations from the departing Spanish religious orders that accumulated lands to seek profits in the international cash crop market (Anderson 1988). The emerging elites entrenched themselves through the lucrative export of cash crops, mainly sugar, to the US market and through the monopolization of political positions through the electoral democracy installed by the American colonial government.

Studies of rural local politics in the pre-martial law era emphasized elites' landowner-

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ship and patron–client relationship with poor constituents as their power base (Lande 1965; Agpalo 1972). They discussed an urban setting, where a vast number of domestic migrants moved from rural areas and the land ownership was not concentrated; the emergence of "machine politics" was observed, in which "new men" utilized resources obtained from national politicians to consolidate their constituents' vote for their political party or faction (Machado 1971; 1974). While the agrarian patron–client relationship is more long term and personal, this urban machine politics is more instrumental and specific to election time. Democratization in 1986 helped to revive such urban machine politics in many localities, including the cities of Metro Manila (Magno 1993; Gloria 1995).

John Sidel (1999) contributed to a theoretical turn by arguing that local elites' power base is neither landownership nor a patron–client relationship but is in fact found in their access to state resources, including allocation of national revenue, use of rent-seeking, and violence. He argues that the local elites who monopolize access to state resources have ruled over poor constituents in the structural condition of "primitive accumulation of capital" in which resources are concentrated in the state. Kawanaka Takeshi (2002) supports the importance of access to state resources for elites' power, yet he presents a different perspective in terms of methods of rule. While Sidel emphasizes the local elites' violence and coercion with the cases of Cavite and Cebu City, Kawanaka explains how Mayor Jesse Robredo's political machine efficiently distributed services to organized constituents in Naga City.

Although the theoretical turn toward state resources is important, the condition of the state's monopoly of resources on which these arguments are premised has become increasingly irrelevant in many localities. This is because globalization and economic liberalization have radically changed the structural condition of what Sidel called "primitive accumulation of capital" and have promoted capital accumulation in society—not only in Metro Manila but also in many smaller cities. Continuously increasing remittances from Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) have increased the number of constituents who are independent of the clientelist relationship with local elites.[2] The remittances have also expanded purchasing power of OFW families and the size of local markets, which has attracted inward investment of private capital, both domestically and from foreign investors.[3] Thus, the state no longer monopolizes resources, and private capital has increasingly become essential for local elites to consolidate their rule.

Coinciding with the changing economic environment was the decentralization intro-

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2) The amount of remittances from OFWs increased from $694 billion in 1985 to $18,763 billion in 2010 and $28,943 billion in 2018 (Philippine Statistics Authority).

3) The net flow of foreign direct investment into the Philippines increased from $12 million in 1985 to $1.07 billion in 2010 and $9.802 billion in 2018 (World Bank, n.d.).

duced by the Local Government Code of 1991, which gave local governments enhanced discretional authority to tax, issue local bonds, borrow from financial institutions, and engage in development projects in collaboration with the private sector. In general, decentralization provides incentives for local governments to compete for a prosperous local economy (Weingast 2009, 280). In the Philippines' case, limited devolution of resources from the national to local governments, despite the fiscal decentralization, has intensified the race among local governments to attain investments by providing the private sector with exemption from regulations, tax privileges, and long-term guarantees of profits (Holmes 2016, 124–129).

It is clear that local elites have found new incentives in the changing environment. If they are successful in enticing investments from the private sector, they can stimulate the local economy, create employment, and increase local revenue, all of which are useful in consolidating their electoral holds. It has become irrational for them to maintain the traditional practices of red tape and demanding grease payments from the private sector in exchange for permitting business operations. This new rule of the game introduced by the global economy has pressured local elites to become more business friendly.

This new trend is seen in the fact that each year there are around 150 entries from local government units (LGUs) for the Galing Pook award (Galing Pook Foundation 2017, 3). Since 1993 the Galing Pook Foundation has given this award to local governments that initiate outstanding or trailblazing innovations in local governance. However, Ronald Holmes (2016, 129–131) notes that not all local governments are keen to adopt good governance even when they fail to generate local revenues. He explains that the unconditional Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) from the national government has led to complacency among local leaders, who do not improve public services, causing "flypaper effects" (money sticks where it hits).[4]

Andreas Lange explains that the divergence between progressive and regressive local politics is determined by differences in local economic structures. In areas where economic activities are urbanized and diversified, there are likely to be more local elites competing for support from the electorate. Intensified competition gives elites incentives for local economic growth that provides benefits to constituents. By contrast, in areas where economic activities rely on agricultural and state resources, a limited number of dynastic elites entrench themselves through exploitive rent-seeking without being pressurized by the electorate and rival elites, and the economy stagnates as a result (Lange 2010).

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4) Holmes also notes that real property tax collection on idle lands tends to be low because the financial and political process of land valuation is more costly than a possible increase in revenue from taxes, due to the limited power of local governments to set tax rates.

I-2 *Real Estate Boom in Neoliberal Economy*

For progressive local elites, a crucial requirement to attract the private sector is securing and providing urban lands for them. The real estate business, which has recorded a boom since 2003, is the second-fastest growing industrial sector only behind mining as a separate subsector in the country (Bello *et al.* 2014, 35–66).[5] The real estate boom is visible in the active construction of IT parks, shopping malls, and residential towers not only in Metro Manila and its suburbs but also in smaller cities.

A driver for the growth of the real estate business is remittances from OFWs. Remittances almost quadrupled between 2000 and 2016, from US$6.96 billion to US$26.9 billion. As Antoinette Raquiza (2014, 231) clarifies, the growth in the service sector is marked by a remittance-led economy in which business conglomerates branch out to meet the demands created by OFW families who spend money on real estate, retailing, gaming, tourism, education, and health care. Of the OFW remittances, 30 percent is estimated to be invested in real estate (Bello *et al.* 2014, 46). To seize the opportunity and diversify traditional sources of wealth, established business elites, including Henry Sy, Lucio Tan, and John Gokongwei Jr., have made a full-scale entry into the rapidly growing real estate market within the last two decades, while new entrepreneurs such as Andrew Tan, Manuel Villar, and Andrew Gotianun have built wealth primarily in the real estate business.

Another driver for urban real estate development is the rapidly growing global business process outsourcing (BPO) industry, in which the Philippines, India and China are the leading countries. In 2016, BPO centers in the Philippines generated revenues of US$25 billon, contributing to 9 percent of the country's GDP growth (Shead 2017). The boom in the BPO sector strengthened international companies' demand for office space (Bello *et al.* 2014, 45–46; Raquiza 2014, 230). The BPO business in the Philippines started in 1997 when the real estate tycoon Andrew Tan transformed unoccupied high-rise buildings into the Eastwood City Cyberpark following the Asian financial crisis (Raquiza 2014, 234–235). He was followed by other business elites, such as Lucio Tan, the Ayalas, and the Gokongweis. They successfully lobbied to include BPO facilities as part of the special economic zones authorized by the state to enjoy tax incentives.

According to Raquiza, investment in real estate helped these business elites dramatically increase their wealth accumulation. She explains that their venture into real estate was nothing but an attempt to seize the third most distinct business opportunity, which emerged in the early twenty-first century, when the economy was driven by

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5) Current prices of real estate, renting, and business activity according to the gross national income and gross domestic product recorded double-digit growth except from 2008 to 2009.

liberalization and globalization. This followed the first period of the American colonial era—in the early twentieth century—when the production and export of agricultural raw materials and semi-processed goods consolidated the wealth of traditional elites, and the second period, after the post-war independence, in the 1950s, when Filipino entrepreneurs took over departing Americans' retail trade businesses (Raquiza 2014: 231–232). The current, third, opportunity was formed by the global capital flow into the country and neoliberal state policies that "liberated" lands from the state, domestic manufacturing, and agriculture. Many state lands were privatized, structural adjustment programs negatively affected the old manufacturing industry of import substitution, and the conversion of land use from agricultural to commercial became easier (Bello *et al.* 2014, 47–48).

However, this neoliberal economy does not mean a departure from rent-seeking and cronyism that characterized the previous political economy. Despite the dominant discourse of free market competition, real estate and construction businesses are protected from foreign capital competition by economic nationalist institutions, including the 1987 constitution. Rent-seeking is still important because real estate is one of the commodities most regulated by the state (Bello *et al.* 2014, 35–66). Political influence plays a significant role in the following processes: the privatization of state lands, conversion or rezoning of land uses, tax abatements, public service provision, and the construction of infrastructures that affect land value. Edsel Sajor (2003, 98–99) argues that during the real estate boom in Cebu City in the 1990s, the urban planning became about dealmaking with private interests rather than preserving public interests through regulation. Congressmen have exploited their legislative power when diversifying into real estate business (Coronel 2003). The three billionaires in the House of Representatives had real estate businesses in 2017 (Rappler 2018). The owner of Vista Land, Manuel Villar, who served as congressman for three terms and senator for two terms, is the prototype of the new breed of politician.[6] He reportedly exercised political influence over public works in order to inflate the value of his lands (Rufo 2010).

Walden Bello *et al.* (2014, 53–55) insist that land is still the elites' source of wealth but their economic base has shifted from rural, cash crop-oriented activities to urban development. However, not all traditional elites have been successful in adjusting to the changing business environment. For instance, old landed elites in Metro Manila such as the Tuazons, Aranetas, and Ortigases are no longer leading economic players due to their

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6) Manuel's son Mark became the secretary of public works and highways in the Duterte administration despite the family's interest in real estate. Manuel's wife, Cynthia, who was reelected to the Senate in 2019, chairs the Senate's Agriculture and Food Committee despite the Villar family's interest in converting agricultural lands into the family's subdivision project sites.

failed strategy of speculatively holding on to idle assets.[7]   They are now selling their urban lands to bigger developers.[8]   Bello *et al.* (2014, 55) argue that the key for Filipino capitalists to successfully accumulate wealth has become their ability to mobilize large amounts of capital to meet globalized sources of demand.

I-3 *Globalized Local Economy in Ilocos Norte*
The changes in the political economy have reached from Metro Manila to smaller cities. Ilocos Norte is an ideal place to examine their impact on local politics because of the province's heavy reliance on international migration and remittances from OFWs. The province is administratively composed of 21 municipalities, one component city, and the provincial capital of Laoag City. Ilocano is the common language of the region. The following historical description of the region is derived from the works of Nagasaka Itaru (2009; 2013).

In Ilocos Norte Province, which lacks large plain lands, agriculture could not support the increasing population. This pushed many males to migrate to sugarcane plantations in Hawaii and fruit farms on the US mainland from the beginning of the twentieth century, during the American colonial period. Among the approximately one hundred thousand Filipinos who migrated to Hawaii between 1915 and 1946, 54 percent were from the three Ilocano-speaking provinces of Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, and La Union (Young 1981, 360). Although the American government imposed a quota to limit the number of Filipino immigrants in 1934, the quota was removed by the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, and the number of Filipino migrants increased again. In the 1960s, two-thirds to three-fourths of the Filipinos in Hawaii and the US mainland were estimated to be Ilocanos (Lewis 1971, 6). Since the 1980s, migration to Italy has become popular. Ilocanos were the biggest group among the OFWs until the 1990s, when the number of international migrants rapidly increased in other provinces (Nagasaka 2009, 91).

Remittances from OFWs has become the main source of income in the local economy. The population engaging in agriculture in the province continuously decreased from 52.4 percent in 1992 to 45.2 percent in 2000 and 27.4 percent in 2016. Tobacco and garlic were once profitable cash crops in the region, but imports and smuggling of cheaper products from China have negatively affected their production (Molina 2013;

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7) Speculation was a major strategy they used for accumulation, because of the high and secure returns coupled with failure of the state to collect idle land taxes due to penetration of the elites' interest (Goss 1998, 91–92; Cardenas 2011, 17).
8) Sajor (2003) points out that while the Osmeñas and Aboitezes, the two traditional landed elite families in Cebu, became real estate developers, other landed elites speculatively held on to their lots without developing or selling them and thus lost out on business opportunities.

Clapano 2019).[9] The decrease in selling price has made these cash crops unprofitable due to the high inputs and labor required for cultivation. Growth in the manufacturing industry has stagnated, as it has in many parts of the country, although a few factories continue to operate: the San Miguel Beer and Coca-Cola plants in the municipality of San Nicolas since 1980 and the tomato-processing plant of the Northern Foods Corporation in the municipality of Sarrat since 1984. Reliance on international remittances is reflected in the fact that Laoag City had 16 bank branches for a population of 66,000 in 1975 (Abat 1984, 80); this number of banks per capita could be higher than in Manila. By 2006, the number of bank branches had increased to 29. According to bank managers, branches in Laoag have much bigger deposits than branches in other areas, reflecting the huge amounts of remittance and transfers of pension from the United States (Nagasaka 2013, 361).

Remittances support the locals' new consumption behaviors. Nagasaka's 2008 household survey in a village located 15 kilometers away from Laoag showed that 82 percent of the villagers received remittances. Nagasaka notes that urban or middle-class lifestyles unimaginable 10 years ago have spread in the village. An increasing number of villagers complete higher education, pay for water services, and own a motorbike or private car. They drive to Laoag, withdraw remittances from bank ATMs, and eat out. The way that OFWs invest in land has also changed. While it was previously common to buy lands for agriculture or housing in their home village as traditional "prestige goods," an increasing number of OFWs have purchased real estate in Laoag for their own housing or commercial investment since the 2000s (Nagasaka 2013).

In 1992 there was only one fast food store and one big grocery store in Laoag, but today many shops and businesses can be seen. Investment in the city has increased since the 2000s against a backdrop of enhanced purchasing power of OFW families and intensified competition in Metro Manila, which has pushed investors to seek new opportunities in smaller cities such as Laoag. However, the commercial district of Laoag is small, impossible to expand, and expensive due to the geographical constraints imposed by the adjacent Laoag River. Therefore, a new commercial district has formed in the neighboring municipality of San Nicolas, only 3 kilometers away from the city beyond the Laoag River to the south, including a big shopping mall called Robinsons Place Ilocos (originally Robinsons Ilocos Norte; hereafter the Robinsons). Car showrooms for Honda, Nissan, Kia, Hyundai, Chevrolet, Toyota, and Ford have been built along the road connecting Laoag City and Batac City through San Nicolas.

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9) Production of tobacco declined by an average of 5.36 percent annually from 2001 to 2007 (Espino *et al.* 2009).

The Robinsons Group was founded by John Gokongweis Jr., the Chinese-Filipino business magnate. He started by establishing a food-manufacturing company, Universal Robina, in 1954; this grew to become one of the largest food and beverage companies in the country. The group diversified into real estate (Robinsons Land) in the 1980s, an airline (Cebu Pacific) and shopping mall (Robinsons Mall) in the 1990s, and many other sectors. Robinsons Mall has increased its branches, expanding from Metro Manila to smaller cities and China; there were 51 branches as of 2018. The Robinsons, which opened on December 3, 2009, is the first and largest shopping mall in the Northern Luzon Region and has a floor area of approximately 22,220 square meters.

When the mall opened, there were concerns that the size of the local population might not support the business. However, its sales in January 2010 were more than double the initial estimate. While this was attributed to the newly opened mall's attractiveness to customers during the Christmas season, one year later sales were still growing steadily.[10] By January 2010, all 54 spaces were occupied. About 80 percent of them were being used by companies based in Manila or those directly run by the Robinsons, and the remaining 20 percent were owned and run by local businesspeople. The mall's shop lease manager cited the following reasons for its success: there were no competing large-scale shopping malls in the province; local consumers' purchasing power was boosted by remittances from OFWs; the mall displayed a wide range of goods, including some previously unavailable in the region; and it was the most convenient place to shop for those who had cars, as it had a large parking area.

Real estate development in the area is also impressive. The Robinsons Group built an expensive gated subdivision with a pool and clubhouse in the suburb of Laoag City along the road to Laoag airport.[11] Then Senator Manuel Villar also developed his Camella Homes along the airport road. Most of the lots were quickly purchased by families supported by remittances from overseas.

II   Business-Friendly Politics of the Valdezes

II-1 *Valdez Family*
The site where the Robinsons and other commercial facilities were built was called the

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10) Interview with Pia Guirre, shop lease manager of Robinsons Ilocos Norte, February 2, 2011.
11) Those who offered land for residential development were local elites. According to Nagasaka (2013), the owner of a local department store called 5-Sisters purchased the land a long time ago from the Agcaoilies, an old elite family, and sold it to the Robinsons for their subdivision, whose units were sold for 2.9 million to 6.6 million pesos in 2010.

Valdez Center, named after the Valdez family, a local elite clan in San Nicolas. I argue that the Valdezes, especially the two brothers Alfredo and Hilario, played the role of policy entrepreneurs and had a major role in developing the municipality.

From a historical perspective, local elites in Ilocos Norte could not own a significant amount of land because the region lacked expansive plains suitable for large-scale plantations.[12] This provided opportunities for new local elites to emerge through violence during World War II and through higher education after the war. The Valdezes are one of them. Hilario Valdez, who lived in the second half of the nineteenth century, married Chrispina, a sister of former President Ferdinand Marcos's grandfather. One of their children, Simeon Marcos Valdez, gained influence by leading the anti-Japanese struggle as a battalion commander of the 15th infantry regiment and served as a congressman for 14 years after the war (Velasco 2006). Angela Valdez, Simeon's sister, married the father of former President Fidel Ramos. Consequently, Simeon was an uncle to both presidents, Marcos and Ramos. After democratization in 1987, one of Simeon's relatives, Alfredo Valdez Sr., a retired soldier who became a municipal councilor, was appointed officer-in-charge as mayor of San Nicolas by Corazon Aquino's administration, but he was soon replaced by Marcelo Batangan. Until Alfredo's namesake son Alfredo Jr. won the mayoral election in 2004 after three other mayors,[13] no clan could establish dominance.

Despite the Valdez family's relationship with powerful political clans, Mayor Alfredo Valdez Jr. emphasizes his middle-class professional origins. He was born in Laoag in 1961 and moved to San Nicolas, his mother's hometown, during childhood. After finishing high school locally, he studied pharmacy at the Far Eastern University in Manila and became a medical doctor. While working at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City, he obtained a master's degree in hospital management from Ateneo de Manila University. Upon returning to San Nicolas, he worked as a hospital consultant. Encouraged by a local priest, friends, and his brother Hilario, he ran for the mayoral election and won the position in 2004. He has explained that he wanted to remedy such problems as the deterioration of public order and financial mismanagement. He was reelected unopposed in 2007 and 2010. In the 2013 election, Alfredo switched to vice mayor due to the 1987 constitutional limit of serving in the same position for no more than three consecutive terms spanning nine years. His wife, Melanie Grace Valdez, won the election as mayor. Alfredo came back as mayor in the 2016 election and was reelected

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12) The elites previously held a relatively large amount of land in the province of Ilocos Norte, but due to the practice of divided inheritance, the size of their landholding decreased (Nagasaka 2009, 57).

13) They are Benjamin Madamba (1988–92), Angelo Barba (1992–2001), and Manuel Hernando (2001–4).

in 2019, both times unopposed. Since 2010, the Valdezes have assumed the position of vice mayor as well.

In the process of consolidating the family's power, Alfredo's brother Hilario, a leading local entrepreneur, played a key role in attracting investment to the municipality, which fueled local economic growth. Hilario studied law at San Beda College and became a lawyer. Recognizing his contribution to the electoral victory of Fidel Ramos to the presidency in 1992, Ramos appointed him as deputy administrator of the National Tobacco Administration and a board member of the National Food Authority. While handling issues related to farmers, he became disillusioned by the tedious procedures of the government. He resigned from both positions and started a shipping and cargo logistics business in 1994. The following year, Hilario expanded his business into his hometown with the establishment of the Venvi Group of Companies, which ventured into agribusiness and then real estate (Guillermo 2006). He suggested his brother Alfredo run for the 2004 mayoral election to create a business-friendly environment.

II-2 *Making of the Valdez Center*[14)]
Hilario saw the economic potential in 20 hectares of underutilized, agricultural, low-lying land, which was frequently flooded during the rainy season and would remain waterlogged for a month afterward. This land has now developed into the Valdez Center. Accumulation of the lands started in 1997 when Carlito Abadilla, a local elite in the municipality of Banna, sold 4,000 m^2 of the family land to Hilario to finance the clan's election expenses the following year. To address concerns among board members of the Venvi Group that this development plan would cost a lot, Hilario argued, "What is more important is the good location. If the site is in a bad location, even if the development is easy, the business will be difficult" (Guillermo 2006). When certain lands were purchased, he petitioned the provincial government to allow the moving of soil from the adjacent Laoag River to increase the height of the land to prevent flooding.

The most difficult problem in the course of development was the acquisition of titles to the land. A lot of land was registered in the 1920s and 1930s, and many of the title-holders were deceased, along with their children and grandchildren. In some cases, when the Venvi Group was negotiating the purchase of land from an owner, another person would come forward claiming to own the same piece of land and demand payment. Consequently, the group had to negotiate with multiple claimants and go through the process

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14) The description here is drawn from interviews with Alfredo Valdez (February 1 and 8, 2010; February 19, 2019); Hilario Valdez (February 20, 2019); Ed Mar Vincent Bonoan, former municipal councilor of San Nicolas and deputy leader of the operation team, the Venvi Group (February 7, 2010); and Guirre.

of judicial titling, which took a lot of time and work. It also took considerable time for the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to process administrative titling and for the Department of Agriculture to convert land use from agricultural to commercial. About 60 percent of the process of acquiring the land title for the Valdez Center was completed by January 2009, and 80 percent by February 2019.

It is not rare in large-scale development projects in the Philippines for coercion and violence to be used against residents who oppose land sale or relocation. However, my research into the development of the Valdez Center did not uncover such stories. Rather, it appears that the former landowners earned a profit by selling their land.[15] Several times I heard such jokes such as "My grandfather used to own land there, but he sold it to buy a buffalo carriage. If he had not sold it, I would be very rich by now." The Venvi Group also provides jobs in the Valdez Center to families of landowners, to encourage them to sell their land.

From the beginning, Hilario had a view to develop the site into a commercial district. When some progress was made in developing the land, he asked SM Department Store, the leading mall business—owned by Henry Sy—to build a shopping mall. However, the negotiations broke down, because while the Venvi Group proposed constructing its own commercial facilities and operating a joint venture with SM Department Store, the latter demanded a 50-year lease of the entire land and a monopoly on the shopping mall business. After this, Hilario discussed the business plan with the Gokongweis' Robinsons Group, and in 2005 they reached a basic agreement for a joint venture, which was finalized the following year. Based on the agreement, in 2007 the Venvi Group first built a commercial facility named 365 Plaza (originally 365 Mall), and in December 2010 the Robinsons Ilocos Norte opened for business.

Following the success, the Venvi Group, which become the biggest corporation in the province, further expanded its businesses in the Valdez Center. In 2011 it built the first condominium in Ilocos Norte, Balai Condominium, consisting of one nine-story building and two four-story buildings with a swimming pool. All the units were purchased while the condominium was still under construction, mostly by migrants living in Hawaii as accommodations for temporary returns home or as rental investments.[16] The meat shop Freddo was constructed to promote the Venvi Group's pork industry. Vivien Hotel

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15) According to Bonoan, there were cases in which some residents tried to extort an excessive amount of money from the Venvi Group using false documents.
16) The reason why the group built a condominium when there was plenty of land to build houses was so that migrant workers returning home temporarily could enjoy peace and quiet as well as privacy. The units ranged in size from $47\,m^2$ to $170\,m^2$ and were sold for prices ranging from 1.1 million to 3 million pesos in 2010.

Table 1   Comparison of Real Properties in San Nicolas

		1998		2008		2017	
		Parcel	Value (pesos)	Parcel	Value (pesos)	Parcel	Value (pesos)
Agricultural	land	19,521	55,941,930	20,076	61,546,280	20,331	129,694,640
Residential	land	5,423	21,005,590	6,031	27,092,750	6,050	61,509,150
	building	5,412	12,518,210	5,880	104,268,180	5,962	297,236,120
Commercial	land	244	8,957,530	364	20,887,400	636	92,813,670
	building	143	15,673,990	231	90,153,560	591	852,286,010
Industrial	land	5	6,131,430	8	6,765,640	26	27,466,790
	building	13	5,275,140	15	14,340,070	20	74,645,550

Source: Office of Municipal Assessor, Municipality of San Nicolas (2018).

started operations in 2018 in 365 Plaza. In a space beside the hotel, the Venvi Group enticed Casino Filipino-Ilocos Norte owned by Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation, targeting Taiwanese and Chinese mainlanders. The Venvi Group also built an IT park, to which it successfully enticed big American BPO companies: Expert Global Solutions (renamed Alorica Ilocos) in 2014 and Accenture in 2015.[17] In order to provide accommodation for workers in the Valdez Center, it built the Vesa Hall, composed of four buildings that could accommodate 198 people, in 2019. In the Robinsons, the Valdez Center also hosts such government offices as the Department of Foreign Affairs' passport center, the Social Security System, and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority. Thus, the Valdez Center has become a one-stop shop for many purposes, from shopping, eating, working, and living to applying for government services.

Thanks to the real estate development and opening of new businesses, the number and value of real properties have significantly increased. The surge in commercial land and building values between 2008 and 2017 is impressive (Table 1).

II-3 *Business-Friendly Politics*

The economic development in San Nicolas is partially attributable to the area's geographic attractiveness to investors: it is located at the major transportation interchange in the province of Ilocos Norte and has easy accessibility to Laoag City and Laoag International Airport. Compared with Laoag City, whose commercial district is small and unsuitable for redevelopment, San Nicolas has the advantage of having vast lands along the major road that are suitable for developing large-scale commercial districts.

However, it is wrong to ignore Mayor Alfredo Valdez's initiative for what he calls

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17) Alorica Inc., a California-based customer service company, acquired Expert Global Solutions in 2016. Accenture's branch in Ilocos Norte was the third after Manila and Cebu.

"business-friendly" politics.[18] The concept seems to be derived from the "Most Business-Friendly Local Government Unit Award," which has been given by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) since 2002 to promote good local governance and improvement in the business environment under the theme of "What's good for the citizenry is good for business." Among the one hundred LGUs nominated each year, San Nicolas won the prize in the level 1 municipality category in 2009, becoming the first winner of the award in Ilocos Norte. The municipality also received the award for three consecutive years in 2012, 2013, and 2014, which made it the first Hall of Famer of the award in Ilocos Norte. The selection criteria in 2009 were twofold: first, "good governance," which refers to encouraging trade and investments through both "quality customer service," based on simplified, efficient, and seamless business-related procedures, and "public–private sector partnership" for the formulation and implementation of local developmental plans; and second, the realization of "competitiveness" in terms of "investment promotion," "micro, small and medium enterprise development," and "quality management systems and innovation" (Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry 2009). By 2016, revised business friendliness indicators included "anti-red tape act," "fiscal transparency," and "trade, investment, and tourism promotion" (Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry 2016).

Alfredo's initiative has been in line with these indicators of the PCCI.[19] Eradicating conventional rent that was exploiting state resources for public projects was a prerequisite for him to put in place new reforms. Immediately upon being elected in 2004, he revoked a plan of the previous administration to build a public market with a loan of 36 million pesos, which he criticized as an inappropriately high price due to collusion with the construction company. The municipality then completed construction of a public market with its own funds without resorting to a loan in 2010.

In order to attract investors, Alfredo implemented a series of reforms. First, he had the municipal council draft and pass the Investment Incentive Code in 2004, the first legislation of its kind in the region, to facilitate investment procedures and provide tax reductions for five years to new investors.[20] Hilario also made use of his business network in Manila to bring investors to San Nicolas. Second, Alfredo eliminated the conventional practice of politicians and officials demanding grease money in exchange for

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18) A municipality official who had served three mayors also noted that it was after Alfredo was first elected that various reforms were started under the banner of being "business friendly" (interview with Reidemor Bumanglag, head of human resources, municipality of San Nicolas, January 31, 2011).
19) The following discussion is based on interviews with Alfredo Valdez, February 1 and 8, 2011.
20) San Nicolas Investment Incentive Code of 2004; interview with Bonoan, who drafted the bill, on January 28, 2011.

licensing and approval for investors. Third, he realized a "one-stop shop licensing center" by eliminating red tape and quickly providing licenses and approvals necessary for business. When investors visited the municipality, rather than letting them go back and forth between various bureaus, he would convene a meeting in the mayor's office with all related officials in attendance. He said this was also effective in preventing wrongdoing on the part of officials. Fourth, he made sure to maintain security to reassure investors. As validation of this, San Nicolas was recognized as having the Most Outstanding Municipal Peace and Order Council in 2006 by the National Police Commission. Security is particularly important for luring BPO businesses, which operate in the middle of the night due to differences in time zones from the United States.

II-4 *Impacts on the Local Economy*

The development of the Valdez Center has had various impacts on the local economy. The most positive impact is its huge contribution to job creation. Although some contractors were from Manila, five hundred to six hundred locally hired construction workers worked on building the Robinsons, while two hundred worked on building Balai Condominium. They commuted in the beginning by public transportation but later by newly purchased motorbikes. As of 2019, more than ten thousand people regularly worked as construction workers, salespersons, security guards, and so on in the Valdez Center.[21] BPO offices have greater potential to provide jobs with higher salaries to young college graduates. Alorica Ilocos increased its number of employees from nine hundred to 1,500 in 2019.[22] To attract workers, it provides 13,000 pesos for relocation assistance. Accenture initially employed two hundred people, increased that number to around one thousand by 2019, and was set to offer five thousand jobs. These BPO companies have pointed to the wealth of talented students and young professionals as a reason for choosing Ilocos Norte to host their branches (ABS-CBN News 2015; Adriano 2015; 2018; *Manila Times*, April 27, 2016; Provincial Government of Ilocos Norte, Communications and Media Office 2016).

   Alfredo also intends to create synergy between San Nicolas's traditional pottery (*damili*) industry and newly attracted businesses, which would remind the public that modern design and traditional crafts could go hand in hand (*Manila Times*, July 28, 2009). Having exempted pottery business operators from paying taxes,[23] he asked the Robin-

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21) The Venvi Group directly hired five hundred to six hundred workers as of 2019.

22) Alorica Ilocos offered 390 pesos a day for new workers, which was much higher than the minimum wage of 310 pesos in the region in 2019.

23) Licensing requirements are also exempted for pottery business operators except for those who produce bricks that construction companies purchase with official documents.

sons to use locally produced red bricks for the mall's exterior and part of the interior. The municipality also invited a volunteer pottery artist from Japan International Cooperation Agency to develop new products that would be attractive for tourists to buy as local souvenirs.

Some local businesspersons found new business opportunities in the Robinsons, but local businessmen I interviewed in 2010 and 2011 were having difficulty adjusting to the new business.[24] A Chinese Filipino restaurant owner who invested 700,000 pesos to set up an outlet in the food court complained that the high rent and mandated use of high-quality materials were burdens on his business. Another Chinese Filipino who ran a restaurant in the mall admitted that his business was in the red because of the high rent and expensive utilities and that he would consider withdrawing if the rent did not come down.[25] Because of this situation, many local business owners were still in a "wait and see" mode with regard to assuming tenancy in the mall.[26]

Investments by big business from the outside also brought threats to existing local businesses. Before the opening of the Robinsons in 2009, there was some opposition to the plan from grocery stores in San Nicolas and an old local department store in Laoag, but there was no serious political opposition. After the opening of the Robinsons, local retail businesses were adversely affected. The 5-Sisters Superstore, a local department store in Laoag, tried to win back customers by improving its stock and increasing sales, but it eventually closed and leased its premises to SM Savemore, which opened in 2011. Vendors at the public markets in Laoag and San Nicolas were also affected by the Robinsons' opening.[27] In particular, those dealing in groceries complained about reduced sales, but they tried to secure *suki* (regulars) with friendly sales talk and by providing services that department stores could not, such as discounts and free replacement of defective products. They also tried to attract customers by emphasizing that their prod-

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24) Rent varies from one business type to another. In 2010, for a restaurant the monthly rent was 600 pesos per square meter as well as a small percentage of total sales.

25) He expected that if a new large-scale shop opened in Laoag City, the Robinsons would reduce its rent in order to retain tenants.

26) Interview with Robert Bismonte, president, Laoag/Ilocos Norte chapter, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, on January 29, 2011.

27) However, the revenue from the Laoag public market decreased by only a small margin after the Robinsons' opening because the city administration made efforts to prevent tax flight by strictly monitoring shipment to the market and sales. On the other hand, merchants in the Laoag public market demanded a reduction in rent from Laoag City because the loan of 140 million pesos to build the public market in 1999 had been paid off in July 2009 and because the merchants' sales had been reduced with the opening of the Robinsons. As for vendors in the San Nicolas public market, because the market opened in November 2010, it is impossible to compare revenues before and after the Robinsons' opening.

ucts were cheaper and fresher than those found in the mall.[28]

Yet the biggest reason why many local businesses were able to survive despite aggressive investment by the mall businesses was that local residents receiving remittances from abroad had enough purchasing power to sustain both old and new commercial facilities. Locals generally welcomed the Robinsons as it provided a new place for consumption and entertainment. The rich and middle classes enjoy shopping for luxurious items as well as the convenience of making a significant number of purchases in a single trip because of the mall's large parking lot, which is a contrast to the congested commercial districts in Laoag. The poor come with their families on holidays to have meals in inexpensive restaurants and indulge in a bit of shopping in an air-conditioned space.[29] Yet many consumers use shops closer to their home or workplace to buy items they use daily and the public markets to buy fresh foods.

II-5 *Contribution to Local Revenue and Public Services*
New businesses have made important contributions to the tax revenue of San Nicolas, which does not enjoy a big share of the IRA from the central government due to its classification as a second-class municipality.[30] The amount of IRA to local governments is determined by their classification based on area, population, and income. For instance, Vintar, having the largest area in the province, is classified as a first-class municipality and received 80 million pesos of IRA in 2009, whereas San Nicolas, which has the second-smallest area in the province at 40.18 km^2, received only 43 million pesos that year. A municipality can significantly increase its share of IRA by gaining cityhood, which requires satisfying one of two requirements: having an area of 100 km^2 or a population of 150,000, or generating a local income of 100 million pesos for the last two consecutive years.[31]

It is unrealistic for San Nicolas, which had a population of only 33,642 in 2007 and 36,736 in 2015, to meet the population requirement. Thus, San Nicolas has sought to raise local revenue through its business tax, the largest source of tax revenue.[32] Since

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28) A vendor dealing in clothes said that her products were cheaper for "everyone," in contrast to the more expensive products at the Robinsons, partly due to the latter's high rent. A chicken vendor said that because chickens sold at the Robinsons were frozen, she was trying to compete by selling as much fresh chicken as possible.

29) The shop lease manager claimed that tenants at the Robinsons were chosen to cover all classes of customers (interview with Guirre).

30) When Alfredo assumed the mayoral position in 2004, San Nicolas was a fourth-class municipality.

31) In Ilocos Norte, Batac was granted cityhood by Congress in 2007 even without satisfying the income requirement, but the Supreme Court revoked the decision in 2008. Batac regained cityhood in 2010 after the Supreme Court nullified its previous decision.

32) Coca-Cola paid the highest business tax of an annual 6 million pesos, which was followed by the Robinsons' 3 million to 3.5 million pesos from 2010 to 2017 (interview with Henry Ulep, treasurer, San Nicolas, January 27, 2011 and November 26, 2018).

Table 2 Revenue of Municipality of San Nicolas (pesos)

	Business Tax	Local Sources	IRA	Total Income	Local-IRA Ratio	IRA Dependency
1995	–	5,867,393	9,065,063	14,932,456	65%	61%
2000	–	9,780,525	19,999,176	30,156,843	49%	66%
2005	5,309,264	16,243,027	27,328,178	49,362,887	59%	55%
2006	9,087,340	22,954,227	31,865,571	57,849,372	72%	55%
2007	8,504,991	19,619,440	33,016,562	53,558,126	59%	62%
2008	–	24,220,931	38,487,191	63,227,750	63%	61%
2009	–	36,899,928	43,250,560	77,004,823	85%	56%
2010	13,708,576	45,574,280	45,882,014	94,171,132	99%	49%
2011	–	42,862,964	49,614,809	108,880,338	86%	46%
2012	23,156,039	49,429,061	48,155,015	107,123,299	103%	45%
2013	25,563,645	53,551,818	53,272,738	113,655,331	101%	47%
2014	26,603,670	58,506,180	60,290,493	121,494,068	97%	50%
2015	30,130,853	62,386,035	68,713,644	132,389,747	91%	52%
2016	30,130,853	69,811,613	75,684,623	149,028,183	92%	51%
2017	30,846,695	73,563,096	85,202,101	162,257,296	86%	53%
2018	40,001,487	95,304,294	91,384,284	224,523,047	104%	41%
2019	44,274,485	97,194,880	99,777,236	209,598,819	97%	48%

Sources: Republic of the Philippines, Commission on Audit (various years) and Municipality of San Nicolas (2007; 2010).

2005, the year after Alfredo was elected mayor, San Nicolas's local revenue has increased dramatically despite the tax reduction for new investors. The increase in local sources of income has outstripped the increase in IRA, which has led to a significant decline of IRA dependency to around 50 percent or even lower (Table 2). Considering the national average of IRA dependency at the municipality level was 78 percent in 2004 and 77 percent in 2016,[33] it is clear that San Nicolas has achieved a financial status relatively independent of central government funding.

By making use of the increased local revenue, the municipality has improved public services, which has helped it win many awards in various fields of good governance. Trophies and certificates for more than sixty awards are exhibited in the municipality hall, which is constructed with locally produced red bricks and ornamented with traditional products. A virtuous cycle is identified: initiatives for good governance yield awards; awards attract investment; and investment increases local revenue to support the betterment of public services, which attracts new awards.

In terms of infrastructure, the municipality implemented the Small Water Impounding Projector "Catching Rain" Program, which utilizes the indigenous and environment-

33) Bureau of Local Government Finance, Department of Finance (2004, 20; 2016). The average IRA dependency of the municipalities in Ilocos Norte also decreased from 73.4 percent in 2009 to 52.2 percent in 2016.

friendly technique of earth dams, water reservoirs, and irrigation systems for agriculture in the municipality, where there are no natural bodies of water for irrigation. This program won the Galing Pook award in 2017 (Dela Cruz 2017b; Galing Pook Foundation 2017, 17). For environmental rehabilitation, to address the rapid increase in waste and garbage generated by economic development, the municipality in 2012 started constructing a sanitary landfill, which came into operation in 2015. This was a progressive initiative, considering that more than 85 percent of LGUs still used open dumps as of 2016, despite the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000 enjoining LGUs to convert open dumps into sanitary landfills (Senate Economic Planning Office 2017).

In the field of cultural services, in order to enhance public awareness about the cultural heritage of the local pottery industry, the municipality honored the master craftswoman Paulina "Nana Paul" Rangcapan as a Municipal Living Treasure in 2016 (Municipal Ordinance No. 2016-05). Her story is highlighted in the museum Museo San Nicoleño, which was set up in a historical water reservoir building in 2017 in time for the quadricentennial of San Nicolas's independence from Laoag (Sembrano 2018). A municipal officer explained that the pottery industry was an important part of San Nicolas's cultural heritage; even though the Spanish colonial government tried to annex San Nicolas to Laoag, the necessity of managing the pottery industry helped San Nicolas to maintain its independence.[34] The municipality also institutionalized the Damili Festival, in which each *barangay* performs native dances; required elementary and high school students to learn the art of pottery as part of the curriculum; and purchased an old Spanish-style building to preserve the structure and named it Balay San Nicolas. Such programs act as a conduit for tourism development. The municipality became a finalist for the Galing Pook Award for Outstanding Governance Program for its cultural heritage program in 2015. Moreover, Alfredo encouraged and facilitated Manuel Aurelio, a local intellectual, to publish a second edition of his book titled *The History of San Nicolas* (Aurelio 2013).

As for health and sanitation, the municipality has provided funds to extend health insurance to those not previously covered by PhilHeath: informal workers and unenrolled women about to give birth.[35] It has held medical-dental missions and blood donation drives to provide medicine and medical assistance to the people. The Department of Health conferred the National Sandugo Award on the municipality in 2013 and 2017 for actively promoting voluntary blood donation (Dela Cruz 2013; 2017a). In the education sector, the municipality has worked with the San Nicolas Express BIN-I Foundation, a

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34) Interview with Richie Cavinta, February 19, 2019.
35) See Municipal Resolution No. 2019-52, which was enacted to comply with the National Health Insurance Act of 2013.

goodwill organization founded and chaired by Alfredo, to provide scholarships to less fortunate students. San Nicolas was also adjudged a National Kabalikat awardee by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority in 2013 for its outstanding promotion and enhancement of technical education and skills development (Dela Cruz 2013).

II-6 *Race for Investment among Local Governments*

According to Alfredo, another advantage of being less dependent on IRA is that local chief executives like himself can withstand harassment from higher-ranking politicians. A feud with the Marcoses, the distant relatives and the most powerful clan in the province, is a serious threat for the Valdezes.[36] The Marcoses, who have monopolized the governorship of Ilocos Norte since 1998, was not always supportive to the development of the Valdez Center. The Venvi Group's application to the provincial government for tax incentives was rejected.[37] The Venvi group also had to develop the basic infrastructure for services such as electricity and water by themselves. Imee Marcos, who served as the governor from 2010 until she was elected to the Senate in 2019, declined the Venvi Group's application for a quarry permit for two years while issuing permits to other businesses. When two senators distributed farm-to-market road funds to the provincial government, Imee did not allocate the funds to San Nicolas. Perhaps frustrated by the Valdezes' achievements, Imee demanded that investors not invest only in San Nicolas. As if to appease the governor, Alorica opened a small office in Laoag, and Casino Filipino installed several machines in the Plaza Del Norte Hotel and Convention Center which was constructed in Paoay by Imee's brother Bongbong when he was the governor. The feud with the Marcoses eventually made Hilario to run for a congressional seat but lost to Eugenio Angelo Barba, who was backed by the Marcoses in the 2019 election.

Such conflicts between political clans should be understood in the context of competition over investment, not just as personal matters. Imee herself situated the rise of business-friendly politics as the third stage of development of the province, following the first stage when her father, President Ferdinand Marcos, developed the province through aggressive public spending on infrastructure in the 1970s, and the second stage when remittances from OFWs contributed to the local economy from the 1990s to 2000s, which she believed was not sustainable due to the high social cost of draining the population. In the current third stage, where "small government" is celebrated, local governments seek sustainable development by collaborating with the private sector. The BPO busi-

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36) Interviews with Alfredo Valdez and Hilario Valdez, February 19 and 20, 2019.
37) The Ilocos Norte Investment Board pointed out that Venvi had acquired land titles for only 2 to 3 hectares of the 20 hectares for which the application had been made (interview with Bismonte).

ness is especially important because it can prevent university graduates from leaving the province and can increase the purchasing power of young workers. Thus, Imee emphasized that winning the "race towards FDI (foreign direct investment)" was essential, and it was no longer only ASEAN countries that competed for FDI but also local governments in the Philippines.[38]

Apart from enticing investment, Imee added another method for the local government to function as an enterprise: pursuing profit in such fields as tourism.[39] However, there are still legal and political limitations that discourage local governments from seeking profit as an enterprise.[40] Thus, attracting investment is so far the most important strategy.

The impressive successes of San Nicolas have sparked a race for investment among local governments in the Province. Laoag City, whose mayoral position was ruled by the Fariñas clan from 2004 to 2019, legislated the Investment Incentive Code in 2008, four years after San Nicolas, and tried to entice mall businesses. Although its scale is much smaller than that of the Robinsons, the SM Savemore opened in the city in December 2011, replacing the old 5-Sisters Superstore, which was followed by the opening of SM Hypermarket in October 2012. To host the latter, Laoag City renovated the Ilocano Heroes Memorial Hall. In return, SM Department Store donated 1.5 million pesos to Laoag City General Hospital and 300,000 pesos for the renovation of St. William's Cathedral (Orosa 2012). Puregold Supermarket, a large-scale grocery store run by the Chinese-Filipino businessman Lucio Co, opened its doors in November 2012.

However, the series of big investments in congested Laoag drew opposition in several forms. Local businesses and the Laoag Market Vendors Association opposed the opening of large-scale grocery stores in the city. In response to their anxiety, Laoag City claimed that it could not prevent local development and proposed that local businesses take up tenancy in the malls.[41] The strongest protest was against Laoag City's decision to demolish the historic structure of Laoag Central Elementary School, which was built in 1929, and offer the land to Puregold. The land had originally been donated to the city for educational purposes by the diocese of Laoag. Growing opposition from the school's parent-teacher association, the community, and the local business sector forced the pro-

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38) Interview with Imee Marcos, February 3, 2011.
39) Imee pointed to Governor Ray Villafuerte of the province of Camarines Sur as a successful example. The governor put back profits gained from promoting tourism into school-building projects.
40) Imee criticized that Jesse Robredo, secretary of the Interior and Local Government of the Benigno Aquino III administration issued three memorandums to constrain local governments' economic independence.
41) Interview with Joshua Paulino, head of Management Authority of Laoag Public Market, February 1, 2011.

vincial board to impose a moratorium on the demolition of the heritage structure in 2009 (Arzadon 2009). To avoid further delay in opening, Puregold eventually agreed to down-scale its original plan and built its supermarket beside the school.

III Local Politics and Private Capital

III-1 *Reexamining Rent in Local Politics*

A characteristic of the business-friendly politics in San Nicolas is the close link between politics and business formed by the Valdez brothers. Although Hilario had made a conscious effort not to intervene in politics,[42] the two brothers clearly made use of rent to further develop the Valdez Center. It would not be feasible to accumulate and develop the huge lands without strong support from the local government because the business needed to go through many complex procedures to get various kinds of permits. However, the use of such political power by an economic actor is usually regarded as rent-seeking, which harms the economy. In that case, why did the use of rent by the Valdezes promote the development of the local economy instead of harming it?

According to the mainstream neoclassical economic theory, rent essentially harms the economy because it gives incentives for economic actors to indulge in rent-seeking, inefficiently spending resources for unproductive purposes such as lobbying, petitions, and donations, as opposed to profit-seeking, in which resources are utilized for productive purposes in the market, thus contributing to economic development. On the other hand, there are arguments that some forms of rent have produced more benefits than costs, contributing to economic growth in East Asia and Southeast Asia, contrary to the dominant neoclassical view (e.g. Chang 1994; Khan 2000a; 2000b; 2006; Kang 2002). According to Mushtaq Khan, it is possible to measure the different economic impacts of rent by subtracting the cost of rent-seeking from the benefits of rent. While a positive difference signifies that rent is "value-enhancing," a negative difference shows that rent is "value-reducing" (Khan 2000a; 2000b; 2006).

In the Philippines, rent-seeking has been identified as a major obstacle to economic development. Paul Hutchcroft (1998; 2000) argues that oligarchic elites have engaged in predatory rent-seeking from the state for their self-interest at the cost of economic rationality and the general welfare of the nation. He also states that privatization of businesses previously controlled by the state did not lead to the abolition of predatory rent-seeking because it produced new rent—the state's licensing of the entry

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42) Interview with Bonoan, January 28, 2011.

of private capital—which could be utilized by companies enjoying the most favorable political connections to take advantage in bidding and negotiation (Hutchcroft 2000, 241). Rent-seeking in the Philippines is expensive and unproductive because so many actors compete for rent; the state is weakened by many authorities informally intervening in and influencing the formal bureaucracy. This condition makes the outcome of rent-seeking so unpredictable that beneficiaries of rent pursue narrow self-profit instead of investing in development that contributes to broader interests (Hutchcroft 2000; Kang 2002).

In stark contrast to the general description of the Philippine political economy, however, it is undeniable that value-enhancing forms of rent have worked in the case of San Nicolas. This can be attributed to two factors. First, the cost of rent-seeking has been at its minimum because of the high predictability of its outcomes at the level of local government, where the number of actors is limited and negotiation with a chief executive with strong leadership is reliable. Rent-seeking from the central government is much more complex and incalculable due to the many informal authorities involved. In the case of San Nicolas, the family tie, coupled with the shared vision and interests of the Valdez brothers, has made the cost of rent-seeking little to none. Another factor making rent-seeking inexpensive is the changing economic structure. The cost of rent-seeking is likely to become more expensive in a setting where the state monopolizes resources or provides lucrative business opportunities and a number of companies are competing for rent, as in the case of overbidding for a public project. However, private capital has become more dominant over state resources and local governments are not always in the position to choose investors. In the new setting where many local governments compete to attract private capital to their localities, the cost of rent-seeking to companies must be much cheaper.

Second, the rent utilized by the Valdezes for the development of the Valdez Center produced general benefits to the local economy because the Valdezes tapped the potential of the local market rather than monopolizing it. The enticement of the international BPO companies further expanded the local market by strengthening the purchasing power of its workers and families. Furthermore, the Valdezes succeeded in creating and maintaining a competitive market. They did not put undue pressure on other private capital and instead used their own businesses as instruments to attract new investment from Manila and abroad. They explained that investors would not be interested in investing in a large expanse of empty land and therefore it was necessary for the Venvi Group to create some successful examples with their own money.

Yet, the economic impacts of rent can change over time, and value-enhancing forms of rent can become value-reducing (Khan 2000b). At least three negative scenarios are

conceivable for San Nicolas. If investment in the municipality further increases and multiple companies compete for business permits from the local government, the cost of rent-seeking may balloon, and this may take away from the benefits of the rent. Also, if demand in the local market becomes close to saturated, the businesses of the Valdezes and other companies that enjoy rent may prevent the development of other private capital and inhibit the competitive market. Lastly, a change in local political leadership may seriously disturb the conditions that have kept the rent productive. The weakness of local bureaucracy under the "spoils system" of the Philippines, in which high-ranking local officials' tenure is dependent on electoral outcomes, raises the risk.

III-2 *Changes and Continuity in Elite Rule*

Sidel stated that the structural condition of the state's monopoly of resources helped local elites to entrench their power through access to the state. This paper argues, however, that conditions have changed as private resources have accumulated in society—not only in Metro Manila but also in many smaller cities—through international remittances and investments by the private sector since the 2000s. The new structural conditions have provided local elites with an incentive to switch their political dominance strategy from predatory rent-seeking for state resources to enticement of private sector investments. The new strategy enables local elites to enhance their revenue, improve public services, and receive awards, which further attract investment. The Valdez brothers were the pioneering policy entrepreneurs who first adapted the new strategy in Ilocos Norte.

However, the new structural condition does not always produce policy entrepreneurs who practice reform-oriented local politics throughout the Philippines. Given that the new strategy is not always available for local elites who do not enjoy geographic conditions suitable for commercial development, the gap between progressive and regressive local governments will become bigger. Even in cities with potential for investment, not all local elites can smoothly change the conventional way of doing politics. Aggressive enticement of investment without sufficient coordination can also invite local opposition, as seen in the case of Laoag. Thus, it can be argued that the new structural condition provided local elites with a new rule of a game in which those who succeeded in adapting themselves to the new rule became dominant and those who did not do so began failing.

This study also confirmed the tendency that business-friendly local politics strengthens the power base of dynastic local elites. The case of San Nicolas suggests that business-friendly politics facilitates the emergence of a new type of local dynasty. The fact that Alfredo won reelection unopposed in 2010, 2016, and 2019 shows that the Valdezes were able to establish a dynasty through reform-oriented politics in the munic-

ipality, whose political landscape had once been so competitive that none of the ambitious clans had been able to build a stable dominance.

For more established dynasties such as the Marcoses, the changing structure of the political economy may have provided a new challenge. Yet, Imee was confident in the dynasty's stability, insisting that local governments ruled by long-standing dynastic elites were more advantageous to economic development through business-friendly politics. This was because stable, strong leadership enabled them to implement a long-term plan, while competition among many interests, coupled with frequent changes in leadership in national politics as well as more competitive local politics, could stagnate development.[43]

Although it may be tempting to dismiss Imee's argument as mere self-justification for dynastic elites, the study's findings affirm her view. Theoretically, the presence of many actors and unpredictability in electoral politics increase the cost of rent-seeking, which tends to have a negative impact on the economy. On the contrary, dynastic local politics limits the number of actors and unpredictability in politics, which can reduce the cost of rent-seeking and thereby produce a positive outcome. Empirically, this study exemplifies that local elites can strengthen their hold on power through business-friendly politics by managing the channel of capital inflow, providing more job opportunities, and improving public services.

However, a change in the way local elites allocate resources to constituents and the way the latter evaluate the former may eventually lead to more pluralistic local political competition. In traditional clientelist and machine politics, local elites directly distribute resources to their followers for votes as a token of their personal "kindness." In contrast, in business-friendly politics, local elites indirectly benefit a broad range of constituents, beyond their narrow political affiliation, through economic and social development. This can make constituents more independent of local elites and thereby weaken the latter's direct control. Moreover, because constituents value performance and competence in the local elites, even established dynasties may fail if they fail to perform for the people. Although this study does not have data showing such signs, new studies on failed or weakened dynasties in the new environment of a political economy would reveal conditions for change.

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43) Interview with Imee Marcos.

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Conjugal Mayorship: The Fernandos and the Transformation of Marikina, 1992–2010

Meynardo P. Mendoza*

From 1992 to 2010, during the mayoral terms of Bayani and Maria Lourdes Carlos-Fernando, Marikina underwent an extensive transformation. The husband-and-wife team transformed it from a sleepy, semi-agricultural third-class municipality into a model city and the recipient of many awards and distinctions. Aside from providing the physical infrastructure needed to lay the foundation for the city, the Fernandos also transformed the residents by promoting a culture of order and discipline, and later on introducing corporatist practices in the delivery of basic services. In the process, Marikina became sustainable from a financial and environmental stand-point. This paper argues that Marikina's transformation can be attributed to the following: first, that the skill sets the mayors possessed matched the city's needs at the time of their tenure; second, that Marikina's resurgence coincided with the reforms implemented after the transition to democratic rule starting in 1986, in particular, the passage of the Local Government Code; and, third, that Marikina experienced a continuity of policies even if there were changes in leadership. The city did not suffer from what may also be termed as "cancel culture," wherein gains made by the previous administration were negated as a result of highly polarized politics. The paper further argues that aside from agency, Marikina's development was also conjunctural. Marikina's success may be attributed to the confluence of interests among stakeholders; a phenomenon termed policy coalition.

Keywords: Marikina, local transformation, policy coalition, good governance, model city, local politics

Introduction

Marikina's Great Leap Forward occurred when Bayani Fernando (or BF, as he is called by locals) became the mayor of Marikina in 1992. But unlike the Great Helmsman, Bayani could not use charm and ideology to remold his vision, for he did not possess those attributes. Rather, he styled himself after another Asian strongman of another mold, the neo-Confucian leader Lee Kuan Yew, whose authoritarian style of governance

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made Singapore what it is today. Singapore, the bustling, clean, and modern city where discipline and respect for authority reign supreme, became the model for Marikina's transformation. Thus, Bayani Fernando may well be Marikina's version of Lee Kuan Yew. Both Lee Kuan Yew and Bayani command respect and admiration for their achievements, but certainly not affection. Mao Zedong, on the other hand, had a cult-like following and was treated as an icon even though he led the country to destruction along with the Red Guards. And while Mao and Bayani were succeeded by their spouses, Maria Lourdes (or Marides) is no Jiang Qing. Marides was elected by a big majority, possessed great talent not in drama but in management, and did not belong to a Gang of Four. And while Bayani may have utilized some of the more persuasive practices of Singapore and China in governance, Marikina's success lay in the cooperation of other stakeholders—business, labor, nongovernmental organizations—who found themselves sharing a common issue and working with the local government to achieve a common goal.

On one level, the husband-and-wife team transformed Marikina by laying the infrastructure groundwork to remodel the city into something new. It has clean and orderly streets with wide sidewalks and bike lanes; motorists following traffic rules and regulations; residents paying their taxes before the deadline; a rehabilitated river park where residents can jog, stroll, or simply gather for family reunions or group meetings; and civility in public spaces. This was hardly the image Marikina had earlier. Until the early 1990s, it was a sleepy, laid-back third-class municipality where visitors came only for its shoe shops. After 18 years, the Fernandos had transformed Marikina into a vibrant model city, so much so that it was adjudged one of the best-managed cities in the Philippines and among the best choices to invest in and raise a family (Vera 2008, 28). After the end of the Fernandos' terms, Marikina received many awards and distinctions.

On another level, the husband-and-wife team also undertook a sort of cultural revolution. In the Fernandos' vision of the future, urbanization needed to go hand in hand with public order and decency in public spaces. The husband-and-wife team imposed discipline and public order in the form of *urbanidad* (roughly translated as "urbanity" or "civility") or the aesthetic sense of living in a city. Gone are the days when men spat, drank, and urinated in public. Women can no longer hang out their laundry for the public to see. Drivers obey street signs. To provide residents with constant reminders, sidewalks have been inscribed with edicts.

I Marikina's Geography and Politics

The area now known as Marikina was founded as a mission area by Jesuit missionaries

around 1630 (Fabros 2006, 15). Its original inhabitants settled near the river, a tributary of the Pasig River, which linked San Mateo and Montalban in the north to Manila. The first church was established in present-day *barangays* Barangka and Jesus de la Pena at the foot of the Ateneo de Manila University. Old-time residents claim that Marikina's boundaries extended to 15th Avenue in Cubao until the creation of Quezon City in 1937.[1] In fact, President Manuel Quezon's former Marikina rest house is now the site of the Light Rail Transit 2 Santolan Station. By 1773, Marikina had been given as a land grant to the Tuason family (Fabros 2006, 16), Chinese mestizos whose descendants include Miguel Arroyo, husband of former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo.

Marikina may be divided into two areas. The First District consists of nine *barangays* and has a land area of 850.53 hectares, or 39.56 percent of the total, while the Second District has seven *barangays* but a larger land area, with 1,297.47 hectares or 60.44 percent of the total (Marikina City 2020). The First District is the town center, composed formerly of four *barangays*—Sta. Elena, Sto. Niño, San Roque, and Calumpang—and straddles the southern part of the Marikina River (see Fig. 1). This is Marikina's old quarters, where the first settlement took place. This is also where the *munisipyo* (municipal and later city hall), the main church, market, hospital, and sports center are located. As can be expected, this is where old families reside; their businesses (shoes, retail,
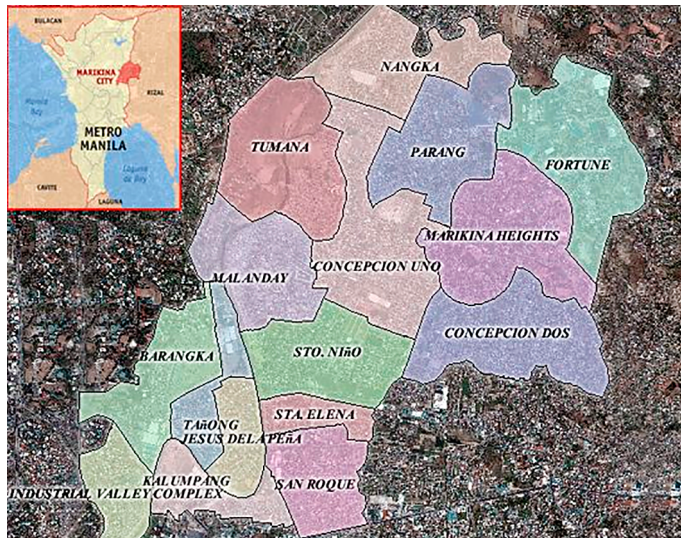

Fig. 1 Marikina City Map
Source: Marikina City, www.marikina.gov.ph, accessed March 28, 2017.

1) Interview with Amelia de la Paz, November 8, 2017.

small- to medium-scale industries) and professions (medicine, dentistry) have made them the municipality's elites. Longtime residents of Marikina may be distinguished by their *chinito* (Chinese-like) features, as many are descended from Chinese migrants who settled in Marikina from the middle of the seventeenth century. As pioneer settlers who control the local economy, they may also be said to dominate or control politics.

Until the early 1970s, the First District was notorious for its many dance halls or cabarets. Long before Ermita, Pasay, and Quezon City became Manila's red-light areas, Marikina was the red-light district. Marikina was at the end point of the Pasig Line of the American colonial-era *tranvia* (electric rail) system. Because of the area's remote location, colonial officials favored placing these entertainment facilities in Marikina instead of the downtown area. Thus, for many young men Calumpang became the mecca for another rite of passage.

Because of its wide-open spaces and proximity to Manila, the Second District (Parang, Malanday, and Concepcion) drew numerous businesses to set up their factories there in the late 1950s and early 1960s. These included Fortune Tobacco Corp., BF Goodrich rubber and tire company, Arms Corp. of the Philippines, Eagle Electric, Holland Milk Products, Goya Chocolate Factory, and Mariwasa Tiles and Ceramics. Purefoods also set up shop, but in the First District. As a result, factory workers from many parts of the country started migrating to Marikina.

At the same time, the Second District's wide-open spaces attracted another type of business: real estate. Beginning in the late 1960s and early 1970s, developers opened up new subdivisions and low-cost housing projects to solve Manila's housing backlog. Foremost among them were the Marikina Subdivision, Provident Villages, SSS Village, and Rancho Estate. As newcomers to Marikina, it took some time before residents of these new homes could integrate and organize, first as neighborhood associations and later as a voting bloc. Thus, for a long time Marikina's local officials almost always came from the First District. Even with a larger voter base, prospective candidates from the Second District were handicapped by having none of the traditional electoral networks or campaign machinery that candidates from the old political families in the First District possessed. This disadvantage ended only in 1992, when Romeo Candazo teamed up with Bayani Fernando to run for congress.

Bayani was no stranger to politics. His father, Gil, had also been the Marikina mayor—from 1947 to 1959. As a young boy, Bayani may have had his first exposure to how Marikina should be run. However, he had another calling. He studied civil engineering at the Mapua Institute of Technology, one of the top engineering schools in the country. Thereafter, he founded his own construction company, BF Corporation, becoming a major player in the construction industry. In the 1970s and 1980s local politics was

not an option, as martial rule precluded elections and popular participation.

After the Aquino administration came to power, local elections were introduced in 1987. Bayani decided to try his luck, fueled initially by his boyhood dream to revive the stagnant Marikina River and make it a center for community activities (Damazo 2002). Being a neophyte, he lost to Rudy Valentino, the administration's chosen candidate. Cory Aquino's popularity was at an all-time high, and whoever she endorsed was ensured of victory. Valentino's term, however, was lackluster. Not only did Marikina stagnate, but the town became notorious for a series of heinous crimes, including rape, murder, bank robberies, and extrajudicial killings.

Undeterred, Bayani ran again in 1992, this time campaigning on a platform of "an industrial and government-friendly, happy, working-class community" (Villaluz and Sanchez 2017). Bayani capitalized on his being an engineer, wearing his trademark construction helmet during the campaign, and came up with the catchy battle cry "BF gets it done!" The message worked, and his campaign gained momentum. The people of Marikina were fed up with the incompetence of the previous administration. Bayani's gung-ho attitude and emphasis on discipline resonated with voters, who handed him a landslide victory. His centerpiece program, the Save the Marikina River Project, also appealed to voters. Unlike grandiose programs or projects that were promised at every election but seemed unattainable, Bayani's project seemed like a doable one given his experience and expertise. Being a newbie candidate also had its advantages. One was that Bayani dodged the *trapo* (traditional politician) tag and was even supported by progressive forces, among them the Kilusang Mayo Uno.[2] Not having many resources to count on, Bayani forged alliances with several sectors based on his vision to include the business community and the Iglesia Ni Cristo.

II The Marikina Way, 1992–2010

For Bayani, Marikina's transformation necessitated a strong emphasis on order and discipline. He likened his emphasis on discipline and meticulousness to the "broken windows" theory. As the theory explains, an unnoticed broken window, however small, if left unrepaired shows an uncaring attitude on the part of the house owner. If unchecked, this attitude becomes contagious and spreads to others. In practice, this meant rehabilitating and renovating Marikina's poor infrastructure to allow discipline and order to set in. Bayani said:

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2) Before the split within the Communist Party in the Philippines.

> There ought to be law and order to put everything in order, and without it there will be iniquity and worse, anarchy. Order is the key to change and progress. When the order is pervasive, people think and behave with civility and urbanity. There can be urbanity only when order is pervasive. (Fabros 2008, 17)

On many occasions, the new mayor could be seen berating those who disregarded Marikina's ordinances in public.

To restore order and discipline on Marikina's congested and chaotic streets, Bayani reclaimed the easement designated for pedestrians from illegal structures, parked vehicles, and vendors. To do this, the city council passed a resolution that classified all materials and illegal structures in public conveyances (streets, sidewalks, riverbanks) as garbage, and therefore apt for disposal (Fernando 2007, 11). With this legal mandate, it became possible to reclaim public spaces and enhance mobility. After establishing the necessary right-of-way, Bayani started concreting and asphalting Marikina's notorious roads. Later, a standard pattern and color were used to pave sidewalks in the whole city. Bike lanes were incorporated between roads and sidewalks. Next came big-ticket items such as renovating the public market and city hall and setting up a new health center and satellite centers in each *barangay*, covered courts, new school buildings, and much more. Great attention was paid to Bayani's pet project—the Marikina City River Revival and Park Project. The river was first dredged of silt and garbage, then aerated to remove foul odor and revive fish stocks. Both banks were developed for joggers and picnickers, and restaurants were invited to set up shop in the newly developed area. This project was so successful that it won many awards and citations and received distinguished visitors, both local and foreign.[3]

To keep residents physically fit and active, Bayani redeveloped the Marikina Sports Center. Aside from the full-length tartan-covered track oval, this facility also has an Olympic-size swimming pool, a baseball field, and a football field. Marikina was lucky to inherit this facility from the province of Rizal. Formerly called the Rodriguez Sports Center, the facility was created to host the 19th World Softball Championships in 1971 as well as the inaugural edition of the Palarong Pambansa in 1974. But when Metro Manila was created in 1975, Marikina ceased to be part of Rizal Province and joined the new entity. Rizal lost its premier sports facility, to the advantage of Marikina. Bayani further enhanced the facility by erecting a new building for basketball, volleyball, table tennis, and aerobics and spaces for physical education classes. The track oval is open 24 hours a day, while other sports facilities are closed for only six hours daily.

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3) For a detailed discussion on the topic, see Pompeyo C. Adamos III, "Local Chief Executive's Political Leadership and Private Voluntary Organization's Participation: A Case Study of the 'Save the Marikina River Project'" (master's thesis, Ateneo de Manila University, 2007).

Table 1   Bayani's Guide to Leadership

1. Know your resources.
2. Draw a plan to the last bolt and the last man.
3. Sell your plan.
4. Deploy as many proper tools as possible for the job. (Let the tools do the job.)
5. Make sure every man has his orders.
6. Give comfort to every man.
7. Make sure everyone is doing his share.
8. When things go wrong and you're pressed for time, don't do it alone. (Let the organization help you to keep the task in line.)
9. Change plan or abort mission if the job cannot be done, but get prior clearance from whoever gave you the order.
10. When in doubt, report.
11. When the job is done, report.
12. If you succeed, let everyone know. If you fail, let me know first.

Marikina's swift physical transformation could be greatly attributed to Bayani's engineering experience. Unlike other mayors whose education or background was in law or medicine, Bayani knew at once what needed to be done and how to obtain the necessary resources. He applied the principles he used in his company and his work methods to the City Engineering Office (see Table 1). Inefficiency and corruption in government infrastructure projects became things of the past. For the first time, Marikina experienced how it was to be rebuilt as if it was a privately contracted project. In this manner, corporatist practices in the private sector worked well when applied to public service (Tordecilla 1997, 17–18).

Bayani also promoted the practices of a clean and green city. Waste segregation was introduced: green bags for compostable materials and black bags for recyclable materials. Specific days were set for which garbage bag was to be collected. Offenders—those who put in the wrong waste material—could expect their garbage to be refused or returned. Students and residents were reminded of Marikina's strict anti-littering policies so that it became practice for many to hold on to their trash until they saw a garbage can. In one of his reelection campaigns, instead of handing out campaign leaflets Bayani handed out metal tongs in his signature green color with a reminder for people to pick up their own litter. Aside from restoring order and addressing Marikina's deficient and dilapidated structures, Bayani also focused on a seeming disregard for what old-timers called *urbanidad*. Resolutions were passed that prohibited spitting, urinating, drinking alcoholic beverages, and strolling around shirtless in public areas (Lorenzo 2007). There was even a ban on hanging out laundered underwear exposed for the public to see.

Bayani's success in transforming Marikina into a model city was due, to a large extent, on the passage of the 1991 Local Government Code. By granting local chief

executives more leeway in managing their cities/municipalities, mayors became in a sense more powerful than the president of the republic. While the power of the purse belonged to Congress and not to the president, at the local level the chief executive had the power to decide where to allocate resources or what projects or programs to include in the budget and implement. In many ways, Bayani was able to use this newfound capability. Another contributing factor in Bayani's success had to do with Fidel V. Ramos's election to the presidency. Ramos and Bayani had much in common: they were both methodical and sticklers for detail when it came to planning and execution; they also favored infrastructure development, an admirable work ethic, and commitment to discipline. Even their public image was identical: a folded barong tagalog with a hard hat, denoting the willingness of a public executive to roll up his sleeves and do the spadework, or an image of a hands-on manager.

Local chief executives can deliver more and become electable if they are able to access funds and support from the center. As Alfred McCoy (1994) and Patricio Abinales (1998) have pointed out, while local elites are the supreme authority in their locality, they are also dependent on their relations with the central power or the state for their survival. Eventually, Bayani's hard work and brand of service, along with the visible improvements he made, caught the attention of Malacanang.

III Public Goods and Civic Virtues

Like the ancient Indian ruler Asoka, who reminded his constituents of Buddhist teachings through the construction of the Rock and Pillar Edicts, Bayani inscribed tenets of his philosophy on sidewalks to remind the people of Marikina of them even after his term ended. Sidewalks were painted red to convey a strong message (see Fig. 2). Among the messages Bayani imparted were the following:

- Pantay Pantay Kung May Disiplina (Discipline leads to Equality);
- Disiplina Nagsisimula sa Bangketa (Discipline starts at the sidewalk);
- Magbihis ng Angkop at nang Igalang Ka ng Iyong Kapwa (Wear proper attire to gain respect);
- A walkable city is a healthy city;
- Marikina: a bicycle-friendly city;
- Marikina: a city of government and business-friendly working-class people; and
- Work hard, work well, and work together.

Fig. 2   Sidewalks Are Marked with Reminders or Edicts in the Form of Slogans.
Source: Author's personal photo.

While other cities abroad may have used this strategy, it was a novel idea in the Philippines. Not only were the messages original and innovative, they also reminded citizens that the government was always present and watching. As people walked past these messages, the messages became part of their subconscious, reminding them of the city's rules and edicts. Most important, Bayani was able to convey that there was a public space where there were rules and norms and that public facilities built by the city government were public goods. They were not for individual use but for the common good.

After reaching the maximum allowable three terms in office, Bayani was succeeded by his wife, Marides, who ran Marikina for the next nine years, from 2001 to 2010. Like in Singapore, where Lee Kuan Yew made way for his son to take his place—thanks in part to Goh Chok Tong's holding the line until Brig. Gen. Lee Hsien Loong was mature enough—Bayani asked his wife to take his post and continue the project he had started. After all, if a woman could continue the succession in running a business corporation or even a revolt (Gabriela Silang) after the death of her husband, why not in public office!

If Bayani's term as mayor was focused on improving Marikina's physical infrastructure, Marides's term was spent on consolidating the gains made by Bayani and making sure the city became sustainable financially and environmentally. Her term in office was

made easier by Marikina becoming a city on December 8, 1996 by virtue of Republic Act 8223. Under the Local Government Code, cities have more leeway in running their affairs than municipalities do; they also have a bigger share of the Internal Revenue Allotments (IRA) of the national budget.[4] Marides was no ordinary housewife or a push-over. She was the daughter of Meneleo Carlos, one of the most successful local entre-preneurs in the country. Carlos attended Cornell University, where he obtained a degree in biochemical engineering in the 1950s. He set up a business empire focused on the production of fiberglass, resins, polymer, and other industrial products. Like her father, Marides also went to the Ivy League school, where she obtained a master's degree in business management. With her outstanding education and extensive experience run-ning a corporation, Marides was able to further push the transformation of Marikina by coming up with a management system that set the standard for governance in a highly urbanized setting. For her efforts, she was nominated as one of the finalists for World City Mayor in 2008. By the time Marides completed her three terms in 2010, Marikina had received numerous awards both locally and internationally.

Marides emphasized the concept of a healthy city. A healthy city is not only clean but has the facilities for an improved quality of life, such as parks, sports facilities, water treatment plants, a waste management facility, etc. A healthy city is one that promotes a healthy lifestyle. With the city's motto of "A healthy city leads to a sustainable city," the initial intention was to rehabilitate the city to make it livable and habitable. But the concept evolved to financial viability, ensuring the city's standards could be maintained with sufficient funding (Vera 2008, 29). Marikina City provided each family with a health passport—a family record that contained details of each family member's check-ups, vaccinations, and dental examinations and the nutritional services available at the city health office.

Because of Marides's corporate background and experience in running a manufac-turing firm, her natural inclination was to lead an organization and deal with partners and customers whose satisfaction she had to always take into consideration. Thus, her attitude toward public office was not to shake hands and dole out money but to manage city hall and its employees like a corporation—to deliver its products, which consisted of basic services (Siao 2013). Because Marikina residents were her clientele, she treated them as customers. While customers may not always be right in such a setting, they can certainly demand quality service. And this Marides was keen to fulfill. The mayor insti-tuted a number of feedback mechanisms to gauge the delivery of basic services in terms of courtesy, timeliness, and efficiency. She instituted a "one-strike" policy, meaning city

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4) For studies on Marikina's fiscal administrative and budgeting systems, please see Ocampo-Salvador (1997) and Palisoc (2000).

employees could face disciplinary measures or even dismissal if they were subject to complaint. Another aspect of corporate management that she carried into public service was the delegation of powers, making sure that everyone became part of a team and did his or her job.

Marikina's success under the leadership of the Fernandos may also be attributed to the continuity of the programs and leadership style. What had been started during Bayani's early years was continued and built upon so that there was ample time for the initiatives to take root and develop. Likewise, the drive for excellence and innovation among employees, and the culture of discipline and urbanity among citizens, became established. A set of doable programs and projects, rootedness in the community, a middle-class constituency that was articulate and politically active, and a system of elections every three years added to the equation. Bayani and Marides Fernando invested heavily in empowering Marikina City by strengthening the administrative and field support services of the city, the pillars that made up the delivery of basic services and the long-term viability of the local government unit (LGU), by allocating sizable funds for capital goods (engineering equipment, riverboats for rescue and relief operations, and ambulances), infrastructure (medical, educational, and sports facilities), as well as capacity building and training. The husband-and-wife team invested in strengthening the capability of Marikina in the long term. While political will has always been mentioned as a key factor in effectively running LGUs, there are limits to what political will can achieve if the foundation is weak and wanting. An analogy may be made to a cart driver beating an old and weary horse. Political will may be important, but so is the means or the capability to deliver services.

IV Policy Coalition through Common Interests

Marikina City is unique in having a statue in honor of a known Communist, Filemon "Ka Popoy" Lagman (see Fig. 3). Moreover, Marikina presents a unique case where labor unions, businesses, and the LGU formed an alliance and institutionalized a tripartite body. If relationships between these groups were marked by enmity in the past, what brought them together was quite unexpected—the ill effects of globalization. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the processes of globalization were being felt more and more in the Philippines. Liberalization, or the entry of foreign goods and services, and the need for greater competition to do away with inefficient, expensive services were becoming the norm. Local businesses that benefited or were protected by the previous trade regime became wary and disturbed. In Marikina, the moribund shoe industry now faced

Fig. 3   A Statue Dedicated to Filemon "Ka Popoy" Lagman, Former Labor Leader, Communist Cadre, and Co-founder of the Partido Manggagawa (Workers Party), Who Worked Out an Amicable Relationship between Business, Labor, and the Marikina City Government during Bayani's Term.

Source: Author's personal photo.

Note: The statue is undergoing repainting, obscuring the hammer-and-sickle emblem.

the prospect of demise and extinction. This fear was not without basis. The national government, through the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), favored an approach based on comparative advantage. Like Darwin's concept of survival of the fittest, industries that could not keep up with the competition would naturally wither away. What the DTI favored was the so-called One-Town-One-Product approach. Instead of pouring resources into unprofitable industries, the DTI advocated for specialization, concentrating on products that the town could excel in producing. For Marikina, this meant closing the century-old shoe industry and opening up new business ventures.

Globalization has its underside too. Opening windows may let in fresh air, but it also lets in flies and other insects. In the case of Marikina, smuggled and dirt-cheap Chinese-made shoes, some as cheap as 60 pesos a pair, started flooding the market. This caused deep concern not only among business owners but also among shoe workers and the Marikina city government. In late 1999, progressive groups wary—or critical—of the ill effects of globalization initiated the formation of the Free Trade Alliance. This group was composed of labor federations, NGOs, advocacy groups like the Freedom from Debt Coalition, members of the academic community (notably from the University of the

Philippines' School of Labor and Industrial Relations), and many other like-minded individuals. It comes as no surprise that the chairman was the notable former Senator Wigberto "Bobby" Tanada, whose nationalist credentials were without reproach. By the early 2000s, a common ground between business and labor had been established and a partnership began to take shape.

This collaboration led to the formation the following year of the Philippine Employment–Labor Social Partnership, Inc. (PELSPI), an advocacy group focusing on economic policies and development. The mechanism instituted by the group was to arrive at a social dialogue among partners. PELSPI attracted big business actors, among them the chambers of commerce and business federations, the Employers Confederation of the Philippines, and Marcos-related industrialists such as Lucio Tan, owner of Fortune Tobacco Corp. Because Meneleo Carlos, Bayani's father-in-law, was the chairman of one of the big business federations in the country, he became part of the consultative process. Carlos's influence among businessmen enabled Bayani to bring together concerned business and workers groups to dialogue and achieve industrial peace in Marikina (Mendoza 2018).

The framework for cooperation was capsulized in the slogan "Marikina—Bayan ng Masasayang Manggagawang Kaibigan ng Industriya" (Marikina—home of happy workers friendly to industries). To institutionalize this mechanism, Bayani set up the Workers' Affairs Office (WAO), which also acted as the secretariat of the tripartite body. In a way, the WAO assumed the role of the Bureau of Labor Relations and the National Labor Relations Commission of the Department of Labor and Employment because any strikable labor issue passed through it first for dispute resolution. A key factor in the success of tripartitism in Marikina may have been Bayani's pragmatism. As a mayor well rooted in the community, Bayani was able to differentiate the different levels of radicalism within the labor movement, and identify which among these he could speak to and negotiate with. He did not meddle directly in labor problems. Rather, he let the WAO handle them. He may have been dictatorial in other aspects, but with this tripartite body Bayani consulted first before making a move, even if his decisions did not please the business and labor sectors. In the end, Bayani saw the importance of a cooperative labor sector when it came to attaining industrial peace, a key ingredient for a business-friendly environment (Magtubo 2018).

In the same manner, labor also demonstrated pragmatism in dealing with business and the Marikina city government. Labor groups belonging to the Sanlakas/Bukluran ng Manggagawa/Partido ng Manggagawa were open to negotiation and compromise at the shop (factory) level even if they positioned themselves as radicals at the national level. By working with businesses and the LGU, they received support or resources for mobi-

lization, education, organizing, and other purposes (Magtubo 2018). Being pragmatic himself, Bayani did not interfere with, or oppose, the radical posturing of labor groups at the national level so long as they made Marikina peaceful.

V What Is Local Is Not Always National

All politics is local! So goes the famous dictum describing politics in the Philippines. This may be a truism, as the efforts of the Fernandos to replicate their success in local governance at the national level did not meet with the same level of success. If policy coalition was a factor in Marikina's transformation, the same could not be said at the national level. On the contrary, Bayani's projects and programs for the metropolis were met with resistance and hostility. Clearly, the constituency at the national level was so diverse that a minimal amount of consensus among stakeholders could not be reached. Furthermore, interest groups opposed to his plans for change gravitated toward each other and formed a strong lobby against his policies. The same may be said of the teaming up between Richard Gordon and Bayani Fernando as presidential and vice-presidential candidates in the 2010 elections. Despite showcasing the successes of both Olongapo and Marikina Cities, the team fared badly when the election results came in.

Because of Bayani's success in Marikina's transformation, he was appointed chairman of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) in 2001 by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. There were high expectations from residents and the business sector for him to turn Manila into a clean and orderly metropolis. As soon as Bayani assumed office, he undertook almost exactly the same projects and approach he had in Marikina, naming it Metro Gwapo (Good-looking metro). In theoretical terms, Metro Gwapo aimed to increase the metropolis's livability by achieving safety, efficiency, accessible amenities, and pleasant surroundings. In practical terms, the project meant no obstructions, no litter, no decay, no diseases, no stink, and no discourtesy (Lopez 2007, 18).

As in Marikina, what Bayani wanted to do right away was to clear the metropolis of illegal settlers, sidewalk vendors, grime, and crime as well as rebuild the city's waterways and infrastructure. Clearing operations targeting sidewalk vendors and illegal settlers near waterways became common, much to the consternation and anguish of those affected (Kusaka 2017). U-turn slots, separate bus lanes, concrete barriers separating private from utility vehicles, and traffic constables in uniform dotted the streets of the metro. In addition, much of the signage bore the color pink, a reminder to residents to bring the metropolis to the pink of health.

Bayani's close association with the president enabled him to acquire additional funds to undertake projects. There was a command center to monitor traffic, the recruitment of more traffic enforcers, the acquisition of more equipment to support operational requirements, the widening of main thoroughfares to ease traffic congestion, the dredging of heavily silted rivers and waterways, the operationalization of pumping stations to mitigate flooding, and even the establishment of motels for employees and stranded commuters in need of short-term lodging (Lopez 2007).

Yet, after several years in office Bayani was able to achieve only a modicum of success in his planned vision for the metropolis. As expected, resistance from street vendors and urban poor in public conveyances was reported vociferously in the media. The negative image created of Bayani (a dictator, heartless, anti-poor, and a tyrant) would impact him later when he ran for national office (Kusaka 2017). The biggest stumbling block to Bayani's vision, however, came from the mayors themselves. Apprehensive that the reforms being initiated by Bayani would impact on their constituents and governance (traffic, garbage collection, etc.), Metro Manila mayors resisted by insisting that the role of the MMDA was consultative and that, unlike them, the chairman was not an elected official, did not have the people's mandate, and thus could not force them to obey.

Unlike many local politicians, Bayani was a loyal member of the Lakas-NUCD, the party of Presidents Ramos and Macapagal Arroyo. When Joseph Estrada won as president, Bayani did not switch parties even though the former San Juan mayor derided Lakas-NUCD members. This party loyalty, along with Bayani's efficient and effective leadership, endeared him to President Macapagal Arroyo. Like many politicians, however, Bayani did not hide his desire to secure national office in the 2010 elections. He believed that he possessed the attributes of a leader: experience, vision, and commitment. Unfortunately for him, his chosen party had other plans. Because Bayani was not considered winnable, the party chose instead the young, energetic, and charming Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, even though he was not a party member. During the Lakas-NUCD national convention, Bayani was not even considered as Teodoro's running mate.

The party's decision angered Bayani, and he left Lakas-NUCD permanently. He teamed up with Gordon, former Olongapo City mayor, in the 2010 elections and ran as his vice-presidential candidate. Before Marikina's transformation under Bayani, Gordon had transformed Olongapo into a model city. Gordon also managed the transformation of the former Subic naval station into an economic zone and freeport. The team capitalized on their success stories. They chose the catchy name "The Transformers" and projected an image of strong leadership and political will. Timing, however, was not on their side. Because they exhibited qualities that were so close to the unpopular presi-

dent's, their candidacy did not resonate with voters' preference. The pair lost miserably: Bayani ended up fourth out of eight candidates.

Aside from the negative publicity he generated as MMDA chairman, Bayani fared badly because he was pitted against veteran Senators Loren Legarda and Mar Roxas as well as Makati Mayor Jojo Binay, a longtime human rights lawyer. When asked during political debates about national issues such as foreign policy, economy, and security, Bayani could not respond. Not only did Bayani lack the eloquence of his rivals, the debates exposed his lack of knowledge beyond local concerns. Unfortunately for him, Bayani showed voters that while he was well versed in running a city, the same could not be said if he took on national office. During the televised debates, all Bayani could muster was the appeal to discipline and obedience to authority, demonstrating to voters that his perspective was very localized. While attention to detail in running a locality proved its worth when he was mayor, the same could not be said should he be elected as vice president. In short, he was not qualified for the position he aspired to.

Bayani's failed run for national office coincided with Marides's exit after reaching her three-term limit as mayor. Shortly after, the couple returned to the private sector, focusing on their construction enterprise. Their only child did not show any interest in entering politics, thus ending the Fernandos' venture into politics.[5] This case is atypical of familial politics or dynastic rule in Philippine politics (Quimpo and Kasuya 2010). While many experiences of familial politics in the Philippines have been marked by inequality, poverty, and even being contrary to good governance, Marikina's is quite the opposite.

Conclusion

There are a number of possible reasons for why the Fernandos' mayorship did not fit the pattern of political dynasties or dynastic politics. As discussed above, their ascent to office was not inherited but won through elections. Their successors have not necessarily enjoyed cooperative relations with the Fernandos while maintaining the legacy of reform policy. Second, no other member of the family ran for office to continue the Fernandos' hold on power. Third, while dynasts usually inherit their position and come to public office unprepared or unqualified, the Fernandos brought with them technical and managerial skills as well as long experience in the private sector. It may seem that the Fernando brand of leadership became a thing of the past when the husband and wife left local politics. But the standards set by them became the benchmark by which to

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5) In the 2016 general elections Bayani ran for a congressional seat in Marikina and won, representing the city's First District in Congress.

measure an aspiring local chief executive (Gregorio-Medel *et al.* 2007). In the end, the people of Marikina would not expect less from their mayors, expecting them to provide services similar to those that they had received from the Fernandos, if not better.

Marikina's success may also be attributed to the support the residents gave to the Fernandos. Bayani's style of leadership resonated well with the mindset of Marikina's residents. It may be argued that Bayani's management style appealed to the city's mostly middle-class residents. For a long time, political leadership and control came from long-time residents of the First District: they dictated the values to the new arrivals in the city. So when Bayani pitched the concept of *urbanidad*, it was not an alien idea. Rather, it was a common and respected value that the old residents took to heart. Thus, Bayani's campaign regarding *urbanidad* was simply a reiteration of an old value in an old setting that was being eroded by rapid development and an influx of migration.

It is doubtful whether this approach or appeal to civility can take root in the much bigger cities of Metro Manila. The departure of old-time residents and the massive influx of migrants from rural areas settling in blighted communities have produced a different demographic, shifting government spending away from capital goods to more basic services. The wide disparity in economic standing and orientation has created a very diverse constituency that makes governance complicated. In contrast, Marikina is still the small municipality that it once was and has a large degree of homogeneity in civic norms. In this sense, the Fernandos were able to govern for a long time and enable Marikina's transformation because of the consent of local residents.

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From Governing to Selling Tourism: Changing Role of Local Government in the Tourism Development of Bohol, Philippines

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Tourism is a major global industry. Governments in developing countries have developed tourism as a means for economic progress. The role of the government is crucial in making tourism beneficial for local people. The traditional functions of government involve crafting legislation and regulating tourist activities in local destinations. The business and marketing aspects of tourism are often entrusted to the private sector. Today, local governments are directly involved in the tourism business. The traditional functions of governments have expanded into managing and marketing touristic enterprises and forming partnerships with private and government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and host communities. This study aims to examine how local government units (LGUs) perform both political and entrepreneurial functions in tourism development. In particular, it explores the case of the province of Bohol—a model for tourism development in the Philippines. The Bohol LGU demonstrates how the local government can integrate governance, coordination, and doing business through tourism. This case study attempts to offer useful insights on formulating policies in local tourism development.

Keywords: governance, local tourism, tourism development, tourism business, public-private partnership, policy making, local politics

Introduction

Tourism has become one of the biggest global industries (Hitchcock *et al.* 1993; McIntosh and Goeldner 1986; United Nations Steering Committee on Tourism for Development 2011; Vanhove 1997; UNWTO 2015). As a top worldwide export category, it has surpassed automotive products and food (UNWTO 2017, 6). Tourism activities affect the economic, social, political, and environmental components of host countries and communities more than traditional industries do (Crick 1989; Eadington and Smith 1992; Long 1992; Murphy 1985). Management plays a crucial role in the way tourism contributes to local economic, social, and environmental sustainability (Edgell *et al.* 2008;

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Jamal and Getz 1995). Private businesses carry out the task of managing tourism and controlling the development of destinations. Multinational corporations operate hotels, resorts, tours, and transport services with minimal government intervention.

Entrepreneurial local government units (LGUs) have become a trend in the Philippines. Aser Javier (2002) argues that public entrepreneurship among LGUs has become a strategy to decentralize the political process. This new movement is contextualized within the Philippine Local Government Code of 1991, which empowers LGUs to engage actively in corporate activities to increase their local revenue contributions (RA 7160). This new trend raises important questions on the role of the government in tourism development (Philippine Statistics Authority 2017). It raises the question of how LGUs can simultaneously carry out governance and do business. With their political advantage, are LGUs more effective than their private counterparts in managing tourism and delivering its benefits to communities?

Using the case of the tourism industry in Bohol, this study examines how LGUs perform both political and entrepreneurial functions in tourism development. First, this study examines how LGUs exercise their traditional political roles and leadership in developing tourism in the province. Second, it presents the municipality of Danao, Bohol, as a model of how traditional governance and doing business can work together in tourism. This study highlights how partnerships, collaborative actions, and leadership enable the growth of an inclusive tourism development.

This study employs qualitative case study methods. In gathering data, I used in-depth interviews with key informants and focus group discussions. Informants were selected through purposive sampling based on their knowledge of the topic and their authority regarding the issues at hand. Informants included provincial development and provincial tourism office heads, the municipal mayor, municipal development and tourism staff, local people, and tour operators. Gathering of data and fieldwork were conducted within a year. To triangulate data gathered from the interviews, I also used primary and secondary documents and literature. I gathered official documents from the provincial and municipal offices, including statistics, legislative papers, development plans, accounting and financial reports, and local narratives written by local people. Official data from government agencies were also analyzed.

I Overview of Tourism in Bohol

The province of Bohol lies in the Visayan archipelago in the Philippines. It is the 10th-largest island in the country, with a land area of 4,821 square kilometers. By January

2018, it had a population of 1,255,128 people scattered among its 47 municipalities and the city of Tagbilaran (Philippine Statistics Authority 2018). From being one of the poorest provinces, Bohol has become a first-class province (income class) and one of the most dynamic in the country. From being a hotbed of political insurgency, it has become a leading tourist destination. Tourism has become one of the socioeconomic drivers in the province, with growing tourist arrivals and tourism-related businesses.

Bohol is one of the top tourist destinations in the Philippines. With the economic benefits that accompany the arrival of visitors, tourism has become one of the biggest industries in the province. It is considered a means for alleviating poverty, generating employment, and developing social infrastructures.

The province's tourist resources are based on its natural features, cultural practices, and heritage structures. Its natural features include white beaches, marine life, forests, animals, waterfalls and rivers, hills and mountains, caves, and "adventure parks." Musical performances and native dances, religious and historical festivals, and local handicrafts comprise its cultural attractions. Closely connected with Boholano culture and history are the province's heritage structures.

This section provides a general background of Bohol tourism. First, it presents a statistical overview of the touristic movement. Second, it examines both nature- and culture-based tourist resources in the province. Finally, it surveys Bohol's public and private facilities that make travel convenient and safe. This overview demonstrates how the local habitat, history, heritage, and hospitality have become the main resources for tourism and how government support facilitates the growth of the industry.

I-1 *Tourist Arrivals*

The number of tourists continues to grow in Bohol. According to a report shared by the Bohol Tourism Office (BTO) from the Department of Tourism Region VII (2016), in November 2016 there were 820,640 tourist arrivals in the province. This number was 36.26 percent higher than the year before, with an average annual growth of 28.5 percent over the past three years. After the great Bohol earthquake in 2013, tourists continued to visit despite fears of another earthquake and the damage to infrastructure and tourism facilities.

Tourists in Bohol are both local and foreign. In 2016 the BTO identified 585,316 (71.32 percent of the total number of tourists that year) as local tourists, 233,736 (28.48 percent) as foreign nationals, and 1,588 (0.19 percent) as overseas Filipinos. Among the foreign tourists, the largest number came from China (59,289), followed by Korea (39,229), the United States (20,317), and France (11,690). A significant number of tourists came also from Japan, Germany, and Taiwan. The BTO and the Department of

Tourism (DOT) projected 1,226,574 tourists in the province in 2012 and the operation of the new airport in Panglao Island by 2018. Airlines began operating at the airport in 2019, with flights being limited to domestic destinations for the moment. Tagbilaran Airport was closed when Bohol-Panglao International Airport began to operate.

Among the tourist destinations in Bohol, Panglao Island had the largest number of visitors. From January to November 2016, a total of 366,174 tourists visited the island municipality. The provincial capital, Tagbilaran City, had 105,885 visitors, followed by Dauis, which had 25,914. Since most of the tourist facilities (such as the airport and pier) and tourist accommodations (such as hotels and resorts) are in these areas, it is not surprising that the largest numbers of tourists are found in these municipalities. Tourists visit destinations in other municipalities for sightseeing and other activities, without staying there overnight.

I-2 *Touristic Products and Activities*
Nature-Based Tourism

The natural environment is one of the main features of the tourism industry (Fennell 2008; Holden 2008; Hunter and Green 1995; Krippendorf 1982). It is "crucial to the attractiveness of almost all travel destinations and recreation areas . . . provide an important 'backdrop' to commercial service areas and recreation sites, or at least contribute to all tourist locations" (Farrell and Runyan 1991, 26). "Nature-based tourism" refers to

> tourism in natural settings (e.g., adventure tourism), tourism that focuses on specific elements of the natural environment (e.g., safari and wildlife tourism, nature tourism, marine tourism), and tourism that is developed in order to conserve or protect natural areas (e.g., ecotourism, national parks). (Hall and Boyd 2005, 3)

The Bohol provincial government has enumerated the natural assets that have been developed as tourist attractions (see Table 1).

One advantage of traveling around Bohol is the close proximity of tourist sites. For example, in one day tourists can visit the Chocolate Hills, Man-made Forest, Loboc River, Panglao beaches, Hinagdanan Cave, and Rajah Sikatuna Protected Landscape (as a side trip). These spots are accessible through a well-cemented/asphalt 120-kilometer national highway. Located in the mid-southwestern part of the province, the Tarsier Sanctuary and Mag-Aso Falls in the towns of Corella and Antequera can be covered in a single trip. The Abatan River and mangrove plantations in the towns of Cortes and Maribojoc are two neighboring areas.

White beaches in the town of Anda and the mangrove plantation in the town of Candijay lie in the eastern part of Bohol. The islands of Pamilacan and Balicasag are

Table 1 Nature-Based Tourism Resources in Bohol

Natural Sites	Location
Geological formation	Chocolate Hills, Carmen and Sagbayan
Protected forests	Man-made Forest, Bilar
Rivers and waterfalls	Loboc and Loay River and Busay Falls; Mag-Aso Falls, Antequera; Abatan River cruise and nature viewing: Cortes, Maribojoc, Antequera, Balilihan, and Catigbian
Cave	Hinagdanan Cave, Dauis
Beaches and marine attractions	Panglao and Anda beaches; dive sites in Balicasag Island and all over Panglao and Cabilao, Loon; dolphin watching, Pamilacan Island
Protected areas	Rajah Sikatuna Protected Landscape in Bilar; mangrove areas in Panglao, Candijay, Maribojoc, and Banacon Island

Source: Based on data from Province of Bohol and German Development Service (2010, 7).

located 15 kilometers from each other on the Bohol Sea and are accessible by boat from Panglao and Baclayon ports. However, lying in the Cebu Strait, north of Bohol, Banacon Island's mangrove forest is a little farther from the rest of Bohol's tourist attractions.

Culture-Based Tourism

Culture is "a deeply embedded aspect of tourism" (George *et al.* 2009, 5). Traditional practices and customs of host communities have become tourist attractions. In Bohol, cultural traditions are evident in their physical and intangible forms. Physical and artistic expressions include old religious buildings, Spanish structures, ancestral houses, music, traditional dances, religious and historical festivals, handicrafts, and delicacies. Aside from these manifestations, Boholanos are known for their tradition of hospitality and friendliness toward visitors. The provincial government of Bohol enumerates specific cultural and historical assets that are of touristic value (see Table 2).

Old Spanish-period structures are included in tourist routes. These include stone churches dating back to the early Spanish colonization of Bohol. Almost each of the province's 47 municipalities has its own old church strategically built within the town center plaza, where the municipal government building is also located. These church buildings with bell towers mostly have baroque designs made of coral brick and hardwood.

Some of Bohol's heritage structures were destroyed by fire or natural disasters. The great Bohol earthquake of 2013 destroyed many historic buildings, including the churches of Loon and Loboc towns. Some have been totally restored or are undergoing restoration. Modern reconstruction also caused the degradation of some of these churches. Other heritage structures include ancient watchtowers and century-old houses that tourists can visit.

Table 2   Culture-Based Tourism Resources in Bohol

Physical Structures and Cultural Practices	Examples and Locations
[Stone] Churches	Baclayon, Dauis, Loon, Loboc, Maribojoc, Albur, Dimiao
Heritage structures	Punta Cruz Watchtower in Maribojoc; Escuelas de los ninos y ninas and Clarin House in Loay; Casa Rocha in Sitio Ubos, Tagbilaran City; Panglao belfry and Ermita Ruins in Dimiao
Local crafts	Loom weaving in Tubigon, Inabanga, Albur, and Buenavista; basket weaving in Antequera; pottery making in Albur and Calape; calamay manufacturing in Albur and Jagna
Concerts and presentations	Popular cultural groups such as the Loboc Children's Choir, Dimiao Children's Rondalla, Bol-anon Theater Group, Diwanag Dance Theatre, Cecilio Putong National High School Dance Troupe, and recently Tubigon Dance Group
Festivals	The Sandugo (blood compact), a re-enactment of Miguel Lopez de Legazpi and Boholano Chieftain Rajah Sikatuna's treaty of friendship, and the Bolibongkingking, a spiritual thanksgiving and petition dance, in Loboc; fluvial parades in Loay, Loboc, and Talibon; annual town fiestas

Source: Based on data from Province of Bohol and German Development Service (2010, 7).

Aside from ancient buildings, Bohol is known also for its musical traditions. Talented Boholanos have caught the attention of tourists and international musicians. One of the best-known musical groups in the province is the Loboc Children's Choir. The choir is composed of elementary and high school students from the town of Loboc carefully selected by their teachers. The group has won several international competitions, including first place at the "Europe and Its Songs" international choir festival in Barcelona in 2003 and first place at the Concorso Internazionale Di Canto Corale "Seghizzi" held in Italy in 2017. Tourists can experience Boholano musicality on a Loboc river cruise, which culminates with musical presentations.

Another occasion on which tourists can experience Boholano cultural creativity is during the monthlong Sandugo festival held every July in Tagbilaran City. The celebration commemorates the blood compact between the Spaniard Miguel Lopez de Legaspi and the native Rajah Sikatuna in 1565 marking the historic peace pact and the opening of the province to the world. The celebration starts on July 1 and wraps up with a street dancing competition on the third or fourth Sunday of the month. This is the major tourist attraction of the city of Tagbilaran.

Bohol is known for its religious festivals and parades, especially its grand fiesta celebrations. Dating back to the Spanish period, *pista* is a community (town, *barangay*, *sitio*) celebration of thanksgiving in honor of the local patron saint. Cultural presentations are held for at least two days. Families prepare food not only for their relatives and friends but for anybody who comes into their homes. Food is offered all day. During the *pista*

season (especially in the month of May) tourists can experience a festive atmosphere while witnessing traditional dances and musical presentations, often in public places.

Bohol's traditional handicrafts are produced for touristic consumption as well as for export. Products of loom weaving in the towns of Tubigon, Inabanga, Albur, and Buenavista, basket weaving in Antequera, and pottery making in Albur and Calape can be purchased in souvenir shops in tourist destinations as well as city malls. Tourists can also taste and take home traditional Boholano sweets, including *calamay* (made of glutinous rice powder, coconut milk, brown sugar, and peanuts) from Albur and Jagna, and peanut kisses and other locally baked pastries.

I-3 *Tourist Facilities and Services*

By Air, by Sea, and by Land

The island of Bohol can be reached by either airplane or boat. Bohol has one airport, Bohol-Panglao International Airport. The airport project was sponsored by the Japanese International Cooperation Agency. At present, there are seven direct flights connecting Bohol and Manila. Three main airline companies offer services on this route: Philippine Airlines, Cebu Pacific Air, and AirAsia. The one-way fare is around PHP3,500 (around US$67). On June 22, 2017, direct international flights began between Seoul-Incheon and Tagbilaran Airport.

An alternative way of getting to Bohol is by ship. There are at least four major seaports in Bohol: Tagbilaran, Tubigon, Jagna, and Ubay. There is no direct sea route between Manila and Tagbilaran. However, since air travel is inexpensive and more convenient than sea travel, people prefer to take a flight from Manila. From Cebu, it is most convenient to sail into the ports of Tubigon and Tagbilaran because of their proximity and the frequency of ferries. On the Cebu–Tagbilaran route, slow ferries cost around PHP210 (US$4) and fast ferries around PHP350 (US$7). The Cebu–Tubigon route is shorter and cheaper. Pump boats also ply between Cebu and the towns of Getafe and Inabanga. Traveling within Bohol is not a problem. Public land transportation is affordable. This includes open-air buses, air-conditioned vans, jeepneys, cabs, tricycles, and *habal-habal* (transport motorbikes). Tourists can also rent cars and motorcycles.

Accommodations and Other Services

Bohol has luxury hotels and resorts, tourist inns, pension houses, travel lodges, and homestays. In 2015 (the latest year for which data is available), the Bohol Tourism Office counted 360 accommodation establishments in the province, with a total of 6,370 rooms (Province of Bohol 2015, 24). This number is far higher than the 2,000 rooms counted in 2010 (Province of Bohol and German Development Service 2010, 8). These accom-

modations are spread throughout the province, especially in Tagbilaran City, Panglao Island, and Baclayon. With its fine white beaches and proximity to the capital city, Panglao Island has the greatest number of resorts and spas, including a five-star hotel and exclusive resorts.

There are 15 BTO-accredited local travel agencies in Bohol. For those who like shopping, Bohol has shopping malls and department stores. The three main shopping malls are Bohol Quality Mall, Island City Mall, and Alturas Malls. Withdrawing cash is convenient, with 49 banking units and ATMs scattered around the city and municipalities (Province of Bohol and German Development Service 2010, 8). Communications are convenient, with telecommunications companies providing mobile and Internet services.

II   Governing Bohol Tourism

As mentioned earlier, tourism is a major industry in Bohol. Concerned with reducing the province's poverty incidence, the provincial government considers tourism as one of the means to achieve economic growth. Adopting the concepts and strategies of pro-poor tourism, local government officials and planners look to tourism to uplift the socioeconomic condition of poor local communities through employment, sharing of income, and growth of local entrepreneurship while at the same time conserving the province's natural resources (Province of Bohol and German Development Service 2010, 1). To achieve these goals, it is crucial for the local government to build institutions and craft legislation.

II-1 *Institutionalizing Tourism*
Establishing institutions for nature-based tourism strengthened Bohol's tourism development. With the aim of developing a general framework for tourism development, a memorandum of agreement was signed between the Soil and Water Conservation Foundation and the provincial government of Bohol in 2005. Through the Provincial Planning and Development Office (PPDO), the Bohol Environment Management Office (BEMO), and the BTO, preparatory steps were taken for the formulation of the Biodiversity Conservation and Ecotourism Framework Plan of Bohol as mandated under the Bohol Environment Code of 1998.

The partnership project involved national agencies, particularly the DOT and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). European development agencies assisted by providing technical and financial support. These agencies included the German Development Service (DED) and Soil and Water Conservation Foundation

(SWCF) for technical support; InWEnt for financial assistance; and the UNDP-GEF-SGF Program and the European Union, both through SWCF (Province of Bohol and German Development Service 2010, 2).

To provide technical assistance during the formulation of the tourism framework plan, the provincial government of Bohol established a multi-sectoral Ecotourism Technical Working Group. This was composed of regional and provincial government agencies—such as the DENR, DOT, BEMO, PPDO, and BTO—and nongovernmental organizations. Organizers provided modular training for LGUs, NGOs, local communities, academe, and the private sector from March to November 2005. The training focused on topics such as ecotourism and biodiversity, ecotourism product development, marketing and promotion, and monitoring and evaluation (Province of Bohol and German Development Service 2010, 3).

The workshop produced the Bohol Ecotourism Club, composed of representatives from local governments, NGOs, local communities, and the private sector. Serving as a "prime mover" and "watchdog" for ecotourism activities in the province, the body ensures the inclusion and implementation of ecotourism principles in municipal tourism development projects. It also seeks to educate the public on ecotourism and to recommend acceptable ethical standards on tourism development projects in Bohol. One of the organization's roles is to be a "communities' mentor" to guide people to see alternative income-earning opportunities through tourism (Province of Bohol and German Development Service 2010, 3).

The project came to be known as the Biodiversity Conservation and Ecotourism Framework Plan of Bohol 2006–2015. It served as a bible for investors, people in the tourism business sector, municipal executives, planners, and NGOs in the province for their tourism development and biodiversity conservation projects. Guidelines included principles, regulations, standards, best practices, and ethics for tourism activities that the government considered to be in line with its vision.

Specialized agencies composed of national, provincial, and local government units, NGOs, and organizations from the private sector are in place to promote and facilitate the development of tourism in the province. One is the Provincial Tourism Council. The council was originally composed of more than 50 members—60 percent from the private sector and 40 percent from the government. Before this body was created, a Committee on Tourism was an integral part of the Sanguniang Panlalawigan (provincial council). During that time there was an independent Provincial Investment Office, which had a section for the tourism sector until 1997.

Intending to run for mayor, the Committee on Tourism chairperson of the Sanguniang Panlalawigan decided to turn over the responsibilities of the committee to

the Provincial Investment Office. In 2007 the tourism section of the investment office became a separate provincial government entity. This was when the tourism industry started to grow, and the former office was no longer adequate to accommodate the growing needs of the industry. Now, the Bohol Tourism Office (formerly the Provincial Tourism Office) functions as the secretariat of the Provincial Tourism Council.

Since all tourist sites are under the administration of LGUs, the provincial government cannot develop tourist attractions on its own. However, it oversees the overall tourism development activities in the province and provides for the needs of LGUs. The BTO has become the advice-giving and coordinating body of the province for tourism development. The BTO has specific responsibilities. First, it helps LGUs and the private sector in developing their own tourist sites. It also orients planners regarding policies and other issues concerning tourism in the province. It accepts tourism project proposals from LGUs and provides advice and suggestions concerning the viability and marketability of such projects. Second, being the marketing arm of the provincial government, the office employs forms of communication such as posters, brochures, and videos to promote Bohol tourism to the world. Seeing the potential of proposed tourism projects, the office also provides clients for local tourism businesses.

Third, the BTO organizes basic skills training for tourism and hospitality services. In coordination with other government agencies, such as the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), the office organizes seminars and workshops for LGUs, community organizations, and other tourism practitioners to enhance their services. Training includes basic culinary arts, customer service, tourist guiding, and operation of cottages and accommodations. The office also coordinates closely with other government agencies like the DOT for professional and financial resources, especially in organizing seminars, and the DENR on issues concerning protected areas that are now being utilized as tourist attractions.

The Provincial Tourism Council and the BTO have limited power. Although these institutions are under the Office of the Provincial Governor, they cannot take decisions regarding implementation of policies, nor can they regulate tourist activities. Officers are elected, but members meet regularly only twice a year. Core group members meet regularly, and in special cases they discuss pressing issues.

Another government agency that is involved in the province's tourism industry is the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB) under the DENR. The body is composed of *barangay* captains (village chiefs) and municipal mayors of localities enclosed within protected areas. One-fourth of the entire island of Bohol (75,766 hectares) consists of protected areas (Province of Bohol and German Development Service 2010, 11–12). Many of these have become tourist sites, including the Chocolate Hills, Man-made

Forest in Bilar, Loboc Watershed, Tarsier Sanctuary in Corella, and 15 marine sanctuaries within the seas of Panglao, Dauis, and Baclayon.

As the governing body for deciding on matters related to policy and the administration of protected areas, the PAMB reviews project proposals and tourist activities to check that they comply with the set standards for ecological conservation. The body also decides on budget allocations (Province of Bohol and German Development Service 2010, 15). Coordinating closely with the BTO, the PAMB discusses with development planners on issues related to developing tourist sites in protected natural environments.

II-2 *Enacting Tourism*

Aside from institutionalizing tourism, the Bohol provincial government also enacts policies and environmental ordinances for tourism development. This legislation aims to ensure the protection of natural and cultural resources in order to help the tourism industry. Such ordinances are put in place in response to national legislations (e.g., Protected Areas System in the Philippines [RA 7586 or NIPAS Act of 1992]) that promote ecological conservation and ecotourism. Bohol pioneered a provincial legislation, the Bohol Environmental Code of 1998, to protect the natural environment, which has become a major component of its tourism industry. This code has become a model for other local governments in the country.

In 2007 the Act to Declare the Province of Bohol as an Eco-cultural Tourism Zone (RA 9446) was promulgated. This law mandates the DOT, the provincial government, and the city of Tagbilaran to coordinate closely in developing and promoting tourism in the province. Coordination involves formulating development plans, protecting natural and cultural resources, consolidating political powers, providing technical and material assistance, and partnering with private and nongovernmental agencies. The law produced the Bohol Tourism Master Plan, which "would be a unified direction of the province to further harness and sustain its vast tourism potential" (Province of Bohol 2007, 1). This law was further strengthened by the promulgation of the Tourism Act of 2009 (RA 9593).

Since 1995 there have been at least 165 provincial ordinances, resolutions, and policies related to tourism development. Many of these concern coordination among different LGUs, particularly with municipal mayors, NGOs, and private agencies. These ordinances urge and encourage partnerships among stakeholders in developing and governing tourist activities. In 2017 the province prepared the Bohol Surprise Tours program, which highlighted 12 new local ecotourism destinations. This program showcases the livelihood activities of host communities as tourist sites. The same year, the province—along with the DOT, the United States Agency for International Development, and private sector representatives—launched the province's new branding: "Behold

Bohol." This branding aimed to project the revival of Bohol after the 2013 earthquake.

Developing Bohol tourism is a collaborative effort between the provincial government and municipalities. Through the BTO, the provincial government provides municipalities with technical assistance. Technical support includes training of local tourism officers and staff, advertising and packaging of products, and mapping of possible tourism resources. The provincial government also helps in constructing roads leading to tourist destinations. Though the provincial governor heads the entire province, the municipal mayors still have the power to decide the direction of local tourism development. In this sense, the municipalities have greater influence than the provincial government. However, the provincial government provides the general framework and legislative mechanisms to encourage the growth of tourism in municipalities.

After the implementation of the Bohol Tourism Master Plan, LGUs at the municipal level started to develop their own tourism programs and activities. Since LGUs administer most of the tourist sites, they have control over these areas in terms of management. LGUs either coordinate with private agencies to provide environments conducive to tourism, or they develop and manage touristic enterprises by themselves.

Loboc municipality provides an example of collaborative tourism. The town is known for its river cruise. The tourism project is a product of a partnership among the LGU, donor agencies, private investors, and local community organizations. The LGU provided the necessary facilities around the tourism complex, including building the river port for boats and floating restaurants, developing the tourism office and terminal, and providing access and a huge parking area. Private businesses manage the cruise, the shops, and the floating restaurants. Local community organizations participate through musical and cultural performances held along the riverside. Foreign government donors sponsor the lighting in the river's vicinity.

The Abatan river tour is an example of an exclusively LGU-managed tourism enterprise. The project involves the four neighboring municipalities of Cortes, Maribojoc, Balilihan, and Catigbian. The tour features a cruise through the mangrove forest along the river connecting these municipalities. It includes a visit to waterfalls and local villages, and cultural presentations at the Tourism Center. The coastal municipalities of Panglao, Dauis, and Baclayon have also initiated a similar partnership, called Padayon. The three towns are located within the Bohol Marine Triangle, where there are five major marine ecosystems (see Green *et al.* 2002, 48). This collaborative project aims at environmental preservation for tourism development.

II-3 *Tourism Leadership*

Leadership plays an important role in the growth of tourism. The tourism industry of

Bohol would not be possible without the leadership of local politicians. Prominent local figures helped bring Bohol tourism to where it is now. The three main personalities were Rene Relampagos, Erico Aumentado, and Edgardo Chatto. With political will and shared vision, these leaders were able to continue what their predecessors had started, despite their differences in political affiliation.

The laying of the groundwork for tourism development in Bohol can be attributed to Relampagos. He has served as a Provincial Board member (1989–92), vice governor (1992–95; 2019–), governor (1995–2001), and member of the House of Representatives (2010–19). During Relampagos's term as governor, the Bohol Environmental Code (Province of Bohol 1998) was promulgated, which created the BEMO. The code is considered to be the first of its kind in the Philippines and became a model for other provinces in the country. This legislation became the ground on which tourism policies and guidelines sprouted.

During Relampagos's term as governor, concerns over environmental protection and management were brought to the fore. These gained primary importance in policy making and in formulating development programs for the province. Care for the environment became the starting point for Bohol to engage in ecotourism as a model for tourism development. During Relampagos's term, the province collaborated with various international and national government agencies, NGOs, and local communities.

What Relampagos prepared, Aumentado cultivated. Aumentado defeated Relampagos in the 2001 gubernatorial race. He started as a member of the Provincial Board (1967–86), then became the vice governor (1988–92), a congressman (1992–2001; 2010–12), and the governor of Bohol (2001–10). In 2001 Bohol was considered one of the poorest provinces in the country. Aumentado saw the potential in tourism as a means of poverty reduction. During his term he placed Bohol on the tourism map, and eventually the province emerged as one of the top tourist destinations in the country.

Aumentado continued what his predecessor had started, establishing ties and crafting development plans. Through collaborative work among local and national government agencies and NGOs, Aumentado's administration produced the Biodiversity Conservation and Ecotourism Framework Plan of Bohol 2006–2015. The plan came about as a response to Executive Order No. 111 (EO 111) (Estrada 1999), which laid the guidelines for ecotourism in the country. The framework became the basis for development projects and activities in the province. During Aumentado's administration the Bohol Arts and Heritage Code (Province of Bohol 2008) was also promulgated. This code provided the legal basis for the promotion and development of culture-based tourism.

Aside from establishing legislative and institutional mechanisms, Aumentado improved the basic infrastructure of the province. He fixed the circumferential road (the

Carlos P. Garcia Circumferential Road) and the minor roads connecting the municipalities, which made transport and access to tourist destinations faster and more convenient. Pacifying the Communist insurgency in Bohol was also considered a great achievement of the former governor. He died in December 2012.

A lawyer by profession, Chatto has served as a member of the Provincial Board (1980–86), mayor (1988–95), vice governor (1995–2001), congressman (2001–10; 2019–), and governor (2010–19). The greatest challenge Chatto faced as governor was the 2013 earthquake. The 7.2 magnitude earthquake left the province with a high number of casualties and heavily damaged roads, bridges, houses, and buildings. Tourist sites and cultural structures, including the Chocolate Hills complex and many of the century-old heritage churches, were heavily damaged.

Through the help of international agencies, Chatto was able to rehabilitate the province. The Behold Bohol project highlights how Bohol reemerged as a tourist destination after the tragic earthquake. During Chatto's administration, Panglao-Bohol International Airport was also inaugurated. Though Chatto belongs to the opposition party, his support for the Duterte administration gives him a political advantage in pursuing his plans and projects.

III   Selling Tourism: The Case of the Local Government of Danao

The town of Danao is in the central part of Bohol. It is located around 66 kilometers (the fastest route) northeast of Tagbilaran City and can be reached by car in around two hours. The town has 17 *barangays* and had a population of 17,890 in 2015, with 3,364 households. It has an average income of PHP90 million and in 2016 had an Internal Revenue Allocation amounting to around PHP75,526,524. The main source of livelihood in Danao is basic farming. With the LGU-run tourism development, Danao rose from being a sixth-class municipality in 1999 to a fourth-class municipality and ranks first in Bohol and the region in income generation efficiency.

III-1 *From Insurgency to Hospitality*
Before tourism was developed in Danao, the town was known for its political insurgencies and poverty. The province of Bohol was an insurgent hotbed from 2000 until it was declared insurgent free in March 2010 (Torres 2011, 1). Several attacks and gunfights took place in the province, including raids of government and business centers that were related to insurgent groups. The extreme poverty in the area, especially in farming communities, formed a seedbed for ideology-based conflict. This was the experience of

people for decades, although this phenomenon was not something new for Danao. Historically, the town was the headquarters of the group of Fernando Dagohoy, the leader of the longest revolution in Philippine history (1744–1829).

Danao was known also for its poor, malnourished, and low-educated population. In 2003 it was considered the poorest municipality of Bohol and one of the poorest in the country, with a score of 57.2 on the poverty index (National Statistical Coordination Board 2009). Some people survived on small-scale traditional farming and charcoal making. Others moved away to work as domestic help and laborers, undermining family life. With these social and economic conditions, Danao became a pilot area for national government assistance. Government agencies started to introduce livelihood projects among the local people. However, local communities found the assistance insufficient, and the help made people more dependent on government support rather than motivating them to exert the effort to improve their livelihoods.

Today, the local government of Danao is noted for its tourism enterprises. The LGU-run tourism program came to be known as E.A.T. Danao (Eco, Educational, Extreme Adventure Tour). The program's activities take place at Danao Adventure Park, around 7 kilometers from the town center. The landscape includes cliffs, caves, rivers, rock formations, and century-old trees. These natural features provide a unique venue for outdoor adventure activities, including trekking, kayaking, caving, cliff plunging, zip-lining, rappelling, and root climbing. Visitors can also enjoy the "Sea of Clouds," a formation of fog and clouds suspended near the tops of neighboring mountains in the early morning.

Then Municipal Mayor Jose Cepedoza floated the idea of having a tourism enterprise in 2001. The idea was realized through his successor, Mayor Louis Thomas Gonzaga, and led to the opening of the park in 2006. Informants said that the concept of an adventure park came about after the mayor experienced AJ Hackett Bungy Jumping in Queenstown, New Zealand. The country offers several adventure activities, particularly on its mountainous terrain. The mayor shared the plan with his advisers and formed a team to conduct a feasibility study. After the death of Mayor Gonzaga in 2016, his mother, Natividad, took office and is continuing the project.

Danao Adventure Park is a product of collaboration and partnerships among stakeholders. The tourist activities started with caving and mountain trekking, until groups of tourists saw the potential of the place. River-based activities were added later. Danao LGU started to connect with adventure enthusiasts, government agencies, and tour businesses for support. Danao's fame spread, and government agencies—including the DOT and DENR—came to acknowledge the potential of the park.

The DENR helped Danao with resource inventory. The DOT assisted the LGU with

product development and marketing. The Department of Trade and Industry helped with the making of souvenir items, while the TESDA helped with the training of local personnel in tourist services. Tour businesses in Bohol and private individuals also helped. Tour agents, Web bloggers, and adventure enthusiasts assisted with the product test run, product development, and marketing. The World Bank and the Development Bank of the Philippines also assisted.

The development of Danao tourism is a result of local participation. Local people were involved in the planning and implementation of the project. During the initial stages, they worked together with private agencies and individuals. LGU employees and officials contributed extra hours of work without pay. *Barangay* officials encouraged their communities to do voluntary work. Civil society organizations helped on the ground without pay. Volunteers helped with clearing the areas where the adventure park would be established, landscaping, and marketing adventure tours. They also started to act as tour guides (Jensen 2010). Local leaders learned through feedback from visitors and tourists how to improve the place and services. This spirit of cooperation led to a sense of community ownership among the local people.

III-2 *Tourism Benefiting Local People*

The main sources of income from tourism activities in Danao include revenues from individual entrance and parking, adventure activities, and accommodation services. At the time of this study, entrance fees were around PHP40 and parking fees PHP10–30. Adventure activities cost around PHP350 per person, aside from the more expensive "Plunge," which costs PHP700. Danao Adventure Park has accommodations ranging from PHP600 to PHP1,000 per night. The park also offers adventure packages, which cost PHP1,500–3,500 per person and may include food and accommodations.

LGU-run tourism was able to contribute to the economic and social well-being of the local people. It took two years for Danao to profit from its LGU-run tourism industry. Based on municipal records provided by the Danao LGU, in 2009 Danao had an income of around PHP4.8 million from tourism-related enterprises. The figure grew to PHP21.25 million in 2012. In 2010 the LGU started to give back to the local people what had been gained through their cooperation. However, after the great earthquake hit Bohol in October 2013, Danao experienced a decrease in income due to the low number of tourists. The LGU also had to spend huge amounts on repairing tourist facilities. In 2014 the number of tourists plunged to 7,261 from 25,531 the preceding year. Danao is slowly regaining its visitors. From January to October 2017, there were 23,042 tourist arrivals.

Tourism has provided alternative means of livelihood and social services for the community. Benefits from tourism come in the form of livelihoods, employment, and

social services. Social services include scholarship programs, subsidized hospitalization programs, free use of ambulances, supplemental feeding, and health insurance programs. Danao Adventure Park employed 13 local guides in 2006. The number grew to 35 in 2008 and continued to increase to 45 in 2009. Today, local tourism directly employs more than 100 local people as tour guides, accommodation and food service staff, and maintenance and support personnel. Other local people who are earning an income from tourism are the People's Organizations, which provide food to the LGU-run restaurant and sell souvenir items to visitors. In the area of education, the LGU started the Iskolar sa Torismo (Scholars of tourism) program in 2011. At the time of this study, 83 college students were receiving scholarships in various state colleges and universities in the province. The scholarship program has produced 12 graduates since its inception.

Most of the benefits from tourism go toward health services. The subsidized hospitalization program helps poor patients with their medical fees. From 2011 until the time of this study, 221 people had benefited from the program. The subsidy for the health insurance program had benefited around 4,000 people. The LGU's free ambulance service has been supported by revenues from tourism activities since 2011. However, the supplemental feeding program for preschoolers ran for only a year.

Aside from the economic and social benefits, tourism has created environmental awareness among local people. People have started to participate in ecological preservation activities. They have stopped cutting trees for their former livelihood of charcoal making. In a personal interview, Mayor Natividad Gonzaga argued that aside from the material benefits gained from tourism, the most valuable outcome was the regaining of pride among the people of Danao. She emphasized that tourism had brought back pride to the place, and the municipality had evolved from being identified as backward and poor to attracting people from around the world with its natural and cultural wonders.

Conclusion

This study examines the changing role of governments in tourism development. Governments play a crucial role in the development of the tourism industry. Local governments have evolved from being passive to more active actors in the industry. From merely providing laws and building infrastructure, governments now manage their own tourism-related businesses. In past decades, the management of tourism was entrusted to the business sector. Multinational corporations and private businesses controlled the operation of resorts, hotels, and other tourist services with minimal intervention from the government. Now, LGUs are competing with private operators.

Entrepreneurial LGUs are a new phenomenon. From governing tourism, LGUs are now also selling tourism. Aside from tax revenues, local governments are gaining additional income from their self-managed tourism businesses, and at the same time they provide employment to local people. This new trend challenges the traditional role of governments in tourism development. It raises questions over how LGUs can carry out governance as well as do business at the same time. With their political advantage, are LGUs more effective than their private counterparts in managing tourism and delivering its benefits to communities?

To illustrate this new phenomenon, this study highlights the case of the tourism industry in the province of Bohol in the Philippines. It examines how LGUs in Bohol can perform both political and corporate functions in tourism. First, the study explores how the provincial government lays the foundation for the development of tourism in its local destinations. Second, this study examines the case of the municipality of Danao as a model for how a once-poor town could grow to become an LGU. With Danao's natural beauty, its culture, and the cooperation of the local people, the LGU of Danao was able to harness the economic, social, and environmental benefits of tourism.

Bohol has evolved from being a poor to a high-income-generating province with the growth of local tourism. Tourism development has also become a tool to address the problem of political insurgency, which affected people of the province for decades. The province has become one of the top tourist destinations in the country. Its natural beauty and colorful cultures have attracted both domestic and international tourists. Despite the disruption brought about by the great earthquake of 2013, the number of tourist arrivals continued to grow through the years.

The provincial government set the ground for tourism to grow in Bohol. It institutionalized tourism by organizing collective action among various government units, nongovernmental agencies, and local people. Collaboration among stakeholders created political mechanisms that governed tourism and at the same time encouraged LGUs to engage in tourism development projects. Aside from governing tourism, multi-sectoral institutions enable local executives and their communities to obtain the necessary knowledge and skills to manage and operate tourism-related businesses. Tourism has become embedded into local governance.

Aside from institutionalizing tourism, the provincial government of Bohol has provided legislative mechanisms that directly impact tourism. Bohol pioneered a tourism code for regulating tourism development. This code has become a model for other LGUs in the country. Enacting tourism provides a solid legal basis for regulating tourist activities and development. The Bohol tourism code has become a framework for the provincial tourism development plan.

Institutional and legislative mechanisms could not have been efficient without the leadership of Bohol's local executive. This study highlights the crucial role of three local politicians in the growth of tourism: Relampagos, Aumentado, and Chatto. With their political will and openness to collaboration with other agencies, they were able to put Bohol on the global tourism map.

The municipality of Danao illustrates how an LGU is able to carry out governance as well as do business. From being a poor town, Danao has evolved into a top income-generating municipality in the region. From being a hotbed of insurgency, it is now a top adventure tourism destination in the province. Danao tourism development is a result of leadership and collective action. Collaboration among stakeholders has transformed the once-sleepy town into an ecotourism playground. The LGU, with its political advantage, built its own tourism business through collaboration with different government agencies, NGOs, businesses, and private individuals. This collaboration facilitated the planning, marketing, and operation of tourist services. Thanks to government-run tourism businesses, local people are now participating in and enjoying the rewards of the industry.

Close collaboration enabled the development of tourism in Bohol. The growth of the industry would not have been possible without collaboration among the provincial government, municipalities, and private sector. Although this collaboration was challenged by issues of power relations, particularly between the provincial and municipal agencies, these issues were addressed through constant communication among leaders. Legislative and technical assistance from the provincial government is crucial since it enables municipal governments to engage in the industry. Municipal leadership is crucial in encouraging communities to participate in the tourism industry. The provincial government provides the face of Bohol tourism to the world, while municipal governments provide the actual experience.

This study has mainly explored the wider view of tourism in Bohol. A grassroots-level study of the experiences of local households with the growth of tourism in their localities would be relevant. Examining the political and moral economy of local tourism development would also generate insights into the dynamics of local tourism development.

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Creating Sulu: In Search of Policy Coalitions in the Conflict-Ridden Island

Criselda Yabes*

The island province of Sulu has seen a military presence for decades, the result of a failed rebel uprising in 1974, when the capital town of Jolo was burned to the ground. It has not been able to fully recover since then. This paper seeks to recommend possible policy coalitions for local transformation in Sulu. It reflects on how the military and civilians came together in a tacit and binding agreement to set the pace in changing the status quo. For the military, it meant doing more than what was expected of soldiers in a conflict area; it meant dealing with people face-to-face and learning local history. Over the years, it has been shown—though scarcely studied or investigated—that officers with a keen sense of leadership and a wide understanding of history, politics, and society are more likely to shake the ground for better results. For civil society, it was an opportunity to seek congruence from an armed unit that was going to be their friend, not an enemy as it had been in the past; civil society was going to find a substitute for the local government's lackluster performance (if not outright incompetence) to restore a semblance of normalcy. Lastly, a proposal for a military governorship is examined, and a set of crucial conditions to implement the proposal are presented, based on the findings on the ground.

Keywords: Sulu, military governance, whole-of-nation approach, civil-military operations, *bayanihan* model

Introduction

The island province of Sulu has seen a military presence for decades, the result of a failed rebel uprising in 1974, when the capital town of Jolo was burned to the ground. It has not been able to fully recover since then. Over the years the military has delivered a tough search-and-destroy approach and transformed it into a civil-military campaign attempting to develop basic services. But problems persist, with the complex dilemma of dealing with radical rebels involved in kidnapping, local leaders having their private armed groups, and a population trapped in a cycle of poverty. Because of persistent violence without the legitimate domination of physical force, some argue that politics in

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Sulu is characterized as "bandit politics," which fits well with the framework of the weak state in the introductory chapter of this issue (Gutierrez 2003).

As we will see below, however, a one-dimensional label like "bandit politics" does not capture the dynamics on the ground.[1] Over the years, it has been shown that officers with a keen sense of leadership and a wide understanding of history, politics, and society are more likely to shake the ground for better results (Yabes 2011). In line with this framework, Lt. Col. Antonio Mangoroban (2012) proposed a military governorship with a limited term. This paper sheds light on the people in Sulu who are making a difference on the conflict-ridden island, and examines Mangoroban's proposal. Based on a thorough study of military officers and people on the ground in Sulu, this paper asserts that the proposal's success depends mainly on vetting officers who can do the job. The chapter ends with lessons from Sulu that can be applied to other devastated cities, such as Marawi.

I A Path to De Facto Military Governance

Sulu (land area about 168,000 hectares) was once a shining example of progress and cultural cohesiveness between Muslims and Christians. It was the center of gravity in the southern fringes of the Sulu Archipelago, the home of the Tausug elites under a once-powerful sultanate. It is also a prime example of a tragic fate: it was destroyed after the 1974 uprising, leaving the victims in the hands of warlords, bandits, and extremist fighters who raised the stakes with kidnappings and other terrorist incidents. There was a brief spell of military rule after 1974, but it eventually gave way to the rule of political families who sought dominance by keeping themselves entrenched (Gutierrez 1995).

In the opinion of military commanders who were interviewed for this paper, something was wrong with the Philippines' rehashing of previous doctrines borrowed largely from the American colonial campaign. Consequently, the Armed Forces of the Philippines went through a shift in its own strategy, a strategy that has been constantly modified over the years in search of a solution to the insurgency problem nationwide. The Philippine military implemented the *Lambat Bitag* (Fish net) strategy in the late 1980s, aimed at fighting Communist guerrilla fronts by deploying special operations teams to the countryside. Later the strategy included modules that had to fit in with the cultural traditions of Muslim Mindanao vis-à-vis the insurgency in the south.

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1) Eric Gutierrez in his other article recognizes a "new concept of national security . . . in the military circle," which encouraged a marine colonel, Ponciano Millena, to help the handicrafts industry in Sulu (Gutierrez 1995, 142).

After the democratization of the Philippines in 1986, there were various reform attempts in Muslim Mindanao, including Sulu. In the 1990s, trade with Indonesian and Malaysian neighbors was revitalized through an economic scheme for the Brunei Darussalam–Indonesia–Malaysia–Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA). The United States Agency for International Development helped finance the economy of the country's poorest provinces (Dañguilan-Vitug and Yabes 1998).[2]

Commercial prosperity would wax and wane depending on the level of violence. Sulu has its cycle of violence that usually comes before the elections or when the rebels need money from kidnapping ransoms. In between the spates of violence is when commerce can thrive. The long-heralded Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) has been negligent, if not a failure, in serving the broad interests of Muslim Filipinos (about 15 percent of Mindanao's total population of more than 20 million), who are victims of their own elected leaders. It has been described as nothing more than a "bureaucratic layer providing little" except power and privileges for Muslim politicians (Lara 2014).

Sulu's eminent revolutionary who led the uprising in 1974, Nur Misuari, was the first ARMM governor when he accepted a peace deal offered by the Ramos administration in the mid-1990s. His leadership crumbled under the weight of nepotism, corruption, and ethnic divisions. The people of Lupah Sug, as Sulu is locally called, gravitated from traditional clan institutions to a shadow state fueled by an informal economy of the illicit drug trade, gunrunning, and the kidnapping business (Lara and Schoofs 2016). One way or another, Misuari's ARMM leadership took the Muslim narrative on a downhill curve, an example of failing promises to ordinary people. Power and privileges of the old datu structure trumped the modern education, rights, and unity binding the region. Dissatisfaction among the Muslims funneled into the hands of religious leaders, who were often caught in a bind by radical forces or threats of violence. The idea, therefore, of a democratic style of governance was lost in the ensuing generations searching for a common good.

Sulu and other Muslim provinces are essentially run by warlords who are members of the political families elected by their own people. The leadership deteriorates when they fight (literally and figuratively) other political families or rivals. Civil-military operations (CMO) were a mere disguise for undercover work designed to unearth the ideology infecting a local population. By 2000, Sulu had become home to a group of radical rebels called Abu Sayyaf, which was linked to the al-Qaeda masterminds of 9/11. Then came the batches of American special forces teams under the Philippines–United States Visiting Forces Agreement, with the government taking part in a US-led global "War on

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2) Then President Fidel Ramos, reducing political tensions with Malaysia and Indonesia, initiated a revival of the old trade and commercial routes.

Terror."[3] Their presence harked back to the American colonial era of the early 1900s, during which the Sulu Sultanate abdicated. Sulu became a laboratory for counterterrorism strategy. There was a joint task force aimed at striking down high-value targets (HVTs), namely, the key leaders of Abu Sayyaf, whose strength peaked at an estimated 1,200 fighters around 2000. Almost three-fourths of Sulu was considered "threatened" in 2005 (Quemado 2017). The US-backed Oplan Ultimatum between 2006 and 2008 resulted in a setback for Abu Sayyaf, so much so that in the momentum a few years later, only one out of the five "original HVTs remained to be operationally active."

While the government went back to the negotiating table for a peace deal with the dominant Muslim rebel faction, the largely Maguindanaoan Moro Islamic Liberation Front on mainland Mindanao, CMO became a standard necessity (even in demand in some villages) in Sulu simply because the rationale of governance had disappeared. A joke making the rounds was that Zamboanga, at the bottom tip of a peninsula in Mindanao, the nearest city to Sulu, in the cradle of civilization, was host to the village and town mayors of Sulu. The mayors had made their private homes in the Christian-dominated city, neglecting their jobs in Sulu and merely collecting their handouts in the form of Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA). At the grassroots level, in Sulu there were no infrastructure services; the military ended up providing such services by default.

In many places the only shadow left of governance was the military presence. It was the only government symbol there was. Criselda Yabes (2011) discusses the diversified and creative strategies employed by military officers to restore peace in Sulu and the islands as well as mainland Mindanao. About one of three brigades falling under an infantry division or the Marine Corps was led by commanders willing to initiate prospects of "nation building" with the civilian population. Each had their own creative ideas of what had to be done.[4]

Following is an account on the search for possible policy coalitions for local transformation in Sulu. The narrative below reflects how the military and civilians came together in a tacit and binding agreement to set the pace in changing the status quo. For the military, this meant doing more than what was expected of soldiers in a conflict area; it meant dealing with people face-to-face and learning local history. For the civilian

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3) This came during the early term of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, who had initiated peace talks with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front as a result of the "All-Out War" on the border of Maguindanao and Lanao, carried out by her predecessor, Joseph Estrada (whom she had replaced in a popular coup).

4) The author spent about two years traveling to military camps in Sulu, Lanao, and Maguindanao. The brigades had in their command the battalion commanders, who were the front liners. The brigades, in turn, fell under the divisions. The military had a total of 10 divisions, 4 of which were in Mindanao.

sector, it was an opportunity to seek congruence with an armed unit that was going to be their friend, not an enemy as it had been in the past; it was going to find a substitute for the lackluster performance (if not outright incompetence) of the local government unit in a force that would lead them to a process of normalcy. Lastly, a proposal for a military governorship with a limited period is examined, and a set of crucial conditions to implement the proposal is presented based on findings on the ground.

II   From Mount Bayog to Bud Datu, the Marines vs. the Army

The Philippine marines' campaign called for an "80-20" strategy: in the overall scheme of operations, the military would carry out 80 percent CMO and 20 percent combat. Sulu was going to be a template for the two other southern island provinces to follow, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi. Known by their acronym BASULTA, they fall under the ARMM.[5]

The strategy could have worked, but it did not, for a number of reasons—mainly that commanders had to adjust to each province, which had its own dynamics at play. CMO had some successes, however, and it is those that this paper will try to identify.

The template was to be a precursor to the *bayanihan* strategy crafted by the armed forces in 2010, and approved by President Benigno Aquino III when he took office. This alone was a turnaround from previous models, bringing in the framework of a "whole-of-nation" approach in search of peace and stability. For this strategy to work, the military needed the cooperation of key government departments and agencies to make the switch from lack of governance to development.

From 2008 to 2014, the Philippine Marine Corps was fully deployed over the BASULTA zone as part of the navy's master plan for a Fleet Marine Concept. Amphibious in nature, the marines were to have the islands as their ships, so to speak, in the absence of modern boats from which they were supposed to operate. Having the islands in their area of responsibility was a victory given the politics in headquarters: they were given the opportunity to do things their way (Yabes 2011).

From the early days of the rebellion, Sulu received the brunt of military operations, in a way that gave the appearance of martial rule. From the time the insurgency began in the 1970s, military commanders alternately deployed the army or the marines depend-

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5) The two other provinces in the ARMM are Lanao del Sur, whose capital is Marawi; and Maguindanao, where 53 media workers were killed in 2009 (the Ampatuan Massacre) and 44 police commandos were killed in 2015 (The Fallen 44). The ARMM provinces are composed of different Muslim ethnic groups. Muslim scholars have so far refused to admit that the ethnic differences have caused strife among the groups, which makes it difficult to attain peace.

ing on the political circumstances or the personal judgments of top generals. That the marines were now given control of the islands was seen as a change to the pattern of ruthless fighting, one that had the bearing of a scorched earth policy. The marines' experiment of changing from combat to CMO was theirs for the taking. Not all commanders could see the sense in this, questioning their core competence.

In fact, not all the marines could understand the meaning of the 80-20 campaign. An internal survey of one marine battalion showed that almost 60 percent of the men did not even understand the Tausug culture. How could they then go about making peace with people targeted as the enemy? But a great majority of the men said they were willing to learn and that it was important to gain the trust of the local people (Quemado 2017).

From being men in uniform who were feared and hated, the marines began repairing bridges and building schools, using their trucks to ferry children to classrooms, augmenting the jobs of teachers, transporting agricultural produce that otherwise would have been impossible to do in a war zone. The atmosphere in some of the villages turned festive, though the local population was still wary of the new situation (Yabes 2012b).

CMO had been used in the Communist insurgency in the northern Philippines (Luzon) in the past, since the 1970s, and it was being used now to tackle the Muslim insurgency in Sulu and in other parts of Muslim Mindanao (depending on the military commanders). But recent leadership training in civilian and educational institutions gave potential up-and-coming commanders the wherewithal to create a brand of their own in a "bridging leadership" workshop.

It was, for example, a stunning move when a battalion commander in Sulu built a replica of the Astana in his camp.[6] The symbol of the Astana, the palace of the Sultanate of Sulu at the twilight of the sultanate's power, was arguably significant. Nothing much was left of the original structure, rotting in the jungle of Maimbung, opposite the coast of Jolo. The replica was set up on Mount Bayog, in the town of Talipao, where the camp was located. The camp, which had been the target of rebel attacks, was rundown, messy, and disorganized. The replica was constructed in 2013, restoring pride among the people of Sulu.

It was an innovative and clever idea on the part of the marine battalion commander, Col. Romulo Quemado, to allow local folks to visit the replica for weekend picnics, to feel at home in it, for soon enough even rebels in disguise and influential community leaders

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6) The Asian Institute of Management spearheaded the Bridging Leadership program, where over the years key senior officers have attained their academic degrees. Likewise, the private sector helped craft the Army Transformation Roadmap, which began in 2010; it called for three phases over 18 years, to match the three six-year periods of a presidential term, with a long view of developing a respectable army "loved by the people."

befriended him. It was the replica of the Astana that helped to forge relationships, enabling the commander to obtain information from local folks—rather than forcing it out of them—and to deal directly with them.

Quemado also set up a radio station to promote the Tausug culture. He was aware of the volatile situation in early 2013, with his camp being not too far from the base of a Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) commander. Quemado was able to communicate with the MNLF commander through conduits who visited the Astana. He somehow prevented a plan by the rebels to march into the town of Jolo in a show of strength; instead, the rebels laid siege to a coastal community in Zamboanga that lasted 18 days in September 2013.

The effectiveness of Quemado's outreach was put to the test when, in April 2014, the head of the town's local militia—under the banner of the Barangay Peace Action Team—led a fight against Abu Sayyaf in the community. This was unprecedented. The military created militias as "force multipliers," but in Sulu militias are normally on the payroll of an elected official or a political family. They could have gone either way, joining the rebels or working as guards for their employers (Yabes 2014).

The militia leader, who went by the nom de guerre Marlboro, recounted how the rebels had crossed a line by kidnapping children. A firefight ensued. Marlboro's men brought down the rebels in a surprising victory; and for the marines this was a tactical victory as well. It was also a matter of luck, for in the past something of this nature inevitably led to accusations of human rights violations. The attack against Abu Sayyaf had no civilian casualties, and it became the talk of the town (Yabes 2014).

By forging an alliance with the community, the marines had local people on their side, temporarily at least. This widened the military's scope of influence. One telling sign was that there were Philippine flags flying over huts—this had never been seen before. It was the symbol of the Astana that had opened the way forward.

The lack of doctrine or standard policy supporting civil-military affairs left commanders toying with their own ideas and limitations. A leadership framework was needed to guide CMO in the field. Quemado and a few of his fellow officers helped put some shape into Community Relations Training (CRT), producing a manual for others to follow. Workshop modules had a combination of community, i.e., academe, local government units, religious leaders, nongovernmental organizations, and others; and the security sector, namely, the military, police, and militias.[7]

The workshops focused on Sulu's culture and religion. The traditional CMO was going to be transformed into a *bayanihan*, a collective community endeavor. The leader-

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7) The CRT modules came with guidance, financial and otherwise, from the Asia Foundation.

ship was not aiming for a military end state but for a state in which power was going to be shared.[8] There was a thin line for the military to watch out for when playing the role of servant leader: were they soldiers or civil servants? It was hard work (Yabes 2011, 216–235).

It was time to reinvent the wheel, said Quemado, by co-creating the process for the goal of peace. He said the military could not help build bridges if the bridges were later going to be bombed; they could not build a school or a road without the opportunity of forging genuine relations with the people. After building the replica of the Astana, the military pursued other touristic and educational activities in historical places such as Bud Datu and Bud Daho, sites of the Moro wars during the American colonial years.[9]

In a status report presented to a class of the Command General Staff College—those preparing for senior ranks—Quemado showed that the CRT years from mid-2010 to 2014 had reduced Abu Sayyaf's strength to an average of 250 from an estimated 1,200. One crucial aspect in the CRT module was courting the youth, especially the orphans of the conflict. Having them on the military's side could mean one less generation of fighters.

There was so much to do that patience for results could wear out; and it did, eventually. There were cynics and unsavory partners. Every approach had to be culture-fit. The military was there to listen to people, not tell them what to do. It was not about the security the military could offer, but the security people were wishing for. "By the end of the day, we shall leave, they stay," Quemado recalled.

A commander's tour of duty could be as long as two years, although it was often shorter. That was too brief a time to expect rapid changes on the ground; moreover, a military unit taking over from the previous one could change the flow of the campaign or even stop it. The problem lay in vetting officers for positions. Much of the decision making turned personal when claiming turf and loyalty among the officer corps, which inevitably upset the playing field.[10]

The marines were held accountable for not delivering enough in terms of body count. It was alleged that under their watch the rebels had managed to quietly expand their base and had carried out a series of kidnappings of foreigners that had brought millions of pesos

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8) *Bayanihan* is a sociological concept of a Filipino community whose members help each other; its symbol is of people carrying a typical native hut for a neighbor's home. Despite the military's shift to a *bayanihan* outlook, however, the headquarters remain focused on body counts and guerrilla fronts destroyed as a barometer for their successes in the field.

9) The author spent time in the replica of the Astana in December 2013 and April 2014.

10) Brigade commanders may or may not have the prerogative to choose their battalion commanders. Out in the field, especially in provinces dominated by warlords with direct connections to the national government, local leaders exercise their preferences; the same goes for members of the board of senior officers who vet promotions.

into their ransom booty (Lara and Schoofs 2016, ch. 4). The army units were let back in; they disrupted the status quo and fired more rounds of artillery than usual. Behind the scenes there was a quarrel among military academy classmates as to who should take command.

A new brigade commander had to be flown in, ostensibly to salvage the situation. Gen. Jose Faustino knew the terrain: Sulu had been an important part of his career when he was battalion commander during the years of the Oplan Ultimatum. Roughly one year into his tour from 2016, he was the first in his academy class of 1988 to be promoted to the rank of brigadier general. His camp was on the splendid Bud Datu, overlooking Jolo, the mosque, and the sea beyond.

Faustino's tack on CMO was to be "purposive" and not simply allow it to be a "stand-alone" campaign. What, he asked, would be the purpose of building too many schools if there were no teachers? He looked back on his past efforts and said he had to recalibrate, recalling a situation when his unit had provided 20,000 pesos for a water pipe in a village. He should not have done that, he said. He should have shown the village chief how he could use the IRA disbursed by the national government for his people's basic needs.

"Every activity has to be centered to a goal" was his mantra. And that goal was to defeat Abu Sayyaf. He would give CMO a ratio of 60 percent (instead of 80 percent) over combat operations of 40 per cent. Returning to Jolo, he saw much of what had not changed, not more of what had changed. In a meeting with mayors to gather a census, he saw the same what-can-we-do-to-help lip service, the lack of real action by local leaders in instilling the value of governance.[11]

It was key to let people know that *barangay* halls were there to serve the community centers. As for the CMO, the army's *bayanihan* team immersed in a village was armed with a checklist of what to do, to avoid mistakes in social relations and be sensitive to the traditions of Muslims. And once the community arrived at a sort of comfort level with soldiers, the team was scaled down to a platoon. The process was usually daunting even at the first stages, when rebels disrupted communities that cooperated with the military, once beheading a soldier who turned out to be a Tausug (a former MNLF rebel integrated into the army after a peace deal in 1996).

Above are profiles of two officers (Quemado and Faustino) in the theater of Sulu, one from the marines, the other from the army, as they saw the island from their own prism. They also reflected, one way or another, a long-standing rivalry between the two units, a rivalry well known within armed forces circles. But they had the same intentions

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11) The author's interview with Faustino took place in May 2017, around the time when the Marawi siege broke out. Faustino was one of the key battalion commanders featured in *Peace Warriors* when he was in Sulu and Lanao.

for the good of Sulu, racking their brains to disentangle the complex mesh it had become. Their common denominator was that they were both trained in intelligence, in which they had the advantage of getting down to the roots of a cyclic history. In Sulu, they chose to wear the hat of a peace builder.

Sulu needs more than one solution to find peace, or at the very least an equilibrium to restore the essence of governance. It requires an *Avatar* logic (yes, the James Cameron movie). One has to dive in with empathy, to read history and calculate where one must stand, to play things by ear and observe meanings through the eyes of the people.

This is too demanding a task for an officer cut out for black-and-white orders. For those who are made like Avatars, they have a winning chance. They cannot force people to take their side, but when a voice of reason among the people is convinced of the change, it becomes germinal. In the following section, we will see the reasons to have hope for local transformation in Sulu. These are stories of civilians who took it upon themselves to find a way to set things right with little help from local agencies or leaders. Like the previous section, this section reveals the merging of common ideas and the steps taken, both serendipitous and calculated, by civilians to transform their own communities, even if they had to start with breeding cows or selling rice or making coffee. Above all, these are real turnarounds in the connection between military and civilians— a genuine partnership.

III   The Voices of Lupah Sug

III-1 *Recalibration of Civil-Military Relations on the Ground*

In the five months of fighting in Marawi in 2017, government forces were the heroes for defeating the Islamist militants. This was not the case in Sulu during the 1974 uprising; more than anything, a man in uniform was never to be trusted. And even until today, people of that generation cannot forget the destruction wrought to their lives.

Mercia Salarda Alli would never have thought to find herself in the company of soldiers after what the military had done to her family, their home destroyed in the fire. Ms. Alli lives by the traditional value of the Tausug's *maratabat*, a strong sense of honor. As far as she was concerned, she and her surviving family members could live on their own despite the downward spiral of Lupah Sug. But by a twist of irony, it was the American task force that sought her out, and she relented.[12]

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12) The author has known Ms. Alli since 2012. Interviews with her as well as Muddazer Hailanie of the Kankitap Cooperative in Patikul were carried out in May 2017, in Jolo.

She was with the local office of the Department of Agriculture, which was barely getting by with a minimal budget trickling down from the ARMM office based in Cotabato City on the mainland. The Americans were offering veterinary services for their medical mission. This was a solution to saving cattle on the brink of perishing. Cows, carabaos, and goats were the only tangible source of income for poor peasants in the most far-flung of villages; they could easily be sold when required.

Relations between the Americans and local people was two-pronged: the American soldiers were making an entry into the heart of Sulu, close to the lairs of the rebels and the communities that supported them, while the local government office needed help that the state could not provide. The condition Ms. Alli had set for this arrangement was that there would be no military operations of any kind: no attacks, no raids. She was certain there were rebels among the people watching, but she did not fear them as long as she was there to help people.

In due time a community partnership was fostered through saving the cows and later other projects, with the Americans handing over the initiatives to Filipino marine officers to take forward. Ms. Alli was struck by the respect she felt for herself and her staff. The military did not make them ride in military vehicles; they made sure to provide them with civilian transport when going to the villages. All plans were made through consultation. The CRT workshops were held in camps, and the people involved in the workshops were all at ease with the arrangement after the CMO activities they had done together.

In addition to her job in the agriculture office, Ms. Alli formed a group of volunteers to help improve the livelihood of local folks. She called it Matawkasi, which means "going beyond"; the group branded themselves as advocates for peace. Ms. Alli's influence grew among communities in the conflict areas. She traveled to nearly all corners of the island, doing what other local government units should have been doing in the first place, to get a firsthand view of the needs in remote hamlets.

The military had put the Matawkasi group in touch with civic groups from Manila extending help with the mainstream purpose of nation building. The military, on the other end of this partnership, also courted civilians and private companies for its outreach programs and civil-military campaigns. Small steps led farmers to Manila, where they met agribusiness experts who gave technical support. Fresh harvests of exotic fruit such as mangosteen and durian brought bigger profits when transported by plane to markets outside Jolo.

Sulu coffee was back in the limelight and being sold in high-end grocery stores in Manila. This was a breakthrough courtesy of a Muslim princess who returned to her hometown and saw her old neighbors living in an abject state. She decided to turn things

around in her village, which had once been a rebel camp. She found the basic equipment to help villagers mill coffee beans instead of leaving them to dry on the road, where they would be crushed when military trucks drove by (Yabes 2012a).

The local government code of 1991 decentralized power to the local government units by giving them the IRA, but this led to families fighting for government positions. Such positions became a family affair, so to speak, preventing potentially progressive leaders from running for office. This began a race among families who saw the IRA as their personal coffer if they were to run for office, and it triggered bloody fights just to win an election for a local seat.

The late Secretary Jesse Robredo of the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) of the Benigno Aquino administration (2010–16) knew the problem as he had been a mayor of Naga City in Southern Luzon for about 20 years and led a reform program for the seal of good governance and good housekeeping. His tragic death in a plane crash in 2012 put an end to the program, but it sowed the seeds for reform. In the two years that he was cabinet secretary, he was committed to training leaders in Muslim Mindanao to follow the same path and traveled to many places in Sulu to get his vision across. He felt that this was the right—albeit daunting—process for the political and social transformation of Filipino Muslims (Yabes 2018).

In Ms. Alli's opinion, the DILG should have been strict in carrying forward Robredo's legacy. The role of civil society could have tilted in favor of choosing the right leaders. Civil society organizations were not looking for someone perfect, Ms. Alli added; it was leadership that needed to be developed, with room for checks and balances, giving opportunities for Muslim youths to rise.

III-2   *Transformative Leadership in the Local Government*
In October 2016, the municipality of Jolo (population 125,000) was awarded the coveted Seal of Good Local Governance from the DILG, which oversees the local government code throughout the country. At first glance it seemed to be a fluke, or a joke, that a city as dangerous as Jolo could ever be given the thumbs-up for its administrative performance.[13]

The colonial era-style municipal hall underwent a dashing makeover, turning it from a structure that was chaotic and on the verge of ruin to a renovated piece of bureaucratic order. The seal was prominently displayed in the lobby, showing the municipality's achievement after working so hard to obtain the award. A glass-encased bulletin wall

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13) This award came less than six months after Rodrigo Duterte of Davao City was elected president. DILG instituted the "seal" during the term of the late Robredo, to replicate his style of governance when he was mayor of Naga City, breaking with traditional politics to give way to a citizens' charter.

had lists of budgets, procurement, programs, and a host of other procedures of a normally functioning municipality.

The mayor, Kherkhar Tan, was a little-known councillor who had served three terms before he found himself sitting in Jolo's higher office. He was a distant relative of the dynastic Tan family of Sulu and therefore secured the blessings of the island's strongman. His demeanor was down to earth, focusing on the basic undertaking of cleaning up the town, which had a horrendous garbage problem. He deployed at least 10 garbage collection trucks and dozens of new plastic bins with the slogan "I love Jolo."[14]

He blamed Patikul and other outlying towns for bringing violence to the capital. It is imperative for a mayor to get on well with the police chief—and he usually does—but a police chief who hails from Jolo is usually impeded from carrying out his duties if it means a threat to his family (there are no judges willing to serve in Jolo because of threats and the security situation at large; almost every household is armed).

Clan rivalries are rife, an endemic feature of life in Muslim Mindanao. The concept of rule of law was lost on the mayor, who had to deal with too many gray areas. Although the police was supposed to be the main vanguard in counterinsurgency, the task of Internal Security Operations was left in the hands of the military. Thus, Sulu saw more deployment of army and marine battalions than any other island in the archipelago.

III-3 *Private Initiatives to Govern a Village in Patikul*

The idea of setting up a cooperative was perhaps to wean away the youth from *hawa ng sakit*—the illness of falling prey to the temptation of getting quick cash and fancy cell phones from the rebels in the cottage industry of kidnapping for ransom. Nearly every segment of Sulu's population has had a hand in kidnapping for ransom, allegedly from politicians at fairly high levels, soldiers, police, and rebel leaders all the way down to unemployed, uneducated teenagers in remote villages. Classified military intelligence reports estimate that ransom amounts have reached millions of pesos, money that has circulated in the shadow economy of Muslim Mindanao and thereby determined political alliances and influence.

Against this backdrop are small success stories of people seeking to transform the island, especially people who left and then returned to relive their dreams from bygone years. The idea of working together was a sliver of hope to show people they could trust each other despite the poverty and violence. It was a difficult and personal crusade for

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14) The Sulu political dynasty led by Sakur Tan has been around since the early 1990s with the alleged tacit support of the military trying to control the balance of power but which inevitably gives rise to a warlord. Such a modus vivendi—ostensibly intended to ensure an alliance against the insurgency—does not work out in the long run.

Muddazer Hailanie when he thought of bringing back the community spirit of people helping one another. When he returned in 2005 after years of working in Saudi Arabia, he saw how much had gone to waste.

The people in his village of Danag, in Patikul, where Abu Sayyaf rebels are said to have their base, were fed up of hearing false promises from the government as well as nongovernmental organizations that came and went. The water system was at risk of drying up, and Hailanie did not want that to happen. It was the villagers' only water source, and it was rare for villages to have a water system installed, as was the case with electricity. The villagers were leading a hand-to-mouth existence.

Hailanie had a plan. He asked each household to contribute 10 pesos per month to keep the water pump running. His efforts were not very successful, but a few people believed in him and worked with him to fix the pump. With this small group of people Hailanie decided to start a cooperative. With capital of less than 10,000 pesos, the villagers began what seemed like a small business. They purchased about a dozen sacks of rice to be sold among the villagers—this was cheaper and more accessible than going to the market in Jolo.

The undertaking grew into a full-fledged consumers' cooperative by late 2011, selling not only rice but also local produce and goods that would have made Sulu wealthy if it were not for the war. Patikul was the nearest and biggest town next to Jolo, the capital, and the military suspected that commerce was being financed by Abu Sayyaf's ransom money. Hailanie said the cooperative, named Kankitap, would dissuade others from joining the rebels and would show that business could be done through sheer effort and cooperation, a sign of *bayanihan* at work.

IV   Military Rule?

In a master's thesis at the US Marine Corps Command and Staff College in Virginia, a Filipino marine officer who served 10 years in Mindanao offered a solution for both Sulu and Basilan: an outright military governorship for a limited period. Lt. Col. Antonio Mangoroban was one of the officers based in Patikul, where marines were frequent targets of Abu Sayyaf rebels. During that time he "observed how the lack of governance has alienated people further from the government" (Mangoroban 2012).

A military governor could unify both civilian and military efforts under a single authority, as Mangoroban's thesis outlined. As such, it could "force effective governance" to bring elusive peace to the islands. The current government overtures aided by the presidential office of the peace process, even if strengthened by civil-military operations

on the ground, would take time to bear fruit. This, he underscored, was not politically attractive. Impatience could succumb to restlessness, spreading once more the chances of violence.

This framework recalled the American colonial period, when the Sulu Archipelago and the mainland of Mindanao were separate departments under military rule. Mangoroban saw the compelling rationale of employing hard tactics (fighting) as well as soft tactics, which by helping the local people might get their support. A military governorship would have a unified order rather than a disparate or conflicting approach:

> The position is for military commanders to assume as chief executives of local government units operating under the civil laws. The proposal is not the use of extraordinary powers but the integration of both the civil and military powers. The intent is to bring governance and break the cycle of transactional politics entrenched by the political elites. (Mangoroban 2012, 18)

Whether this approach or a variation would be the answer to a coherent peace strategy, the chances of success lay mainly in vetting the right officers who could do the job. Over the years, it has been shown—though never studied or investigated—that officers with a keen sense of leadership and a wide understanding of history, politics, and empathy are more likely to shake the ground for better results.

The armed forces headquarters, which formulates strategies, had this critical aspect to bear in mind. It may have had brilliant minds writing about doctrines and strategies, but what it needed was equally brilliant officers carrying out plans on the ground. This meant a careful selection from the officer corps, shuffling promotions, exercising vigor and discernment in choosing mid-level and/or field-grade officers ready and willing to take command in the complex swarm of Sulu and other provinces. Faustino of the army and Quemado of the marines were striking candidates.

The AFP's *bayanihan* strategy, now modified into *Kapayapaan* (Peace), had an overall plan of intersecting governance, development, and security. This challenged the military with the demands of nuances in leadership and dealing with elected local officials. Maj. Gen. Rafael Valencia, the architect of the strategy since its inception as *bayanihan*, said it could do well only if commanders took the time to read and analyze the classified operational directives given to the unified commands, which in turn should transmit the orders to the men in the field.[15]

More often there appeared to be a lack of maturity in the job when the staff and command college provided higher education for battalion commanders only. There had

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15) The military's area command in Mindanao is divided into Eastern Mindanao (the areas of Davao, Cotabato, Maguindanao, Agusan, Surigao) and Western Command (the areas of Sulu, Zamboanga, Lanao). Author's interview with Valencia, March 2017.

to be more training in leadership. Battalion commanders were on the front lines: their experiences in the field, such as what Faustino and Quemado underwent, could enhance strategy and help in the development of better doctrines.

In theory, however, they would have to wait until they reached higher positions, such as brigade or division commands, before they could widen their practice. That would invariably mean a much longer period for results, whereas top-level vetting would be quicker in pace for a campaign to see things through.

Mangoroban's idea of a military governor was one who should be in a position to fully implement *bayanihan*'s whole-of-government approach, should have served a minimum of nine years in the BASULTA area (therefore, someone who was in active service, not a retired officer who might exploit his political ambitions), and should have a term limited to only three years. The DILG secretary should lead an oversight committee on the performance of the military governor. This, his paper makes clear, was not tantamount to martial law. It was to emphasize the objective of governance, not punitive action.

The paper, submitted for a master's degree in military studies in 2012, could not have predicted the declaration of martial law for the entire Mindanao in the wake of the Marawi siege five years later. President Duterte extended martial law until the end of 2019. Since the siege, there has been minimal progress in the rehabilitation of Marawi. The president has not fulfilled his promise of rebuilding the Islamic city from the ruins of the battle.

The idea of starting from scratch under a new form of leadership rather than putting the blanket of martial law over the entire region—a political move that could trigger trauma from the past—could well set a precedent in Muslim Mindanao. It would take much more than a larger vision from the staff of the armed forces: it would need a commander in chief with a moral and decisive sense of duty to lift Mindanao out of its deep hole.

How would the entrenched political Tausug family in Sulu take it if a military governor were to be installed in the island province? Would it provoke violence from warlords that had worn two masks: one ascribing to a semblance of democratic rules and the other holding on to a feudal culture through weapons and money?

In an ideal setup, a combination of a municipality delivering the seeds of good governance and a military avatar of civil-military operations could make stability, if not peace, attainable. As it stands, it is the military pushing local leaders to perform, in their stead carrying out field operations as well as serving the needs of a civilian population, thereby producing a de facto, quasi governance. Sulu has a long way to go to attain peace. Violence cannot bring back the past, when Sulu was an island paradise. Even elected leaders

are unable to provide the people with necessary services. If the military is to be the hero in this field, it will have to carry out a mission worthy of a soldier.

Conclusion

The sociopolitical circumstances that led to Marawi's devastation in 2017—more than 40 years after the Sulu uprising of 1974—were widely dissimilar in context from Sulu's, as were the geographical distance and ethnic differences between the two. But in seeking to rise from the ruins, Marawi may well draw lessons from the aftermath of Sulu, the long dark shadow it has cast over the decades, an event already buried in history.

The history after the 1974 uprising in Sulu contains several lessons for considering possible policy coalitions for reform in conflict-ridden areas. First, we should recognize that local governments run by politicians who are isolated from local society failed to provide basic public services to the people. Second, despite this challenge, there were private initiatives to make a difference in promoting the local agro-process industry or providing public services such as water. These initiatives can be an asset to enable reform at a broader scale or in the long run.

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CʃƐ·ʌʅ

Tides of Empire: Religion, Development, and Environment in Cambodia
Cᴏᴜʀᴛɴᴇʏ Wᴏʀᴋ
New York: Berghahn Books, 2020.

After a long hiatus, there is a welcome resurgence of ethnographic research emerging from Cambodia. Monographs have recently been written by Eve Zucker (2013), Erik Davis (2015), and Krisna Uk (2016), and 2020 marked the publication of both Courtney Work's ethnography and a study by Jonathan Padwe (2020). With the exception of Davis's urban study, these are anthropological studies of rural or forest-dwelling communities, and most focus upon the social and material changes wrought by the three decades of intermittent warfare and suffering that wracked Cambodia from the late 1960s to the late 1990s.

Tides of Empire is an innovative study of a Cambodian village's rapidly changing forest frontier, based upon fieldwork conducted in 2015. Although Work does not explicitly frame it as such, her work is a landscape study, embedded in contemporary theoretical treatments of landscape as an entangled material and immaterial terrain that is processual and always becoming. Work employs a post-humanist approach to her material, paying attention to both human and non-human actors and agencies, including the weather-world, the trails and roads, the nearby mountain, and the spiritual entities embedded in the landscape and residents' social imaginaries.

Unlike her contemporaries, Work intentionally avoids a focus on the years of conflict and genocide except for when they were directly discussed by her interlocutors. She argues that the residents of her field site were focused on present and future subsistence and the discursive promises of the development state rather than the vicissitudes of the war years or the vagaries of the Khmer Rouge tribunals. The study is populated with former soldiers and land-hungry postwar settlers, but Work keeps her historical gaze wide, aiming to show the similarities in various forms of state and non-state formations that have by turns swept across the landscape and its residents. Work names all these forms "empire," a term she defines as a "container for the various formations of state" that have influenced the people of her study (p. 4). Her use of the term also encompasses contemporary flows of global capital, development and poverty reduction schemes, and religious traditions, specifically Buddhism and Islam.

Work employs a tidal metaphor in relation to these formations, invoking both the image of incoming and receding tides and the debris that retreating ideologies and states leave behind in their wake. She also emphasizes the interstitial nature of her field site, a frontier zone situated between "subsistence and accumulation" (p. 1), which she conceptualizes as a contact zone where mutual but unequal constitution of subjects and relations to power emerge (p. 15), following Mary Louise Pratt (2008). Work emphasizes both the fragility and the hegemonic properties of these successive "tides of empire," although the book is primarily focused on the contemporary forces of extraction, accumulation, religion, and development influencing the frontier setting of her study.

After placing the residents of the village into the scene by describing postwar settlement and in-migration, Work focuses on other actors in the landscape. In the second chapter, playfully titled a "roadology," Work explores the history of the village's trails, roads, and rails. Local use and projects by the Cambodian state, development actors, and private companies are all examined. The abandoned railway is also discussed as an example of long-neglected infrastructure, now being reconsidered in the current era of market intensification in ways that will end residents' creative use of the tracks with simple motorized platforms (*lorries*) that locally move goods (p. 41). The chapter effectively contrasts the discourse of promises of development and progress offered by roads with the grounded realities of road building and disintegration in what Work terms the "soft and malleable world" of the landscape, where monsoon weather and moving soil change the surface of the land every rainy season (p. 46).

In contrast to the many and diverse articulations of power that have swept across the landscape, Work argues that landscape itself contains a foundational force of place, which she terms chthonic energies or "other-than-human power" (p. 5). By doing so, keeping tides as our metaphor, Work wades out into the complex cross-currents of the ontological turn. She never directly states her ontological stance, but since her text argues for the primacy and prehuman existence of animating natural forces, she appears to position herself within a plural ecological approach to post-humanist theory (Cadena 2015). In effect, with her emphasis on chthonic energies, Work is presenting an ur-narrative that predates the arrival of humans or the practice of organized religion, which she argues is inextricably entangled with king-making, imperial enterprises, and claims to territory in Southeast Asia. This is provocative positioning but also places Work in somewhat murky theoretical waters. On what grounds can any scholar firmly posit the ontological existence of nonbiological beings and forces? We can present no evidence beyond the phenomenological experiences and interpretive narratives of human subjects. Cosmological subjects by definition evade empirical examination.

Work argues that the *neak ta* (literally "the old ones," and generally conceptualized as tutelary or land guardian spirits) are not spirits but rather more fundamental forces at the heart of economic and political relations. The book contains little focus on human-spirit engagements common in

similar studies, such as the interpretive and diagnostic role of human mediums and diviners. Instead, Work makes a strong historical case that beliefs in the powers of animist entities were channeled into imperial claims of legitimacy and continue to be sought after by both local human inhabitants of a place and the contemporary elite in Cambodia. However, Work limits her engagement with other scholars of what has been termed the new animism studies, presumably because she takes an iconoclastic approach to traditional classificatory systems and wishes to position animism outside of what scholars generally term religion. A productive comparison of her own field site, for example, could have been made with Zucker's 2013 ethnography of another frontier village, a work which discusses local beliefs about increasing inaccessibility to the spirit world in the postwar milieu of economic accumulation. One concept that Work does productively engage with at length is the polyvalent use of the concept of *parami*, which is drawn from the concept of perfection in Buddhism yet is also used in Cambodia to describe potency emerging from natural places with varying degrees of connection to animism and Buddhism. Work equates *parami* with her concept of chthonic energy and argues that this circulating energy has always undergirded and strengthened claims to legitimacy and power by "Buddhism, Brahminism and the kings they support" (p. 72).

Postwar scholarship on religion in Cambodia initially largely focused upon the revival of religious practice and new movements. Work's study is a valuable addition to emerging scholarship offering a critique of the inequities in power and privilege connected to such religious practice. Work's study is more engaged with themes of political ecology than traditional themes of the anthropology of religion. Work focuses upon "the political and the religious as coexisting modes of power, each with particular agendas for making subjects" (p. 134). The ways in which power and protection are sought through engagements with animist entities, Buddhist forces, and global Islam by her interlocutors are carefully explored. These efforts are analyzed in parallel with efforts to channel the promises of the development state and the current capitalist forces of extraction. Work's ability to demonstrate similarities across very different objects of analysis is one of the strongest contributions of her novel study. Her chapter on merit building and claims to moral power is particularly insightful.

All too often academia continues to ignore the material, to write as if humans and their meaning-making projects exist in thin air. This ethnography has a laudable emphasis on the grounding offered by a material landscape that weather plays upon in largely predictable seasonal patterns, often stymying human efforts at landscape transformation. Village residents are subjects of the study but do not dominate the analytical stage. Instead, Work seeks to remove historical debris and excavate chthonic forces of place that are acted upon by external projects of state formation and organized religion. Whether or not one agrees that such forces can be divorced from the classificatory categories of religion, this study provides a provocative analytical perspective for a study of landscape. Using a diverse set of methodological perspectives, Work repeatedly foregrounds

the power and potency of the mountain and the soil in the face of tides of historical and ideological change. In one final provocation of my own, I question whether this emphasis upon the chthonic aspects of landscape is actually too grounded, offering too little recognition to the mobility and uncertainty of the cosmological world. As Andrew Johnson (2020) has argued in another recent study, ecological and infrastructural change brings new sources of uncertainty, and that emergent uncertainty holds the potency and the promise of new powers—utopic and potentially apocalyptic ones. An exploration of the cosmological implications of the dramatic changes Work outlines in her closing chapter, which occurred only a few short years after the end of her fieldwork, could yield fertile future analysis.

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Islam, Humanity, and Indonesian Identity: Reflections on History
Ahmad Syafii Maarif
Translated by George A. Fowler
Singapore: NUS Press, 2019.

This book is valuable for its exposition of a characteristically modernist Muslim perspective on Indonesia's future. Its writer, Ahmad Syafii Maarif (b. West Sumatra 1935), finds models for that future in the history of Islamic modernism in the country, and especially in the example of the Masyumi party. This party was a strong player in Indonesian politics until 1960, when it was broken apart by Sukarno, who was at that time intent on reducing the legislative power of the

nation's democratically elected representatives. Masyumi was a victim of that process.[1]

In recent decades, Maarif has been more commonly associated with the civil society organization Muhammadiyah, a group which shares Masyumi's ideological orientation. He was chairman of Muhammadiyah between 2000 and 2005. Yet in the 1950s and 1960s, Maarif was a dedicated activist and devotee of Masyumi, and the party is the major focus of his reflections in this work. Like all Masyumi supporters, he is sufficiently inspired by the triumph of Islam in Indonesia to believe that Islam ought to be a public resource for the benefit of all Indonesians, not just Muslims. It ought to be the "big tent" within which followers of all religions in Indonesia may find shelter.

Looking back, the party achieved something striking: it was an umbrella party that attracted support from Muslim groups holding to contrasting programs. For a time, the ideological differences dividing Islamic currents did not preclude a political alliance between them. After the breaking up of the party, the party's ideologues continued its genealogy in separate offshoots. Maarif is an advocate for one of these offshoots, the liberal democratic one, which is characterized by its supporters' conviction that representative democracy and rule of law are concepts validated in the Qur'an and Prophetic traditions. Maarif's understanding of Islam's blessings, which he glosses as *humanism*, is an expansive rather than narrow one. It has motivated his subsequent contributions to public life as a writer, civil society activist, and educator. For these contributions, he is widely admired, to the point where his supporters regard him as a *guru bangsa* (teacher of the nation). He has a small number of noisy but dedicated detractors who have vilified him for the same tendencies that his supporters admire—open-mindedness, liberality of spirit, and kindness. Such is the polarized nature of the "big tent" of public Islam in contemporary Indonesia.

The work consists of five chapters. The first is explicitly historical, tracing the diversity of pre-Islamic Indonesia, the suffering of the peoples of the Indies under colonization, and the ongoing diversification of the Islamization process. It ends with an impassioned eulogy for Masyumi. For Maarif, the banning of Masyumi "greatly damaged the course and development of democracy in Indonesia" (p. 106). The hope offered to Indonesia by this party lay in the "broadminded intellectuals and statesmen who led it" (p. 107).

In Chapter 2 the author gives his impressions of Islam and democracy. This sets a pattern for the book: Maarif is very optimistic about the compatibility of Islam's message with democratic government, but at the same time he provides a depressing account of the state of Islamic democracy, listing the actors who have thwarted it—Indonesian extremists, Osama bin Laden, George Bush, patriarchal Muslim interpreters, Middle Eastern autocrats, supporters of rule by caliphate, intra-*ummat* sectarians, etc. This simultaneous expression of optimism and dismal reflection is continued in the third chapter, in which Maarif discusses contemporary issues of Indonesian Islam,

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1) A detailed account of the party's history has appeared in the form of Rémy Madinier's *Islam and Politics in Indonesia: The Masyumi Party between Democracy and Integralism* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2015).

focusing mainly on the national education policy. The discussion is a disheartening evaluation of contemporary Indonesia: its citizens suffer poverty, the quality of its educational institutions falls below the population's expectations, its elected representatives betray their voters, its national assets are owned by foreign parties, and so on. The fourth chapter argues that Islamic teachings are the best ideological resource for a successful Indonesian society. Once more, the optimism precedes a depressing account of contemporary Indonesian realities.

The book does not contain any new facts or insights, but it has value for its arguments about the benefits Indonesia stands to gain from Islamic modernism. This thoroughly Indonesian Islamic vision is currently overshadowed by the rival concept promoted by the nation's traditionalist Muslims. Nahdlatul Ulama's vision of "Archipelagic Islam" (Islam Nusantara) has achieved something of a public ascendancy in contemporary Indonesian politics. These two visions of authentically Indonesian Islam reflect back on contrasting foundations. Islam Nusantara cherishes a distinctive Indonesian Islam in which diversity and tolerance are legitimized and protected by the institutions of *kyai* and *pesantren*. The modernist vision—presented here by Maarif—cherishes a similar vision but finds its legitimizing foundations in the promises of liberal democracy and ethical citizenship. In line with this, Maarif contends throughout the book that in the early decades after independence, Indonesian politicians and statesmen initiated an Islamo-political project that is exemplary for Indonesians of the present. The heroes of this story are the central figures in the canonical version of modern Indonesian history: Sukarno, Hatta, Agus Salim, Sutan Taqdir Alisjabana, and Nurcholish Madjid. And Maarif's admiration for the achievements of these figures extends also to the national ideology they supported: Maarif is one of the most vocal supporters of Pancasila as a public resource in post-authoritarian Indonesia.

Maarif's support for the concept of ethical citizenship fosters a far-reaching respect for diversity. He argues that Allah revealed a far more tolerant and humanistic scheme than the vast majority of Muslims currently realize. This leads Maarif to express some positions that are striking in the Indonesian context. On religious equality, for example, a number of verses are cited to prove that Allah intended to give a space to atheists in the world beside people of faith. This proposition is out of step with Maarif's opponents and, less directly, with national ideology.

Because of the book's continued coupling of aspiration and disappointment, I found it a saddening text to read. The way Maarif presents it, the modernist vision appears to make a prisoner out of its holder. He holds to an inspired vision in which the promises of modernity merge with those of revelation, but when he reflects upon the reality of this merging of pious aspirations and redemptive modernity, it seems he will be eternally frustrated by the many Muslims who are opposed or ambivalent toward that modernity. The vision seems doomed to disappointment, and the book is peppered with difficult reflections that convey the intellectual complexity of this mix of public and pious aspirations, such as the following:

If the *umat*, which claims to believe that the Quran is the final message from heaven, is now power-less to prove the truth of this message in the real world, will God be silent and waive His respon-sibility to preserve the Quran as the source of wisdom for humanity? (p. 193)

The book has value for observers of modern Indonesian Islam as a reminder of a distinctively Indonesian conception of Islam and politics that is rather overlooked at present, and as an illustra-tion of the difficulties attaching to the intellectual dimensions of that project.

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Buddhist Revitalization and Chinese Religions in Malaysia
Tan Lee Ooi
Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2020.

Buddhist Revitalization and Chinese Religions in Malaysia focuses on the background and the historical process of Buddhist revitalization in Malaysia. It analyzes the unique social, cultural, and political context inside and outside contemporary Malaysia within which the rationalization and transformation of Chinese Buddhism has occurred. The relations between Buddhism and the Chinese communities as well as tensions between Buddhism and the Chinese religion (Chinese popular religion) have also been specially reflected on in the book.

There have been several previous studies on Buddhist revitalization in Malaysia. In *Sacred Tensions: Modernity and Religious Transformation in Malaysia* (1997), Raymond Lee and Susan Ackerman argue that Buddhist revitalization reflects an ethno-cultural assertion of the Chinese community. In "The Religion of the Chinese in Malaysia" (2000), Tan Chee Beng challenges Lee and Ackerman's views by emphasizing the importance of looking at the internal dynamics of Chinese Buddhism. Compared with previous studies, this book provides a broader view that includes dissecting the local and transnational factors associated with the process of Buddhist revitalization in Malaysia. It is also unique in that it pays special attention to the political responses and desires of Malaysian Buddhists.

According to the author, "Buddhist Revitalization" in Malaysia refers to the modernization movement of Buddhism that has been associated with the reformism or revivalism of the larger

Buddhist world historically and contemporarily. Thus, in this book the author pays special attention to the influence of the modernization and reformism of the Mahayana Buddhism of modern China, as well as the transplantation of new ideas of reformist Buddhism from Taiwan contemporarily.

In Malaysia the Buddhist community is highly diverse, with followers of Chinese Mahayana Buddhism, Theravada Buddhism, and Tibetan Buddhism. Almost all of the followers are Chinese, but Theravada Buddhism is multiethnic as it was brought from Thailand, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka and the main medium used has been English.

The Chinese population in Malaysia is divided into Chinese-educated, English-educated, and Malay-educated according to their educational background. Followers of Mahayana Buddhism are basically Chinese-educated, which also represents the largest proportion of the Buddhist community in Malaysia. At the same time, some bilingual Chinese follow both Mahayana and Theravada Buddhism. According to the author, this book focuses on Chinese Mahayana Buddhism, which is considered the main stream of Buddhism in Malaysia. In addition, many Chinese Buddhists do not simply practice Buddhism—they also maintain traditional Chinese beliefs and ancestor worship and have an inclusive attitude toward religion. The strained relationship between Chinese reformist Buddhism and traditional Chinese religion is an important issue and is another subject of this book.

In Chapter 2 the author provides an overview of the historical development of Buddhism in Malaya while tracing and examining its transnational connection with the larger Buddhist world. Not only Mahayana Buddhism but also the historical process of the development of Theravada Buddhism and their influence on Chinese communities are described in detail. Chapter 3 portrays several initiatives of the Buddhist revitalization movement in Malaysia by focusing on two groups, the Malaysian Buddhist Association (MBA) and the Youth Buddhist Association of Malaysia (YBAM). The two nationwide organizations are the most influential Buddhist organizations in Malaysia. As a legacy from modern China, the idea of modern Buddhism was adopted by the MBA and YBAM in the 1950s and 1970s respectively. Since then the two organizations have embarked on a journey to strengthen themselves while drawing upon the principles of modern Buddhism. The YBAM is the leading Buddhist youth organization in Malaysia and represents Buddhist youths of different linguistic and ethnic backgrounds; it coordinates more than 270 member organizations all over the country. The distinctive and outstanding achievements are that it has promoted Buddhist education, developed Buddhist societies, and has had close linkages with students in major public universities, colleges, and secondary schools. It has had a great influence on the younger generation and the sustainable development of modern Buddhism in Malaysia.

Chapter 4, "New Transnational Connections with Taiwan," discusses transnational connections which are new practices and forms of propagating Buddhism introduced from Fo Guang Shan and Tzu Chi, the two Taiwanese reformist Buddhist organizations. Subsequently Chapter 5, "Remaking Chinese Buddhists," investigates how the Chinese reformist Buddhist groups have

used religious "reformism" as a way to seek a political exit option for the Chinese community in response to ethno-political tensions and cultural crises from the 1980s. Buddhist activists, lay-people, and clerics have played a significant role in the movement of "remaking Chinese Buddhists": they strive to protect the community's interests through enhancing the religious and cultural strength of ethnic Chinese in Malaysia. According to the author, the "remaking Chinese Buddhist" movement—or Buddhist revitalization—was within such a political context and need. Such a perspective is new and unique. Chapters 4 and 5 appear to contain the main discussion points of this book.

Chapter 6, "Counterforces of Buddhist Revitalization," discusses the counterforces to Buddhist revitalization in the Chinese community. The author treats traditional Chinese religion (Chinese popular religion) and Taoism as obstacles or opposite forces to Buddhist revitalization as they are considered less rational, not refined enough as modern religions in this book. Especially as traditional Chinese religion and Chinese culture are inseparable, so the author points out that it is hard for the traditional Chinese religion to change to accommodate to the ideals of rationalization of Buddhist reformists. The conflicts within the Buddhist community are investigated as well.

This study provides a comprehensive and detailed picture of the historical development as well as ongoing transformation of Buddhism in Malaysia. It also portrays the interactions among members of the Buddhist community, various Buddhist traditions, and the complicated relationship between reformist Buddhism and traditional Chinese religion. The author argues that Buddhist revitalization is a movement intended to remake and strengthen the Chinese community. In the course of the movement, transnational connections with Taiwan and the significant resources introduced are highly positive factors. These are the two main observations of this book.

In *State, Society and Religious Engineering: Towards a Reformist Buddhism in Singapore* (2009), Kuah-Pearce Khun Eng indicates that under the guidance of the ethnic-religious policies of the Singapore government, and upon facing competition from Christians, the home-grown Reformist Buddhists rose up and Reformist Buddhism is being established as a modern rational religion for Chinese people in Singapore. Unlike Malaysia, where the government does not interfere in the religious practices of non-Malay communities, the government of Singapore engages in "religious engineering" to ensure peace and religious harmony. Thus, in Singapore the rationalization of Buddhism is part of the response to political policies or state ideology. Like *Buddhist Revitalization and Chinese Religions in Malaysia*, Kuah also portrays the tension between reformist Buddhism and traditional Chinese religion (Shenism), moreover, she emphasizes the need to compete with Christians that eventually serves as a catalyst for the reformism and transformation of Buddhism.

While in this book, the main focus is on the political context of the relationships between Buddhism and the Chinese community as well as Buddhism and the state, which is quite a distinctive view. The author tries to interpret Buddhist revitalization as a political strategy and desire of certain Chinese Buddhists, which is another type of response to politics compared to the case

of Singapore. Nevertheless, the religious law, state policy, and their influences on religions in Singapore are evident, but the hypothesis of this book—that ethnic tension is the reason behind Buddhist revitalization—is not persuasive enough.

In Malaysia the Buddhist community holds varied views toward political tension and crisis. Some Buddhist leaders and activists have voiced their concerns on politics and the cultural and political crises of the Chinese community in Malaysia. Some have even taken certain actions as described in this book. Nevertheless, the leading Buddhist organizations, such as the MBA and YBAM, just tend to assert the religious right and emphasize the interests of Buddhism. Such actions and assertions of the MBA and YBAM are religious rather than political, unlike the Islamic Party of Malaysia (Parti Islam Se-Malaysia), which has intertwined its religious aims with political vision. Furthermore, in Chapter 5 the author indicates that the new social engagement of certain reformist Buddhist groups has encouraged trans-ethnic solidarities, which provide an exit option for Malaysian Chinese. While some new Buddhist groups have succeeded in promoting volunteerism in a multiracial context, as the author points out, the success is limited and it is hard to see the overall impact of it on the transformation of race relations towards trans-ethnicity.

As a researcher of Theravada Buddhism in Malaysia, the modernization or rationalization of Theravada Buddhism has been my concern. It is from the late 1980s there has been a rise of newly established meditation centers and hermitages, and more and more local Malaysian Theravada monks and lay practitioners are seeking out the practice of meditation as well as profound Dhamma knowledge. Such a move represents a new aspect of the development of Theravada Buddhism in Malaysia. The pursuit of spiritual engagement of the practitioners can be viewed as a consequence of years of practice that shows the internal changes of many Theravada Buddhists. For Chinese Mahayana Buddhism, the ongoing rationalization and reformism can be viewed as being within the same context: besides the effect of external factors such as political reasons and transnationalism, the internal changes of the Buddhists are crucial as well. Unfortunately, in this book the author fails to elaborate on this point.

Lastly, I have my doubts about what the author describes traditional Chinese religion (Chinese popular religion) and Taoism as. According to this book, there appears to be a religious hierarchy in the Chinese community, where reformist Buddhism is at the top level and is the sole religious authority and interpreter of Chinese Buddhism and even the decider of what is a "real religion." For instance, "The rationalization of Chinese religion by Reformist Buddhist groups" (p. 151) is a questionable statement; it sounds as though reformist Buddhist groups have the hegemony to correct other religions, which is somehow unacceptable.

Despite its shortcomings, this book documents the multiple dimensions of the religious revitalization of Chinese Buddhism in modern Malaysia. Its detailed and insightful examinations help in fostering a deep understanding of modernity, religion, and globalization in an ever-changing multireligious society.

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Love, Money and Obligation: Transnational Marriage in a Northeastern Thai Village
Patcharin Lapanun
Singapore: NUS Press, 2019.

Making Sense of Transnational Marriage through the Eyes of *Mia Farang*

The northeastern region of Thailand, known as Isan, is a geographic nexus of complex issues subject to political, economic, environmental, cultural, and social investigations. This "problem" region is a source of academic fascination to many scholars. *Love, Money and Obligation: Transnational Marriage in a Northeastern Thai Village* is one of the latest contributions to the bulk of knowledge on Isan society.

The topic of discussion in this book is *mia farang*—Thai women married to Western men. The term carries negative connotations in certain contexts of use and often occurs in spoken language. Before reading the book, I had my own background knowledge and firsthand experience being friends with several *mia farang* or former *mia farang*. I myself was called this at times. These experiences shaped my expectations of this book. So, on the one hand I read the book as a person directly involved in the discourses of *mia farang*, but on the other hand I read it as a student of Isan studies with a background in Thai sociopolitical knowledge. However, I claim no expertise on either transnational or endogamic marriage in Isan but expect to learn from the book like anyone interested in the topic would do.

The book is based on the author's ethnographic research carried out between 2009 and 2012 at multiple research sites but primarily in a village and its neighboring communities in the Isan province of Udon Thani, where 159 women of different ages were married to foreign husbands (p. 47). The majority of them were from humble socioeconomic backgrounds. Some of them were settled in the village, while others spent most of their time in their husband's country. Trans-

national marriage in this village began during the Vietnam War and has continued until today. To explore the complexity of this phenomenon, the author asked several questions to tease out how social and cultural beliefs and practices interacted with the life choices that these women made before and after marrying Western men.

The book is organized into seven chapters. The most important point in the introduction is the author's discussion of her research methods. I find her detailed description of the research methods to be one of the most important strengths of this book. Because the majority of her *mia farang* informants were former sex workers whose life experiences were not always pleasant, I appreciate the author's recognition of her own limitations in delving into the thoughts and experiences of these women given how intimate or sensitive the issues could be. Thus, she does not pretend to be fully objective or claim to be an authoritative voice representing the emic views of her informants. Patcharin Lapanun's humbleness in this regard turns out to be a powerful and honest analytic tool. In addition to the methodological notes, the introduction augments the importance of the study by stressing the author's intention to examine not only *mia farang* but also other people living in *mia farang*'s native communities, in order to gain an understanding of how they play a part in the women's decisions (p. 16). It is the latter point that I look forward to reading in later chapters. In short, I think Patcharin gives a powerful and interesting introduction to her book.

The first chapter gives a historical background to transnational marriage in Thailand (and Siam). The author does an excellent job of placing the current trend of transnational marriage between Thai women and Western (or any foreign) men in its historical perspective. The section on Isan female sex workers during the Cold War helps to explain the origin of the widely held negative stereotypes and discrimination against Isan *mia farang* in general today. It also helps to explain why it appears to be more socially acceptable for members of the rich elite than for women of the lowest social stratum to marry Westerners.

The second chapter is about Na Dokmai, the main research site. The sharp contrast between the village's long agriculture-based economic struggles and its current materially developed, urbanized condition helps to explain the motivations of young women and men to leave their homes to seek a better life elsewhere—to cater to the needs and desires of US servicemen in the provincial capital of nearby Udon Thani during the Vietnam War, to migrate to the Central Plains for factory jobs, or to move overseas as laborers. It shows the economic inequalities that have plagued Isan until today. In the author's description of Na Dokmai, the village stands as a witness not only to the fact that this region is still on the receiving end of inequality in Thai society, but also to the fact that the ever-present inequality is the main driver for Isan people's aspirations of upward social mobility.

The third chapter is on motivations for transnational marriage. The author juxtaposes the "classic Western assumptions about romantic love and its extrication from financial motives" (p. 76) and her informants' motivations to seek Western husbands among both women with failed previous

marriages and younger, single women. I find it unnecessary to resort to a Western, romantic view on love and marriage as a point of comparison and departure. This is because it has already been well documented that marriage in the West is motivated by different reasons, not romantic love alone. Thus, prioritizing the traditional view of romantic love as the main factor for marriage, such as in the "for love or money" dichotomy, does not help to understand these *mia farang*'s motivations for marrying Western men. Doing so gives me the impression that the book aims to speak to and challenge those with conservative views. I personally think it would have been more helpful to compare typical reasons for endogamous unions among Na Dokmai villagers and the informants' reasons for transnational marriage in order to see similarities or differences in a range of factors that individuals consider before deciding to get married (or to stay married).

Patcharin also outlines different reasons for divorced, former sex workers to marry Western men and contrasts them with those that drive younger, unmarried, educated women from well-to-do backgrounds to seek Western husbands. Some of the reasons for the union are the expected roles and responsibilities of male spouses, the negative image of local men, the shortage of local men with an attractive profile, the women's social locations, and positive (perceived or real) attributes of Western men. To me these reasons are no different from those that any random woman considers in marrying any man (regardless of his ethnicity or nationality).

In the fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters, conceptual discussions of reasons and dynamics for transnational marriage in the previous chapters are fleshed out through examples of life stories of *mia farang*. The author does a fine job of bringing out subtle details of their lives to support her theoretical claims. The main theme that recurs throughout the discussions is the women's sense of responsibility toward their parents, relatives, or children from previous marriages. Their obligations are one of the main forces behind the women's decision to seek a Western husband. But why a Western husband? Patcharin explains that the women see these men as more financially established, responsible, and accepting of them. Among those with previously failed marriages and/or backgrounds in the sex industry, they do not see themselves as desirable spouse candidates for Thai men (who in their experience are not good spouse candidates either). The author goes on to argue that as *mia farang*, they reinvent their identity by engaging in community activities as good members of society—organizing merit-making as good Buddhists and donating to various local causes.

Being associated with the West, materially well off, and benevolent, *mia farang* have earned a place in a distinct social category in village society that the author characterizes as a distinct "class" in Max Weber and Pierre Bourdieu's sense of the word. However, I would have liked for the author to clarify this point. I believe this so-called class is marked with contestedness, which should be explored in detail. In addition to this, I was hoping the author would have more thorough discussions of the role of those left behind in the sending community in encouraging women to marry Western or other foreign men. I was hoping to hear voices of family members of the majority of *mia farang* from the village rather than a few parents of younger, often more educated village

women, who actively sought Western husbands for their daughters. To me these parents are not in the majority. It would have been more helpful to learn about the thoughts and feelings of parents or relatives of *mia farang* who endured struggles before meeting their spouses and whether and how these relatives supported or disapproved of these women's decisions regarding marriage. By focusing on this particular group of people, the book would likely tease out many issues related to inequality, which is one of the most persistent problems in Isan. Also missing were voices of the women's former spouses. Stories about these men are told largely through the perspective of *mia farang* or their relatives. I was also hoping to learn about these women's self-reflections on their decisions to leave home at a young age to work in the sex industry, on their work-related struggles, on their outlook in life and, more important, their self-esteem.

The picture of a typical *mia farang* that emerges in the book is of a woman who engages in sex work because of life hardships; she hopes for a better life so she can take care of her family back home. And to have a better life she makes the rational decision to marry a Western man who loves and takes good care of her despite her background that makes her undesirable to Thai men. She continues to maintain ties with the community by being a good Buddhist and member of the community. In this regard, the woman is not different from many other Thai women in striving to live up to traditional expectations. Note, however, that I make no claim about images of *mia farang* beyond the descriptions in this book.

As much as I enjoyed reading the book, I do not think I learned much as someone from the region who was already familiar with the subject matter. I am sure that many *mia farang* themselves would find much of the book to be common knowledge. But the great value of the book, which I am grateful for, is that this common knowledge may not be so common among many in the socially and politically divided society of Thailand, where stereotypes and prejudices are dominant and often accepted as norms and where people tend to see things as either black or white and good or bad. The book contains useful knowledge to help educate these people about the lived realities of contemporary Thailand. For those who are not familiar with Isan, this is a highly valuable book that sheds light on transnational marriage and its complex nature, with regional inequality in the background.

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Haunted Houses and Ghostly Encounters: Ethnography and Animism
in East Timor, 1860–1975
Christopher J. Shepherd
Singapore: Asian Studies Association of Australia/NUS Press, 2019.

When the Timorese surrendered their most sacred ancestral heirlooms to the Portuguese administrators in the second half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries, did they adopt a rationalist and naturalist cosmology? When they treated missionaries with the highest respect, did they do so out of their commitment to the Christian god? Or was all of this shaped by an animist point of view that flexibly took up and transformed whatever powerful forces arrived on the island?

Animism has ambiguous overtones in Southeast Asian studies. For a long time, the term denoted world religion's Other, conceived either as the ontology of those not converted to one of the scriptural, transcultural religions or as the residue of practices and ideas that preceded conversion and still resist orthodox purification. In this undertheorized context, it slightly hinted at "backwardness" and "superstition." Only in recent years has a broader debate on animism in anthropology, in which Philippe Descola, Tim Ingold, and others have revived the term as a critical counter-concept to Western-modern ontology, caught the attention of scholars of Southeast Asia.

Christopher Shepherd's meta-ethnography of East Timor before Indonesian occupation is probably the first monograph-length attempt to merge previous and current notions of animism in the region, and it is a successful one. This is not least due to his recognition that the new anthropology of ontologies is conditioned by the earlier reflective turn that questioned how anthropological representations were constructed in the first place.

Shepherd's book is not primarily a historical reconstruction of Timorese rituals and cosmologies in the period defined in the subtitle. Rather, it is an analysis of the way they were portrayed in the writings of colonial and professional ethnographers. Yet, the author also attempts to capture what eluded their gaze and thereby to understand how Timorese animism adapted to colonial circumstances.

His argument is in line with other analyses of Southeast Asian concepts of the stranger, like the figure of the stranger king. The Timorese saw a continuity between the powers of animist life forces and spirits on the one hand and the power of Portugal and Catholicism on the other. Adopting Christianity or respecting administrators was not simply a recognition of the Europeans' superior force but also served rather animist purposes. Timorese were trying to figure out who commanded the most effective power in their environment, in an arrangement that Shepherd, adopting Kaj Århem's term, calls "hierarchical animism." Insofar as this made the Timorese adopt new ceremonies and respect new socio-cosmic obligations, Shepherd calls the result "transformative animism." Only on the final page does the author arrive at the conclusion that this inclusive flexibility is not a deviation of animism but one of its central features.

Shepherd moves through a series of works, committing each chapter to one writer, characterized by a role model. Thus, among the ethnographers of the colonial era, he identifies "the Governor" (Afonso de Castro), "the Naturalist" (Henry Ogg Forbes), "the Magistrate" (Alberto Osório de Castro), "the Captain" (José Simoes Martinho), "the Administrator" (Armando Pinto Correia), and "the Missionary" (Abilio José Fernandes), while professional anthropology is represented by "the Sentimentalist" (Margaret King), "the Theologian" (David Hicks), "the Apprentice" (Shepard Forman), and "the Detective" (Elizabeth Traube).

While the positions of the colonial administrators vary quite a bit, none of them veers from the paradigm of European superiority, a fact that Shepherd often comments upon with wry humor. However, quite a number of these accounts—most dramatically the one by Fernandes—contain clues as to how the Timorese placed outsiders within their own cosmological framework. Professional ethnographers get a more extensive and detailed treatment. Here, Shepherd shows at once how they attempted to construct a unified cultural truth of the Timorese and how they reflected critically on their own procedures.

Still, Shepherd proposes his central thesis with considerable care. When he suggests that the Timorese conceived of foreigners in terms of spiritual power, he does so in the form of questions. These are not rhetorical—he does not try to force upon readers that Timorese unambiguously classified King as a *lulik* (sacred) person or took Hicks's fearless strolls into the forest as unequivocal evidence that he was a wandering soul. Rather, he raises the possibility that the Timorese pondered this possibility.

In this way, he reiterates Timorese—and in many ways Southeast Asian—animism more generally. This is an ontology of possibilities that branch out according to communication and context, not one of an ultimate truth waiting to be revealed by science. In a way, Shepherd's own reflections on ethnographic form concur with animist epistemology, thus suggesting that Southeast Asian epistemologies impact on the way that anthropologists know about them. So, did animism's flexibility and indeterminacy inform its anthropological representations? In this respect, Shepherd could have been more explicit about the theoretical consequences of his analysis.

This reluctance to elaborate on consequences may relate to the fact that Shepherd never lets his own ethnographic knowledge of Timor—which produced his first book in 2014—interfere with his hermeneutic reading of others' accounts. His refusal of the position of the know-it-all, however, leads to an odd exemption. On the one hand, his critical—though sympathetic—analysis of anthropological representations inexorably reveals their modernist and politically accommodating strategies, especially regarding the Indonesian occupation. This even pertains to ethnographers like Forman or Traube, whose reflexivity Shepherd praises. On the other, he never applies these standards to himself. Thus, he takes to task professionals for not laying open their strategies and agendas but never clearly reveals his own.

Lucidly written and well argued, narratively dense while not indulging in theoretical diver-

sions, this volume provides fascinating insights into both the history of ethnography on East Timor and the transformation of Timorese ritual and cosmology. It provides rich opportunities to reflect upon the conditions of representation, the power of colonialism, and the power of animism to tap into this power.

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Rural Development in Southeast Asia: Dispossession, Accumulation and Persistence
Jonathan Rigg
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In recent decades, rural societies and the agricultural sector in Southeast Asia have undergone dramatic transformations and been integrated into the global economy. A range of book series, special issues, regular articles, and reports have intensively addressed agrarian transitions in Southeast Asia. This topic has been framed and explored in specific contexts or from dominant theoretical or disciplinary perspectives. However, the overall picture of the dynamic processes of social change in rural society in Southeast Asia is still unclear. In *Rural Development in Southeast Asia: Dispossession, Accumulation and Persistence* Jonathan Rigg insightfully outlines the general trends of agrarian change in Southeast Asia, both critically and comparatively. This short book is part of Cambridge Elements in Politics and Society in Southeast Asia, a series that focuses on a specifically featured country or theme through a brief but comprehensive overview of the debates in existing literature.

After clarifying the problematic rural-urban dichotomy, contributory rural-urban connections, and characteristic agrarian transitions, Rigg outlines these rural concerns in Chapter 1, as a mirror reflecting the social transformation processes on the ground, which challenges common modernization and development theories based on experiences from the Global North. In order to better understand rural development in Southeast Asia, three core issues—traditional rice farming, featured as smallholder persistence; market-oriented cash crops (focusing on rubber and oil palm) that are characterized by upland dispossession; and rural landlessness—are discussed in Chapters 2 to 4. Theoretically, starting from the agrarian question and related debates on interrelations among peasantry, peasant agriculture, and capitalism as a point of departure, Rigg conceptualizes the puzzle that "while peasants may have largely disappeared . . . the smallholders farm has not" (p. 7). Rigg maintains assiduous attention to this issue, in response to the transition toward large farms (Rigg *et al.* 2016; 2018; Rigg 2019). In addition, he argues that current theoretical con-

siderations regarding Karl Marx's primitive accumulation or David Harvey's accumulation by dispossession (ABD), which have been rigorously engaged within Southeast Asian scholarship, could not cover the reality or accumulation (processes) without dispossession (AWD). The semi-proletarianized rural population lives with features of pluriactivity and rural-urban interactions in the contemporary context of neoliberalism and globalization.

Rigg starts Chapter 2 with a question that was asked of villagers: why they continued to cultivate rice when agriculture was in an economically and socially marginalized position. This issue has been further elaborated as a focus in examining the puzzle of smallholder persistence. This process revealed a scenario that was different from the Global North, which features large-scale farming and agricultural mechanization as labor-saving approaches. Rigg offers five key points in response to this puzzle: agro-ecological, historical or temporal, political or policy-related, technological, and economic or livelihood related (p. 14). The points are supported by comparative cases not only from Southeast Asia but from Asia more broadly. To better understand the persistence of the smallholder, Rigg highlights the importance of the Southeast Asian context in relation to industrialization, globalization, development of non-agricultural sectors, and pluriactivities as local responses. Rigg also challenges research based on the concept of "household," advocating that a dynamic definition of key concepts (e.g., smallholders and family farmers) should be distinctly clarified. In addition, he points out the multifunctionality of land, particularly land as social security, in response to the precarity of pluriactivities. Generally, he argues, smallholder persistence shows an obvious characteristic of AWD rather than ABD.

Contrary to the persistence of wet rice farming as "another picture of agrarian change" (p. 39), Rigg examines the dispossession processes in the highlands, or "frontiers," in Chapter 3. Referring to James C. Scott's exploration of "Zomia," he elaborates on the features of upland Southeast Asia, including the states of being un(der)settled, un(der)utilized, un(der)productive, degraded, and (un)civilized, due to which this upland space has been involved in a state-led development agenda through territorialization processes. Specifically, Rigg covers two main points: turning land into capital and turning people into labor. These processes, and their socioeconomic and political consequences, have received wide attention from Southeast Asian scholars, assembled under the notion of land grabbing. Relatedly, the final major concern in Chapter 4 is the landless, "a particular group of rural people," especially in the context of agrarian capitalism. Landlessness is also intricately connected to issues of poverty, inequality, and policy making. With reference to long-term studies in Java, Rigg highlights the importance of non-farm work and a translocal approach in rural livelihoods, along with both their positive and negative consequences.

With all these realities and concerns in mind, Rigg reconsiders rural changes in Southeast Asia theoretically, offering three future scenarios: modernization, persistence, and post-productivism. He also presents some critical issues that are extremely helpful for rethinking contemporary peasantry, rural society, and even emerging new forms of agrarian questions.

This book provides a clear and concise picture of rural development in Southeast Asia based on Rigg's solid, in-depth, and longitudinal fieldwork (mainly in Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos) as well as further engagement with both classic and recent secondary literature covering mainland and maritime Southeast Asia. As Rigg notes, many of the issues discussed—such as aging, gender, and (inter)generational relations—are not limited to Southeast Asia but extend also to East Asia. Although similarities or similar development trends have been noted in both East and Southeast Asia, their interactions and interdependence are not highlighted or analyzed in depth in this book.

Rigg also reflects on the differences between some key concepts (pp. 19–20), such as smallholder and small-scale farmer, which have historically been used interchangeably in the literature. He inspires us to think about rural development from multiple perspectives, such as rural-urban and lowland-upland interactions, as well as telecoupling. Generally, this book provides an insightful and comprehensive summary of a changing rural Southeast Asia that could also be a starting point for (re)thinking the future of rural development.

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Cambodia's Muslims and the Malay World: Malay Language, Jawi Script, and Islamic Factionalism from the 19th Century to the Present
PHILIPP BRUCKMAYR
Leiden: Brill, 2019.

There are many notable recent books and articles on Cambodia's Muslim communities, including works by Farina So (2011), Ysa Osman (2002; 2006; 2010), Jorge López-Cortina and Alberto Pérez-Pereiro (2017), Emiko Stock (2012; 2016; 2019), and others. Much work, necessarily, has focused on the period of 1975 through 1979 and 1979 to the present. Nicolas Weber's *Histoire de la Diaspora Cam* (2014) broke incredible new ground but was unavailable to readers who could not read French, although Weber has published several excellent English-language articles and chap-

ters on aspects of Cham history related to his book (Weber 2008; 2011; 2019). To add to this conversation, Philipp Bruckmayr's *Cambodia's Muslims and the Malay World* is the single best study of Jawi source material to date. In the book, Bruckmayr examines Jawization, i.e., the adoption of the Malay language and the Jawi script among Cambodia's Muslims, and the spread of "Islamic factionalism" in Cambodia from the nineteenth century onward. Through a combination of studies of Jawi source material, French colonial documents from Cambodia archives, and fieldwork from Cambodia, he argues, "*jawi's* unifying and homogenizing role was potentially disruptive in nature because it marginalized Islamic discourses and literatures in other local languages" (p. 1).

To support his claims, Bruckmayr takes readers on a journey through the formulation of similar processes elsewhere in the Muslim world, especially island Southeast Asia. He also considers the critically important historical context of Cambodia's Muslims, whom he divides into two ethnic classifications, Cham and Chvea. He includes a cursory examination of the origins of Cambodia's Cham in the last Champa civilization kingdom, Pāṇḍuraṅga—now the lands associated with Ninh Thuận, Bình Thuận, and Đồng Nai Provinces in Vietnam—followed by a much more in-depth exploration of Cham connections to Malay scholarly centers, particularly the Patani network, and diversification of Chvea (often glossed over as "Malay") influence in eighteenth-century Cambodia. Chapter 3 digs deeper into the precolonial and early colonial periods, while Chapter 4 examines the structural and processual dispositions for Jawization. The fifth chapter focuses more deeply on the 1930s, mapping out emergent Islamic factionalism. Chapter 6 focuses on the agents and vehicles of Jawization, moving up through the middle of the twentieth century, while Chapter 7 leaps backward in time again to the colonial era, to give a detailed analysis of the French colonial role in the process of Jawization. The book concludes with the legacies of Jawization and anti-Jawization.

The strongest contributions of this study, Bruckmayr's analyses of Jawi source materials, are woven throughout. Yet, the single greatest contribution in terms of a standalone chapter is Chapter 6, which could likely be assigned to undergraduates. For graduate students, the strong theoretical framework in the first chapter, on "Islamic Logospheres," weaving together ideas from Roland Barthes, Mohammed Arkoun, Talal Asad, Pierre Bourdieu, Stephen Gath, Leif Manger, and other pillars would make excellent reading (especially pp. 4–8). The last chapter, on the lasting legacies of Jawization, collapses vast collections of evidence from the deep historical past through the present into a sweeping single analysis; it would be useful for advanced graduate students and scholars focusing especially on Cambodia. While these discussions are fascinating, one might wonder: How do the recent works from the many scholars in the field of Cham Studies in Cambodia fit into Bruckmayr's theoretical discussions? He relies on them but does not discuss them. Critiques of this excellent book may be summarized in three categories: (1) the style of the prose, which with further refinement would have broadened potential readership; (2) a critique of a *lack* of standards with regard to the Cham language; (3) criticism of analyses of social and his-

torical contexts, especially beyond the borders of Cambodia—in Vietnam—which nonetheless make their way into the text.

First, there are several passages in the book with problematic prose. These include the statement "the country [Cambodia] reconnected with the outside world in 1992 after two decades of international *isolation* [emphasis added]" (p. 3) and the contention that "*isolation*" played a role in the creation of the Cham Bani community (p. 26). To temper the language, the author notes locals were "far from frozen in time" yet cannot help making the tragically flawed assumption that Cham, Javanese, and Sasak script communities were "far less dynamic" than those that used Jawi (p. 69), despite having no expertise in those three scripts evidenced in this book or other works to back an evidence-based comparative assessment of them. This language is reminiscent of Bruckmayr's predecessor, Antoine Cabaton—who went on to be an excellent scholar on *insulinde*, leaving behind earlier works in Champa and Cham Studies—and the prose could have been airbrushed to avoid overstating any claims.

Next, although Bruckmayr provides a fascinating description of the origins of the term "Jawi" (pp. 9–11), readers would have benefited from a more straightforward description that clearly disambiguates Jawi as an Arabic or Perso-Arabic derived script used to write Austronesian languages—predominantly Malay—from historical Cham (*cawa/jawa*), Vietnamese (*cha va, đồ bà*), and Khmer (*chvea*) terms with meanings that changed over time. It would be useful for readers to understand that Jawi adds new glyph forms (often six) to replicate the phonemes of Austronesian languages. Thus, Malay, Acehnese, Banjarese, Minangkabau, Cham, and so forth all have slightly different variants of Jawi. Furthermore, this is strikingly similar to the Arwi script of the Tamil language, also historically present in South and Southeast Asia, although Arwi adds 13 glyph forms. More strikingly, readers will not find an easy-to-read overarching description of the sheer diversity, historical and contemporary, of the main subject of the book, Cambodia's Muslims. Granted periods of flux, Cambodia's Muslims have also included, variously, Arabs, South Asians, Indonesians, Malaysians, Thai Muslims, and even Vietnamese, Chinese, American, and European Muslims, not mentioned at all at the outset—although, occasionally, some such individuals make appearances in the book. Instead, the book simplifies the community principle ethnic classifications, Cham and Chvea (80 percent). Although we also do not get a clear description of what is meant by *chvea* over time, astute readers may find the author understated, even too humble, about the dramatic impact of Jawization, especially in reference to Cham language communities.

Among Cham Muslims, the symbolic counter to the spread of Jawi is the persistence of the Cham script of Cambodia: Akhar Srak. Akhar Srak is a variant of the Eastern Cham Akhar Thrah script, typically associated with the last historical kingdom of the Champa civilization, Pāṇḍuraṅga. Akhar Srak—like Akhar Thrah—is a southern Brahmi script, also much like the Cambodian script in oblique letters, Âksâr Chriĕng, or other mainland Southeast Asian scripts, as well as the island Southeast Asian scripts of Batak and Balinese communities. Although the author uses "Akhar

Thrah" throughout the book, the Cham manuscripts in reference in most cases are written in Akhar Srak, giving one the sense that a needed layer of expertise in Cham languages was absent from the editorial process. A similar lack of standards for Arabic, or even Jawi, would be considered haphazard in the halls of Leiden but is somehow forgivable in the case of Cham. Consider the important statement, summarizing eight chapters of well-thought-out argumentation, suggesting that Jawization and anti-Jawization culminate in the divergence of Muslims into two communities, "one headed by the Mufti of Cambodia and the other by the *ong g'nur*" (p. 2). According to the Moussay romanization system the author claims to use, *g'nur* should be *ginuer*. *G'nur*, rather, is a common re-transcription into French and English based on oral transmission, not romanization of script. Elsewhere, the author writes *khnour* based on a Cham → Khmer → French language pathway (pp. 64, 124, 133, 140, 145, 146, 256, 265, 344, 350). Bruckmayr does not follow either of the perfectly acceptable transcription systems of the École française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO) or the Library of Congress for Khmer or Cham. The problem is not that these systems do not exist, just that the author does not use them. Instead, he follows transcriptions from secondary scholar-ship or already present in French translations of archival documents.

In another important example where knowledge of the Cham language is a critical factor in providing evidence for the argument, it seems that Bruckmayr does not notice that "to follow the *jawa*" *tuei cawa* (alt.: *jawa*) is not the only phrase that is important in the linguistic context he is discussing, but also that "to enter the Bani religion" (*tamâ agama Bani*) is present in some of the very same manuscript collections scholars have been analyzing in Cambodia. The presence of the historical usage of the term "Bani" in contexts of communities associated with the *Ong Ginuer* (i.e., the *Kan Imam San*) suggests the Cham term *Bani*, like the term *Chvea* in Khmer, is histori-cally and geographically contingent, a point that actually services Bruckmayr's argument (see also Weber 2005; Noseworthy and Pham Huyen 2020). In another instance, he struggles to pin down the location of *Mâkah* in Cham manuscripts written in Akhar Thrah per "Pāṇḍuraṅga traditions," without cohesively explaining that interpretations of *Mâkah* simply vary in Pāṇḍuraṅga contexts. Sometimes *Mâkah* is a "beyond space," sometimes obliquely "overseas," while in others "Mecca," and still others "Kelantan, Malaysia." This brings us to critiques of analysis of social and historical context.

It is very curious indeed that Bruckmayr does not explain that the term *Kan Imam San*—the followers of the *Ong Ginuer*—appears to be a Cham language neologism. Two previous terms in scholarly circulation were *Kaum Imam San* and *Kaum Jumaat* (Friday group) (De Féo 2004; 2005; Guérin 2004; Weber 2005; Pérez-Pereiro 2012; Stock 2012). Very likely, *Kan* was reasserted quite recently to replace the usage of *kaum*, meaning "group," because the latter is Malay, not Cham. *Kaum* is quite absent from Cham lexicons or other language sources until the 1950s–70s, when all of a sudden variable records of local pronunciations of *kaum* begin to appear, even in Eastern Cham. Likely this is a loanword being adopted from the social climate of the 1950s–70s, where *kaum*

muda/tua discourse so influenced Cham language as far as the Thuận Hải (now Ninh Thuận and Bình Thuận Provinces). The notion of a *Kaum/Kan Imam San* itself seems to be a bit of a new construction, as nineteenth- and twentieth-century Akhar Srak manuscripts almost unanimously use the term *Bani* as a self-referential. In other words, the adoption of the term *Kan* likely is a marker of the anti-Jawization position that Bruckmayr posits. In reference to important Cambodia-Pāṇḍuraṅga cultural connections, Bruckmayr refers to a "Bani *rija* ritual." Yet, *rija* are in fact a category of rituals for both the Bani and Ahiér (Cham particularist/localized Hindu) communities. Bruckmayr intends, evidently, to refer to the Rija Praong ritual yet references only a single text for this ritual's origins, as if there were not an entire vibrant, and dynamic, series of ritual texts providing different versions of the backstory, narrative, events, significance, ritual order, ritual vocabularies, mantras, and so forth for Rija Praong. We need not expect Bruckmayr to get these Pāṇḍuraṅga-Cham contexts right, but readers do need to know that the reliability of the information dissipates outside the Jawi logosphere.

While I put forward criticisms of the style of prose, a critique of attention to details of the Cham language, and a critique of social and historical contexts in this review, readers should walk away with a clear understanding: This book is one of the single greatest contributions to the field of Cham Studies in relation to the fields of Islamic Studies and Cambodian Studies published in recent English-language scholarship. This is precisely why the renowned scholar of Islam in Southeast Asia Nico J. G. Kaptein (2020, 418) was able to muster only a single criticism in his review of the book, that "at times the book is too detailed," a complaint I beg to differ with. The detail-driven analysis of Bruckmayr's study is indeed quite refreshing.

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