PHILIPPINE DEMOCRACY AGENDA: VOLUME 3

CIVIL SOCIETY MAKING CIVIL SOCIETY

MIRIAM CORONEL FERRER, EDITOR

PHILIPPINE DEMOCRACY AGENDA

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CIVIL SOCIETY MAKING CIVIL SOCIETY

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SYNTHESIS

Civil Society Making Civil Society

The Philippines is usually described as a strong civil society type, in contrast to other countries where non-state mobilizations and organizations are underdeveloped and/or controlled by the state. Thousands of voluntary organizations addressing various concerns dot the country's sociopolitical landscape. According to the Department of Interior and Local Government, Philippine non-government organizations (NGOs) and people's organizations (POs) number 14,398.[1]

Much of the credit for this positive characterization of Philippine society goes to the political and social movements that have been built and nurtured by the politicized sectors of society throughout the decades. These "left-of-center" sectors have been instrumental in building NGOs and POs, as well as alternative political and social development agencies which are active interlocutors of the state and generators of social welfare.

In addition, non-state institutions such as the media, the academe and religious institutions have manifested a capacity to maintain autonomy from the state. There are almost 30 newspapers published in Metro Manila alone, with nine claiming national circulation. Major cities have several local newspapers as well.[2] A massive school system spreads out to all regions. In 1996, there were 48,112 schools. Of these total, 73 percent were elementary schools; 12%, secondary schools; 2.5%, technical/vocational institutions; and 2%, tertiary schools. About 16 percent were privately owned, while approximately 84% were run by government.[3]

The majority religion in the Philippines is Catholicism (83%). The Catholic Church has 82 dioceses nationwide, and a total of 171 institutes of consecrated life, pious unions and lay associations for men and women.[4] Protestants and members of other Christian denominations, including two Filipino indigenous churches, make up about 11%. Twenty percent of the population in Mindanao, on the other hand, are Muslims. Muslims make up 4.6% of the population nationwide.[5]

Although at times encumbered by vested economic interests and/or conservative outlooks, time and again, these non-state institutions have demonstrated their potential as independent power centers and agents of change.

Meanwhile, 70 million Filipinos are scattered in 1,540 municipalities, 65 cities, 77 provinces and 41,950 barangays.[6] Most of these barangays are fishing and farming villages, the latter found in both lowland and highland. With their own local languages, customs, traditions, civic groups, sectoral organizations, religious

institutions, business firms, and neighborhood associations, they generate their respective spheres of belongingness and interaction.

The changed legal framework and decentered political power of the post-Marcos period have provided the enhanced context for the strengthening of the different actors that make up civil society. To their credit, many of these actors responded to the challenge seriously and have taken good advantage of the opened spaces, even creating some where there were none. Witness the post-Marcos growth of social movements and alternative centers, the press, and the basic freedoms actively asserted by communities, schools, and religious institutions.

In this sense, one can say that Philippine civil society has cumulatively pushed forward the democratization project.

Democratization, however, has not always been smooth sailing. Insidious attempts by sections of the state institutions who prefer to contain the enlargement of other power bases have time and again upset the project.

The obstacles to this forward movement are not only external. Fractiousness in its own ranks and failure to respond to evolving needs are unfortunate realities that have weakened or derailed civil society's democratization efforts within, and vis-à-vis, the state.

To begin, the groups that make up civil society differ from each other in many ways, as to:

- *Nature of Organization* – function or role may be service-oriented, for advocacy, research or training; may be ideological or political, organic (community), or indigenous or traditional (clan, tribe); or be based on nature of composition (e.g., sectors, classes, ethnic group, gender).
- *Organizational level* – organizational membership may be as individuals or groups; and scope of operation and/or membership may be at the most basic territorial unit (e.g., neighborhood) or national and international.
- *Organizational origin* – may be initiated by government, interest groups, or particular institutions (business, church, academe) or by individuals.
- *Perspectives/Ideology* – operational frameworks may be defined by some ideology, philosophy, religion, or culture.

Differences such as these do not create tensions or conflicts per se but they define the frames in which various civil society actors operate. In so doing, complementation and incongruence, and intersecting, parallel or opposite movements occur, leading in key instances to sharp conflicts or breeding low-level but unsettled tensions.

Uneven development among and within sectors, differing types and sizes of resources at their disposal, competition for the same resources, and varying organizational natures and capabilities have likewise delimited the impact of civil society agents.

For instance, NGOs far outnumber POs, and most NGOs are concentrated in urban centers. A survey of 102 peace organizations found that a huge chunk is based in Metro Manila, and POs number 300 percent less than NGOs.[7] This trend shows that there is a dearth of consolidated grassroots organizations on the whole, and both change-agents and service-providers in the rural areas remain scant.

These types of unevenness are also manifested in the international NGO terrain. Inquiring on perceptions of NGOs, the 1995 Benchmark Survey of NGOs found respondents felt restricted by factors like the presence of larger NGOs, the use of the English language, Northern NGOs, accredited NGOs, white-run NGOs, and male-run NGOs.[8]

The exploration of new terrain and modes has also caused organizational crises not present before when the old terms and ways were in place and unquestioned. The new situation has necessitated a review of outlook, terms of engagement vis-à-vis each other and the state, and even a reinvention of goals and programs as new niches for active intervention are created and enlarged. In such undertakings, old ideas contend with the new. Confusion and uncertainty have made new undertakings seem to be more risky, and commitments have wavered.

This volume on *Civil Society Making Civil Society* explores the dynamics within sections of civil society. It examines the different areas that have caused tensions or conflicts; factors or developments that have helped resolve these tensions; and mechanisms that are being put in place or may be necessary to constructively resolve conflicts or free up areas of tension among civil society groups. It identifies the major tasks ahead that require conscious action on the part of civil society to ensure the dynamism, solidarity and integrity of its parts.

The big strides attained by Philippine civil society are well recognized. But in pursuing the democratization process, it must constantly examine itself, find creative ways and means of handling differences, and address its weaknesses and strengths. By doing so, it is believed that civil society can really become the foundation of and a potent force for democratization.

Tension Areas in Intra-Civil Society Relations

Commissioned synoptic papers for the conference on Civil Society Making Civil Society defined the elements of civil society (IBAÑA); examined the NGO sector, its range of actors and dynamics with other sectors (DAVID); and reviewed the Philippine experience in community organizing and current rethinking (FRANCISCO). Two case studies were also commissioned for each of the eight workshops on POs, NGOs, media, religious institutions and the academe, women/gender, ethnic communities, political parties, and business. The cases looked at the dynamics within the sector and in relation to others, as manifested in specific events or issues. Invited participants discussed these papers and contributed insights based on their own experiences and perspectives.

The varying subcontexts and nature of participants would explain the diversity of identified areas of tensions and conflicts manifested in each sector. However, similarities that cut across each sector allow us to identify the general sources of conflicts and tensions that arise in intra-civil society interaction.

Tension areas have been organized into the following:

- *Uneven power relations* - mainstream vs. periphery; economic, gender and cultural inequities; organizational hierarchies;

- *Differences in perspectives, analysis and approaches* - political and ideological cleavages; conflicting gender and class perspectives; disciplinal and cultural divergences; differing organization strategies; and
- *Conflictive organization practices* - sectarian tendencies; lack of financial transparency, access and sustainability; lack of capability and difficulty in balancing concerns; and personality conflicts.

Uneven Power Relations

Within civil society, there are hierarchies and uneven distribution of power arising from different advantages in resources, technical know-how, influence, etc. These uneven power relations can be found within or between groups in civil society.

Mainstream vs. Periphery

For instance, business, religious institutions, the media and academe have huge resources behind them, compared to NGOs, POs and small communities. They have legitimate, well-defined roles in our society — economic, spiritual, provider of information, and reproducer of knowledge. They have influence and have wielded it accordingly. In contrast, NGOs, POs and local communities are still in the process of establishing their legitimacy and building their respective strengths as power centers in their own right. Constitutionally, there are no obstacles to their growth — in fact, the constitution and laws like the Local Government Code provide for their empowerment. But they are latecomers in the development of Philippine society. They are the counter-elite, so to speak, and remain at the edges of the political and economic mainstream.

Biases and mutual suspicion exist between the two groups. Thus, there are less interactions between the two than within one camp. For example, business-funded foundations are comfortable working with religious organizations but have yet to feel comfortable being partners with NGOs, especially the more radical ones. NGOs, on the other hand, complain how business foundations are diverting support from funding agencies to their coffers when they already have the advantage of corporate backing. (DE CASTRO)

NGOs and media also feel alienated from each other; the former tends to perceive media as part of the establishment; and the latter sees the other as mouthpieces of ideological forces. (GUIAM)

Between NGOs and POs, the relationship is also generally uneven, since the NGOs as the service-providers to the POs hold the resources. This beholden relationship between the two has in many instances created a PO dependency on the NGO, and an NGO tendency to dictate its programs and models on POs.

"Center-periphery" relations are also sources of conflicts, usually manifested between Metro Manila-based partners or head offices and their regional counterparts. Regional partners or branches feel that their autonomy is undermined by national policies set at the capital region, or their efforts overshadowed by those in the national political center.

Regions, provinces and local communities far from the National Capital Region have deep-seated resentment of the uneven economic development that has

been perpetuated throughout the decades of nation-building. It is not surprising that this perceived "Manila colonialism" has engendered regionalistic, ethno-nationalistic or localist responses.

Economic, Gender and Cultural Inequities

Economic advantages of one group over another is also a source of conflict. Ethnic minority groups, for instance, feel they cannot extricate themselves from economic dependency on majority groups. In the same way, trade unions are overpowered by the more consolidated and highly influential employers' federations and business clubs.

Within sectors, there are also uneven relations between sexes. In religious institutions, the dominance and special privileges enjoyed by male priests, pastors, and other religious leaders are deeply ingrained institutional practices. So too in most sectors, including indigenous communities. Males have tended to dominate leadership positions and decision-making. For instance, respected male elders comprise the tribal councils in the Cordillera. (LABAJO) Thus, gender conflicts have emerged, especially with more women asserting their rights.

Oppression has also been felt in the matter of language used. POs, for instance, have felt alienated by discourse in a foreign language (English or even Filipino). The imposition of ideologies, policies, laws and practices alien to indigenous groups have also been cited as sources of conflict.

The low visibility of indigenous groups, women, and the poor in multi-sectoral fora also reflects the uneven power relations. When a slot is given to this sector in management or leadership positions, it is usually construed as tokenism, due to the gross unevenness of their actual participation in decision-making.

Organizational Hierarchies

Within a sector, hierarchical relations are also found and may even be the norm in the organizational structure, as in the cases of the religious and corporate sectors, and the academe as well. Media owners, even those who do not interfere in the day-to-day editorial operations, have the final say in the end as to what goes to print or on air. Most NGOs and POs try to combine their democratic vision with more equitable practices within the organization but this has not always been achieved. In all cases, tensions have arisen between leadership/management and members.

Differences in Perspectives, Analysis and Approaches

Political and Ideological Divergences

Conflicts abound when there is disagreement over how to view certain events, or the stand to take on a certain policy question. But more than just disjunctures on an issue-to-issue basis are the cleavages along ideological or political lines. The so-called political blocs — the national democrats (split also into several groupings), popular democrats, democratic socialists, and socialists in the Philippine setting have their respective ideological moorings, programs, priorities, traditions, subcul-

tures and organizational networks even though collectively they form the ranks of the Philippine Left.

Two of the major questions that have divided the Left are on the terms of engagement with the state; and the espousal of armed struggle as a legitimate and valid option under the present circumstances.

On the one hand, there is wariness that the less confrontational mode has led to a domestication of the power relations between the state and civil society. It is feared that the culture of resistance and confrontation that characterized the relations with the martial law regime has waned. Critical collaboration with the state has its advantages but some believe it has also put NGOs, POs and other non-state groups on the brink of co-optation. Some have also felt that they are wasting their time in this type of effort. For example, the various national summits organized by the state were widely attended by NGOs and business groups but concrete results remain wanting.

On the other hand, the vintage 1970s confrontational mode is no longer felt effective by others. "Expose and oppose" mass actions are felt too stereotypical and no longer able to generate mass support and interest.

These trials and errors to find a good balance between opposition and collaboration have drawn lines among the members of the Philippine Left, as manifested in the segregated rallies that have characterized post-Marcos mass mobilizations. Underneath the physical segregation are the bigger differences in ideology and strategies.

The merits of political negotiations between the state and armed insurgent groups like the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army, the Moro National Liberation Front and other Muslim rebel groups, and the military rebels have also divided the ranks of the Left. Support for or against the peace process and its mechanics have raised to the fore the issue of espousal of non-violence or armed struggle among NGOs and POs. The divisiveness of this matter can also be gleaned from the early break of some NGOs from the broad NGO network, the CODE-NGO. (see DAVID)

Whether civil society groups should directly engage in electoral politics by fielding candidates is also a source of unresolved tension. The current de-emphasis on the state and greater importance put on initiatives of non-state, non-political party movements seem to be a counter-thrust to the realization, on the other hand, of the parliamentary arena as equally crucial as the extra-parliamentary, street mobilization-type of political involvement in the 1970s and early 1980s when elections were boycotted or considered a minor arena of intervention.

The Left has established various modes of coalitions and joint projects over the years, usually on a minimal basis of unity — for instance, anti-Marcos, against coups and rising oil prices, etc. But differences in frameworks and priorities still get in the way every now and then, as shown by the recent experience in organizing the parallel NGO forum on the 1996 Asia Pacific Economic Council (APEC) Summit held in Manila, and the difficulties encountered in forming a Left political party.

Gender and Class Perspectives

Feminists espouse a stand on reproductive rights unacceptable to the values held dear by the prolife groups backed by the official churches. Other issues on sexuality have also divided civil society, with divisions founded on all planes — religious, moral, political, cultural.

Sexism is prevalent on all fronts so much so that feminists and gays have to always be on guard, watching over the press, corporate establishments and service institutions as well, for such traces.

Positioning based on class or sectoral interests also draw contentious dividing lines. Business groups are usually opposed to workers' demands for wage increases. Within the academe, teachers' interests may run counter to administrators, and so on.

Disciplinal and Cultural Divergences

Divergent political orientations are not the only sources of tension. Sectors steeped in service orientation and social consciousness often find the profit-orientedness of business irreconcilable with theirs. Media's news orientation is exasperating to groups working on long-term processes of social change and who thus hardly get to see their work or ideas in the popular press. The stress on the scientific method or logical thinking of academe can be at odds with the religious groups' theological or biblical view. Cultures and subcultures which affect how people act and think are another set of sources of tension in perspectives and world views. Majority cultures have imposed themselves on minorities through laws and concepts alien to the latter's world views. Historical prejudice among groups is difficult to erase — for instance, the biases held by Muslims and Christians against each other. Among tribes and ethnic groups, there are also biases and conflicting value systems. Anti-intellectualism can also be found, including among some of the more radical sections of civil society.[9] The academe is viewed as too detached from the rest of society. On the other hand, civil society groups resent being made objects of study by academe, and view the academic approach as inappropriate to their more practical concerns.

Business, NGOs, media, etc., have their own subcultures which the others may not understand, leading to misunderstanding and hostility. Media approaches to news coverage, for instance, remain traditional. They focus on personalities and events, rather than processes and perspectives of the more marginalized sectors. Others feel that this approach is no longer adequate to deal with the more complex issues of the times, and the more gradual processes taking shape under a normalized political situation.

Organizational Strategies

A review of community organizing (CO) for the last four decades has also raised new issues in the light of domestic and international changes. Major questions confronting COs are: how to achieve a balanced handling of local and national issues, and sectoral and community-wide issues; how to link local, national and global movements; how to combine different CO approaches; the soundness of using economic projects as CO entry points; how to sustain CO programs; how community organizers are to phase out or pull out from the community; and the

most viable scale of development. (FRANCISCO) Among cooperative workers, divergent strategies being raised include forming cooperatives out of existing POs, or forming cooperatives as a consolidated, comprehensive type of PO themselves. (VILLANUEVA) Others have begun placing a big weight on ensuring profitability and viability of cooperatives as an economic unit, and not merely on the service aspect.

These issues being raised have created debates. Depending on how they are resolved or tested in the field, they can cut at the ideological premises and strategies that guided past CO and cooperative work.

Since perspectives and approaches define structures and structures reinforce perspectives and methods, these types of differences have been quite acrimonious and persistent, revealing a fragile unity among civil society actors on how to go about the democratization process. On the other hand, pluralism in perspectives and approaches is also a hallmark of a vibrant and dynamic process.

Organizational Practices

Sectarian Tendencies

Ill-feeling among groups, not so much over programmatic differences but over competition for the same resources and promotion of sectarian interests, has damaged working relationships. Membership-raiding, leadership squabbles, usurpation of projects and grants, and other underhanded actions have marred otherwise friendly relations. Protectionistic behavior, undermining of other groups, turfing, and billing questions are other irritants.

Branding of groups as part of an ideological bloc and stereotyping accordingly, has led to misunderstandings and counterproductive behavior. A problem also arises when a group is identified with one bloc even though its membership is non-ideological.

Financial Transparency, Access and Sustainability

Lack of transparency in financial matters and the absence of established financial management systems have created distrust within and between organizations. Some POs, for instance, have felt they are being used by NGOs to access funds. Cooperatives break apart because of alleged financial misdemeanors of management or plain mismanagement. Corporate funds are relatively immune from the scrutiny of rank-and-file. But if a wage issue or the corporate future is at stake, lack of financial transparency becomes a contentious issue. In sections of civil society that are ardent advocates of democracy and accountability, there is greater expectation from membership and partners for the leadership to practice what they preach.

Meanwhile, the so-called Democracy, Justice and Advocacy NGOs (DJANGOs) are angered by the rise of fly-by-night or politician-backed Mutant NGOs (MUNGOs) which they feel destroy the name of NGOs. (DAVID) MUNGOs operate on the basis of patronage received from political vested interests, and are more money-making enterprises than service-oriented activists. In the same way, fly-by-night schools, rackets in the guise of religious or charitable ventures, highly sensational tabloids and broadcast programs, "envelopmental" journalism, and corrupt business prac-

tices destroy the integrity of their well-meaning colleagues and create irritants within and across sectors.

In another light, DJANGOs resent the creation of business-funded foundations who turn out to be competitors in accessing funds from funding agencies even though they are already well-funded by their mother corporation. (DAVID, DE CASTRO) As one case study showed, agrarian reform beneficiaries taking over a corporation found they could get no support from the former owners and that they had to learn the trade by themselves to retain the business's viability. (RUIZ)

Finally, new debates are being engendered by the need to plot the long-term sustainability of non-profit sectors and lessen dependency on grants. Should they engage in profit-making activities, charge market interest rates in their credit cooperatives, dabble in the stock market, sensationalize their reports in order to increase sales, etc.? At stake in this debate is their avowed non-profit reason for being and the more pragmatic concerns of sustaining operations and increasing the income level of their own members.

Lack of Capability and Balancing Concerns

Other than financial management and sustainability measures, lack of capability in other aspects have also been sources of tensions within and between groups. Among the progressive NGOs, the need to be "red and expert" has increasingly been felt under the present situation of relative political stability. It is no longer enough to know the structural roots of poverty and environmental degradation and to rage against these. It is now equally important to be equipped with engineering skills in building irrigation systems, artificial reefs, and other technical and scientific know-how. Knowing the ineptitude of the bureaucracy and local government is one thing, but one must also know the laws, the intricate workings of the bureaucracy and the civil service, and the maze of formal and informal practices determining the quality of local governance if one will succeed in truly devolving powers to local centers.

Critical collaboration with the state requires new skills and investment in time and resources in new types of activities (e.g., local government councils, tripartite summits, elections) that some groups may not yet have. Increasingly, the non-profit sector is seeing and wanting the advantage of the efficiency and professionalism of the profit sector. This realization has set new criteria for staff recruitment. In hiring and evaluating personnel, skills and even academic degrees have become as important, if not more important, than commitment. Mechanisms like 8:00-to-5:00 working hours, Bundy clocks, and salary schemes based on length of service and merit are being instituted, alongside mandated benefits that used to be beyond the concerns of cause-oriented groups working surreptitiously against the dictator.

While professionalization of development work contributes to better impact, it has also run into the more free-flowing lifestyle of social activism. Others have thus equated professionalism with bureaucratization and careerism. The stress on output was also viewed as negating the importance of process.

Trying to balance varied concerns — between professionalism and service orientation; between advocacy and basic organizing; between national and local focus — may give rise to tensions. When these were not sorted out properly within

the organization, problems arose, usually between staff and management. Among groups, these types of tensions have exacerbated sectarian tendencies.

In addition, current issues that necessitate active response from civil society sectors — for instance, relief and rehabilitation of disaster areas following an earthquake, volcanic eruption and lahar flow, typhoons and floods, as well as economic issues like peso devaluation and oil price increase — tend to pull resources out of the slow, gradual basic organizing activities.

The problem of balancing concerns is also present in the ranks of business (profit vs. service), media (event vs. process; personality vs. group), religious institutions (material vs. spiritual concerns), academe (institutional vs. societal interests), and gender (distinctive women's group vs. mainstreaming of women in mixed groups). For those in the electoral field, how to balance the alternative with the need to win within the framework of the operative rules is also a tension point.

Personality Conflicts

In coalition or joint undertakings, other irritants due to differences in styles of work arise and perceived lack of commitment of the other groups. A patronizing attitude, arrogance, sexist remarks, lack of credibility, forgetfulness, or inefficiency can severely damage working relations. Problems like these usually evolve into personality differences, say between leaders and members or among leaders and members across groups. They might not be resolved even as the organization tries to address organizational handicaps, because they involve the appreciation of one person by another.

Factors Mitigating Tensions within Civil Society

To their credit, civil-society actors have taken steps to address these tension points. New developments also provide better conditions for resolving these conflicts or avoiding their occurrence. Below we discuss the factors that have helped mitigate tensions within civil society and promote better working relations.

Changing Perspectives, More Openness

Across sectors, there is today a greater openness to work with as many groups as possible through joint ventures, or to at least cross paths in dialogues.

More individuals and groups in business circles are moving away from mere philanthropy and becoming more seriously concerned with social and ecological problems. Likewise, the less ideologically purist and collaborative mode operating among NGOs has made them more open to working with business-supported NGOs or to tying up cooperative initiatives with business groups to enhance their own capability and market viability. Among media people, there is increasing familiarity with the workings and roles of NGOs and more conscious attempts to develop the latter as sources of news and information.

The affirmation of the importance of autonomy, internal democratic processes and of decentralization have helped groups handle national-regional, political-so-

cial mass movement, and multisectoral-sectoral dynamics more effectively. These virtues were all recognized previously but not always practiced. But precisely because of the pitfalls experienced in the past as a result, NGOs and ideological forces are now more conscious of observing these values. It is now widely recognized that the emphasis on big, single command centers among the respective ideological/political groups in the past discouraged independent, autonomous actions and prevented the flowering of independent centers of social and political activity.

In this manner, the devolution process taking place in the state is well complemented by the devolution taking place in civil society, and the changing perspectives that see this decentering as a preferred option rather than a disadvantage.

This openness on many aspects may have been brought about by a rethinking process and a natural outcome of past positive occasions of having worked together on shared issues, especially involving a crisis situation. For instance, the common front put up by indigenous groups and the dominant Bisayan migrant settler community, with the support of the local church, against a logging company allowed them to transcend their inter-ethnic biases. (AGBAYANI)

On the national scene, the democratized context has certainly engendered a review of perspectives away from the traditional statist, confrontational strategy. Within sectors, there were particular influences that also helped bring about new perspectives. The changes introduced in Vatican II, as affirmed by the Plenary Council of the Philippines II, particularly the shift toward a better appreciation of other faith traditions and a preferential option for the poor, have helped bring about more interreligious dialogues and legitimized the more radical involvement of religious people in empowering the poor.

Readership feedback is also deemed an important influence in opening up newspapers to new approaches to news and broader coverage on top of the traditional approaches and sources of news. (CORONEL)

Part of the openness to working together is the realization that differences will remain and need not be totally erased before working relationships can be built. The recognition of the reality of differences has thus made it possible to "agree to disagree" and continue working together professionally.

At the same time, shared values are emerging, and pointing to high potential areas of cooperation. Environmental protection is one such emerging shared value among groups. It transcends class and cultural divisions since it pertains to a common territory, the planet Earth, whose destruction affects all. Respect for pluralism and tolerance (religious, cultural, political, ideological, sexual) are also emerging shared values that enable peaceful coexistence and cooperative endeavor. These shared values allow areas for confluence even as disagreements persist and divergence occurs in other arenas. In contrast, class-based antagonisms that defined social activism in the past are difficult to reconcile by nature, and have allowed fewer avenues for cooperation.

Awareness of the significance of the other in the democratization process and the actual crisscrossing of ranks of practitioners — from NGO to business, NGO to academe, media to PO, academe to media, and vice-versa — have allowed for greater interfaces among sectors. Personal and institutional linkages, trust and friendship have also been built over time among key individuals who could play facilitative roles.

Moreover, actual gains and successes have created forward movements and affirmed the worthiness of the new endeavors. The success of women in Kalinga in putting up day care centers and addressing community issues — even as they continued to fulfill their traditional gender role — was the best argument to their male partners that women indeed can be effective movers in the community setting. (LABAJO) Also, the successfully coordinated campaign for laws on rape and sexual harassment prove that despite the absence of a comprehensive political center and the presence of ideological-political conflicts among women's groups, there is merit in multiple and decentered spheres of engagement. (RAQUIZA)

Responsiveness to public opinion of some government leaders and institutions has kept the critical-collaboration track open, even as negative outcomes in other instances continue to make non-state groups wary.

Finally, continuous dialogue and reflection within and with other sectors have allowed these groups to see things more objectively. Maturation brought about by the passing of time and events, as the church and academe workshop put it, has also helped bring about the new realizations and engendered new ways of reading, interpreting and responding to social problems.

Building on Accumulated Gains

Years of engaging the state and building civil society have allowed present actors to utilize and build on earlier achievements. The existence of networks among NGOs and POs built through a series of community-based consultations provides a venue for fast action and interaction, and continue to bind groups for the long haul despite differences in the twists and turns of social and political work. To a certain extent, the interlocking leaderships among NGOs, ideological forces and other sectors as well have been facilitative in making coordination possible and smoother. (DAVID)

Also, the niches that different actors have carved out for themselves or their groups have earned them respect and allowed them to concede turfs and territories to each other and thus avoid conflicts. Among women's groups, for instance, this appears to be a workable modus vivendi. Resources are pooled whenever shared issues beckon. (RAQUIZA)

On the whole, NGOs are now more conscious of the complementarity of roles among themselves and in relation to other sectors.

Specific, concrete projects also help mitigate the emergence of political or personal differences, as the experience in building the NGOs for Integrated Protected Areas Inc. (NIPA) management board shows. (MELGAR) Concern for the success of such pioneering work and common unity on the importance of the environment and its primary stakeholders has kept the work going despite differing organizational trajectories of those involved.

New arenas for intervention also keep opening up, as society advances and becomes more complex. The legal framework of the post-Marcos Philippine state, to begin with, considerably provides more openings for civil society participation. Civil society itself has flourished in the form of more independent NGOs, civic undertakings, media and economic initiatives. The current globalization and regionalization processes have brought about new issues that call for new alignments. Environment, peace, feminism and other gender concerns have excited new

sectors that before were not involved in activist–type groups. Funding opportunities for these "faddish" concerns have also created unplanned opportunities. All these means that for civil society groups, there are arenas, opportunities and issues that will keep them busy and force them to put aside differences in order to keep up with demands imposed on them by the external and internal environments.

Interventions of Mediators/Facilitators

In key instances, certain institutions played significant roles of bridging gaps between unfriendly groups, creating venues for dialogue, encouraging networking among groups, and helping weak groups to strengthen their capability. Usually, groups with considerable resources are able to play this role. For instance, religious institutions were important actors in bringing together different ethnic groups to fight a common danger and bring greater harmony to a multi-ethnic community (AGBAYANI). NGOs have also played important facilitative roles in community processes. Aside from training and organizing community groups, they can bring the latter together as the need arises. The academe, too, can be an active facilitator in community and national conflicts, as can be gleaned from the Bolinao Cement Plant case study. (FERRER AND LUNA) Finally, respected individuals from all sectors form a pool of potential intermediaries.

Measures and Mechanisms being Instituted

Redistribution of Power

The unevenness in power relations is being addressed by, first of all, empowering the weaker sectors.

In the case of indigenous communities, economic dependence is being alleviated and overcome by introducing livelihood projects that can increase their incomes, enhance their confidence, and enable them to act more autonomously.

To address PO-NGO dependency, some NGO networks have taken concrete steps such as formulating a clearer delineation of NGO-PO roles, more conscious balancing of power and patronage, and a more concrete definition of partnership. By providing such guidelines, it is hoped that true empowerment of POs will take place.

Some NGO networks have also been providing assistance to POs and smaller NGOs in accessing funds through NGO-managed funds or by helping them write project proposals or connecting them to funding contacts. This way, the latter are able to implement projects on their own and develop their capability to raise and manage their own funds.

To address the dominance of political and business groups in media, alternative media agencies have been formed and cooperative or pluralistic ownership of media facilities are being explored, along with pushing for supportive policies like tax breaks for cooperatively-owned media and anti-trust legislation restraining businesses from investing in media for political gains.

Networks are increasingly being localized in order to democratize and decentralize leadership and lessen the domination of Metro Manila-based centers. More logistical support is also being provided for regional representatives to allow them to join activities in the national capital. To strengthen regional or local partners, there are also conscious efforts that the national perspective must not erode regional views or perceptions.

In the case of the Philippine Left's alternative electoral party, it was agreed that the national center will not interfere in regional party organizing but regional recruits will join and support the national party's efforts. (ABAO) The give-and-take assures the regional partners that they can keep their organization's autonomy but at the same time be part of the national effort. In turn, the national center is assured of regional affiliates, the organizing for which it cannot undertake by itself. To ensure women's decision-making role in the electoral undertaking, it was also agreed that the party will impose on itself a 30% quota for women in all decision-making bodies.

Bringing information and information technology to the grassroots is also one way to equalize opportunities. Business, it is felt, should thus extend their resources to the poorer sections of civil society. Localization of news agencies and cross-country reporting can ensure wider visibility of all civil society groups.

Capability-Building

Tightly linked to redistribution of power is the capability-building of sectors to enhance the process of self-empowerment. Indigenous peoples, for instance, have been strengthened by assistance given to organizing themselves, providing them with training on their rights and on leadership. Local media's capabilities have also been enhanced through workshops on reporting and other aspects of publication and broadcasting work initiated by Metro Manila-based journalists who have more formal training and experience, compared to their counterparts.

Capability-building through training and actual experience has been instituted to maximize new arenas opened up in the post-Marcos situation — local development councils, for example, as well as new and varied forms of cooperativism as alternative economic units.

To address the problem of lack of financial sustainability of the non-profit sector, income-generating schemes are being instituted such as credit programs, consultancy, investments, business ventures, encouragement of endowment funds and local philanthropy. Skills for managing or servicing these endeavors are being honed, along with skills for fund-raising, particularly tapping business and government resources.

One other area of current capability-building among NGOs is in the electoral arena. Election-watch capability is relatively developed, but not all-around capability for direct participation in electoral contests in the form of fielding candidates. Creative forms are especially needed considering the relative weakness of this sector vis-à-vis the financial and power bases of traditional politics.

Continuing education of journalists on both skills and perspectives as well as developing new sources of news, for example, through media liaison officers for the different sectors, have helped civil society reclaim a share in media exposure and helped media itself to perform such a broader function in civil society.

Trust and Confidence-Building

People build trust on the basis of face-to-face encounters. Dialogues have thus been an important mechanism for bridging gaps. Muslim-Christian and other types of inter-faith dialogues on spiritual, political and social aspects, dialogues between leaders and mass membership, between civil-society groups and government officials, and among ideological forces have created venues for trust and confidence-building that are basic for any cooperative endeavor to be sustained.

Dialogues have not always been formal. Informal, on-the-spot dialogues have also been fruitful.

Another confidence-building measure used is the cross-cultural exchange which involves longer-term interactions. This has been done through immersion of Muslims and Christians in each other's communities (ABUBAKAR) and through conferences on aspects like sustainable agricultural practices among indigenous communities.

Another mechanism that provides more opportunities for working together is the formation of a pluralist board of directors whose members are drawn from different sectors and political backgrounds. In this manner, the success of the institution becomes the responsibility of more groups who learn to share resources and expertise, and overcome sectarian practices and counterproductive competition. Community organizing and environmental projects have experimented on this format.

Joint pilot community projects are also venues where trust and partnership have been developed. The development of information/media components in all civil society groups has enhanced their respective interaction with media.

Revaluation and Reorientation

In rethinking paradigms and strategies, values and orientations are also necessarily reordered or redefined. For instance, many groups working with ethnic groups see the need for holistic strategies that are faithful to the indigenous people's cultural beliefs and value systems.

Gender sensitivity is one other value reorientation that is being infused in all sectors through the initiative of women's groups. Through seminars and informal exchanges, males get to understand the women's perspective and overcome their own biases. With better understanding of the roots and nature of men's biases, women, on the other hand, learn to deal with the opposite sex in less contentious ways while still getting their point across.

Cultural and gender sensitivity do not negate the bringing in of new ideas, such as women's equal participation in decision-making, but are made to evolve and handled in ways that are not too conflictive. Development programs also try to fuse the positive elements in both western and indigenous technologies.

Tolerance and respect for differences are values being more widely infused. NGOs have learned that a more effective way of dealing with each other and other sectors is to emphasize consensus-building rather than to draw dividing lines. Through consensual decision-making processes, NGOs and ideological forces hope to avoid the mistakes of past coalition efforts that flopped due to what others felt was the tyranny of numbers.

Recognition of the complementarity of roles within and across sectors is also an important perspective that generates tolerance, respect, and a willingness to work together for mutual gains. In the same way that the merits of enterprise and profitability are being developed in the non-profit sector, so is the business sector being infused with service orientation and corporate responsibility. Meeting of minds is thus made possible.

The culture of efficiency, accountability and democracy is another set of values that are being infused in internal organizational processes to address issues involving the lack of democracy, unprofessionalism and financial mismanagement that easily destroy organizational unity and integrity.

Thus, reinvention is today a clarion call that is energizing social and political activism, journalism, business, religious institutions, the academe, and the state as well.

Checks and Balances

To guard against unscrupulous practices that destroy the name of their sector or institutions, civil society groups have organized self-regulating mechanisms. For instance, codes of ethics have been developed by NGOs, media practitioners, the academe, and business. Sanctions have also been put in place for violators. In media, press watchdogs have been instituted to sanction erring journalists and shame influence-peddlers.

To address PO-NGO dependency, CODE-NGO has devised schemes where the phasing out of the NGO is programmed so as not to lose sight of the goal of empowering the PO or community. The Treaty of Cooperation is another mechanism to establish commitment and observance of professional ethics and procedures, and more effectively synchronize and consolidate projects and programs across groups.

Rotating leadership positions among member groups avoids domination by any single group in a cooperative project.

Networking

Networking works wonders in bringing together groups to act concertedly. Task forces, for instance, have been one such mechanism especially effective for community- and issue-based campaigns that need the support of a wide range of institutions.

Networking may be within or across sectors, areas and regions, as well as international. Usually, mobilization is done through partnerships with existing NGOs and POs. Division of labor has also helped to get more work done.

Mobilization and networking are often undertaken on a per-issue or per-project basis. Nonetheless, there have been efforts at building permanent networks — for instance, NGO networks like the CODE-NGO, and the League of Corporate Foundations.

Networks also provide venues for sharing experiences and developing leadership. For sectoral groups, networks allow them to participate in broad movements with whom they share the same policy objectives, while at the same time maintain

their local decentered bases which are more effective forms of intervention at the ground level.

Mediation and Facilitation

The active assistance of mediators and/or facilitators has also been effective in transforming conflict situations. Politicians, church leaders, members of the academe or academic institutions themselves, have played positive mediation roles. Effective intervention can also be done by respected members within the organization.

Action Agenda

In our earlier discussion, we were able to identify the tension points that destabilize or harm relations within civil society and weaken their potential as key agents of the democratization process. At the same time we were able to define the factors that somehow allow actors to deal constructively with these sources of conflict. The range of measures and mechanisms that they have actually instituted to bridge gaps and advance capabilities was also discussed. The papers that have been written, other literature, workshop and plenary discussions, and the project staff's own research and knowledge served as the main sources for this synthesis.

In finally defining the action agenda for civil society in so far as internal relationships are concerned, we are guided by the realization that these areas needing action are already being addressed, albeit unevenly. A good number of actors have been approaching the issues more comprehensively, others less consciously and on a piecemeal or reactive basis.

Here, we define the major tasks that we believe require conscious action on the part of civil society to ensure the dynamism, solidarity and integrity of its parts.

1. Evolve new strategies and continuously develop appropriate mechanisms in order to effectively address emerging contexts and link various concerns.

Emerging contexts that require further scrutiny as to impact, limits and potential regarding democratization include the NIC growth model, economic integration and globalization in all other aspects, constricting natural resources and environmental degradation, and political machinations at the state level to derail the democratization process. Civil society must study these developments which may limit, adversely affect, or provide opportunities to further advance the process.

Civil society actors must also clarify among themselves how they would be able to balance more effectively the varied concerns that demand their response and intervention: regional, global and national movements and issues; the urban-rural nexus; sectoral–multisectoral stakes; and social, economic and political concerns and dynamics.

The challenge is for civil society actors to be able to recognize one's location in these multiple spectrums of involvement, define one's niche and build on it, and at the same time be able to integrate or combine with other aspects in key moments.

Also, civil society must be able to develop more creative mechanisms for continuing discourse and concerted action, appropriate to the situation on hand.

2. Address weak areas and undertake capability-building measures through training.

Civil society groups must build their technical, scientific and professional know-how so they could provide better service and alternative programs, and be more effective agents of change and development. The human resource pool for the short- and long-term must continuously be developed.

Areas that have been identified for capability-building include self-organization, leadership, technical skills and know-how, effective intervention strategies, management skills, and financial sustainability. These capabilities are deemed necessary to respond to the changing times. Training programs must be appropriate and relevant to current needs.

3. Strengthen checks and balances within and between organizations in order to maintain the unity and integrity of the respective sectors/institutions/networks.

Existing measures that need to be built on and developed further are self-regulating mechanisms such as the promotion and enforcement of a code of ethics, treaties guiding cooperative conduct, and concrete checks that will guard against abusive, undemocratic or monopolistic behavior.

Groups and members must guard against the promotion of sectarian interest at the expense of group goals or the interest of society as a whole. Patronage and corrupt practices must not be tolerated.

High standards for financial transparency and accountability must be ingrained in all groups. Financial management systems must be instituted to prevent distrust and loss of integrity, if not the break-up of groups.

4. Continue to build on gains through networking, confidence-building and appropriate conflict-resolution mechanisms, and maintain openness and respect for differences.

Civil society has already built a deep reservoir of organized groups and networks, friendship, leaders and technicians but this strength has to be enhanced through more cooperative endeavors. It is important that relations are kept harmonious even as differences remain, if this reservoir of strength is to be turned to advantage. Mechanisms for forging links and addressing differences, possibly through the help of mediators or facilitators, must more consciously be developed.

Openness to work with as many groups as possible through joint ventures or dialogues must be enhanced. Areas where there is already a convergence of values such as environmental protection provide a good starting point. But this convergence must be broadened to include other values such as social justice and responsibility.

Respect for pluralism, tolerance of each other's differences, and respect for autonomy and internal democratic processes must be internalized among groups and individuals.

5. Undertake affirmative-action steps to address the uneven distribution of resources and power within civil society.

Hierarchies and uneven distribution of power arising from different advantages in terms of resources, technical know-how, influence, gender, location, etc. are the given realities that have constrained the full flowering of many civil society groups.

Decentralization and other measures that make economic opportunities, resources, training, expertise and technology available to those who have the least access must be consciously undertaken. Participation of women, minority groups, the poor and other disadvantaged sectors in policy-making and other opportunities must be made more meaningful, rather than be mere tokenism. Assistance should not reinforce dependency but eliminate it.

Moreover, beyond the urban centers and in isolated rural areas, transformative civil society groups should expand their presence, popularize the notion of civil society and its role in the democratization process, and link up these communities to the larger project of democracy-building.

6. Continue the process of reflection, renewal of the human spirit, and reorientation for the unending task of building democracy within and without.

Reevaluation and reorientation of work must be done periodically to effectively respond to new conditions and to learn from the negative and maximize the positive features of past experiences. These require constant dialogue, reflection and a deep source of the human spirit to keep on with the work. Political and ideological divergences, conflicting gender and class perspectives, and differences in disciplinal orientation and cultures must be grappled with, not put up as permanent obstacles.

Imagining the kind of civil society that we want for the next millennium would guide civil society groups today in consolidating their gains and setting their direction. In doing so, the analytical tools to be used must be sensitive to the cultural, gender, class, religious, ecological and all other plural dimensions of society that oftentimes are given secondary importance to political/ideological or commercial aims. Finally, concrete steps that will inculcate pluralist values and democratic orientation institutionally, and among members as a collective and as individuals must be taken.

ENDNOTES

1 Tadashi Yamamoto (ed.), *Emerging Civil Society in the Asia Pacific Community* (Singapore & Tokyo: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies and Japan Center for International Exchange, 1995), pp. 5–6.
2 Melinda Quintos-de Jesus, "The Media: High on Verve, Low on Substance." In Lorna Kalaw-Tirol (ed.) *1996, Looking Back, Looking Forward* (Manila: Foundation for Worldwide People Power, Inc., 1995), p. 200.
3 *IBON Philippines National Profile 1996.*
4 *1996 Catholic Directory of the Philippines.*
5 *1994 Philippine Yearbook* (National Statistics Office).
6 Department of Interior and Local Governments - Local Government Center.
7 Miriam Coronel Ferrer, *Peace Matters, a Philippine Peace Compendium* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Center for Integrative and Development Studies and the University Press, 1997), p. 25.
8 Asked if they were restricted by these factors, the yes response ranged from 40% to 76%, as follow: larger NGOs, 76%; English language, 75%; Northern NGOs, 71%; accredited NGOs, 50%; white-run NGOs, 50%; and male-run NGOs, 40%. (Riva Krut. *Globalization and Civil Society. NGO Influence in International Decision-Making* [Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, April 1997].)
9 Sam Moyo of Zimbabwe, with reference to the case of Southern Africa, noted that many NGOs tended to be anti-intellectual partly because of the perceived abstract elitism of intellectuals and party due to their own lack of strategic planning and impatience with theoretical approaches. Most NGOs, he noted, are single-issue focused, and implement rather than advocate. Very few NGOs deal with macro-economic policy and multi-sectoral international relations. He sees the need in bridging this gap in policy analysis and for concerted policy advocacy between the NGOs and intellectuals. (In Robert H. Wilson and Reid H. Cramer [editors], *International Workshop on Governance, Third Annual Proceedings* [Texas: The Board of Regents, University of Texas, 1997].)

KARINA CONSTANTINO-DAVID

Intra-Civil Society Relations
An Overview

Most people experience society as meaningful and sensible, assuming that, beyond their personal domains, there are institutions that take charge of very distinct functions — the state for politics, business for economics, the church for spiritual salvation, schools for education and media for information. But throughout our history, a wide variety of other organizations, within and outside these institutions, have arisen to expose societal ills, to oppose policies and programs, and to propose solutions to issues. These organizations have been variously branded as revolutionary or subversive movements, civic or professional organizations, private voluntary associations, cause-oriented movements, people's organizations or non-government organizations.

Poverty and oppression, aggravated by natural and man-made disasters, have a way of exposing the inadequacies of the state while at the same time encouraging a level of voluntarism from the citizenry. Various initiatives have been launched that have sought to confront state power by raising alternative paradigms and courses of action to the level of public debate. As such, although the main actors have been traditionally limited to the state and its instrumentalities, business, the church, academe and media — all of which have some level of interlocking interests — ideological forces, people's organizations and, much later, development institutions and agencies, have also been constant and critical components in shaping the public discourse on the country's directions.

Today, with the growing complexity of society, the totality of these self-conscious organizations that are accountable to a defined constituency, that contest the power of the state and insist on a culture of involvement, is commonly referred to as civil society. But civil society is a resurrected or "born-again" concept that must be defined based on the present configuration of society. Civil society is a concept that cannot be separated from the issue of power. Standard perspectives on power assume that it is lodged in particular positions that are found within institutions. Viewed in this manner, power becomes a function of individuals or groups that possess personal attributes — charisma or wealth — which are translated into positions of power. But power can also be viewed as a relational concept, one that situates power not in itself but as a result of the fact that those who are presumed to have power exercise it only because others allow them to do so. Therefore, power is ultimately lodged in the hands of those who give it rather than in the hands of those who wield it. It is this view of power that contains the essence of

democracy, where the state is accountable to its citizenry rather than the other way around.

If power is based on consent of the governed, then the withdrawal of consent is the primary weapon to diminish the power of those who govern. In the arena of the state, electoral exercises should be the primary occasions for the expression of people's power. But within the context of a political system where political parties have undifferentiated platforms, access to candidacy is limited by wealth, and voters are uninformed and faced with few choices if any, the electoral arena ceases to function as the venue for the exercise of power by the people. It is because of this that various organizations, today lumped together as civil society, emerge to participate in the arena of the state. And yet a word of caution must be raised. While civil society may be a convenient label for all non-state entities, it does not possess a sufficient paradigm to explain relations of power. NGOs have uncritically accepted the civil-society label and are in fact among the main vehicles for the popularization of the term.

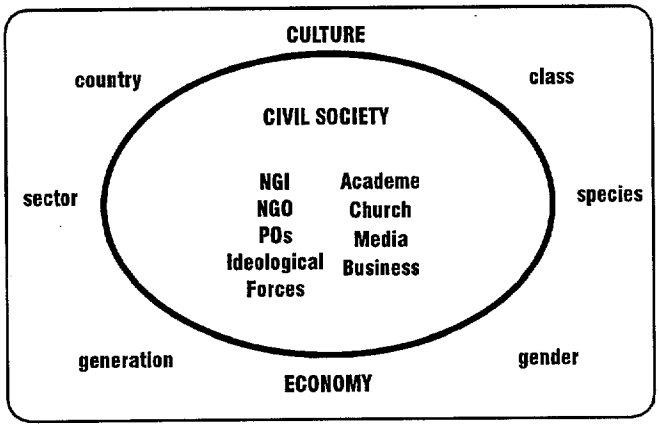
The paper is an attempt to describe the present configuration of what is referred to as civil society — tracing its roots, mapping the terrain, identifying the intersections among component parts of civil society and the roles they play in the democratization process, highlighting both the strains in relations and the advances that have been made, and pointing out critical issues that need to be resolved for a more vibrant civil society. The paper will be approached largely from the vantage point of development NGOs.

Mapping the Terrain of Civil Society

Because civil society emerges from people's voluntarism and not from any mandated order, the configuration is necessarily complex and somewhat confusing. Without assuming that the components of civil society can be categorized into neat boxes, the paper will attempt to heuristically classify the main actors for the simple purpose of aiding in analysis. Figure 1 is an attempt to delineate the main components in what is referred to as civil society today.

All the organizations that intersect with the domain of the state but are not part of the state apparatus are civil society entities. While they operate within the existing cultural and economic structures, their basic thrust can be found in the fact that they contest state power, individually or in concert, by attempting to transform unequal power relations in six interrelated spheres: country and class, sector and species, generation and gender. While business generally intersects with the state on issues that directly concern their economic interests, academe, the church and media, due to their discrete and disparate concerns, generally cover the whole range of issues. NGOs, POs and ideological forces (IFs), on the other hand, tend to center their major thrusts on selected concerns. The latter, being organizations that are bound together by common frameworks and alternative societal visions, concentrate largely on issues of power between countries and classes; in the pursuit of their visions, much emphasis is also placed on organizing marginalized sectors. POs, on the other hand, are mostly organized around sectoral and community issues although a strengthening of women's organizations has also resulted in the emergence of concerns for gender issues. Finally, NGOs are mostly centered on sectoral, environmental, generational and gender concerns.

Figure 1



Before civil society was reintroduced as a catchall phrase to refer to a wide variety of non-state entities, academe, the church, media and business were clearly seen as institutions that played very specific roles that intersected with the state. The significant political movements were also fairly well-delineated even as they were generally viewed, compared to the former, as being outside the bounds of traditionally accepted institutions. In a very real sense, academe, the church, media and business were "legitimate" in public perception while the political movements were "subversive" of the status quo. Sectoral organizations like trade unions were generally associated with political movements and all the rest did not require any labels because they were largely insignificant anyway.

The growth in the number of sectoral organizations and the mushrooming of institutions and agencies that provide services to poor sectors and communities coupled with various types of mobilizations and other interventions, usually in consonance with ideological groups, brought these groups into the consciousness of the state and the larger public. Taking on the accepted international labels, these were lumped together as non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The term "non-government" indicated that those in power needed to acknowledge the existence, even if they could not quite discern the essence, of such groups. Soon enough, there was greater confusion with every other group being labeled as NGO especially since the other civil society actors started to develop their own agencies that operated in a form very similar to that of service agencies.

FIGURE 2 further delineates the components of civil society that are found on the left side of Figure 1. Compared to those on the right side, these actors are, in the public mind, the less traditionally accepted entities that intervene in state functions. However, it is also these organizations that actively bring to the fore issues for public debate with both alternative visions as well as concrete experiences and experimentations that challenge the standard ways of doing things. Compared to the more traditional institutions on the right side of FIGURE 1, non-government individuals (NGIs), NGOs, POs and IFs in the shaded portion of FIGURE 2 may, for lack of a better term, be collectively labeled as SATAO (Structural Alternatives and Transformative Action Organizations). It is important that a distinction be made between SATAOs and the rest of the groups that are considered to be part of civil society because of the very nature of their forms of intervention, without denying the importance of the rest. This is also the very same reason that makes civil society an unwieldy concept because, in a very real sense, an undifferentiated concept of civil society allows the state to appear responsive even as it plays one against the other in the pursuit of its own ends.

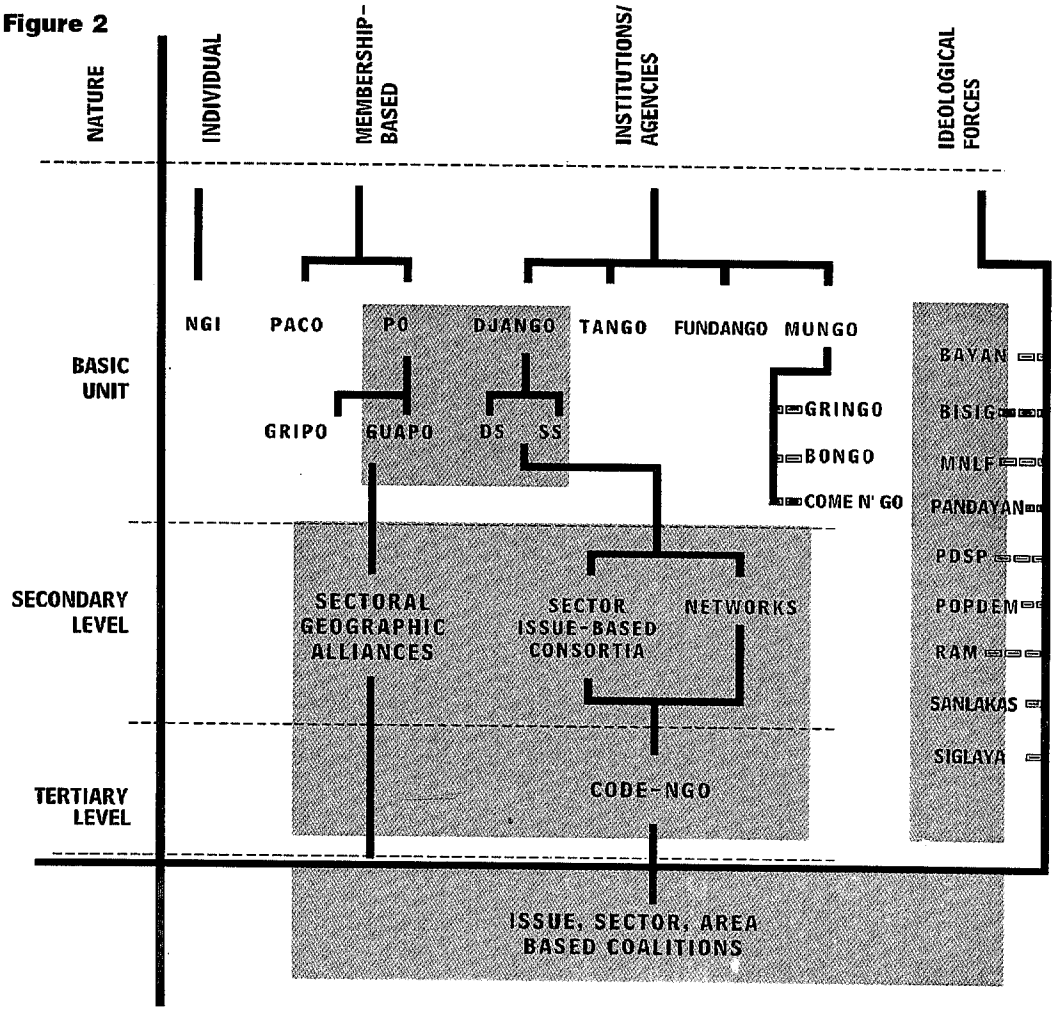
FIGURE 2 is an attempt to categorize the range of groups that are, for lack of a better term, commonsensically lumped under the NGO heading. The Securities and Exchange Commission estimates that there are about 58,000 nonstock, non-profit

organizations, even as many other similar organizations remain unregistered. Internal, however, to this community of organizations, distinctions are obvious and four major categories can be distinguished as follows:

INDIVIDUALS. Academics, religious leaders, and various professionals, whose work intersects with civil society issues but who participate outside an organizational structure, are generally considered by government and media as NGO spokespersons. To distinguish them, they are usually referred to, by the NGO community, as NGIs. Strictly speaking, since they are not organizations, they are not part of civil society. However, they play an important role because the state accords them much legitimacy and when they link up with SATAOs, they strengthen the hand of those whose interventions are generally marginalized by the state.

MEMBERSHIP-BASED ORGANIZATIONS. The majority of organizations listed in the Securities and Exchange Commission are voluntary membership organizations which can be further subdivided into PACO (professional, academic and civic organizations) and PO (grassroots people's organizations). POs can be further subdivided into GRIPOs (government-run/-initiated POs) and GUAPOs (genuine, autono-

Figure 2



mous people's organizations). The GUAPOs have organized themselves beyond the community and/or workplace through sectoral and geographic alliances.

INSTITUTIONS/AGENCIES. These are formally constituted grassroots support organizations that operate with full-time staff and provide a range of services — from direct services in communities to support services like legal, medical, and research work. It is important to distinguish between different types of institutions/agencies because their nature determines the directions and types of services they offer.

- DJANGOs (development, justice and advocacy NGOs). More commonly called development NGOs, they perform a mixture of direct and support service functions with and for GUAPOs. While their primary form of intervention is community and sectoral organizing — generally categorized as direct services — developments in recent years have spawned organizations that provide support services (legal, medical, research, etc.). Largely dependent on grants, both foreign and local, they insist on autonomy and make no pretense to political neutrality. In response to the generally micro and localist nature of their work in communities, DJANGOs have banded into consortia, coalitions and networks that reflect a specific focus of work and/or a common development framework. From 1990, the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO) has been the expression of a higher level of unity counting over 3,000 individual institutions/agencies in its membership all over the country. Initially formed by 10 national networks, CODE-NGO is in the process of creating regional structures, the most significant of which are MINCODE in Mindanao and VISNET in the Visayas. Side by side with CODE-NGO are sectoral and issue-based coalitions that cut across networks and focus on basic issues like women's rights, environment, peace, and the foreign debt. In November of 1995, CODE-NGO, Green Forum, the Women's Action Network for Development (WAND), and the National Peace Conference (NPC), signed a Treaty of Cooperation aimed at further synchronizing and consolidating NGO participation in civil society. Outside of CODE-NGO are other networks, some of which have overlapping memberships with CODE-NGO, like Convergence for Community-Centered Area Development (CONVERGENCE), Philippine Sustainable Agricultural Coalition (PHILSAC), Philippine Development NGOs for International Concerns (PHILINK), NGO Council for Cooperative Development (NGO-CCD), and Partnership for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development Studies (PARRDS).
- TANGOs (traditional NGOs). Charitable, welfare, and relief organizations, they perform valuable services for the poor. While they intersect with POs and DJANGOs, their primary focus remains on providing assistance to marginalized individuals and families.
- FUNDANGOs (funding agency NGOs). These foundations and grant-giving organizations are linked to grassroots organizations primarily through providing financial and other forms of support. Over the last seven years, through the initiatives of CODE-NGO, networks and coalitions, a number of NGO-managed funding mechanisms have been set up.
- MUNGOs (mutant NGOs). The growing recognition of the role of NGOs, the avalanche of funds from foreign donors especially after the fall of the Marcos dictatorship, and the government's decision to engage NGO services in the implementation of programs resulted in the proliferation of organizations whose

essence was really a mutation of the original spirit of NGOs. The largest number are GRINGOs (government run/initiated NGO) that are essentially extensions of the state or personal interests as they are usually set up by politicians and government functionaries. Because of their nature, these organizations perform self-serving functions and corner government contracts and pork barrel funds. Although there are business corporations that are involved in genuine social development activities, BONGOs (business-organized NGO) refer to those that are created primarily as tax dodges, vehicles for quelling labor unrest, or means to project a benevolent company image. Finally, the COME N'GOs (NGO entrepreneurs) relate to fly-by-night organizations that package proposals and promptly disappear with the funds and/or work the funding game by hiring themselves out to large donor organizations. Because of the relative ease in setting up and registering nonstock, non-profit organizations and since there is no systematic monitoring by the Securities and Exchange Commission, there is a growing number of such organizations.

- IDEOLOGICAL FORCES. Throughout Philippine history, state power has always been challenged by organizations that articulate alternative ideological paradigms — communism, national democracy, popular democracy, socialism, democratic socialism, social democracy, Islamic nationalism and liberal democracy. Their ideological and organizational frameworks define not only their alternative vision but also their responses to issues. A significant number of POs and DJANGOs are directly or indirectly influenced by these ideological forces.

The GUAPOs, the ideological forces and the DJANGOs intersect [see the shaded area in FIGURE 2], not only at the level of area/sector/issue-based coalitions but also in day-to-day operations.

Tracing the Roots of Civil Society

Having mapped out the terrain that is civil society today, there is a need to retrace the past in order to understand the present configurations. Although institutions and agencies, those who have consistently referred to themselves as NGOs, are the latest actors in what is called civil society today, this paper will focus on their evolution and the dynamics that characterize their relations with the other components of civil society and the state.

The Beginnings

Although today's development NGO community traces its direct history only to the decade of the 1960s, proto-NGOs existed — through cooperatives, local reactions to colonialism, and the trade union movement — during the period of Spanish colonization. In the early 1900s the American colonial government introduced a few welfare agencies. The devastation brought about by World War II intensified the need for relief, welfare and reconstruction activities. Religious and civic organizations pioneered in these efforts.

The main contender for state power, however, was the communist movement led by the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP). Rural and trade union organizing

before World War II, the HUKBALAHAP anti-Japanese struggle, and the postwar communist movement posed a formidable challenge to the fledgling Philippine state. Apart from American-supported government programs that focused on rural development in an effort to undermine the growing popularity of the PKP and its mass-based organizations, the private sector and the Roman Catholic Church were the most active in anti-Communist initiatives. The Jesuit-based Institute of Social Order (ISO), formed in 1947, tried to counter the communist-inspired peasant and labor movements through the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) and the Federation of Free Workers (FFW). In 1952, the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM) implemented an integrated package of services that was designed to further undercut peasant support for the communist movement.

By the early 1950s, the PKP leadership had been arrested and the movement had almost totally disintegrated. While welfare work continued and the Roman Catholic Church expanded its parish-based activities, the government passed new laws and set up the Presidential Arm on Community Development (PACD). The rallying cry was community development — sanitation, livelihood, backyard gardens, beautification — even as the structural roots that anchored popular support for the communist movement remained unaltered.

Questioning Dominant Paradigms

For about a decade, the country was "pacified." But the 1960s brought on an upsurge of activity in almost all quarters of the globe. As the theology of liberation and Vatican II rocked the Roman Catholic Church, dependency theory and perspectives of another development challenged traditional modernization paradigms. As anti-colonial wars were waged and won, student activism, civil rights, and women's liberation movements further eroded traditional paradigms.

The Philippines was no exception. Remnants of the PKP revived the party, but student activism had a dynamism of its own that could no longer be contained within a rigid framework of the old party. The new Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) emerged, challenging the older generation and adopting Maoism and national democracy as a response to the more traditional Soviet mode. On another front, the FFF and FFW mentors also tried to strengthen a student wing. But like their more radical counterparts, a new generation had been born. Social democracy was their rallying cry.

Unlike the previous period when the lines were drawn quite neatly between the state and the dominant church on one hand and the communist movement on the other, the alliances and the enmities were not as clear-cut. The ruling elite was in disarray. All groups challenged state power and at the same time bitterly fought each other. This rivalry manifested itself, not only in the student movement but also in church institutions, labor federations and the peasant movement. In the Muslim south, Moro nationalism, engendered by years of neglect and discrimination, was also on the rise.

Structural determinants of poverty were no longer ignored, they were the center of the debate. A frenzy of community organizing (CO) challenged the old concept of community development. Significant during this period was the organization of the Philippine Ecumenical Council for Community Organizing (PECCO), the establishment of the Zone One Tondo Organization (ZOTO), and the emergence of the urban poor as a vital sector.

Academe, from which the student movement sprung, also responded with extension, training and research institutions. A revival of interest in cooperatives was also taking place, especially in the Visayas and Mindanao regions.

Within the religious organizations, ideological perspectives were also gaining ground. The National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA), the social action centers, and the basic Christian community (BCC) approach were manifestations of this ferment. The business sector also responded through the formation of the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) and later, together with the Roman Catholic Church, the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference (BBC) for Total Human Development was formed.

The Marcos state, besieged by all these developments, declared martial law in September 1972.

Pursuing Change Under Repression

Martial law forced many sectoral leaders and student activists to pursue the struggle underground. Others cautiously resumed open activities under the auspices of the church, academe or cooperatives. Still others allowed themselves to be coopted by the Marcos dictatorship.

The ideological divisions and suspicions of the pre-1972 period were deeply imbedded. PECCO expanded its rural and urban organizing efforts, enriching its initial Saul Alinsky framework with snatches of Paulo Freire, theology of liberation, Marxism, and structural analysis. Although ideological differences — recruitment of people's organizations into ideological groups, whether to have links with the underground movement or not, differences in strategies and tactics — soon led to the split of PECCO in 1977, various groups continued to develop the community organizing concept into what it is today.

As rural and urban organizing continued, cooperatives expanded, and welfare institutions grew, the martial law period birthed new issues and concerns. Most significant among these were the organizations that focused on human rights violations like the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP). In a dramatic reversal of the anti-Communist role of the churches in the 1950s, many of the initiatives, most especially community organizing, that pushed the dictatorship to its limits were initiated or supported by the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches.

But the generation of the 1960s and 1970s that opted to remain on the legal front did not stop at the relative comfort of church support. By this time, the generic label NGO was already being used in international circles. New NGOs were set up by the mid-1970s, dealing with social development issues on a largely community-based level. Although the student movement was in hibernation immediately after 1972, its revival was spurred by severe typhoons and floods a few years later. Relief work, as it did in the past, the demolition of squatter shanties and growing labor unrest, paved the way for exposure programs which became the human resource base for the growing NGO community.

While the conditions under martial law prodded NGOs to create new strategies and to develop a culture different from that of activist organizations, the ideological divisions continued. Despite this, NGOs opened up new arenas of struggle. Apart from human rights, the Cordillera people's struggle against the Chico dam project, Muslim-Christian dialogues, indigenous people's rights, environmental ac-

tivism, the women's movement, consumer protection, cultural work, children's concerns, and even participation in the 1978 Batasan Elections made for a vibrant NGO community despite disunity. Compared to the present, the NGO community was relatively small and although there were politically independent NGOs much of the action during this period was in conjunction with ideological forces. As such, NGOs were largely labeled as belonging to one force or another, further creating disunity.

But the lack of unity and the relative isolation of community-based approaches also led to the need for networking. The welfare organizations already had a network from the 1950s. The Council of Welfare Foundations of the Philippines Inc. (CWAFPI) was the forerunner of the National Council of Social Development Foundation (NCSD). PBSP, founded in the early 1970s, was also a network of business corporations as well as of those NGOs it supported. The Association of Foundations (AF) was also established during the early 1970s. These three networks represented less political NGOs. NASSA, the Protestant National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP) and the Ecumenical Center for Development (ECD), which was organized in 1978, were more political although their institutional church base necessitated some restrictions. The National Association of Training Centers of Cooperatives (NATCCO), the precursor of the present National Confederation of Cooperatives, was a response to the attempts of the Marcos dictatorship to regulate cooperatives. While NATCCO was not overtly political, many of its leaders were crucial participants in the setting up of the Pilipino Democratic Party (PDP). Other sectoral, regional and national networks were also in the process of formation during this period. One of these was the Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas (PHILDHRRA) which was formally launched in 1983.

As the Marcos regime got more and more isolated on the international front and civil society started to flex its muscles, greater international support flowed into the country. The dictatorship responded with various forms of repression — threats, raids, arrests, salvaging — but the growth in the NGO community could no longer be aborted.

Openly Challenging the Dictatorship

The 1983 assassination of Benigno Aquino galvanized a nationwide protest movement that was possible only because of the painstaking work that ideological forces, POs and NGOs had already undertaken. The participation of the middle class, outraged by the assassination and reeling from the economic crisis, further enhanced the anti-dictatorship struggle. The "parliament of the streets" forced erstwhile enemies to coalesce. There was a frenzy of activity, and coalition-building was the name of the game. Even NGOs and POs that had tried to shun outright political involvement were drawn into the mass movement and literally forced to make painful decisions on which ideological force they would identify with. During this period, the ideological forces could be broadly categorized into the national democrats, social democrats, liberal democrats, and the independent democrats.

In the midst of almost-daily rallies and demonstrations, organizing work expanded and more NGOs and POs were formed. The temper of the times provided fertile ground for mobilization but it also short-circuited the process of organizing. At the same time, all anti-Marcos forces — ideological forces, NGOs, POs, traditional political parties, business groups, churches, professional organizations —

needed to band together into what were later called "cause-oriented" organizations.

The Justice for Aquino, Justice for All (JAJA) movement was the broadest aggrupation, including all ideological forces as well as the traditional political parties. But ideological differences, suspicions of hidden agenda, and a basis of unity that defined what to fight against but not a concrete direction to fight for, all contributed to constant intramurals. JAJA split and all the succeeding attempts at anti-dictatorship coalitions — KOMPIL, CORD, BAYAN — were short-lived and had, as members, a narrower range of organizations. The traditional politicians were the first to drop out. Although coordination still took place, they were no longer organizationally within the succeeding coalitions. By the time BAYAN split in 1985, only the national democrats and a few individuals remained. The liberal democrats were the first to withdraw, a day before the BAYAN congress, the social democrats bolted out during the congress, and a week or so after, the independent democrats also decided to leave.

Development NGOs and networks actively participated in the mass movement, largely through mass actions. Those who were already identified with specific ideological forces, and whose leadership overlapped, generally followed the splits and turns of the anti-dictatorship struggle. As this struggle took center stage, a spirit of voluntarism filled the air. The snap elections called in late 1985 mobilized all sectors. Except for the national democrats who called for a boycott, the rest participated through various means ranging from voter education, to a campaign for clean elections, to outright support for the candidacy of Corazon Aquino.

Massive cheating and election-related violence led to a civil disobedience campaign that merged with the RAM-Ramos-Enrile attempted coup to create the EDSA revolt in February 1986 that toppled the Marcos dictatorship. But the deep-seated strains and the lack of a coherent vision produced a tenuous unity that would eventually splinter in the post-Marcos era.

Short-Lived Euphoria, Redefinition and Legitimation

The victory of the anti-dictatorship struggle through a dramatic display of collective nonviolent action, the seemingly populist stance of a government that was ushered into power on the shoulders of a popular movement, and international recognition and support led to an initial mood of euphoria. But this was short-lived. Soon enough, the Aquino government veered sharply to the right, unable to effect crucial reforms especially in the areas of agrarian reform and the foreign debt.

Despite these setbacks, NGOs and POs continued to expand, buoyed by their role in triumph, encouraged by the available democratic space, and enhanced by international support and their formal recognition by government. The 1987 constitution, various executive orders, and successful legislative bills like the local government code, were all overt forms of legitimation of the role of NGOs and POs. A new terrain had been opened — access to the corridors of power.

NGOs proliferated, including many MUNGOs, largely because of an avalanche of foreign support as well as the decision of government to link up with NGOs in the implementation of projects and programs. Although the mutant variety outnumbered legitimate NGOs, the latter also mushroomed. A wide variety of con-

cerns enriched the NGO community, and the need to maximize the spaces for participation encouraged unity.

Unlike the previous period where unity was artificially forged because of a crisis, NGOs and POs seriously faced the challenges of coalition-building. Two new NGO networks were formed, the Council for People's Development (CPD) in 1986 and the Partnership of Philippine Support Service Agencies (PHILSSA) in 1988. In 1988, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) invited the major NGO networks to a consultation on its country program. The result of this consultation was the Philippines-Canada Human Resource Development Program (PC-HRD), the first major NGO-managed funding mechanism. In the almost two years that followed, the 10 national NGO networks, covering the entire spectrum, cautiously worked on confidence-building measures, learned to build a unity that was based on a recognition of differences, and consciously developed personal bonds of friendship, exorcising the ghosts of the past.

By 1990, the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO) was formally launched. PHILSSA, PHILDHRRA, PBSP, NATCCO, NASSA, NCCP, NCSD, ECD, CPD and AF had accomplished what was deemed impossible. In the formation of CODE-NGO, much emphasis was placed on consensus-building in order to forge a minimum common vision based on a realization and respect for differences. A series of conferences were held, beginning with the theme peace based on justice, which covered a wide range of national and local issues and provided the opportunity to exchange views on frameworks of analysis and alternative orders.

A second conference focused on the roles of development NGOs in the electoral process. Five major levels of participation were formulated: electoral education, electoral reforms, building a people's platform, support of candidates and direct participation through the actual fielding of candidates. It was agreed that all development NGOs should get involved in the first three levels and must respect those that wished to go beyond these.

A third conference focused on formulating a gender-based framework for planning and evaluation which required each of the networks to undertake a leveling-off seminar on gender issues in order to come up with a common framework. This conference was an initial attempt to mainstream the issue of gender inequality in the work of development NGOs.

Finally, a series of network-based and region-based conferences were conducted which culminated in the first national congress of NGOs on December 4, 1991. The congress was attended by about a thousand delegates from all over the country to ratify the Covenant on Philippine Development which laid out consensually validated principles and responsibilities, goals and commitments, and contained as well a code of conduct to govern development NGOs.

At present, CODE-NGO counts about 3,000 individual NGOs all over the country. It coordinates NGO participation in various national and international consultations, represents the development NGO community in regular dialogues with government bodies like the steering committee of the National Economic and Development Authority, and the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council, and takes on advocacy campaigns especially in relation to various state policies and to official development assistance and other donor agencies. Internally, CODE-NGO is focused on capability-building especially in issues like local governance, promoting a self-regulating mechanism according to the Code of Conduct, assisting in the

formation and strengthening of regional and provincial alliances of development NGOs, building a successor generation, and ensuring the autonomy of development NGOs.

Among the most significant developments in CODE-NGO was the decision to move towards a regionalized structure. Four networks — MINCODE, VISNET, Bicol Caucus, Region I CODE — now sit on the board preparatory to the complete regionalization of CODE-NGO. By the end of 1997, it is expected that NCR and the rest of Luzon would have formed viable regional structures. The main rationale for regionalization is to further democratize and decentralize the leadership of the development NGO community. The plan is for the national networks to exit from the organizational structure of CODE-NGO, for each of their members as well as non-network members to coalesce at the regional level, and for the regional structures to compose the national CODE-NGO leadership. The national networks, on the other hand, will continue to service their respective members, based on their original mandates.

At the same time, recognizing the dependence of NGOs on the donor community, CODE-NGO has successfully taken the lead in setting up NGO-managed funding mechanisms that service development NGOs. Significant among these are the Philippines-Canada Human Resource Development Program and the Philippine Development Assistance Program, the Foundation for Philippine Environment with the United States of America, and the Foundation for a Sustainable Society that was recently set up through a debt conversion scheme with Switzerland and the Philippine Conferential Body which is at present negotiating with the Canadian International Development Agency for a fund centered on issues of governance.

In the pursuit of a self-regulating mechanism that can ensure that standards are maintained within the development NGO community, CODE-NGO has taken its Code of Conduct seriously. The most recent set of activities relate to the just concluded PC-HRD program. CODE-NGO has now taken over the review and follow-up of all projects that have incomplete documentation (narrative reports, financial liabilities, etc.) and shall impose sanctions, including suspension or expulsion from CODE-NGO, for those who fail to comply with their accountabilities within a stated time frame.

The process has not always been smooth. In 1994, CPD resigned from CODE-NGO due to "irreconcilable differences with those who supported the proposed Strategic Plan." ECD resigned in 1995 because its present "priority is for it to reorient its members' theological perspectives." Some members of both CPD and ECD, however, continue to be active at the CODE-NGO regional levels. In the meantime, the Alliance of Persons with Disabilities of the Philippines (KAMPI) joined CODE-NGO in 1994, and NGOs which are not members of any of the national networks have also joined at the regional level.

At the same time that CODE-NGO was in the process of formation, other coalitions were also being established. NGOs also saw the need for more issue-/sector-/area-based alliances. Among the POs, the peasants formed the Congress for a People's Agrarian Reform (CPAR), the fisherfolk established the National Coalition for Fisheries and Aquatic Reform (NACFAR), labor forged the Labor Advisory Consultative Council (LACC), the urban poor founded the National Coalition of Urban Poor Organizations (NACUPO) and later the Urban Poor Coordinating Council (UPCN) and the Urban Land Reform Task Force. Across POs and NGOs, environmentalists set up Green

Forum Philippines, women united under the Women's Action Network for Development (WAND) and the Group of Ten (G-10), peace advocates formed the Coalition for Peace and later the National Peace Conference, and advocates on the foreign debt issue organized the Freedom from Debt Coalition. At the same time, other consortia of NGOs were also formed, among them PHILINK, CONVERGENCE, NGO-CCD, PARRDS and PHILSAC.

Many of these formations have worked together on an issue basis, in connection for instance with the Anti-Poverty Summit, the Social Reform Agenda and the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development. On a higher level of unity, CODE-NGO. WAND, Green Forum, and the National Peace Conference signed a "treaty of cooperation" in November 1995 aimed at further synchronizing and consolidating development NGO participation in civil society.

While it is obvious that the various components of civil society cannot be viewed as a monolithic force, there have been significant occasions of concerted action on issues like the oil price increase and the expanded value-added tax. There have also been instances where civil society entities have engaged the state but from disparate positions and even with acrimonious debates, the most recent of which was in relation to APEC. The succeeding section attempts to identify the sources of tension among civil society participants, although largely from the vantage point of development NGOs, in the hope that a clarification may eventually contribute to some resolution that would further strengthen what is one of the most crucial requirements of any democracy.

The Challenges That Must Be Faced

As development NGOs evolved through the years, internally defining and refining their objectives while responding to changes in the external environment, dramatic shifts have taken place. In the beginning, proto-NGOs functioned largely in conjunction with state initiatives and directions, from pockets of voluntarism that responded basically to welfare needs, to vehicles for the delivery of services in support of the anti-Communist campaign. Starting in the 1960s, NGOs and POs complemented the campaigns of political movements by raising alternative paradigms to the level of public debate even as their interventions were mostly at the community level. The 1970s saw NGOs primarily involved in legal, non-armed interventions that honed methods especially in community organizing and helped prepare for the open anti-dictatorship struggle in the following decade. In the 1990s, NGOs expanded way beyond the arenas of localist work, banding together in networks and in CODE-NGO, actively intervening in national advocacy issues, and intersecting more actively, as a separate entity, with the other components of civil society.

Inter-NGO Unity and Tensions

While the level of coalition-building has reached a stage that could not have been predicted two decades ago, it would be idealistic to assume that inter-NGO tensions no longer exist. In the same way that tensions between NGOs were generated by their relative isolation from each other in the past, greater familiarity and more interaction today also result in conflicts brought on especially by competition

for scarce resources, overlaps in turfs, interpersonal difficulties, and various sectarian tendencies. The major difference, however, is that concrete mechanisms have already been developed to minimize such conflicts and most NGOs now recognize that it is imperative for NGOs to take action as a distinct sector in civil society.

Through networks, and later CODE-NGO, the development NGO community has breached many of the walls that served as dividers in the past. Common activities — training programs, sharing of experience and expertise, area/sector/issue-based consortia — have built both personal and institutional bridges. Competition for funds has been minimized by assistance in accessing funds and the breakthroughs achieved through NGO-managed funding mechanisms. Common advocacy campaigns, from the local to the international level, have convinced DJANGOs of the need for concerted action underpinned by consensually validated goals.

Between DJANGOs and Other NGOs

One of the major reasons for the banding together into networks and later into CODE-NGO, was the realization of a commonality of interests as compared to TANGOs, FUNDANGOs and MUNGOs. Apart from the latter, DJANGOs have limited (though generally positive) relations with the others. This is made possible because of two main reasons: the recognition that the concerns of TANGOs are important in their own right and that FUNDANGOs provide a supportive service to both NGOs and POs. It was the proliferation of MUNGOs, however, that helped to propel the formation of CODE-NGO. Unlike the respect for the legitimate roles that are accorded to TANGOs and FUNDANGOs, MUNGOs posed a threat to the development NGO community because they devalue and debase the work of development NGOs. As such, although DJANGOs and MUNGOs often intersect — both in the field as well as in state and donor agency relations — relations are generally cold and fraught with suspicion.

Within CODE-NGO

Apart from some of the strains identified above which have been fully or partially resolved through the years is the issue of the differences in structure and operation of the networks that form CODE-NGO. Some networks are loosely organized while others are more tightly run, some are more secretariat-driven while others are membership-driven, some are more distinctly organized around priority sectors or issues while others cover a much wider range of concerns. Such differences necessarily result in varying levels of representation, participation and dissemination of information. Within a coalition that prides itself on consensual decision-making, such differences have necessarily created tensions. The trajectory towards regionalization, however, is expected to make this issue moot and academic, although newer challenges also need to be faced.

The creation of CODE-NGO by national networks also led to the surfacing of interregional contradictions. In an archipelagic country where state power is centralized in Metro Manila, the leadership of national networks and consequently of CODE-NGO invariably reinforced the ascendancy of NGOs based in Metro Manila. Consistent with the value of democracy and decentralization, the CODE-NGO national leadership confronted the issue by deciding on a concrete process of regionalization that will, within a five-year period, strengthen regional structures so that the leadership of the NGO community will indeed reflect a decentralized

system of operations. But although regional structures have been effective for regional concerns, the biggest hurdle relates to the manner in which CODE-NGO can respond effectively, especially in advocacy activities with the state. Specifically, a decentralized structure will require a change in decision-making processes, much more logistical support for regional leaders to come to Metro Manila, new mechanisms that are adapted to the reality that the state itself is still largely Manila-based, and the development of a national perspective that does not erode the necessity for a regional view.

The proposal to regionalize the CODE-NGO structure initially came from PHILSSA and was supported unanimously by all the other networks. While there has been no debate on its rationale, its operationalization is still being cautiously determined. While all networks, regional and national, have asserted the importance of a decentralized structure that creates the national perspective from clear regional plans, the Metro Manila NGOs and network secretariats have also raised the undeniable issue that Metro Manila has been unable to organize as a distinct region precisely because it has had to take on all national advocacy activities.

The most significant strains within CODE-NGO, however, came largely from the ideological differences between networks. Although this was a recognized and even valued reality, what was crucial was that the leadership had developed sufficient interpersonal relations that afforded a wide latitude for trust. The first three years of CODE-NGO's existence were marked by intense debates that invariably ended up in consensus. As the representatives to the board changed and as some of the ideological forces experienced their own splits and tensions, the easy consensus-building process was repeatedly eroded.

The 1994 resignation of CPD was in fact the culmination of an increasingly difficult process. The immediate and publicly acknowledged reason for the resignation was the proposed Strategic Plan. Before the 1994 national assembly, which is composed of five representatives from each network (at least one each from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao), the Strategic Plan in question went through a lengthy eight-month process. This started with a two-day discussion by the national board that laid out the basic parameters of the plan. The draft was then circulated for each of the networks to intensively comment and suggest revisions. The same draft was also reviewed at the regional level. Another draft was re-discussed by the national board before the national assembly. This somewhat tedious process was actually what characterized CODE-NGO's success in being able to pound out a much more comprehensive basis of unity in the Covenant on Philippine Development. But, with the adoption of the regionalization plan, CODE-NGO decided that it needed to elevate the common basis of unity from the level of common principles to one of common strategies.

As the national assembly tackled the finalization of the strategic plan, many of the issues were resolved by consensus. The impasse came in the section on threats in the environmental scan, specifically the second sentence of the paragraph that dealt with peace. The draft says "The effort at achieving peace is laudable although the process is still quite precarious. If the peace process breaks down, the resurgence of armed conflict may again threaten development work in the rural areas." The CPD representatives pointed out that it was necessary to qualify the concept of peace. The assembly then agreed that the following sentence be inserted "The absence of peace is due to the non-resolution of the basic socio-economic causes of the problems that plague Philippine society." But it was on the

issue of armed conflict and the development process that was impossible to compromise. Some CPD representatives insisted that the resurgence of armed conflict did not threaten development work, in fact, the decision to take up arms may also be viewed as an indicator of development. Although many of the representatives, especially of the less politically-oriented networks, were already terribly uneasy about what they were hearing, some of the CODE-NGO leaders called for the formation of a smaller committee that would try to resolve the issue.

One hour of open discussion and another hour of negotiations in the committee ended up with various reformulations. The CPD representative did not want any mention of the peace talks and insisted that the absence of peace would only have an effect on the security of development workers. The final formulation that was an accommodation of the CPD demands while being acceptable to the rest of the networks was as follows: "If these problems are not resolved, we cannot hope for peace; the absence of peace will affect the security of development workers and their work." But CPD would still not agree and in a caucus, their representatives decided to resign from CODE-NGO subject to the confirmation by their board at a later date. Ironically, the real bone of contention lay in a statement in Part IV of the Covenant on Philippine Development (Rights, Responsibilities and Obligations of Development NGOs) that was hotly debated and consensually validated in 1991: "In undertaking these responsibilities and obligations, we commit ourselves to coordinate with other sectors in our work toward structural change through *active nonviolent and democratic processes.*" (emphasis supplied)

Between CODE-NGO and Non-member Networks

Although CODE-NGO is by far the largest coalition of development NGOs covering at least 80% of DJANGOs, there are other significant organizations outside its structure. Many of these are base NGOs that operate largely at the local level and do not belong to any network. The regionalization process hopes to bring most of these groups into the coalition. In addition, there are other networks that focus on specific basic concerns whose membership largely overlaps with that of CODE-NGO. The Treaty of Cooperation signed between CODE-NGO. Green Forum, WAND and the National Peace Conference is a further deepening of the unity among DJANGOs. But other formations remain outside of these.

In 1988, when the 10 national networks began the spadework for what eventually became CODE-NGO, the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM) was still a member of CPD. Due to a variety of reasons, PRRM resigned from CPD and later spearheaded the formation of about 25 NGOs into the Convergence for Community-Centered Area Development (CONVERGENCE). In the interest of NGO unity, a series of formal and informal dialogues were held between the leadership of CODE-NGO and CONVERGENCE. After the decision to regionalize was made, CONVERGENCE and other networks like KAMPI were invited to join CODE-NGO. The former declined the invitation although some of its members, who belong to other networks, are also with CODE-NGO.

Although there have been joint activities between CODE-NGO, CONVERGENCE and other NGO formations, five sources of tension persist up to the present. First, considering the breadth of the membership of CODE-NGO and the fact that it is a tertiary formation, being a network of networks, it has been awkward to enter into joint activities with smaller secondary level formations. This is not a simple prob-

lem of "billing" but operationally it means that one formation that represents at least 80% of the whole negotiates on an equal footing with much smaller organizations. In the light of the Treaty of Cooperation between CODE-NGO, WAND, Green Forum and the National Peace Conference, the imbalance is even more stark. A corollary issue relates to the accepted decision-making process that is not dependent on voting but on consensus-building. Although CODE-NGO continues to uphold this principle, there are instances wherein the vast majority of participants who are part of the Treaty of Cooperation feel that so much more time and effort have to be expended in order to accommodate a small minority's views.

Second, there are irritants that arise from personality differences and styles of work. Apart from the usual skirmishes that cannot be avoided because individuals will always have differences, a major source of tension springs from the perception that while the leadership of CODE-NGO consciously strives to project the organization and not its leaders, there are others who seem to project single individuals rather than the community as a whole. In addition, there is a perception that has been bolstered by some significant instances that one or more of the other networks consciously try to undermine CODE-NGO as by far the broadest unity among development NGOs. Styles of work, both of leaders and staff, also differ. Through the years, the CODE-NGO has tried to ensure that representatives are the principals of the networks who have the mandate to make firm decisions. Unfortunately, some of the other formations tend to send representatives of their principals resulting in either the inability to come to decisions or worse, the refusal to abide by a consensus already arrived at. Considering that the leaders of networks are equally busy people and schedules are extremely difficult to synchronize, such occasions create unnecessary strains. Among those in charge of staff work, tensions arise because of perceived manipulations, varying levels of commitment to tasks, and the tendency of some to attend only to the needs of their networks leaving the concerns of the entire coalition to others. In coalitions that are specific and short-term, such contradictions are manageable but not in longer-term and more complex actions. As such, joint actions like the Anti-Poverty Summit have been relatively successful although attempts at unity as in the National Coordinating Council for Local Governance (NCC-LG) have been short-lived.

Third, the strains cited above may seem to be petty if they are not viewed within a larger context. One of the dilemmas of development NGOs has been to balance the flexibility and democracy that comes with "smallness" with the need for national impact. In response to this, two main models have emerged — BINGOs (big NGOs) and networks. Both models have their pros and cons which also dictate part of their nature. CODE-NGO, being a network of networks, is composed largely of small (20 or less) and medium-sized base units (less than 50). Their size allows for a minimum of hierarchy and bureaucracy and networking is necessarily more participative. On the other hand, BINGOs are organizationally more centralized even as they are more easily projected in media and have the potential to create an impact with greater ease. Among the DJANGOs outside CODE-NGO, the most notable BINGO is PRRM, although its size (300-500) is nowhere near to that of BINGOs in other countries, especially in South Asia. On the one hand, the ethos within CODE-NGO has been to treat each base organization or network as coequal regardless of size. On the other hand, in much the same way that the imbalance in numbers referred to above creates strains when trying to achieve unity, PRRM as a base organization also finds itself in the awkward position of dealing as a coequal with DJANGOs that are even smaller than its provincial or regional structures. The

regionalization process of CODE-NGO could be a partial solution wherein regional operations can participate at that level in the same way that the members of national networks do while their secretariats sit as members of the regional formations in which they are primarily based. But the tensions that are inherent to the nature of organizations will always remain.

Fourth, although there are CODE-NGO members that are individually identified with although not organizationally part of particular ideological forces, the majority are not. On the other hand, most formations outside of CODE-NGO are largely identified with political blocs. Suspicions carried over from the past, of hidden agendas and manipulation, are still part of the present. This situation, despite the value placed on pluralism, is further aggravated by the fifth source of strains, discussed below: the various issues that confront these actors.

CODE-NGO, despite the fact that its members covered almost the entire range of perspectives, invested much time and effort in developing trust and creating mechanisms to resolve differences, both at the interpersonal and organizational levels. Unfortunately, this has not been the case in its relations with other formations. Although there have been a number of attempts to do so, considering that the leaders are not strangers to each other, these have been more reactive than proactive and have remained, therefore, at superficial levels.

Issues that Continue to Impinge on DJANGOs

DJANGOs do not operate in a vacuum. And although this paper is focused on the relations between civil society actors, there are issues that need to be addressed. Most of these issues pose dilemmas that surface differences in the perspectives of DJANGOs and therefore also constitute sources of strain. Many of these issues, although with different manifestations, also confront other civil society actors especially POs and ideological forces.

▪ Professionalization of Development Work

With public legitimation, external support, and the growth of the NGO community came a push towards professionalization which has been widely but uncritically accepted by most NGOs. For better or worse, professionalization has become a goal that was internally initiated as well as externally imposed. Up to the 1980s, DJANGOs operated as alternative career options based largely on commitment. The "pioneers" of NGO work were largely drawn from the activist protest movement of the past two decades.

The underlying motivation for NGO work, the commitment to change, necessarily resulted in an informal work style, a collegial atmosphere that emphasized participation, and a minimum of systems and rules that all worked very well at the outset. But as NGO operations expanded and more external support poured in, new demands emerged.

Today, while commitment remains high, the spirit of voluntarism has also been eroded by the view that development work is a career. No amount of selflessness can sustain development workers if they have to subsidize their own commitment. As DJANGOs increase in size and scope and become more institutionalized, higher salaries, more comfortable surroundings, and a bureaucracy with some hierarchical order become natural outcomes. There is a valid fear that these trends are

starting to deemphasize commitment, attracting people who view NGO work merely as another job, and undermining the very essence of development work. The contention is not that NGO work must continue to be a sacrifice, but that there is a need to concretely address the contradictions between the human needs of development workers and the culture of service and voluntarism that NGO work must be based on.

This trend has been further aggravated by developments in the donor community. The project orientation of most donors, which assesses proposals on the basis of measurable target outputs and impact, has had significant effects on NGOs. Because one of the biggest limitations of NGOs is their dependence on donors, NGOs have less flexibility and they often short-circuit processes in order to achieve outputs within a specified time frame. This has also led to a bias for numerically translatable activities rather than more processual interventions.

Professionalization has also meant better management and financial systems. DJANGOs, after the initial romanticism of a commitment-propelled work system, realized the need for more institutionalized mechanisms. Donors have also demanded better fiscal and administrative systems. It is disturbing, however, that effective management is automatically equated with the installation of systems that conform to generally accepted business and/or government procedures. But the underlying assumptions of these practices — hierarchy, profit, suspicion — run against the grain of voluntarism. This has led to a bureaucratization of NGO practice. Greater percentages of limited budgets are allocated to financial and administrative support staff even as direct service personnel are swamped with bureaucratic requirements that take up precious time. There is no question that NGOs must ensure effective management. But the challenge is for NGOs to devise systems that are consistent with their very nature and resist the imposition of practices of the establishment.

One of the central concerns of DJANGOs today, a response to both donor fatigue and the instability of donor dependence, is the issue of NGO sustainability. While the various NGO-managed funding mechanisms provide a breathing spell, especially for small NGOs, more and more agencies are experimenting with a wide range of income-generating schemes — credit programs, consultancies, business enterprises, investments, endowment funds, etc. At the same time, effort is also being exerted in the area of locally generated support through the development of fund-raising skills, tapping business and government resources, and developing local philanthropy.

But while NGO sustainability is a crucial concern, there are pitfalls that must be anticipated. Development workers are not entrepreneurs, in skill and in orientation. Many attempts have been dismal failures even as a few have the promise of success. Consultancies and resource linkages with business and government also have a way of eroding autonomy because of the compromises that have to be entered into. In the final analysis, NGOs need to make difficult choices between sustainability and compromise. But in addition, DJANGOs have to be aware of the contradictions between development work as a non-profit undertaking and income generation as ultimately geared towards profit.

▪ The Balance Between Advocacy and Basic Organizing

The roles of DJANGOs have shaped and been shaped by successive conjunctures. What is important is to constantly take stock of reality so that NGOs are not unwittingly swept into roles that undermine their very essence. Perhaps the most crucial dilemma at present is determining the correct balance between advocacy and basic organizing.

Professionalization and legitimation have propelled NGOs into traditional arenas of power from the local to the regional, from the national to the international scene. But the entry of NGOs into the interstices of power has resulted in a significant shift of priorities. Even as organizing and grassroots work continue, more and more time is being spent in networking, consultations, negotiations and lobbying, especially by the leaders of the NGO community. Apart from issues already raised above, the unintended consequences of the growing emphasis on advocacy have been that mentoring of the successor generation of NGOs and the further honing of expertise developed through decades of practice have suffered. But NGOs can neither return to the localist nature of past activities nor leave grassroots work and center on negotiations with the state and international bodies. The reemergence of the concept of civil society has, in fact, trapped many NGOs. By focusing and spending more time and effort on negotiations with the state, NGOs and POs may unconsciously undermine the primary basis for their collective strength, the continuous strengthening of people's organizations.

Another concern that NGOs must face is that while the present conjuncture opens spaces for advocacy, the agenda is still totally in the hands of the state. As such, NGOs intervening through mandated venues of participation may only lead to tokenism as against POs, ideological forces and NGOs taking the lead in defining the parameters of public discourse. For as long as the state is allowed to set the agenda, NGOs will always be at a disadvantage. Because an entire bureaucracy is at the disposal of the state, NGOs and POs cannot hope to create similar infrastructures that will permit them to fully engage the state. If they do, this will only further erode grassroots work because more time and effort will be placed in accomplishing tasks that should be the responsibility of the state.

In response to these dilemmas, NGOs must define the limits of advocacy work. They should not attempt to duplicate the work of government; they must actively push the state to respond to demands from the people. And because advocacy work tends to consume the energies of NGO and PO leaders, a division of labor must be instituted whereby a significant number of leaders continue to undertake the tasks of grassroots involvement while others take on the primary role for advocacy work. Coalition-building and networking have now set the stage; the seriousness with which NGOs respond to these challenges will shape the future.

▪ Dealing with a Publicly NGO-Friendly State

For DJANGOs, whose immediate history evolved in opposition to the state and who continue to believe in the necessity of confronting the structural determinants of poverty and powerlessness, an accommodating state poses basic dilemmas. Both the Aquino and Ramos governments opened their doors to NGOs thereby providing spaces in the corridors of power, no matter how narrow. Initially, because of their participation in the EDSA revolt and the illusion that the Aquino government was serious about reforms, DJANGOs and POs attempted to influence government through

countless consultations and negotiations. The Ramos government further increased such occasions and went one step further by creating councils and other formal bodies with stipulated NGO and PO representation. In fact, between public pronouncements about the importance of reform, empowerment, and participation and executive and legislative initiatives that highlighted the roles of NGOs and POs, the state has successfully painted a people-friendly image. This has been further enhanced by the appointment of NGO leaders to significant positions in government and the enticement for younger development workers to view government service as a logical career path.

But the line between genuine participation and cooptation remains hazy. It is difficult to turn away from opportunities to participate directly in governance. But it is also dangerous to believe that there is enough room in the present social order to accommodate the basic demands of NGOs and POs. More importantly, the amount of time and effort that DJANGOs have placed in advocacy work with government may have unwittingly coopted them, providing government a veneer of participatory democracy. In addition, a still unresolved problem relates to the expected roles of NGOs in advocacy wherein government, and even NGOs themselves, seem to assume that advocacy can only take place when NGOs have a parallel organizational system that can undertake all the studies required in the same way that government does. The dilemma now facing development NGOs is how to balance advocacy work with the basic strength of NGOs, which lies in a wide range of services that are directed towards assisting POs in empowering themselves and determining their own future as well as to determine the limits of NGOs in pursuing advocacy work.

While direct organizing has not yet taken a back seat, more and more NGOs seem to be focusing on other related concerns. NGOs must constantly affirm that the backbone of development work and the possibility of change is an organized citizenry; that, in the final analysis, government will respond more to the demands raised through various forms of collective action, than to suggestions and recommendations that are made within structures mandated and controlled by those in power with an entire bureaucracy at their disposal.

A corollary issue relates to the balancing between critical collaboration and the potential hesitance to engage in more confrontational forms of struggle. The creative tactics that NGOs utilized in pushing for change helped them gain recognition. Many of these tactics developed from a conflict-confrontation model of community organizing. But the relatively congenial relations that are encouraged by a "participation by consultation" process has a way of creating the illusion that government is listening while at the same time retarding more confrontational methods for fear of antagonizing friends in government.

Finally, the electoral process, long shunned by NGOs, POs, and ideological forces because of the Marcos dictatorship, has become an attractive arena for intervention. While electoral participation can no longer be disregarded, the landscape is undeniably dominated by traditional elite political parties. DJANGOs have participated in a range of activities from voter education, poll-watching, electoral reforms, and direct participation through outright support for candidates, and PO, NGO and ideological-force leaders standing for election. While there is still no widespread consensus, the experimentations in electoral participation from 1986 will determine the manner in which NGOs, POs, and ideological forces will operate.

DJANGOs and NGIs

The label NGI emerged as a "term of endearment" for many individuals — academics, religious or media people — who are fellow travelers even as they do not represent any particular institution or agency. NGIs intersect closely with DJANGOs as resource persons in a wide variety of activities as well as in advocacy campaigns. Recognizing that the state responds more quickly to stands that are articulated by prominent figures, NGOs have cultivated relations with like-minded individuals who are ready to take on certain issues as part of their personal commitments.

The most recent example of this is the open letter published in a national daily which called on the President to respond to the spate of demolitions in urban poor communities. Signed by more than 30 individuals, including some DJANGO urban poor advocates, the President responded almost immediately by ordering the PCUP to sit down with the group. If DJANGOs had taken the usual route of negotiating with lower-level officials, the issue would not have received the urgency it deserves. Although courses of action such as this are generally effective in opening doors for advocacy, they do not guarantee a resolution.

DJANGOs and Membership-based Organizations

Relations with PACOs

Like NGIs with whom DJANGOs hardly experience any major tension points, NGOs and PACOs have strain-free relations but for a different reason. There are very few intersections between them because PACOs often shy away from controversial civil society issues, choosing to deal mainly with professional or welfare concerns. Through medical missions and other intermittent involvements, the civic organizations complement the work of NGOs but this is more of an exception rather than the rule. Perhaps because of the multiplicity of concerns of DJANGOs, they have not been able to maximize what could be a promising interface.

Relations with POs

Most DJANGO activities revolve around the creation, strengthening, and coalition-building of autonomous POs. While much of the impetus for organizing in the past came from external sources — NGOs and ideological forces — the poor no longer need to be convinced of the importance of organization. Numerous self-organizing initiatives take place today. As POs gain more skills, knowledge, and confidence, tensions emerge in defining the boundaries of PO and NGO interventions. POs run the gamut from almost total dependence on NGOs to a perspective that views NGOs as simply sources of financial and other forms of support. While the vast majority fall somewhere between these two extremes, there are significant tensions nonetheless.

DJANGOs have always recognized the autonomy of GUAPOs, and their ultimate goal is to assist POs to fully stand on their own. But development workers, mostly middle-class in origin, have always had a romanticist streak that runs side by side with a messianic complex. The former leads to self-deprecation, even a false sense of humility and timidity. NGOs have projected a self-effacing image, publicly articulating their subservience to the decisions of the people. And yet, at

the same time, development workers tend to fully identify with the community/ sector they service and many times have taken the lead even in PO processes, speaking and deciding on behalf of POs. This situation not only muddles roles but leads to confusion especially among PO leaders.

Because DJANGOs, as service institutions, can only survive through grants and various types of self-generated income, and since GUAPO activities also require resources, funds play an important role in the strains between NGOs and POs. The usual tension points, from the PO perspective, are lack of transparency, the use of POs to access grants, the built-in advantage of NGOs in raising resources, and the dominance of NGOs in decision-making especially on program thrusts because they hold the purse strings. From the perspective of DJANGOs, strains emerge out of the perception that there is a growing dependence of POs on the availability of resources (refusing or at least forgetting that they have the capacity to generate funds), a stance that expects NGO personnel to shoulder much of the work (because they are paid to do it anyway), and the fear (based on experience) that many POs have collapsed due to accusations of fund mismanagement.

The effects are either resentments that percolate under the surface of partnership or some outright conflicts between NGOs and POs that lead to unnecessary frustration and demoralization. Over the past few years, DJANGOs have placed more attention on defining these intersections and resolving the sources of such tensions through a clearer delineation of NGO and PO roles and a more conscious balancing of power and patronage, leading to the beginnings of a more concrete definition of partnership.

Needless to say, there are minimal relations between DJANGOs and GRIPOs except when they interface in bodies, especially governmental. In such instances, GUAPOs, DJANGOs and ideological forces consciously band together. However, when the contradictions among them are unresolved, there are occasions wherein one bloc or another would choose to create a tactical alliance with some GRIPOs. While such instances lead to pyrrhic victories, they further aggravate the strains that should be minimized among those who are, to a large extent, more strategically like-minded.

Strains Between DJANGOs and Ideological Forces

DJANGOs are relative newcomers in the arena of civil society, while alternative ideological forces have been constant actors. Traditional welfare institutions operated on the margins of political life and the NGOs of the 1950s functioned in consonance with the state. But the ferment of the 1960s and the democratization struggle gave rise to NGOs that made no pretense to political neutrality. Many DJANGOs were born from the womb of ideological forces — student activists from various ideological forces who pursued their visions through NGO work — while others built up alliances in the process of the anti-dictatorship struggle. Significant tensions among NGOs, in fact, are traceable to their identification with ideological forces.

But there is an internal logic to development work, and the rapid expansion and legitimation of the NGO community transformed what was viewed as a mere appendage into a distinct sector. Strains that had earlier been masked by the anti-dictatorship struggle as the central goal are now apparent at various levels. Interlocking and overlapping leaderships of NGOs and ideological forces in the 1980s

had reduced these tensions. Because significant NGO leaders were also in the leadership of ideological groups, coordination was possible especially since NGOs, up to the middle of the decade, were not united as a distinct community.

With greater emphasis on coalition-building, the dramatic growth in number and functions of NGOs, and their growing legitimacy in civil society, development work evolved into a new phase, self-consciously defining its specific role and intervening in issues that went beyond the concerns of individual communities. Although some NGOs remained subordinate to political forces, most DJANGOs zealously asserted their autonomy, in the same way that they insisted on the autonomy of POs. Initial strains related to methods and styles of work later resulted in tensions that revolved around the relatively better financial status of NGOs, the issue of autonomy due to the rapidly growing separate identity of NGOs, and the conflict between the shorter-term goals of NGOs as against longer-term concerns of ideological forces for societal transformation. The roots of these tensions ultimately rest on varying premises regarding the intersections of actors in civil society — are NGOs and political forces coequal components, or should there be a chain of command from ideological groups to NGOs?

The fact that NGOs, compared to ideological forces, had relatively stable sources of funds, employed full-time personnel, directly related with POs, and had to operate on a more formalistic level because of the demands of projects and donors, resulted in skirmishes between NGOs and ideological forces. At the same time, NGOs that were not directly linked to any ideological group also questioned those that were, because an NGO coalition or network could only operate if the principals who were building the alliances could in fact make autonomous decisions.

As DJANGOs banded together into a distinct community and took on more advocacy functions in relation to government, ideological forces, which traditionally operated on an expose-and-oppose stance, slowly started to tread uncharted routes through advocacy campaigns, negotiations with government, and the parliamentary struggle. The simplicity of allies and enemies under the dictatorship has been replaced by a shifting terrain where new roles, tactics, and strategies are constantly being forged.

More recent developments, however, especially the splits in the national democratic forces, have had significant implications on NGOs. Although NGOs which are identified with the national democratic movement are not necessarily members of the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front (CPP-NPA-NDF), the split resulted in dissension within and among a significant number of networks/coalitions and base NGOs. Prior to this split, one group, later to be known as the popular democrats, formed a separate movement, the Movement for Popular Democracy (MPD). Of those who remained, differences in analysis, strategy, and tactics, resulted in two main groups — those who reaffirmed and those who rejected the basic formulations of the CPP-NPA-NDF. On the legal front, those who are identified as supportive of the "reaffirm" line are coalesced in the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN). The latter further split into two main groups: SIGLAYA and SANLAKAS. National-democratic NGO coalitions and PO federations, as well as individual NGOs and POs, were not spared. Sectoral aggrupations — peasants, urban poor, workers, students — even women's organizations and specific geographic areas were split along ideological lines. NGOs also split not only because of differences among their members but also because many had to make a choice between the competing groups in the sectors they serviced.

There have also been changes in the other political forces. The social democrats, now carrying a democratic socialist line, are organized into Pandayan para sa Sosyalistang Pilipinas (PANDAYAN) and the Partido Demokratiko Sosyalista ng Pilipinas (PDSP), the bulk of independent democrats evolved into a socialist organization through the Bukluran sa Ikauunlad ng Sosyalistang Isip at Gawa (BISIG), while most of the liberal democratic groups have either disbanded or remain in scattered organizations that participate in civil society depending upon the issues at hand.

Although most DJANGOs are not identified with any political group, there are significant NGOs that are identified with and even formed by various ideological forces. Among the blocs, however, the Islamic movements and the RAM military rebels are the ones with the least intersections with NGOs. But with the culmination of the peace talks between government and the MNLF, the subsequent formation of the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD) and Nur Misuari's victory as governor of Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), greater interaction can be expected in addition to the probable formation of Muslim NGOs which, at present, are very small in number.

Among the other ideological forces, strains differ depending upon the nature of their relations with NGOs. A variety of considerations determine the intensity of such tensions, each one falling within a continuum — autonomy to dictation in decision-making, partnership to subservience in operations, and independence to intervention in resources. The strains do not only appear between NGOs and the political bloc they are identified with. The perception of other NGOs with regard to the nature of these relations also determines tensions across NGOs.

Since ideological movements and DJANGOs both operate at the sectoral level, other tensions invariably appear. There is an obvious conceptual and operational divergence between them in their view of POs. While both theoretically uphold the autonomy of POs, most DJANGOs insist on a strict organizational divide between them and the POs they service. Most ideological forces, on the other hand, by the very nature of their objectives, relate to leaders and/or POs as part of an organizational structure. As a result, processes are also markedly different creating more tensions while leaving many POs caught in the middle. But coalition work has gone on even as both ideological forces and the NGO community still have to conceptually and pragmatically confront the strains that have not yet been resolved.

Finally, although there have been instances of concerted action in the past, the existing disunity among ideological movements as well as NGOs and POs identified with them is obvious especially during traditionally red-letter days for mass actions — Labor Day, the President's State of the Nation Address, National Heroes Day, etc. In addition, while there are convergences of stands among a wide range of ideological groups, DJANGOs and POs regarding various state policies, there are also instances of clear divergences, many of which can be seen in sectoral issues.

The most recent controversy came with the hosting in the Philippines of the APEC Leaders' Summit. BAYAN and SANLAKAS, from the outset took the stance of total rejection of APEC. SIGLAYA, the popular democrats and BISIG, on the other hand, sponsored the Manila People's Forum (MPF). During the initial stages, the Treaty of Cooperation formations, with Green Forum taking on the lead role, participated. But two main sources of tensions soon emerged. First, since the prime movers were basically ideological forces, the NGOs started to feel that they were simply on the periphery, limited to sustainable development issues while decisions

were being arrived at largely among the political blocs. Central to this was the inability to debate on the primary focus of the MPF even as there was basic agreement on the critique of APEC. The NGOs believed that the concept and goal of sustainable development should be an encompassing principle and not just one of the components of the critique, in the same way that the initial draft documents of APEC had relegated it.

Second, and more importantly, there was no basic agreement on the stance that the MPF would take vis-à-vis the state. This was formulated in terms of an engage-or-disengage approach. A few months earlier, the Treaty of Cooperation networks had sponsored a national consultation on sustainable development and APEC and the consensus had been forged that it was necessary to engage the government. However, the conference also stipulated the conditions which, if not met, would result in a disengagement from the process. The MPF, on the other hand, was not only open to engagement, they actually did engage government in a number of meetings although contradictory signals were being sent by various groups within the MPF.

Recognizing that the NGOs, limited by the mandate of the national consensus, were not in a position to influence the MPF process and that some of the other issues being raised were outside the parameters already set, the Treaty of Cooperation networks decided to pursue the sustainable-development thrust, withdrawing from but acknowledging that it was with the MPF that the greatest similarity existed. Instead, they decided to pursue an international conference on sustainable development and APEC as an initiative that could hopefully complement the MPF, engaging government in the debate but ready to disengage the moment it was apparent that the efforts were futile.

The decision to try to influence the individual action plan of the Philippines in particular and APEC in general was based on an assessment of previous actions, especially the anti-GATT campaign as well as the perception that there seemed to be some openings both at the Philippine government level as well as the ministerial level. In the process of intervention, significant gains, if only still on paper, were achieved, most important among which was the elevation of sustainable development as the overriding framework that would govern the Philippine Action Plan. The Asia-Pacific Sustainable Development Initiative (APSUD), a two-day international conference, highlighted the activities.

While obviously pleased with the gains, APSUD recognized the fact that the concessions of government were not only attributable to their efforts. In a very real sense, the state was somewhat forced to be more responsive because of all the other initiatives that exerted pressure on the issue. What was unfortunate were the innuendoes, the name-calling and the retorts, especially through the media, that served no useful purpose. Rather, these intramurals ate up precious time and effort and further aggravated the divisions in an already fractured community.

The Interface Between DJANGOs and Academe

Although there have always been academics who have played and continue to play significant roles in civil society, academe as an institution has not directly participated in civil society actions, except perhaps during the EDSA revolt. There are, however, pockets within academe that have consistently interfaced with DJANGOs either through institutions that provide both theoretical and practical

insights or as extension arms that operate largely as NGOs. This is an unfortunate situation because NGO work can greatly benefit from the expertise that is lodged in academe.

DJANGOs, up to recently, did have an "anti-intellectual" streak, dismissing academe as ivory tower theoreticians who lacked practical exposure and shunned involvement in the realities they studied. But realizing the need for research and conceptualization, more and more NGOs have tried to take on functions traditionally assumed to be within the domain of academe. On the other hand, academe has, up to recently, viewed NGOs and POs as objects of study whose actions lack the rigor and conceptual clarity that academe prides itself on.

But significant changes are starting to occur. As NGOs go beyond the micro level, a greater appreciation for academic skills has become apparent. At the same time, especially in intersections with the state, academics possess a level of credibility which NGOs, POs, and ideological forces do not. Academics have also slowly begun to appreciate the need for a complementarity of roles, rather than for each to reinvent the other within their sector. The experiences similar to that of the struggle against the cement plant in Bolinao, Pangasinan, the upland consortium in UNAC, and more recently the Urban Poor Research Consortium, are experiences that can be built upon for the future.

DJANGOs and the Churches

Compared to academe, the churches have had a long history of convergence with DJANGOs, not only with specific individuals but even on an institutional level. Especially after Vatican II, Christian churches got more involved in social issues. With the growth of Moro consciousness and the rise of Islamic states, Muslim religious leaders also became active participants in civil society issues.

The perspective of a preferential option for the poor, the rise of the student movement, and the crises that plagued society from the 1960s through the period of dictatorship created the bases upon which churches played a more active role in civil society. The involvement of church people ranged from parish-based social action to the formation of Basic Christian Communities and Basic Ecclesial Communities, from institutes set up by religious orders to coordinative structures like NASSA and NCCP, from support to NGOs to institutionally-mandated NGOs like TFDP and ECTF, from participating in mass actions to joining ideological forces.

Such activities produced a ferment in the churches which also led to ideological factions and splits. The beginnings of community organizing are traceable to church support and for many activists and NGOs the churches served as legitimizer, partner and donor. And yet even as DJANGOs and churches, by the very nature of their common commitment to total human development, converge, tension points are undeniable.

The most significant among these relate to the women's movement and the struggle for gender equality. The Christian churches and Islam are at their core patriarchal institutions. With the growing acceptance among DJANGOs of the importance of gender equality, the ingrained gender inequality within their hierarchies has not gone unnoticed. In the same way that patriarchy, from the family to the state, results in policies and decisions that are biased against women, so it is

also in the churches. The most glaring controversy relates to women's health, sexuality and reproductive rights.

DJANGOs and Media

The media play a pivotal role in the effectivity of civil society because they have the capacity to mold public opinion, pressure the state and decide on the priority messages to send to the citizenry. Although obviously most media outlets are owned by the power elite, the professionals that take charge of the day-to-day operations exercise a wide latitude of discretion. Unfortunately, this is often compromised by competition and commercial considerations. As such, the media have emphasized sensational stories which are mostly negative and centered on personalities from among the power elite, and become captive to "press release journalism." The easy rationalization that media are the way they are because this is what listeners/viewers/readers want is simply a retreat from the responsibilities of media to society.

Within this context, most civil-society actors are at a disadvantage. Much of grassroots work is "nonsensational," and centered on ordinary people who cannot employ public-relations specialists. As such, much of the painstaking work of civil society is never shared with the public. Very often, civil society lands in the news only when there are mass actions, unusual or creative tactics are employed, or dramatic attacks are made on the state.

There is also a clash between media and DJANGO cultures when it comes to the issue of projecting personalities. While the media demand to see "the human face" of issues, DJANGOs emphasize the collective nature of their work. While media wait for stories to be brought to their attention, DJANGOs do not consciously cultivate media contacts and many leaders are in fact reticent in seeking out media. The result has been that media remain largely unconscious of the views of DJANGOs, unable to take these into account in their stories. A corollary issue relates to the complexity of civil society and its intramurals such that media outlets have been criticized for highlighting some groups and not others. Although both media and DJANGOs are today more conscious of their complementary roles and have made encouraging steps to rectify the situation, the relationship is far from ideal.

DJANGOs and Business

Through the years, the business community has intervened as a civil society participant only when their interests were threatened by state policies. But various crises in Philippine society have led to a greater involvement of business in social issues. Whereas involvement in the past was limited to welfare assistance, corporate philanthropy and interventions directed at their employees or surrounding communities, the business sector today has found more arenas for involvement. The Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) which was set up in 1970 was a pioneering effort. The formation of the Association of Foundations a few years later brought corporate and other foundations together.

Business has also banded together around specific issues like the Corporate Network for Disaster Response (CNDR), the League of Corporate Foundations, and the Philippine Business for the Environment. The participation of PBSP and AF in forming and sustaining CODE-NGO has created bridges towards linkages between

DJANGOs and business. And yet the interface has remained largely at the level of NGOs.

But although there have been instances of joint activities on national issues like electoral reform, suspicions and contradictions borne out of divergent interests make collaboration difficult. Business is attuned to profit which is often on a collision course with the interests of the basic sectors and the environment. At the same time NGOs dedicated to the empowerment of marginalized sectors have always considered business and political elite interests to be complementary. As the corporate sector moves towards a greater sense of social responsibility, the intersections are bound to increase.

One other source of strain must also be mentioned. Business involvement in social issues has led to the formation of their own NGOs. At a time when NGOs are starting to explore the corporate sector as a source of additional resources, contradictions have already arisen. On the one hand, the clash of cultures — business expecting tangible and immediate results while DJANGOs emphasize process and long-term objectives — has led to misunderstandings. On the other hand, business-created NGOs, with more access to both the state and foreign donors, have become favored competitors in the arena of access to resources for development.

Civil Society Making Civil Society

Development NGOs, in partnership with POs, ideological forces and other civil society actors, have the potential to be the bearers of an alternative future that emphasizes people's empowerment, that is, the ability of communities and sectors to define their own problems, decide on their options, and determine their own future. DJANGOs are in the best position to help create, strengthen and sustain autonomous organizations that can relate to and debate with each other; advocate and lobby for policy changes; assess the options presented by political parties and forces; experiment with alternative production relations; concretize the vision for an alternative political order; and, create participative structures that will no longer allow the elite and self-anointed parties and personalities to speak in the name of the people.

It is an undeniable fact that over the years, DJANGOs have developed a vast reservoir of expertise in dealing with people's problems. The creativity and dynamism of development NGOs have been repeatedly proven and grudgingly accepted even by those who, as targets, have felt the discomfort of being the objects of grassroots action. Even as the state continues to speak of empowerment and popular participation, DJANGOs have effectively employed collective and self-reliant methods with both urgency, imagination and passion.

But development NGOs do not constitute the whole of civil society. All other actors play equally significant roles. The determinant force, in fact, should be the autonomous people's organizations. At the present conjuncture, however, within the context of a developing economy, an elite-dominated state and a class-divided and patriarchal society, a vibrant civil society is imperative. POs, ideological forces and DJANGOs must therefore strengthen their ranks while reflecting on and resolving the tensions that create disunity, in order to effectively interface with other civil society participants.

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Isang Malawakang Pananaw sa Teorya at Pagpapatupad ng Civil Society o Kalipunan ng mga Karaniwang Kapwa-Tao (KKK) sa Proseso ng Demokratisasyon sa Pilipinas

Sa pagsisikap na maunawaan ang larangan ng civil society sa Pilipinas, susubukan nating gamitin ang iba't ibang lente ng mga teoryang nabuo na ukol sa civil society. Umaasa tayo na mapalilitaw, sa pamamagitan ng mga teoryang ito, kung ano ang papel ng civil society sa proseso ng demokratisasyon sa Pilipinas. Magsisimula tayo sa pagsasalaysay sa konsepto mismo nito, sa tulong ng kasaysayan ng mga ideya, hanggang sa makarating sa mga konseptong nagsisikap unawain ang dinamismo ng civil society sa Pilipinas sa kasalukuyang panahon.

Kasaysayan ng Konsepto ng Civil Society

Bagaman nakaugat na ang diwa ng civil society sa pang-araw-araw na pamumuhay, hindi maikakaila na nagmula sa Kanluran ang pagkakahabi ng mga konsepto ukol dito. Sa paglalahad ng kasaysayan ng konsepto, makikita rin natin ang mga bakas nito sa ating kasalukuyang pagkaunawa rito.

Sinaunang Panahon

Ayon kina Arato at Cohen, mababakasan ang unang pananaw sa civil society kay Aristoteles at sa konsepto niya ng "*politike koinonia*" na ang kahulugan ay "mga mamamayang malaya at pantay-pantay ang pamumuhay sa ilalim ng isang malinaw na pamantayang legal."[1] Para kay Aristoteles, nakataya ang mismong pagkatao ng tao sa kakayanan nitong makipamuhay sa kapwa. "Isang masamang tao o isang diyos ang hindi namumuhay kasama ng kapwa."[2] Kasangkot sa definisyon ng civil society ang pagka-"sibilisado" ng pakikitunguhan sa isa't isa.

Mahalagang bigyang pansin ang ganitong pagkaunawa dahil ipinakikita rito ang sakop at hangganan ng civil society. Nasa labas nito ang makahayop at maladiyos na pagturing sa iba, tulad ng pagturing ng kanibal sa kakaining tao at ng pagturing ng alipin sa hari o ng hari sa alipin. Ipinalalagay ng sibilisadong pagturing sa kapwa, maging noong sinaunang panahon, na malaya at magkakapantay ang mga nasasakop ng civil society. Hindi itinuturing na malaya at kapantay ang nakatakdang kainin ng kanibal at ang mga alipin.

Bagaman may pagkaaristokratiko ang ganitong pananaw dahil may mga taong ipinapalagay na mababa ang antas kaysa iba, mayroon pa ring matututunan dito ang ating pagsisikap na gawing makatao ang pamumuhay ng mga nasa labas ng panlipunang larangan ng buhay. Kaya lamang naman naitutulad sa alipin ang mga nasa gilid ng lipunan ay dahil wala silang kapangyarihan, kabuhayan, at boses. Isang mahalagang tungkulin ng kasalukuyang civil society ang matulungan silang magkaroon ng mga ito, at nang maging bahagi ng lipunan.

Mahalaga, kung gayon, ang pag-oorganisa ng mga karaniwang tao upang magkaroon ng kapangyarihan. Mahalaga rin ang mga proyektong pangkabuhayan na sinusuportahan ng civil society upang maiangat ang kabuhayan ng maralita. At mahalaga ang mga programang pang-edukasyon na nagpapalakas ng loob nilang makisangkot sa mga pagpapasyang may kinalaman sa sariling buhay.

Gitnang Panahon

Noong gitnang panahon unang nakita ang salungatan sa pagitan ng makamundong pamumuhay at ng isang makalangit na pamantayan ng civil society. Matatagpuan sa akdang *City of God* ni San Agustin, halimbawa, ang pagtalikod sa makamundong pamahalaan upang paglingkuran ang Kalipunan ng mga Santo sa pangangalaga ng Diyos sa langit. Nagkaroon ng dalawang layunin ang buhay ng tao nang ayon sa lipunang kanyang ginagalawan: ang lipunan ng Diyos at ang lipunan ng tao. Gayunpaman, naniwala si San Agustin na maging sa kasalukuyang lipunan ng tao, maaaring matagpuan ang mga kasapi sa lipunan ng Diyos. Gayundin, maging yaong mga kasapi sa kasalukuyang simbahan sa daigdig ay maaaring kasapi talaga sa lipunang makamundo. Naaayon sa uri ng pamumuhay, kung gayon, ang pagiging mamamayan sa tinagurian nilang "*societas civilis*" o civil society.

Sa paghihiwalay ng konsepto ng civil society mula sa makamundong pamumuhay sa lipunan, masisilayan ang normatibong elemento ng civil society bilang isang pangkalooban at etikal na atitud. Itinatakda ng konseptong ganito ang mga karapatdapat na pagturing sa kapwa; bagaman maaaring sa tunay na buhay ay di madalas natutupad ang ganitong pakikipag-ugnayan. Nagiging tuntungan ng paghatol sa mga batas ng lipunan ang punto-de-bista ng civil society. Kaya nga nagkasundo sina San Agustin at Santo Tomas sa pagtutol sa mga batas na hindi tumuturing sa pagkatao ng tao. Ayon sa kanila: "Hindi tunay na batas ang mga hindi wastong batas."[3]

Kapunapuna ang pagsibol ng civil society sa kandungan ng simbahan na nagsisilbing alternatibo sa pampulitika't pang-ekonomikong sistema ng pamumuhay. Ang simbahan marahil ang maituturing na pinakamalaki at pinakamatandang ahensya ng civil society. Karamihan sa mga kilusang masang tulad ng Federation of Free Workers at Federation of Free Farmers ay nagsimula sa inspirasyon ng panlipunang doktrina ng simbahang Katoliko. Maging noong panahon ng batas militar, naging kanlungan ang simbahan ng mga nagsisikap bumuo ng organisadong pamayanan.[4] Kasalukuyang nagpapatuloy ang mga samahang kasangkot sa simbahang nagtataguyod ng katarungan, sa pamamagitan ng Basic Ecclesiastical Communities.

Bagaman hindi relihiyoso lamang ang motibo ng mga nakikisangkot sa civil society, mahalagang bigyang-pansin ang yutopyanong pamantayan ng kanilang pagpuna sa lipunan. Dahil ang umiiral na panlipunang kaayusan sa daigdig ay di tugma sa mga ideyal ng civil society, nagsisilbing tagapuna itong huli sa mga

katiwalian sa lipunan. Hindi magiging matibay ang puna kung walang maimumungkahing higit na mabuti't magaling na uri ng pag-uugnayan ng mga tao. Isang mahalagang sandali sa kasaysayan ng civil society, kung gayon, ang pagkakabaklas ng konseptong ito mula sa makamundong pamumuhay sa lipunan at pagtanaw sa isang yutopyang hindi pa natutupad.

Makabagong Panahon

Sa makabagong panahon, lumitaw ang pangangailangan ng kontrata sa pagitan ng mga indibidwal na tao. Ayon kay Hobbes, ang kontrata ang bumibigkis sa mga kasapi sa estado habang ang mga kasapi ng civil society ay ang "kalat na masa" (unformed mass) na hindi nasasakop ng kontrata. Pinatibayan ni Locke ang ugnayang batay sa kontrata nang ipahayag niyang maaari ring mawasak ang isang pamahalaan na katulad ng pagkawasak ng lipunan. Subalit si Montesquieu ang naglinaw na magkaiba ang ugnayang pampulitika sa pagitan ng mamamayan at estado, sa isang banda, at ang ugnayang panlipunan o sibil sa pagitan ng mga mamamayan.

Sa itinuturing na di-pormal na ekonomiya (informal economy) ng mga bansang katulad ng Pilipinas ay masasaksihan din itong ideya ni Hobbes tungkol sa "kalat na masa." Sa ekonomiyang ganito, nagkakaroon ng produktibong transaksyon ang mga mamamayan; bagaman hindi nairerehistro sa mga kontrata ng pambansang sistema ang kanilang gawaing pang-ekonomiya. Itinatayang aangat sa 50 porsyento ang ekonomiya ng bansa kung mabibilang lamang ang di-pormal na ekonomiya.

Maisasali rin sa "kalat na masa" ang orihinal na mga tribung nasa gilid ng sistemang pampulitika, na may sariling mga tradisyon ng pagmamay-ari at pag-uugnayan na iba sa mga titulo't batas na pinaiiral ng pamahalaan. Kaya nga isang mahalagang tungkulin ng mga kilusang kasapi sa civil society na mapangalagaan ang mga tribung ganito laban sa mga batas na maaaring gamitin bilang pagsasamantala sa kanila.

Bagaman higit na malalim na ang pagkakaunawa ng kasalukuyang mga kasangkot sa civil society kung ihahambing sa lumilipas na makabagong panahon, mahalagang ang may kalat na pagkakaunawa sa civil society. Inaakala nilang kailangan pang iorganisa ang masa; gayong madalas na organisado na ang pamayanan bago pa man dumating ang mga tagalabas na nagnanais silang iorganisa.

Hegel at Marx

Sa kasaysayan ng kanluraning pamimilosopiya, katangi-tangi sina Hegel at Marx sa kanilang malalim na impluwensya sa modernong pag-unawa sa civil society. Ipinalagay ni Hegel na higit na mauunawaan lamang ang civil society sa konteksto ng estado, habang iginiit naman ni Marx na isang salamin lamang ng kalagayang pang-ekonomiko ang anumang kalagayan ng civil society.

Ayon kay Hegel, mahalaga ang estado upang pangalagaan ang pangkalahatang kabutihan ng mga mamamayan na maaaring magkawatak-watak dahil sa paglalabanan ng iba't ibang mga interes sa lipunan. Kung walang estado, wala ring magbubuklod at maglalagay ng hangganan sa maaaring gawin ng mga samahan sa lipunan na sariling interes lamang ang itinataguyod. Para sa ikabubuti ng lahat, kailangan ng isang estado na magpapasya at magbubuo ng iba't ibang interes ng mamamayan.

Ang lakas o kahinaan ng estado ang isa sa kasalukuyang mahahalagang usapin sa larangan ng civil society. May nagsasabi na kailangang palakasin ang estado upang mapangalagaan nito ang mahihinang sektor ng lipunan. Ang lakas daw ng civil society ay sintomas lang ng kahinaan ng estado kung kaya sa oras na lumakas na ang estado at nakakaya nang alagaan ang mahihina, maaari na ring humina ang civil society. Sa kabilang banda, may mga natatakot sa labis na lakas ng estado na maaaring ipanupil sa mga karapatang pantao. Tagapagbalanse, kung gayon, ang civil society sa posibilidad na mang-abuso ang estado. Sa katunayan, madalas na nagtutulungan ang civil society at ang estado sa paglilingkod sa pamayanan, sa paraang nagpupunuan sa kahinaan ng isa't isa.

Tumutol si Marx sa pagbibigay-diin sa papel ng estado. Ayon sa kanya, kung susundan ang hantungan ng pagmumunimuni ni Hegel, ang ekonomiya ang talagang nagpapatakbo ng naglalabanang mga interes sa lipunan. Hindi maaaring hindi talaban ang estado ng pang-ekonomikong interes. Makikita natin ngayon sa panahon ng mga negosyanteng multinasyonal, bilang halimbawa, na yumuyukod talaga ang pamahalaan sa interes ng ekonomiya kahit pa maipagbili ang likas at pantaong kayamanan ng bayan. Hindi kayang sakupin ng anumang estado ang mga kompanyang multinasyonal dahil hindi naman sila nananahan sa alinmang estado. Ang talagang nagpapatakbo sa mga kompanyang ito ay ang dikta ng tubo ng puhunan na matutunton, bandang huli, sa mga stock market ng iba't ibang bansa. Sinusundan lamang nila ang utos ng pagpapatubo sa puhunan nang walang kinikilalang pamahalaan o estado.

Dahil sa kahinaan ng estado na pangalagaan ang pangangailangan ng karaniwang mamamayang madalas naisasaisantabi ng mga may-hawak ng kayamanan at ng kapangyarihan, humihingi ang kasalukuyang panahon ng panibagong pananaw sa panlipunang kalagayan ng tao. Namumulat ang mga mamamayan na hindi kaya ng estado lamang o ng ekonomiya lamang ang tumugon sa kanilang mga pangangailangan.

Kasalukuyang Panahon

Sa kasalukuyang panahon ng post-moderno, sinisikap ding lampasan ang pananaw sa civil society nang alinsunod kina Hegel at Marx upang matugunan ang tunay na mga pangangailangan ng mga karaniwang tao. Ayon nga kay Vaclav Havel, pangulo ng Chechoslovakia, na nanguna sa pagtataguyod ng civil society sa Europa:

> Nadarama ko na ang paglikha ng civil society ang pangunahing hamon ng ating panahon. Ano ba ang civil society? Sa aking palagay, ito ay isang lipunang may malaking sukatan ang sariling pamamahala, kung saan tinutupad ng mamamayan ang sariling papel sa pampublikong antas ng buhay.[5]

Maraming ipinahihiwatig ang mga pangungusap na ito ni Havel. Sa ngayon, mahalagang pagtuunan ang tinagurian niyang "pampublikong antas ng buhay." Isa sa mga mahalagang diskurso ng kasalukuyang mga pilosopo, ang "larangang pampubliko" (public sphere) ay hindi monopolyo ng burukrasya lamang at hindi rin para lamang sa pampalengkeng interes ng mga negosyante. Iniugat nina Jurgen Habermas at Hannah Arendt ang paglitaw ng larangang ito sa pagbibigay-diin sa panlipunang larangan ng buhay na hindi maiuuwi sa pampamahalaan o sa pribadong interes lamang.[6]

Kaya nga isang katangian ng civil society ang higit na malawakang panlipunang konteksto ng pamumuhay. Tinutukoy ng salitang "society" sa civil society ang isang espasyo o lugar na maaaring mamuhay ang mga grupo ng tao nang hindi pinanghihimasukan ng pamumulitika o pamamalengke. Ayon kay John Hall, patnugot ng isang kalipunan ng mga sulating ibinunga ng pagpupulong ng mga eksperto sa paksang civil society sa Cambridge, Inglatera:

> Nakita ang civil society bilang kabaliktaran ng despotismo, isang lugar kung saan maaaring umiral at gumalaw ang mga grupong panlipunan — isang nagpapatunay at nagpapatibay sa isang higit na malumanay, at matatagalang, kundisyon ng pag-iral.[7]

Sa pananaw na ito, muling masisilayan kung bakit tinawag na "sibil" ang lipunang tinutukoy rito. Hindi ito pinamamahalaan ng dahas at arbitraryong kapritso ng kung sinong Poncio Pilato. Mayroon itong paggalang sa pagkakapwa-tao.

Pagbabalik-tanaw

Mula sa pahapyaw na pagsusuri sa kasaysayan ng civil society sa Kanluran, mapapansin na ilang mga pamilyar na elemento ng civil society ang tumatagos pa rin sa kasalukuyan. Mula pa sinaunang panahon, nailahad ang sakop at hangganan ng civil society nang ayon sa kung sino ang itunuturing na kapwa-sibilisado sa lipunan. Dahil magkaisa noon ang estado at ang lipunan, nakabukod ang mga walang karapatang makibahagi sa estado. Isang mahalagang tungkulin ng civil society, kung gayon, ang palawakin ang sakop nito, lalo na sa pagdalóy ng panahon.

Unang nabaklas ang kahulugan ng civil society mula sa estado nang magkaroon ng normatibong kahulugan ito sa ilalim ng organisadong simbahan, dahil ipinakilala ng huli ang isang lampas-sa-mundong kaharian ng Diyos. Bagaman hindi lamang relihiyoso ang ideyal ng civil society, ang elemento ng paglampas sa pang-araw-araw na karanasan ng estado ang nagpasulong sa isang panibagong pananaw sa lipunan.

Inihanda ng makabagong panahon ang isang civil society na isinasakatawan ng mga kontrata sa pagitan ng mga indibidwal na mamamayan. Nagkaroon ng mga pormal na ugnayan ang mga tao na bukod pa sa orihinal na tuwirang pakikipag-ugnayan sa estado. Sa puntong ito lumitaw ang mahalagang pilosopiya nina Hegel at Marx na ipinakita ang estado at ekonomiya bilang magkakumpitensyang katalaban o contrapelo ng civil society. Sa pagsisikap nina Hegal at Marx na iuwi sa estado at sa ekonomiya ang larangan ng civil society, higit na luminaw rin na may sariling larangan nga ang civil society na hindi basta masasakop ng estado o ng ekonomiya lamang.

Sa kasalukuyang panahon, naggigiit ang civil society na magkaroon ng lehitimong lugar sa lipunan na naiiba, bagaman hindi hiwalay, sa estado't ekonomiya. Sa larangang ito lumulugar ang mga kilusan ng mga karaniwang taong nais mamuhay sa isang ideyal na lipunang tumutugon sa karapatan ng kapwa-tao, pagkalinga sa kapaligiran, at kapayapaan.

Kayat mababakasan sa kasalukuyan ang mga elemento ng civil society mula sa nakaraan: pagkilala sa kapwa-tao, at ang normatibong proyekto para sa isang ideyal na lipunan na iba, bagaman di hiwalay, mula sa larangan ng estado at ng ekonomiya.

Ang Civil Society sa Pilipinas

May mahabang kasaysayan din ang civil society sa Pilipinas na nakaugat sa kolonyal na karanasan ng estado. Kaya nga may tradisyon ng pag-aaklas laban sa mga dayuhang sumakop at bumuo ng ekonomiya at ng estado.

Dala-dala ng militanteng civil society ang tradisyong ito hanggang sa ngayon. Noong nakaraang pulong ng APEC, bilang halimbawa, malinaw na may tatlong posisyong panlipunan ukol sa mga usaping tinalakay rito, at isa sa pinakamalinaw at pinakamatinding posisyon ang nagmumula sa civil society. Kahanay ng posisyon ng mga kilusang pulitikal na naglalayong mahuli ang estado at ang posisyon ng estado mismo, ipinahayag ang impluwensya ng civil society sa pormulasyon ng mga prinsipyong pag-uusapan sa APEC, bagaman hindi sila rito pangunahing kabahagi.[8]

Malinaw ang lakas ng impluwensya ng civil society sa Pilipinas kung ihahambing sa ibang mga bansa na pinagdausan ng APEC. Halimbawa, nakulayan ng civil society ang mga pangungusap ng Pangulong Ramos, lalo na sa usaping ukol sa likas-kayang pagpapaunlad o sustainable development. Kakatwa ang impluwensyang ito kung ihahambing sa bansang Hapon kung saan idinaos ang naunang APEC. Napwera raw doon ang mga NGO dahil wala raw kinikilalang NGO ang APEC. "Pang-ekonomikong usapin lamang daw ang huli, at hindi pampulitika."[9] Ipinakikita ng civil society sa Pilipinas ang lakas ng impluwensya ng mga karaniwang tao, gayong hindi naman sila opisyal ng pamahalaan ni malalaking tao sa ekonomiya.

Sakop at Layunin ng Civil Society sa Pilipinas

Mula rin sa pangyayari ng APEC sa Pilipinas lumitaw ang pagtutol ng ilang sektor sa lipunan sa makitid na pagtingin na ang civil society ay pang-NGO lamang. Sa opinyon ni Amado Doronila, halimbawa,

> Sinarili na ng mga NGO ang matunog na salitang "civil society." Ito ang kanilang bukambibig, na tila ba mayroon sila ritong monopolyo — o karapatang-sipi. Sa tingin ko, sinasakop ng civil society ang napakalawak na larangan ng mga institusyon at grupo na nakikipagtalaban sa isa't isa at nag-aambag sa proseso ng demokratisasyon ng lipunan. Kung kaya ang simbahan, ang burukrasya, ang lehislatura, mga pulitiko't NGO, samahang sibiko, at maging mga samahan sa negosyo ay mga kabahaging lahat sa civil society.[10]

Medyo napakalawak na ng sinakop ng definisyon ni Doronila, kung kaya wala na tayong maituturing na nasa labas ng civil society, at kung gayon ay wala nang ipinagkaiba ang civil society sa ibang bahagi ng lipunan, pero may masasabi pa rin ang kanyang pananaw ukol sa tungkulin ng civil society sa Pilipinas. Ayon pa rin sa kanya, ang civil society ay

> ...tungkol sa isang etika at isang kultura ng malawak at pluralistikong pakikibahagi sa isang demokratikong proseso. Kabaliktaran nito ang isang lipunang arbitraryo at makaawtoridad, na ang mga desisyon ay nakabatay sa mga institusyong katulad ng militar o mga pwersang panseguridad.[11]

Bagaman hindi pa rin sapat ang gayong pananaw, mababanaagan mula sa panalitang ito ang kasalukuyang konteksto ng civil society sa Pilipinas.

Nagkaroon ng pampulikang pagtangkilik ang mga kilusang nakaugat sa civil society sa mismong Saligang-batas ng Pilipinas noong 1987 na nagbigay-diin sa papel at mga karapatan ng organisadong mamamayan, kasabay ng pagtatatag ng Komisyon sa mga Karapatang Pantao (Art. XIII, Sek. 15-19). Matatagpuan ang sumusunod na definisyon: "Ang mga organisasyon ng sambayanan ay mga asosasyong bona fide ng mga mamamayan na may subok na kakayahang itaguyod ang kapakanang pambayan at may mapagkikilalang pamumuno, kasapian at istruktura." (Sek. 15)

Mula sa definisyong ito makikita ang legal na sakop ng definisyon ng civil society. Ayon daw sa Securities and Exchange Commission, may 18,000 NGO ang rehistrado noong 1986. Malamang na higit pa rito ang bilang ngayon, pagkalipas ng sampung taon, lalo na kung isasama rito ang mga hindi rehistrado.

Sa pagitan ng malawak na definisyon ni Doronila at sa makitid na definisyong legal, may gitnang panukat na iminungkahi si Fr. John Carroll ng Institute on Church and Social Issues: Ito ang civil society "bilang organisadong pamayanan, na idinidiin ang sarili upang itulak ang reporma sa lupa, kalusugan, pangangalaga sa kapaligiran at ang solusyon sa iba pang mga suliraning may mabigat na timbang sa buhay ng mga tao."[12]

Maraming sumunod sa definisyong ito ni Carroll dahil sa pagdidiin sa "kabutihang komun" at pampublikong larangan.[13]

Madaling matanggap ang definisyon sa konteksto ng isang estadong nabibitag ng pansariling mga interes ng ekonomiya at ng iilang nagtatamasa sa pampulitika't pang-ekonomikong kalagayan. Dahil na rin sa kahinaan ng estado na tugunan ang pangangailangan ng mamamayan, nagtatayo ng sariling samahan ang huli upang mapangalagaan ang kanilang kapakanan. Maging ang seguridad ng ari-arian at buhay, halimbawa, ay hindi na nakakayanang panagutan ng estado, lalo na nang minsang manawagan ang Pangulo mismo na dapat maproteksyunan ng mamamayan ang kanilang sarili. Hindi kataka-taka kung gayon kung bakit naglipana ang mga pribadong gwardya sa mga bangko, tindahan, at maging tahanan ng mga may-kaya.

Bukod pa sa kahinaan ng estado na tumupad sa mga saligang pananagutan sa mamamayan, naging mahina rin ito sa harap ng pandaigdigang ekonomiya na nagbabantang sumakop sa maliliit na negosyo at magsasaka sa kanayunan. Halos naipagbibili na ang likas na kayamanan ng bansa sa mga dayuhang maykapital. Dahil makaasa sa estado, kailangang lumakas ang civil society upang harapin ang pandaigdigang galaw ng globalisasyon na nagbabantang patagin ang bukod-tanging kultura ng bansa kapalit ng komersyalismo.

Lipunan at Pulitika

Sa *Trends and Traditions, Challenges and Choices* (TTCC), iginiit ng mga may-akda ang pampulitikang konteksto ng civil society.[14] Dahil na rin sa pagkakaugat ng mga pangunahing lider ng civil society sa mga katipunang pampulitika na naglayong hawakan ang estado upang mabago ang lipunan, hindi maiiwasang magkaroon ng pampulitikang kulay ang galaw ng civil society. Isa ito sa idinidiin ng mga NGO, dahil may tuksong mawala sa usapan ang tungkol sa estado.

Gayunpaman, talagang may kakaibang larangang binubuksan ang civil society lalo na sa kasalukuyang panahon. Hindi na gaanong maigting ang usaping ideyolohikal at nanghihina ang estado mismo sa harap ng globalisasyong pinangungunahan ng mga korporasyong multinasyonal. Kaya nga kailangan ng isang masusing pagpansin sa malawakang pananaw sa pulitika sa pagitan ng mga pahayag ng mga NGO ukol sa civil society. At katulad ng nakita natin sa sakop at layunin ng civil society, may dalawang magkaiba, bagaman magkasangkot na mga definisyon ang civil society na kaugnay ng malawak at makitid na pananaw sa kapangyarihan.

Bilang tulong sa pagsusuri, ibinahagi ng *IPD Political Brief* ang isang paglilinaw: "Marahil, isang paraan upang mapalinaw ang usapin ay ang pagdidiin na nakatuon ang demokratikong agenda ng civil society sa demokratisasyon ng lipunan mismo, sa mga panlipunang institusyon at kaugnayang pangkapangyarihan." [15]

Kung sa lipunan nakatuon ang civil society, sa estado naman nakatuon ang mga kilusang pampulitika. May implikasyon pa rin ang mga gawain ng una sa ikalawa dahil sa katapusan, nagkakaroon ng kapangyarihan at awtonomiya ang mga taong nakaugnay sa civil society. Mula sa kapangyarihang ito, nagkakaroon sila ng lakas na baguhin ang mga relasyong pampulitika at pang-ekonomiya.

Mula rin sa pag-aaral ng IPD sa galaw ng mga karaniwang tao sa eleksyon noong 1992, lumitaw ang dalawang konseptong pulitikal na may kaugnayan sa pagkakaiba ng lipunan at ng pulitika. Sa una, binibigyang-diin ang lakas ng pakikipag-ugnayan ng mamamayan sa pulitiko upang matupad ang kanilang mga pangangailangan. Sa ikalawa, nabibigyang-diin ang kapangyarihang ipatupad ang mga tungkulin ng mga pulitiko sa pamayanan. Ang lakas na ito, kung gayon, ang naglalarawan sa relasyong panlipunan habang ang kapangyarihan ang tumutukoy sa relasyong pulitikal. Mahalagang pareho, at hindi magkahiwalay, subalit sa pagtanaw sa kanilang pagkakaiba ay lumilinaw ang pagsusuri sa kalagayan ng civil society sa Pilipinas. Iminungkahi rin na nakaugat ang ugnayang panlipunan sa pang-araw-araw ng buhay ng karaniwang tao, habang ang ugnayang pulitikal naman ay sa maiigting na sandali sa lipunan, katulad ng eleksyon at piyesta.[16]

Malalim na nakalubog sa kulturang Pilipino ang pagkakaibang ito kung kaya isa marahil ito sa mga magpapatangi sa civil society sa Pilipinas.

Ang Civil Society bilang Alternatibong Balangkas ng Pulitika at Ekonomiya

Pagkatapos bumagsak ng sentralisadong mga pamahalaan noong nakaraang dekada, higit na tumindi ang usaping ukol sa civil society bilang pagpuna sa kasalukuyang padron ng pag-unlad. Mula sa punang ito, natural na lumilitaw rin ang civil society bilang isang alternatibong teorya at gawain sa pagpapaunlad.

Mga Puna sa Linyadong Teorya ng Pag-unlad

Isa sa pangunahing puna sa kasalukuyang padron ng pagpapaunlad ay ang pagtuntong nito sa linyadong teorya na tinatanggap nang walang pasubali ang teorya ng industriyalisasyon. Ayon na rin kay Benjamin Tolosa, sa kanyang pagsusuri sa mga teorya ng pagpapaunlad, parehong tinanggap ng Marxismo at ng liberalismo

ang pananaw na ang rebolusyong industriyal ay isang pagsulong sa kasaysayan ng tao.[17]

Kaya nga lamang, maraming suliraning ibinunga ang teoryang ito. Bagaman pinuna na ng Marxismo ang alyenasyong idinudulot ng industriyalisasyon sa kundisyon ng paggawa ng tao, hindi kayang ipaliwanag sa mga balangkas lamang ng Marxismo ang kasalukuyang pagtutol sa industriyalisasyon. Binabalewala nito di lamang ang karapatang pang-ekonomiko ng mga manggagawa, kundi pati ang higit na malalim na kahulugan ng pamumuhay. Nasa kasalukuyang kaunlaran sa Kanluran ang sanhi ng mga suliraning kaugnay ng kawalang kabuluhan sa buhay.[18]

Ang Pagturing sa Industriyalisasyon bilang Katumbas ng Modernisasyon

Tuunan natin sandali ang proseso ng industriyalisasyon sa higit na malawakang pagsulong ng modernisasyon. Nagsimulang mamulatan ito ng tao nang matuklasan niyang nanggagaling lamang sa kanyang sariling kamalayan ang mga balangkas ng pag-unawa. Dahil sa pagkamulat na ito, na nagkahugis sa kilusan ng kaliwanagan (*die Aufklarung* o Enlightenment) sa Europa, nagkalakas-loob ang tao na tumayong hari ng kanyang kapaligiran upang isaayos at gamitin ang mga bagay-bagay sa daigdig alinsunod sa kanyang sariling disenyo.

Kaya nga ang anumang pagpuna sa kasalukuyang mga teorya ng pagpapaunlad ay kailangang pumuna rin sa mismong galaw ng modernisasyon. Isa sa mahahalagang punto-de-bista sa kasalukuyan ay ang paniniwalang lumalampas na tayo sa daigdig ng moderno, at pumapasok na sa daigdig ng lampas-moderno. Ito'y hindi na sinosolo ng iisang teorya na maaaring gawing sukatan ng kaunlaran.

Mga Usaping Post-moderno

Inihahain ng post-modernong pananaw sa mundo ang pluralismo ng mga punto-de-bista kung saan walang iisang pananaw ang maaaring lumutas sa mga suliranin ng tao. Lumilitaw ang panibagong mga punto-de-bistang katulad ng usaping pangkapaligiran, pangkasarian, pangkapayapaan, at karapatang pantao. Magkakaugnay ang mga bagong pananaw na ito dahil pinatatampok ang mga biktima't ipinepwera ng modernong padron ng pagpapaunlad.

Idinidiin ng kasalukuyang pagpuna sa industriyalisasyon na kailangang sundin ang siklo ng kalikasan sa pamamagitan ng muling paggamit sa likas na kayamanan alang-alang sa susunod na henerasyon. Ang kasalukuyang mga suliraning pangkapaligiran ay bunga lamang ng pagkakabatak sa mga siklo ng kalikasan alinsunod sa linyadong teorya ng kaunlaran na pumapailalim sa industriyalisasyon. Ang resulta nito ay ang kakulangan ng likas na sangkap sa simula ng produksyon at ang kalabisan ng basura sa katapusan ng produksyon.

Kasangkot rin ng pluralismo ng mga punto-de-bista sa panahong post-moderno ang paglitaw ng kilusan ng mga kababaihan. Ihinahain ng kilusang ito na may bukod-tangi silang kontribusyon sa usaping pangkaunlaran dahil sa matagal na rin nilang pagpasan sa dobleng bigat ng responsibilidad sa loob at labas ng tahanan. Pinalitaw at pinuna nila ang pagbabalewala sa gawaing pantahanan bilang kontribusyon sa produksyon at ang pagturing sa kanila bilang mga katulong lamang ng kalalakihan sa pagsulong ng industriyalisasyon. Ang dati'y itinuturing na mga

usaping pantahanan ay nagiging usaping pulitikal na rin. Ang modernong pagkakahati ng pribado at pampublikong usapin ay binubuwag ng mga kababaihan, tulad ng pagkakabuwag ng Pader sa Berlin na nagsilbing panghati sa pangunahing mga ideyolohiya ng modernisasyon.

Lumilitaw din ang usaping pangkapayapaan,lalo na nang bumagsak ang Pader sa Berlin noong 1989. Sa pagbabago ng balanse ng pandaigdigang pulitika, higit na tumindi ang pagtatagisan ng mga bansang magkakaiba ng kultura at kaugalian. Lalo nang nangangailangan ngayon ng panibagong mga pamamaraan at pananaw na magtataguyod sa mapayapang pakikipamuhay ng mga tao sa isa't isa. Ang mga suliranin sa Silangang Europa, sa Arabia at maging sa Mindanao, ay halimbawa ng pangangailangan para sa bagong padron ng pag-uugnayan.

Dahil iba-iba ang mga kultura, lumilitaw ang pangangailangan ng isang unibersal na pamantayang magsisilbing batayan ng mga karapatan ng tao bilang tao. Ang karapatang magpahayag, bumuo ng mga samahan at makibahagi sa mga usaping pulitikal, ay humahamon sa umiiral pang mga balangkas panlipunang pumipigil sa pagkakapantay-pantay at kalayaan ng tao. Sensitibong usapin sa Indonesia, Singapore at Tsina, halimbawa, ang ukol sa unibersalidad ng mga karapatang pantao, gayong matagal na itong kinilala sa Kanluran simula pa noong unang idineklara ng mga rebolusyonaryong Pranses dalawang daang taon na ang nakararaan.

Dahil sa panibagong mga usaping ito, sinabi ni Korten sa kanyang akdang *Into the 21st Century*[19] na may isa na ngayong panibagong henerasyon ng mga NGO na pinatatakbo ng mga makabagong ideya at hindi lamang ng salapi at ng kapangyarihan. Mula sa dating pagtulong lamang sa mga nasalanta ng pangkalikasang sakuna, hanggang sa pakikisangkot sa mga komunidad at pagpuna sa mga di makatarungang balangkas ng lipunan, nakikita ni Korten na may panibagong mga kilusan na ang layon ay hubugin at hindi lamang punahin ang kasalukuyang kalagayang panlipunan. Ipinakita niya na may pagbabaliktad ng punto-de-bista sa galaw na ito ng kaunlaran: nagiging higit na aktibo ang pagbahagi ng mga mamamayan sa kalagayang panlipunan at hindi na sila mga pasibong tagatanggap lamang ng kaunlaran.

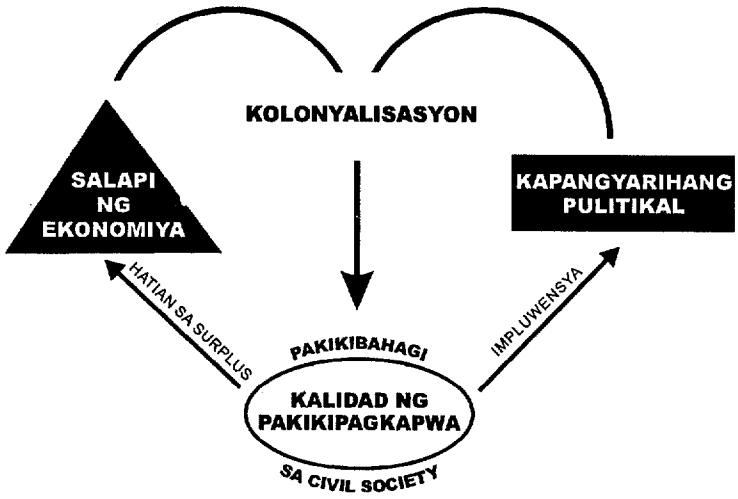
Ang Tatluhang Modelo ng Lipunan

Bagaman may inilulunsad na panibagong modelo ng lipunan ang mga NGO, hindi maiiwasang ilagay ang kanilang pagkilos sa konteksto ng umiiral na mga balangkas ng ekonomiya at pulitika. Kaya nga lamang, iba ang lohika ng diskurso ng lumilitaw na alternatibong mga balangkas. Kung nakabatay sa salapi ang sukatan ng makabagong ekonomiya, habang kapangyarihan naman ang batayan ng tradisyonal na pulitika, itinatakda ng umuusbong na Kilusan ng mga Karaniwang Kapwa-tao na ang sukatan ng kaunlaran ay ang malaya at pantay-pantay na pakikibahagi o partisipasyon. Sinasalamin ang lohikang ito sa balangkas ng diskurso ng mga karaniwang kapwa-tao ukol sa kalagayan ng kanilang pang-araw-araw na buhay.

Kalidad ng Pamumuhay, Kayamanan at Kapangyarihan

Isang halimbawa ng panibagong sukatan ng kaunlaran ang kalidad ng pamumuhay at hindi lamang ang kantidad ng GNP. Madalas, hindi naman nasasakop nitong huling panukat ang mga di-pormal na larangan ng ekonomiya kung saan nabubuhay ang "kalat na masa." Lalong hindi matatapatan ng mataas na kantidad ng GNP ang pagkaikli ng buhay ng tao dahil sa polusyon, trapiko at nerbyos sa bilis ng paghahabol sa kwarta at kapangyarihan.

Subalit habang hindi pa natutupad ang mga alternatibo'y natututo ang civil society na buong ingat na makiugnay at makipagtalaban sa kasalukuyang mga balangkas ng ekonomiya at pulitika. Maibabalangkas ang pakikipagtalabang ito sa sumusunod na paglalarawan.



Bagaman payak, nakakatulong ang modelong ito na linawin ang hangganan at sakop ng civil society. Ang pakikibahagi sa kalidad ng pagkakapwa-tao ang binibigyang-diin sa civil society habang ang pagkalap sa salapi ang nagpapatakbo sa ekonomiya at ang paghawak sa kapangyarihan ang lohika ng pamahalaan. Sinisikap ng civil society na maimpluwensyahan ang uri ng pamamalakad sa pamahalaan habang sinisikap iuwi sa maayos na hatian ang bunga or surplus ng ekonomiya.

Totoong may elemento rin ng ekonomiya at pulitika sa civil society. Hindi maiiwasan ninuman ang salapi at ang kapangyarihan sa tunay na buhay. Ang punto ng ganitong pagbabalangkas ay upang maipakita na may lehitimong lugar at papel ang civil society sa lipunan na maaaring gawing tuntungan sa pakikipagtulungan at pagpuna sa mga patakarang pampulitika at pang-ekonomiya. Kung walang bukod-tanging lugar sa lipunan ang civil society, madali itong makakain ng mga dambuhalang sistema ng umiiral na pulitika at ekonomiya.

Pagkapangunahin ng Civil Society

Batay na rin sa kasaysayan, mahalagang idiin na umusbong lamang ang kasalukuyang sistema ng ekonomiya at pulitika sa lupa ng civil society. Ang mga uri ng ekonomiya at pulitika ay nahuhubog ng mga kumplikasyon sa pang-araw-araw na buhay ng tao sa civil society. Kaya nga iginiit ni Rajesh Tendon, isang pangunahing teorista ng civil society, na ituring ito bilang pangunahing sektor, at hindi lamang ikatlong sektor ng lipunan.[20]

Ayon na rin sa pananaliksik ng Institute for Popular Democracy, hinuhubog din ng pang-araw-araw na diskurso sa larangan ng civil society ang katuparan ng pampulitikang ehersisyo ng eleksyon.[21] Ang ibinoboto ay mga kandidatong kasangkot sa pang-araw-araw na buhay, at hindi iyong mga sumusulpot lamang tuwing eleksyon. Maging sa larangang pang-ekonomiya, higit na pangunahin ang pagpapahalaga sa mga bagay kaysa sa presyong ipinapataw rito. Kaya nga iminungkahi ni Nicanor Perlas sa isang komperensya ukol sa malikhaing pagtugon ng civil society sa APEC at GATT, na patingkarin ang pagpapahalagang panlipunan, pantao at pangkapaligiran sa anumang panukat ng pang-ekonomikong kauniaran.[22] Ipinakikita lamang ng mga halimbawang ito kung paano nakaugat sa pang-araw-araw na buhay ng karaniwang kapwa-tao ang larangan ng civil society.

Proseso ng Deliberasyon bilang Lohika ng Civil Society

Sa konteksto ng mga samahang pantao at ng mga NGO na nagsisikap magtaguyod ng alternatibong mga balangkas sa lipunan, binibigyang-diin ang proseso ng demokratikong pakikibahagi ng mga kasapi. Sa mga pulong, halimbawa, madalas na nililinaw muna ang mga maaaring asahan, sinisikap bigyan ng pagkakataong makibahagi ang mga kasangkot, at muling kinukunsulta ang mga kasapi sa katunayan ng resulta ng deliberasyon.

Ipinapalagay ng ganitong proseso ang paggalang sa kalayaan at pagkakapantaypantay ng mga kasapi, maging sinuman ang nagpapanukala. Ipinapalagay na maaaring umoo o humindi ang bawat isa nang ayon sa pinakamakatwiran at pinakamabuting kahihinatnan ng mga pagpapasya. Sinasagot din nang makatwiran ang mga tumututol sa mga mungkahi at hindi padogmatikong binabara o isinasaisantabi.[23]

Mula sa prosesong ito, pinalilitaw ang pinakamabuting pasya na naaayon sa kongkretong kalagayan ng mga kasangkot. Ang mga usapin na talagang binibigyang-halaga ng grupo ang lumilitaw at ang "kabutihan ng lahat" ang siyang namamayani. Hindi itinatakda, sa simula pa lang, kung ano ang nilalaman ng "kabutihan ng lahat." Pinalilitaw lamang ito sa proseso ng diskurso. Maaaring sa simula, pansariling interes ng mga kasangkot ang inihahain. Subalit sa pagdaloy ng malayang talakayan, unti-unting napalilitaw ang iba't ibang pananaw na maaaring makaapekto sa gawain ng grupo.

Impluwensya, Hindi Kapangyarihan

Dahil sa paniniwala sa pwersa ng katwiran, naniniwala ang civil society na hindi na nito kailangan pang humawak ng kapangyarihan ng estado upang mabago ang lipunan. Kaya nga bagaman mahalaga pa rin ang estado bilang institusyonal na kundisyon ng civil society, ipinapalagay na isang hindi tuwirang pagbabago ng

lipunan ang paghawak ng kapangyarihan sa estado. Ang tuwirang gawain ng civil society ay ang pagpapaunlad sa kalagayan ng mga kongkretong komunidad sa lipunan. Sa pagsulong ng panlipunang mga kaugnayan ng tao, natural na umangat din ang pampulitikang sistema mula sa pag-asa ng mga karaniwang kapwa-tao.

Kaya nga mahalaga ang edukasyon at konsyentisasyon bilang estratehiya ng civil society. Madalas, nagiging pamamaraan lamang ang mga pampulitikang proyekto, tulad ng eleksyon, upang palawakin ang kamalayang pangkatarungan ng mga mamamayan. Ito rin ang madalas na dahilan kung bakit natatalo ang mga kandidato ng civil society. Lumulutang sila sa daigdig ng mga ideya ng progresibong pulitika, habang hinahakot ng tradisyonal na pulitiko ang boto ng karaniwang kapwa-tao. Gayunpaman, patuloy ang pag-asa ng civil society na, sa kalaunan, magkakaroon din ng impluwensya ang kanilang mga ideya sa galaw ng pulitika.

Kinakailangan ang ganitong pag-asa dahil nagsisilbing kanlungan ang larangan ng civil society habang hindi pa matatag ang mga institusyong pampulitika na susuporta sa pangangailangan ng mga karaniwang kapwa-tao. Mula sa pag-aaral ni Hannah Arendt sa kasaysayan ng mga rebolusyon, nabigo ang mga rebolusyonaryo na matamo ang isang higit na makatarungang lipunan nang lamunin ng sistemang pulitikal ang kanilang mga lider na biglang natagpuan ang sarili sa isang burukrasyang may nanigas na lohika ng sistemang mapang-api. Ganito raw ang nangyari sa Rebolusyong Pranses noong 1789 at sa Rebolusyong Ruso noong 1917.[24] Maaaring masabi na ganito rin ang nangyari matapos mag-alsa ang mga mamamayan sa EDSA noong 1986. Naging bahagi ng burukrasya ang mga dating aktibista at naging mga tagapagpatupad na lamang ng umiiral na sistema.

Mula sa aral na ito mula kay Arendt, maaaring mapatibayan ang lumilitaw na pagnanais ng mga progresibong pulitiko na magtatag ng mga konseho ng mamamayan sa mga komunidad, na kakatawan ng isang tuwirang demokrasya ng pakikibahagi o direct participatory democracy.[25] Sa uri ng pamamahalang ito, maaaring talakayin at pagpasyahan ng mga kasangkot na mamamayan ang mga suliranin at isyung pangkomunidad at pambansa. Binibigyan nito ng tuwirang lakas at kapangyarihan ang mga mamamayan. Sa kalaunan, nilalayon ng ganitong uri ng pamamahala ang isang federasyon ng mga konseho na hindi nalalayo sa isang pamahalaang pederal. Ang sistema ng awtonomiya sa Cordillera at sa Mindanao ang itinuturo nilang mga halimbawa.

Hatian, Hindi Pagkamkam sa Tubo ng Puhunan

Nilalayon ng civil society ang isang uri ng ekonomiya na hindi lamang nangangamkam ng tubo sa puhunan kundi nakikibahagi sa komunidad na kinasasangkutan ng negosyo. Kaya nga mahalaga ang muling pag-usbong ng mga kooperatiba na naglalayong ipamahagi sa mga kasapi ang tubo ng pagnenegosyo nang ayon sa kontribusyon ng bawat isa. Maging sa pagtataguyod ng mga negosyong pangkabuhayan, itinuturing na kasosyo sa responsibilidad ang mga karaniwang kapwa-tao at hindi lamang pasibong tagatanggap ng biyaya.

Sa pakikibahagi naman sa mga pagawaan, mahalaga ang papel ng mga unyon dahil isinusulong nito ang kalidad ng pagkatao ng manggagawa na hindi lamang masusukat ng pasahod na iniaabuloy sa kanya paggatapos ng bawat araw ng paggawa. Ibinibigay ng manggagawa ang kanyang sarili sa gawain, kaya kailangan lamang na tumbasan ito ng karampatang sahod na makapagbibigay sa kanya ng makataong pangangailangang katulad ng pabahay, pahinga, at pag-aaral ng mga

anak. Ang agwat sa kalidad ng pamumuhay at ang madalas na pakantidad na sukatan ng paggawa ang sinusubukang punuan ng mga unyon sa kanilang pagnanais na magkaroon ng makataong mga kundisyón sa paggawa.

Higit na makikita ang masalimuot na kaugnayan ng mga manggagawa at ng kanyang kapaligiran sa mga gawaing pang-agrikultura kung saan kasangkot ang kalagayan ng kapaligiran sa mismong produksyon. Isang halimbawa nito ang pagsisikap ng Confed Kalikasan sa Nueva Ecija na magtatag ng organikong uri ng agrikultura. Dahil sa kanilang pagsisikap, nagkakaroon ng alternatibong uri ng pananim na hindi sumisira sa lupa. Higit na mabili ang kanilang produkto dahil iniiwasan nito ang mga kemikal at artipisyal na mga pataba na may negatibong epekto sa kalusugan ng tao.

Sa pagtatagumpay ng samahang ito, tinulungan sila ng Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement at ng Pamantasan ng Pilipinas sa Central Luzon. Sinubukan din nilang makibaka sa mga nagtotroso sa kagubatan dahil naaapektuhan ng baha ang kanilang mga taniman. Sa puntong ito makikita ang halaga ng pakikisangkot ng komunidad sa pagtataguyod ng mapangalagang pag-unlad sa ekonomiya.

Hindi makakamit ang ganitong tagumpay sa pamamagitan ng isang serye ng linyadong produksyon na dinidiktahan lamang ng may-ari ng puhunan o ng panginoong may-lupa. Maaaring pumaltos ang serye ng produksyon kung nakabatay ito sa iisang panginoon. Kung mababalam ang pagpapautang, halimbawa, hindi agad makapagtatanim at maaaring makalampas ang siklo ng panahon. Sublait kung may pagtutulungan ang komunidad, higit na maraming alternatibo ang maaaring mailahad, at maiiwasang ang buhay ay iniaasa sa panginoong may-ari ng lupa.

Laban sa Kolonisasyon ng Pang-araw-araw na Buhay

Kung hindi nakaugat at hindi nagmumula sa komunidad ang pang-araw-araw na kabuhayan, naiiwang nakabitin ang kilos ng karaniwang tao sa dikta ng may hawak ng salapi at ng kapangyarihan. Nawawala ang kanilang sariling pagkukusa dahil kailangan pang hintayin ang utos at suporta ng mga ito. Dahil lagi silang nakatingala sa panginoon, hindi na nila nakikita na magkakatulad sila ng kalagayan. Naikwento nga ni Fr. John Carroll kung paanong sa sugalan ay nagtatalo-talo rin ang mga drayber ng mga nagsusugal, gayong ang itinataya ng mga ito ay halos katumbas na ng isang buwan nilang suweldo. Tinatawag ni Habermas na kolonisasyon sa pang-araw-araw na buhay ang pagkawala ng kakayanang makita ang sariling kalagayan sa buhay dahil sa silaw ng salapi at kapangyarihan ng pinapanginoon.[26] Hindi lamang mga indibidwal na tao ang nagsasagawa ng kolonisasyon. Tinutupad din ang kolonisasyon ng mga impersonal na sukatan ng salapi at kapangyarihan. Maging ang mga may-hawak na nito ay nakikita lamang ang halaga ng sarili nang ayon sa naturang impersonal na sukatan.

Nilalayon ng civil society na makalampas sa ganitong panunukat sa pamamagitan ng pagbabalik sa pang-araw-araw na pakikipagkapwa ng tao sa tao. May normatibong elemento ang civil society kung gayon na nagmumungkahing makibahagi ang tao sa tunay na sarili: malaya, makatwiran, at kapantay ng kapwa.

Mga Institusyonal na Kundisyon ng Civil Society

Upang matupad ang mga ideyal ng civil society, nagmungkahi sina Arato at Cohen ng mga institusyonal na kundisyon upang mamukadkad ito. Ayon sa kanila, ang apat na kundisyon ay ang a) awtonomiya ng iba't ibang punto-de-bista, b) ang pagkapubliko ng mga institusyon ng kultura at komunikasyon, k) ang pribadong larangan ng pagtubo at malayang pagpapasya ng indibidwal na mamamayan, at d) ang legalidad ng mga batas at karapatang pantao.[27]

Awtonomiya ng Iba't Ibang Punto-de-Bista

Upang magkaroon ng pagkataong makibahagi ang iba't ibang sektor ng lipunan sa diskurso ng civil society, kailangang hindi napilitang umayon o tumanggi ang mga kasangkot dito. Ang nalalabing lakas ng civil society, kung ihahambing sa kapangyarihan ng estado at ng salapi ng ekonomiya, ay ang "walang-dahas na lakas ng pagkamulat sa talagang kalagayan" (the unforced force of the better insight).[28] Kaya nga upang maisali ang pagkamulat ng iba't ibang sektor ng lipunan, dapat ding magkaroon sila ng pagkakataong ipahayag ang sarili.

Subalit upang makabahagi sa diskurso, kailangang maging organisado ang pakikisangkot ng dating mga walang boses. Dito pumapasok ang mahalagang papel ng middle class na kasapi sa mga NGO dahil sila ang nakakagamit ng wika at mga institusyong sumasali sa talakayang pambansa. Madalas na sa wikang Ingles nagaganap ang mga diskurso na ginaganap sa pamamagitan ng paglalathala sa mga dyaryo o pagpapahayag sa telebisyon at radyo. Dahil may natipong impluwensya at pinag-aralan ang mga NGO, nagiging tagapamagitan sila ng mga walang boses upang makibahagi sa mga usaping pambayan.

Nililikha, kung gayon, at hindi lamang basta ibinibigay, ang bukod-tanging lugar ng civil society sa lipunan. Kung walang awtonomiya ang iba't ibang mga sektor dahil ginigipit sila ng estado o ng ekonomiya, mahalagang mag-organisa upang ipagtanggol ang kanilang lehitimong lugar sa lipunan. Kung hindi, di lamang civil society ang mabubuwag. Ang mismong pang-ekonomiko at pampamahalaang mga institusyon ay maninigas dahil wala nang lugar upang paunlarin pa ang kalidad ng pamumuhay ng mga mamamayang kasangkot dito. Madalas na hinihiram ng pamahalaan at ng pagnenegosyo ang panibagong mga pagkamulat sa kalagayang panlipunan mula sa civil society. Ang usapin ukol sa sustainable development at pagpapaikot ng mga bagay sa siklo ng kalikasan ay ilan sa mga mungkahi ng civil society na malugod namang tinanggap ng pamahalaan at ng mga nagnenegosyo.[29]

Telekomunikasyon bilang Teknolohiya ng Civil Society

Upang maitangi ang civil society mula sa tradisyonal na pulitika at makabagong ekonomiya, mahalagang tingnan ang konteksto ng pagsulpot ng post-modernong mga teknolohiya ng telekomunikasyon at impormasyon. Kung mga agham pantao ang sumuporta sa pag-aaral ng pulitika at mga agham pangkalikasan ang dinamo sa kaunlarang pang-ekonomiko, masasabing ang agham ng impormasyon at telekomunikasyon ang sumusuporta sa civil society.

Makikita ang bisa ng telekomunikasyon at impormasyon sa pakikibaka at pagpapabagsak sa nakaraang mga represibong rehimen na kumikitil sa mga karapatang pantao. Telekomunikasyon ang sumuporta sa mga nakibaka sa rehimeng

Marcos, gayundin laban sa apartheid sa Africa, at sa kasalukuyang pakikibaka ng mga aktibista sa Tsina. May lohika ng pagpapatibay sa sarili ang telekomunikasyon dahil maaaring ibunyag nito ang anumang pagsupil na susubukang ipataw rito. Kaya nga ang telekomunikasyon ang unang sinasakop ng mga nagkukudeta at ang telekomunikasyon din ang unang ipinasasara at ipinagbabawal ng alinmang represibong rehimen.

Higit na tumitindi ang papel ng telekomunikasyon sa pagsulong ng civil society pagkatapos maibagsak ang represibong rehimen. Dati-rati, sa mga plasa't kalsada lamang naipapahayag ng civil society ang kanilang mga adhikain. Bukod pa sa parlyamento sa kalsada, naging mahalaga na rin ang telebisyon at radyo upang maipahayag ang mga adhikain ng mga naisasaisantabi sa gilid ng lipunan. Sa radyo, higit na nakakabahagi sa diskurso ang mga mamamayan dahil wikang bernakyular ang ginagamit. Isa pa, ang kamulatan lamang sa talagang mga pangayayari ang binibigyang halaga sa radyo at ang katuturan ng sinasabi. Hindi gaanong mahalaga kung sino ang nagsasalita dahil hinid naman nakikita kung sino nga ang nagsasalita.

Ang Pribadong Larangan ng Indibidwal na Mamamayan

Magagawa lamang na publikong ipahayag ang iba't ibang punto-de-bista ng mamamayan kung may garantiya ang pribadong pamumuhay ng bawat isa sa simula't simula pa. Ibig sabihin, may pagkakataong linangin ng mga mamamayan ang kanilang sarili nang ayon sa sariling pasya. Bagaman may bahid ng indibidwalismo ng Kanluran ang ganitong pananaw, hindi pa rin maiwawaksi ang pagpapahalaga sa dignidad ng bawat tao na iba, bagaman hindi hiwalay, sa kalagayang panlipunan.

Maging sa pakikibahagi sa malawakang usaping pambayan, lumilitaw rin ang iba't ibang karasarinlan ng mga kasangkot ayon sa sektor at kilusan: kabataan, maralitang tagalunsod, mangingisda, mambubukid, manggagawa, gay o lesbian, peminista, environmentalists, "peaceniks", katutubo, at iba pa. Lahat ng sektor na ito ay nagbibigay ng kakanyahan sa mga kasangkot na kakaiba sa ibang mga sektor, bagaman parepareho silang isinasaisantabi ng lipunan. Nariyan, halimbawa, ang paggigiit ng mga peminista na bukod-tanging isyu ang kanilang ipinaglalaban na hindi maiuuwi sa larangan ng paggawa o karapatang pantao lamang.

May karapatan, kung gayon, ang mga mamamayan sa civil society na maging kaiba, at hindi lamang katulad ng sinumang bayaran ng sistemang pang-ekonomiko o sundalo ng burukrasya. Isang "pulitika ng pagpapahayag ng sarili" (politics of expression) ang lumilitaw sa larangan ng civil society na kakaiba sa "pulitika ng protesta" na kinasanayan noong dekada sitenta at otsenta.[30]

Pagkalegal ng mga Batas at Karapatang Pantao

Higit na nakikita ang pakikipagtalaban ng civil society sa estado sa larangan ng batas. Dito namumulatan na kailangan ng civil society ang isang estado na pinapatakbo nang ayon sa mga batas. At kahit di tumutupad ang estado sa mga batas na nilikha nito, kailangan pa rin ng isang estado na kikilala sa pagkaunibersal ng mga karapatang pantao. Hindi dahilan ang pagkakaiba ng mga kultura upang supilin ang mga karapatang pantao. Kung ganoon nga, maaari ring tutulan ang panunupil na ito nang ayon din sa kultural na kadahilanan. Halimbawa, hindi maaaring labagin ng Singapore ang karapatang pantao ng isang katulong na katulad

ni Flor Contemplacion nang hindi nagugulantang ang kolektibong konsyensya ng ibang mga bansa.

Sa kabilang dako, nagsisilbing sandigan ng mamamayan ang mga batas na likha ng lipunan at ang Unibersal na Deklarasyon ng mga Karapatang Pantao kung sakaling aabusuhin ng estado ang kanilang pagkatao. Hindi sana natuloy ang kumperensya sa Pilipinas ukol sa East Timor, halimbawa, kung walang husgadong napagsampahan ng kaso laban sa nagtangkang pigilin ang pulong. Pinatutunayan lamang ng pagkakatuloy ng kumperensya na ang isang bayang may civil society ay maaaring magpatupad ng batas laban sa kahit na sino; maging pangulo pa man siya ng bansa.

Gayunpaman, pasibo lamang ang papel ng mga hukuman pagdating sa pagpapatupad ng mga karapatang pantao. Ang mga pwersa pa rin ng civil society ang kailangang aktibong magsampa ng kaso upang subukan kung talaga nga bang ipapatupad ng pamahalaan ang sarilii nitong mga batas. Nagsisilbing timbangan lamang ang mga batas na magagamit ng mga mamamayan upang matupad ang katarungan para sa lahat. Subalit sa katapusan, ang mga mamamayan pa rin ang magpapasya kung gagamitin o isasaisantabi ang mga batas na ito.

Ang Pakikipagtalaban ng Civil Society sa Estado

Mapalad ang mga bansang may mga institusyong nagtataguyod ng civil society. Madalas, nagmumula sa civil society ang nahihirang na mga lider ng pamahalaan, at sila rin ang nangunguna sa kalakalan. Kaya nga makatutulong sa estado mismo at sa ekonomiya mismo ang pagkakaroon ng matipuno at masiglang civil society. Pinupunuan nito ang kakulangan ng estado at ng ekonomiya, at pinupuna rin upang magwasto.

Kung wala pang civil society dahil represibo ang estado, lumilikha ng lugar ang civil society sa pamamagitan ng mga espasyong maaari nitong kapitan. Sa mga panahon ng represibong rehimen, kumakanlong ang civil society sa mga simbahan, media, pamantasan at maging sa ilang negosyo. Subalit sa panunupil ng estado sa civil society, lalong nagiging bunyag ang pagkamapang-api ng pamahalaan dahil sa pagkalat ng balita sa pamamagitan ng media at usap-usapan. Ayon nga sa isang kasabihan: "May pakpak ang balita, may tenga ang lupa." Wala nga raw maitagong sikreto sa pamahalaan maging noong panahon ni Marcos, at kinailangan nitong magpalabas ng iba't ibang bersyon ng nabulgar na mga sikreto upang malito ang mga tao.[31]

KKK: Kilusan ng mga Karaniwang Kapwa-tao

Nakaugat ang civil society sa karaniwang pamumuhay. Simpleng pakikiharap at pakikipagkapwa at di gaanong kumplikadong mga transaksyon sa buhay ng karaniwang kapwa-tao. Kaya nga madalas na nilulutas niya ang pampulitika't pang-ekonomikong suliranin sa pamamagitan ng harap-harapang pakikipag-usap sa mga kasangkot. Higit na mahalaga ang pakikisama at pakikipagkapwa-tao. Kaya nga sa araw ng eleksyon, itinataguyod niya ang mga tumuring sa kanya bilang "kababayan, kaibigan at kapatid."[32] Gayundin, nagmumungkahi ang civil society ng isang ekonomiyang harapharapan (associative economics) na nakaugat sa lokal at pampurok na pakikipagkapwa.[33]

Subalit sa harap ng panlipunan at pang-istrukturang ugnayan ng mga tao, kung saan hindi na maaari ang harap-harapang pakikipag-usap, maaaring maging mahina ang tinig ng karaniwang tao. Kailangang palakasin ang kanyang boses sa pamamagitan ng pakikipagbuklod sa mga mayroon ding interes sa katarungan at kalayaan. Dito pumapasok ang pangangailangan sa higit na masinop na pagsusuri sa mga itinatatag na mga Kilusan ng mga Karaniwang Kapwa-tao.

Komunidad ng mga Karaniwang Kapwa-tao

Ang pinakapundamental na samahan ng mga karaniwang tao ay yaong sila mismo ang nagtatag sa pamamagitan ng pakikipagbigkis sa mga taong katulad nila ang interes. Nakaugat sila sa iisang komunidad, kaya malulutas ang suliranin sa pamamagitan ng harapharapang pakikipag-usap. Sa isang peace zone, bilang halimbawa, madaling mapagkasunduan ng magkakapitbahay na ilawan din ang kanilang mga bahay kung sakaling may isang bahay na magsindi ng ilaw sa gitna ng gabi, tanda na may nanghihimasok sa looban nitong huli. Kung may masamang-loob na nais manghimasok, ang buong komunidad ang makakakita sa kanya dahil hindi siya maaaring makapagtago sa dilim (Cantomanyog Peace Zone).

Subalit sa mga panahong bata-batalyong sundalo na ang kanilang kaharap, kailangan na ring palakasin ang kanilang boses sa tulong ng mga NGO na may kaakibat na tagapagpahayag sa media. Sa Sagada Peace Zone, halimbawa, madaling nakadalo at nakiramay ang Coalition for Peace at ang Presidential Peace Commission dahil ikinalat ng mga taga-Sagada ang panggugulo ng AFP at ng NPA sa pamamagitan ng mga dyaryo.

Gayunpaman, tagasuporta lamang ang mga tagalabas. Ang mismong mga namamahay sa komunidad ang nagpapasya sa kanilang buhay. Sa isang pag-aaral ng Institute for Popular Democracy, lumitaw na may palatandaan ang karaniwang tao sa mga "taong labas" at mga "taong loob."[34] Ang una ay ang mga kaiba sa kanila: nag-iingles, hindi nila kilala, may ibang punto, at kahinahinala ang kilos. Maaaring mga ahente sila ng pamahalaan, negosyo o NPA. Ang mga taong loob naman ay yaong mga kasangkot sa buhay ng komunidad, mga kasama at kautang-na-loob. Sila ang mga maaasahang dumamay sa panahon ng kagipitan dahil nakikisangkot sila sa pang-araw-araw na buhay.

Kasamahan ng mga Karaniwang Kapwa-tao o People's Organizations

Nagkakabuklod ang orihinal na komunidad upang matugunan ang kanilang magkakatulad na pangangailangan. Maaaring ito ay para maipalibing ang isang namatay, isaayos ang irigasyon sa bukid, lutasin ang isang suliraning pangkapayapaan o pangkapaligiran. Sa oras na malutas ang suliranin, naglalaho na rin ang samahan. Kailangan na naman ng panibagong isyu upang mapalabas ang mga mamamayan mula sa lungga ng kanilang tahanan. Gayunpaman, ang ganitong mga panandaliang bukluran ay nag-iipon ng higit na malalim na pagkaunawa sa pagkakomunidad ng mga kasangkot. Namumulatan na sila nga ay nananahan sa iisang bangka, sa isang balangay na maaaring umusad o lumubog ayon sa kung sila ay magtutulungan o magkakanya-kanya.

Mahalagang bigyang-pansin na sa pagtugon sa mga partikular na suliranin ng komunidad, hindi lamang mga pormal na institusyon ng baranggay ang

namamahala. May mga di pormal na lider sa komunidad na may impluwensya bagaman walang kapangyarihan. Sa kaso ng Sagada Peace Zone, bilang halimbawa, hindi lamang ang meyor at konsehal ang naging tagapagpadaloy ng kapayapaan. Kasangkot din ang isang nars, guro, anim na lider ng mga tribu, isang retiradong pari, isang lider ng samahan ng mga kababaihan, at ang kinatawan ng Department of Social Work and Development.

Kaya nga mahalaga ang paglilinaw na ginawa ng Institute for Popular Democracy sa pagitan ng "lakas" at ng "kapangyarihan."[35] Yaong may lakas ay may kakayanang makarating sa "may kapangyarihan." Itong huli ang siyang nakapangyayari, ang yumayari, at may awtoridad sa mga pangyayari sa komunidad. Ang malakas ay may kakayanang makiusap at makipag-ayusan sa mga may kapangyarihan. Tagapamagitan o tulay lamang siya patungo sa talagang may kapangyarihan. Malakas lamang ang civil society. Ang estado ang may kapangyarihan.

Kalipunan ng mga Karaniwang Kapwa-tao

Mahalaga ang prinsipyo ng pagkatagapamagitan ng mga NGO dahil maging sa malawakang konteksto ng panlipunang pakikisangkot, tinutupad ng mga NGO ang papel ng tagapamagitan. Sila ang tumatayong tulay sa pagitan ng mga PO o mga komunidad, sa isang banda, at ng pamahalaan at mga funding agencies, sa kabilang banda. Ang mga NGO ang may kakayanang gumawa ng mga pag-aaral at pagsusuri na inihahain nila sa mga tagalabas. Dahil na rin sa middle-class na katangian ng mga sumasapi sa NGO, nagiging tagaugnay sila ng mga naaapi at ng mga nagtatamasa.

May iba't ibang NGO na maaaring ihanay mula sa mga samahang sibikong katulad ng mga Jaycees at Soroptimists, hanggang sa simbahan mismo na itinuturing na pinakamalaki at pinakasinaunang NGO. Sa pagitan ng mga samahang ito ay ang tinataguriang mga Social Development Agencies na naglalayong isulong ang karaniwang buhay ng karaniwang tao. Marami silang usaping hinaharap katulad ng mga isyu sa pabahay, kasarian, kabataan, kalikasan, karapatang pantao, utang ng bansa, mga manggagawa, at iba pa. Kasabay nito, may iba't iba ring estratehiya ng pagtugon sa mga suliranin: advocacy, tuwirang pag-oorganisa, edukasyon, at pananaliksik. Pinagtutuunan nila ng pansin ang malawakang mga suliraning panlipunan na nakaugat sa di makatarungang balangkas ng lipunan.

Isinaayos ni Korten ang pagkakaiba-iba ng mga NGO sa pamamagitan ng ebolusyonaryong mga kategorya. Ayon sa kanya, maraming NGO ang nagsimula sa pakikiramay sa mga maralita at nasalanta ng kalikasan. Sa puntong ito, ang mga NGO ang tumatayong tagapagsagawa ng mga proyekto at tagatanggap lamang ang mga biktima ng lipunan o kalikasan. Madalian ang mga solusyong ibinibigay nang ayon sa madaliang mga pangangailangan: damit at pagkain ang madalas na iniaabuloy.

Subalit namumulatan ng mga nakikisangkot mismo na hindi pangmatagalan ang ganitong mga solusyon. Kaya nagsisimula sila ng mga proyekto na humihiling ng malalim na pakikisangkot sa komunidad. Sinusubukan nilang hanapin kung ano talaga ang pangangailangan at sinusubukang tugunan ito sa tulong ng mga mamamayan. Madalas na kaugnay sa kalusugan at edukasyon ang nagiging tulong nila. May higit na paggalang na lumilitaw sa kakayanan ng komunidad na magpasya sa kanilang kapalaran. Tagasuporta at tagaudyok lamang ang nagiging papel ng mga NGO.

Kaya nga lamang, hindi pa rin sapat ang mga solusyon sa larangan ng komunidad dahil nasa loob sila ng isang masalimuot na sistema ng lipunan. Nagkakaroon ng malalimang pagsusuri sa mga balangkas ng lipunan na umaapekto sa komunidad. Nagiging pambansa o panrehiyon ang pagsusuri; kailangan na rin ng higit na matagalan at pang-institusyong pagtugon sa mga mapang-aping balangkas. Dito nagsisimulang mabuo ang mga katipunang pulitikal na nag-uugnay sa pagbabago ng estado bilang sentro ng lipunan.

Sa isang higit na malawakang antas ng pagsusuri, iminungkahi ni Korten ang paglitaw ng mga kilusang isinasaalang-alang hindi lamang ang partikular na bansa o rehiyon, kundi ang buong planeta mismo. Kaya nga higit na matagalan ang kailangang pakikisangkot dahil kaugnay ito ng mismong uri ng pamumuhay ng mga tao, kasama na ang mga karaniwang tao at ang mga kasapi ng NGO. Humihiling ito ng koalisyong internasyonal dahil hindi sa isang rehiyon o bansa malulutas ang mga suliraning ito. Hinaharap nito ang panibagong uri ng pamumuhay na kaugnay ng ekolohiya, kasarian, karapatang pantao at kapayapaan.

Sa susunod na mga pahina, pagtutuunan ng pansin ang huling dalawang uri ng NGO, na higit ang epekto sa kasalukuyang pagsusuri.

Katipunan ng mga Karaniwang Kapwa-tao

Malalim ang pagkakaugat ng mga NGO sa kilusang pulitikal sa Pilipinas. Iniluwal sila ng pakikibaka laban sa batas-militar, kaya di maiiwasan ang kanilang kinasanayang pagnanais na mahuli ang estado bilang sentro ng kapangyarihan. Sa kasalukuyang pagdagsa ng ekonomiyang liberal sa daigdig, higit na nagiging mahalaga ang papel ng estado upang mapangalagaan ang mga mahihina. Isang malaking trahedya ang kasalukuyang nagaganap dahil sa pagyuko ng estado sa kapritso ng pandaigdigang ekonomiya na sumasakop sa kasuluksulukang likas at panlipunang yaman ng bansa.

Matindi ngayon ang pangangailangang sumali sa paligsahang pulitikal na naglalayong makibahagi sa pamamahala ng buong bansa. Dahil dito'y nagkakatipon ang dating magkakahiwalay na progresibong partidong pulitikal upang magtatag ng isang katipunan na makikipagpaligsahan sa pagatatayo ng isang malakas na estado at malakas na civil society.[36] Estado pa rin ang nakapangyayari sa pamamahala ng bansa; habang nanggagaling sa civil society ang lakas ng bayan na magmungkahi at pumuna sa estado nang ayon sa tunay na pangangailangan. Mahalaga ang mga mungkahi ng civil society dahil madalas na walang laman ang estado kundi ang bigat ng burukrasya. Mahalaga rin ang mga pagpuna ng civil society para sa mga pagkakataong nagiging mapang-abuso na ang estado.

Kaya nga walang kontradiksyong namamagitan, para sa katipunang ito, sa makapangyarihang estado at malakas na civil society. Pormal ang larangan ng pamamahala ng una, habang di pormal naman ang sa ikalawa. Makikita ang dinamikong ugnayan ng dalawang ito hindi lamang sa larangan ng mga komunidad (katulad ng nangyari sa Sagada Peace Zone), kundi gayon din sa malawakang larangan ng lipunan. Isang halimbawa rito ang pangangailangan at pagkabukas ng pamahalaan sa mga ideya ng civil society upang higit na maging epektibo ang pangangalaga sa pamayanan. Ang pang-NGOng diskurso ng people's empowerment at sustainable development ang pinakamatingkad na pagtanggap ng pormal na patakaran ng pamahalaan mula sa di pormal na larangan ng civil society.

Kaya nga lamang, bagaman sa katapusan ay pampulitika rin ang kahahantungan ng gawaing NGO dahil naihahanda ng huli ang mga mamamayan na makisangkot sa paggamit ng kapangyarihan, mahalagang linawin na magkaiba ang larangang ginagalawan ng partidong pulitikal at ng civil society. Ang una ay kaugnay ng mismong paghawak sa kapangyarihan ng estado na nagiging mahalagang kundisyon sa pagtubo ng civil society. Ang ikalawa ay kaugnay ng pagbabago ng mga panlipunang istruktura sa pang-araw-araw na buhay na siya ring kundisyon upang magkaroon ng pagkakataong maiboto sa kapangyarihan ang mga kandidatong may pakikisangkot sa mga karaniwang kapwa-tao. Ayon nga sa IPD:

> Marahil isang paraan upang mapatindi ang isyu [sa pagitan ng mga katipunang pulitikal at ng civil society] ay ang pagtataya na ang demokratisasyon ng lipunan mismo — ng mga panlipunang institusyon at pangkapangyarihang ugnayan — ang siyang demokratikong agenda ng civil society.[37]

Ito raw ang dahilan kung bakit madalas na lumalampas sa estado, partido pulitikal, panlipunang sektor at antas sa lipunan ang mga usapin sa civil society. Ito ang mga usaping katulad ng pagkapantay ng bawat kasarian at mapangalagang pagpapaunlad. Maidadagdag na rito ang ukol sa karapatang pantao at kapayapaan.

Isang mahalagang pampulitikang papel na ginagampanan ng civil society, halimbawa, ang pagtataguyod at pangangalaga sa malinis at maayos na eleksyon. Kahit gaano pa kaorganisado at katapat ng mga kandidato ng karaniwang kapwa-tao, kung madadaya naman sila sa bilangan, balewala rin ang pagsisikap ng kanilang mga partido pulitikal na sumali sa eleksyon. Gayundin, natutuklasan ng mga mananaliksik na habang hindi nagbabago ang mga panlipunang ugnayan na nagtatali sa karaniwang tao sa mga patron ng lipunan, ang mga patron pa rin ang kanilang iboboto, kahit gaano kaganda ng plataporma ng mga alternatibong kandidato.[38] Mahalagang makisangkot sa pang-araw-araw na buhay, kung gayon, upang maimpluwensiyahan ang pagboto ng karaniwang kapwa-tao. At ang mga kasangkot sa civil society ang may pagkakataong umugat sa pang-araw-araw na pamumuhay na ito.

Kaya nga iminungkahi ni John Carroll, sa kanyang madalas gamiting definisyon ng civil society na kailangang "itulak, sa madaling salita, ang sistemang pulitikal mula sa labas." Itong labas na ito ang larangan ng civil society. Ayon sa kanya:

> Subalit maraming tagamasid ang kasalukuyang umaayon na sa daigdig ng mga umuunlad na bansa, dumating na ang sandali para sa "civil society," sa organisadong pamayanan, na itaya ang sarili sa pagtutulak ng reporma sa lupa, ng kalusugan, ng proteksyon ng kapaligiran, at ng solusyon sa iba pang mabibigat na suliraning pinapasan ng mga tao. Sa madaling salita, itulak ang sistemang pulitikal mula sa labas.[39]

Kaya nga may pagkakomplementaryo ang kalipunan ng mga NGO at ang katipunan ng mga partido pulitikal na nagnanais tugunan ang mga pangangailangan ng karaniwang kapwa-tao.

Koalisyon ng mga Karaniwang Kapwa-tao

Isang mahalagang karanasan ng mga NGO at ng progresibong mga partido ang pagbubuo ng mga koalisyon na umiikot sa mahahalagang isyung katulad ng

repormang agraryo, utang ng bayan, at ang dating koalisyon laban sa base-militar ng Estados Unidos. Muli, mahaba ang naging kasaysayan ng pagbubuo ng mga koalisyon na maiuugat din sa mga panahong pinagkaisahang ibagsak ang rehimen ng batas militar at awtoritaryanismo. Kaya nga may sapat na mga aral mula sa karanasang ito upang magkatulungan ang mga progresibong kilusan para sa karaniwang kapwa-tao.

Bagaman may pagkapanandalian ang nasabing mga koalisyong ayon sa kabuluhan ng isyu, sa mga ito'y nagkakaroon ng pagkakataong magkakilakilala ang iba't ibang grupong magkakatulad ang layunin. Nararanasan nilang makipagkapwa at bumuo ng konsensus na lampas pa sa adyendang pulitikal ng mga organisasyon. Kaya nga halos hindi raw kapanipaniwala na hindi na tinatanggap ang vanguardismo at dominasyon ng iba sa koalisyong katulad ng CPAR.[40]

Ayon sa ulat ng isang beterana sa paghubog ng mga koalisyon:

> Ang hamon ay ang pakikinig kung paano nagkakatulad ang mga punto nang namamalayan din kung paano sila nagkakaiba. Tinuturuan ako ng karanasang ito kung paano maging eksakto at malinaw ang sariling pag-iisip dahil bilang isa sa mga tagapagpadaloy, pananagutan ko ang siguruhin na lahat ng kasapi sa Forum ay maaangkin ang posisyon, mabibigkas ito nang malinaw at maiuugnay ito sa kanilang sariling pananaw at mga prinsipyo.[41]

Dahil nanggagaling mula sa iba't ibang mga punto-de-bista ang mga kasapi sa koalisyon, mahalaga ang pagpapadaloy ng talakayan upang makarating sa punto na maaaring tanggapin ng bawat isa ang pagkakatulad at pagkakaiba ng mga pananaw. Makikita rito ang lohika ng diskurso kung saan pangangatwiran ang namamayani at hindi dahas at kapritso. Ayon kay Cesar Cala, sa kanyang akdang ukol sa mga koalisyon, "pinagagalaw [ng mga koalisyon] ang mga progresibong grupo upang makita ang pagbubuo ng mga koalisyon hindi bilang isang serye ng di magkakaugnay na pantaktikang pagsisikap kundi isang patuloy na diyalogo kaugnay ng ibang mga grupo't indibidwal, upang mabigyang kahulugan at maitaguyod ang magkakatulad na layunin at mga alternatibo."[42]

Mula sa mga karanasang ito, nagkakaroon ang mga kasapi ng kakayanang mamahala nang ayon sa komprehensibong pamantayan. Ayon kay Cala, nilayon ng Partido ng Bayan na ang sinikap itatag na koalisyon noong 1985 ay maging katulad ng isang alternatibong pamahalaan.[43] Bagaman hindi nagtagumpay ang pagsisikap dahil sa suliranin ng pwersa at ideyolohikong tuligsaan, maaaring masundan ang ganitong estilo ng pagtitipon ng kapangyarihan sa konteksto ng mga isyu't suliraning hinaharap ng mga karaniwang kapwa-tao.

Mahalagang sangkap, kung gayon, ang pagpili sa mga isyu na maaaring matanggap ng lahat. Upang tumagal ang koalisyon, kailangang kasangkot din sa mga ito ang mismong pag-iral ng pamayanan, kagaya nga ng mga usaping kaugnay ng kapaligiran, kasarian, kapayapaan, at karapatang pantao.

Mahalaga ring bigyang-diin ang proseso ng pag-abot sa konsensus. Mararating lamang ang isang demokratikong pamayanan at pamahalaan kung hindi taliwas ang pamamaraan sa layunin nito. Walang garantiyang makararating sa demokrasya ang pamamaraang marahas at dogmatiko. Sa kabilang banda, maaaring magtalaban sa larangan ng pangangatwiran ang mga koalisyong handang magbigay ng katwiran at sumagot sa mga pagtutol nang ayon din sa katwiran.

Sa pamamagitan ng mga diskurso, hindi na kailangang paghiwalayin pa ang adyenda ng partido at ang layunin ng civil society. Anumang agenda ay maaaring ihain upang pag-usapan at sinumang may nais pag-usapan ay maaaring maghain ng sariling adyenda upang mapag-usapan ng lahat nang ayon sa katwiran at hindi lamang dahil sa awtoridad, salapi, at kapangyarihan. Sa ganitong konteksto, muling iiral ang "kawalang dahas ng pinakamagaling na kamulatan sa talagang dapat mangyari" sa pamayanan.

Paglalagom: Ukol sa Kilusan ng mga Karaniwang Kapwa-tao

Batay sa iba't ibang pagkakahubog ng mga NGO na nagmumula sa mga komunidad hanggang sa mga koalisyon, malinaw na di mailalagay sa iisang kategorya ang galaw ng mga NGO sa civil society. Ang malawakang pagturing sa kanila bilang mga "kilusan" ay higit na makatutulong na unawain ang kanilang dinamismo. Mayroon silang kakayanang umangkop sa iba't ibang sitwasyon, lokal man o internasyonal. Nagiging tagapagpadaloy sila di lamang ng mga usapan kundi ng mga kakayanan at kayamanang mula sa mga mamamayan at maging ibang bansa. Bilang tagapamagitan sa mga istruktura ng lipunan, iniuugnay nila ang iba't ibang antas at sektor tungo sa kabutihang sumasakop sa lahat.

Dahil epektibo ang kilusang NGO, maraming uri nito ang lumitaw. Maging ang pamahalaan ay nagtatag ng sariling NGO desk, gayundin ang mga negosyong nagkakaroon ng sariling mga NGO. Mahalagang bigyang diin, kung gayon, ang bukod-tanging papel ng mga NGO na nagtataguyod sa pagsulong ng kaunlarang makatao (development NGOS). "Social development agencies" (SDA) ang turing nila sa sarili, "tagapamagitang mga samahan na naglilingkod sa pangangailangan ng mga pangunahing samahan gayong, kasabay nito, ay idinidiin ang pagkakaroon ng kapangyarihan sa mga maralita at pakikibahaging popular."[44]

Sa pagdagsa ng mga NGO, matindi ang tukso na lumaki at maging kasimbigat na rin ito ng burukrasya ng pamahalaan. Kaya nga nagbababala ang mga NGO laban sa mga itinatatag ng pamahalaan. Maging ang mga samahang itinatag ng dating Pangulong Aquino noong nasa pamahalaan pa siya ay napagsuspetsahang pakikipanguntsaba ("cooptation") ng pamahalaan sa lakas ng kilusang NGO.[45] Marami na ring NGO ang bumagsak dahil sa bigat ng burukrasya. Nawala ang kanilang kakayanang tumugon nang mabilis at malikhain sa pangangailangan ng pamayanan. Sa pamamagitan ng pagtataya sa payak na pamumuhay, higit na naging malapit ang mga NGO sa kanilang mga kasangkot na karaniwang kapwa-tao.

Mga NGO at ang Iba pang mga Sektor ng Civil Society

Bagaman nangunguna ang pagkakakilala sa mga NGO bilang bahagi ng civil society, mayroon pang bahagi itong huli na higit na nauna. Ito ang mga simbahan, pamantasan, mass media, at maging ilang negosyong madalas nakikipagtulungan sa mga simulain ng NGO. Dahil nakikibahagi at sumusuporta sila sa pag-usad ng kalagayan ng mga maralita at naisasaisantabi, mayroon silang malasakit sa mga gawain ng NGO.

Ang mga Simbahan

Isa sa mga natatanging gawain ng simbahan sa kasalukuyang panahon ang pagtataguyod sa isang uri ng "pananampalatayang nagpapatupad ng katarungan" ayon na nga sa mga deklarasyon ng simbahang Katoliko mismo. Naitatatag ang mga panlipunang aral ng simbahan sa pamamagitan ng mga Saligang Komunidad ng magkakapit-bahay na samasamang nagmumuni sa panawagan ng Banal na Kasulatan para sa kasalukuyang panahon. Lumilitaw ang mga suliranin ng lipunan at ng mga Indibidwal as pagbabahaginan ng kwentong buhay ng mga kasapi sa komunidad. Nagkakakilala ang bawat isa at nasusuri ang mga suliranin sa tulong ng buong grupo.

Bukod pa sa mga Saligang Komunidad, patuloy rin ang mga institusyon ng simbahan sa pag-aalaga ng mga maralita at ng mga naisasaisantabi sa gilid ng lipunan, isang tradisyonal na apostolado. At katulad ng ibang NGO na nagsimula sa pag-aabuloy sa nangangailangan, umunlad din ang mga institusyon ng simbahan tungo sa mapagpalaya at makatarungang pakikisangkot sa mga usaping panlipunan. Maging ang mga obispo at kaparian ay naglalakas-loob na ibanyuhay ang mabuting balita ng kaligtasan ng tao laban sa mapang-aping balangkas ng lipunan.

Mga Pamantasan

Edukasyon ang isa sa itinuturing na pasaporte para sa isang maalwang buhay. Nagbibigay ito ng pagkakataong makaangat ang walang kapital sa pamamagitan ng angking talino at galing. Isang mahalagang institusyong tumutulong sa kaunlaran ang mga pamantasan.

Subalit ang edukasyon ay di lamang tulay patungo sa kaunlaran. Habang nasa loob ng pamantasan, nagkakaroon ng pagkakataong magsuri at maglingkod ang mga mag-aaral sa mga di gaanong nagkaroon ng pagkakataon sa buhay. Namumulat sila sa panlipunang kalagayan, at nagkakaroon ng pagkakataong makiisa at makilala ang ganitong konteksto ng kanilang pag-aaral.

Sa ilang pamantasan, may mga institusyon na nagsisilbing tulay sa pagitan ng teoryang pinag-aaralan at realidad ng lipunan. Dito nabubuo ang loob ng kabataan na maglingkod sa bayan. At upang hindi magmistulang kagamitan lamang ang mga maralita para sa eksperimento't karanasan ng pamantasan, sinusubukan din nitong makatulong sa kanila sa pamamagitan ng mga pananaliksik na may silbi sa kanilang pamumuhay. Sa ganitong mga ugnayan pumapasok ang mga panlipunang katanungan sa mga teoryang pinag-aaralan.

Ang Mass Media

Hindi maikakaila ang kapangyarihan ng mass media sa kasalukuyang panahon. Sa kanyang akdang *Inside Southeast Asia*, napansin ng antropologong si Niels Mulder na:

> Sa timog-silangang Asya, matatagpuan natin ang isang lumilitaw na edukadong publiko — marahil ang pinakamahalagang elemento ng isang civil society — na kulang pa ang laki upang makalikha ng epektibong opinyong publikong pulitikal. Subalit madalas, nais ng mga kasapi nito na makalaya mula sa isang dinastiya o neokolonyal na kaayusan ng estado kung saan iilan ang may pribilehiyo. Naghahangad sila ng pamamalakad ng

di-personal na batas at etika sa pulitika, sa buhay publiko. Dahil sumusulat sila sa mga pahayagan, at aktibo sa mga NGO, madalas naririnig ang kanilang boses.[46]

Para sa mga NGO na kabilang sa middle class na nakagagamit ng wikang banyaga sa mga pahayagan, nagsisilbing timbangan ng katarungan ang media upang maisiwalat ang pang-aapi habang pinupuri yaong mga tumutulong sa pag-usad ng sambayanan. Ginigising nito ang mga natutulog na mga lingkod-bayan at pinasasalamatan yaong may malasakit sa kapakanan ng publiko. Sa pamamagitan ng mga editoryal at liham sa pahayagan, naipapahayag at naibubunyag ang mga adhikain at pangangailangan ng sambayanan. May ilang pahayagan pa nga na sadyang kumikiling sa kapakanan ng maralita.

Sa deklarasyon ng mga NGO ukol sa malikhaing tugon sa globalisasyon ng civil society, kinilala ang halaga ng media sa pagpapahayag ng adyenda ng civil society. Sinusubukan nilang magtatag ng sariling pahayagan upang magkaroon ng pagkakataong makabahagi ang civil society sa pampublikong diskurso.[47]

Mga Pundasyong Itinatatag ng mga Negosyante

Hindi na maikakaila ang ambag ng mga negosyante sa mga samahang nais iusad ang kalagayan ng mga maralita. Hindi na rin masasabi na basta pag-aabuloy lamang ang ginagawa nila mula sa mga labis na kinikita mula sa kapitalismo. Maraming NGOng itinatag ng mga negosyante ang nagsisikap ring maging sentro ng kaunlaran ang mga taong naisasaisantabi.

Maraming pansariling motibo ang mga negosyante upang magtatag ng sariling NGO. Nariyan ang pag-iwas sa buwis, ang pagpapaanunsyo ng pangalan ng kompanya, ang pangangalaga sa sariling mga ariarian laban sa bandalismo, ang tunay na pagnanais na mapaganda ang kapaligiran ng kanilang negosyo. Mayroon ding pangmatagalang mga layunin katulad ng pagkakaroon ng mabuting larawang inihaharap sa komunidad. Ninanais ng ganitong mga gawain na magkaroon ng makataong mukha ang sistema ng kapitalismo.

Bagaman hindi nababago ang sistemang pang-ekonomiko, nakatutulong pa rin ito sa paglutas sa pandaigdigang mga usaping katulad ng kapaligiran at kasarian. May ilan pa ngang pumapasok sa pag-oorganisa sa mga maralita (Mondragon) at mayroon namang sumusuporta sa kabuhayan ng mga komunidad (PBSP). Kailangan nga lamang na magkaroon ng bukas na pananaw upang makita na sa kalaunan, maaaring umunlad ang mga pundasyong ito tungo sa higit na malawakang pagpapatupad sa pagpapakamakatao ng mga balangkas ng lipunan.

Pagtupad sa Layunin at Proseso ng Civil Society

Mahalagang bigyang-diin na hindi mapapabilang sa pamantayan ng civil society ang lahat ng simbahan, pamantasan, media, at maging ang mga NGO mismo. Kinakailangan pa ring ipakipaglaban ang layunin at proseso ng civil society sa iba't ibang bahagi ng lipunan. Hindi lahat ng simbahan, pamantasan, media at NGO ay naglalayon at talagang tumutulong sa pag-usad ng kalagayan ng mga maralita. At kahit tumutulong na sila sa pagtupad ng layuning ito, hindi nangangahulugang naaayon sa pamantayan ng post-modernong civil society ang proseso ng pagtupad

sa mga layuning ito. Para sa kasalukuyang pananaw sa civil society, mahalaga ang demokratikong proseso ng pagpapasya.

Pagbabantay sa Prosesong Demokratiko

Mahalagang prinsipyo ng civil society ang pagpapatupad sa mga proseso ng pakikibahagi ng lahat na kasangkot sa isang desisyon. Masasabi natin na ang prosesong ito ang ambag ng civil society sa demokratisasyon ng lipunan. Sa katunayan, madalas nababanggit sa NGO Code of Ethics ang mga salitang diyalogo, pagkabukas-loob at paggalang sa kapwa.[48]

Kasabay ng pagbabantay sa sarili, binabantayan din ng civil society ang iba pang mga institusyong katulad ng pamahalaan at ng pagnenegosyo upang maging sibil, at hindi arbitraryo, ang mga pagpapasya — lalo na kung magkakaroon ito ng epekto sa buhay ng maralita. Isa sa mga natuklasan ng pag-aaral ni Allan Alegre sa pampulitikang konteksto ng mga NGO, halimbawa, ay ang

> ... pagpapahalaga ng mga NGO sa demokratikong katangian ng mga organisasyong pampulitikal na kanilang nakakaugnayan. Dahil sa tunay na pagtataya ng NGO sa pagbibigay-kapangyarihan at tunay na pakikibahagi, nagiging maingat ang mga ahensya ng panlipunang kaunlaran sa mga samahang pulitikal na may anumang pagkukulang sa talagang pagtalima sa porma at nilalaman ng demokrasya.[49]

Makikita rin ang demokratikong aspeto ng mga NGO sa patuloy nilang pagtatatag at pagtataguyod ng mga kooperatiba na tumatangan sa prinsipyong "isang tao isang boto," gaano man kaliit ng sosyo ninuman sa pondo ng kooperatiba. Sa kooperatiba, ibinabalik ang tubo ng puhunan at sinisikap na makatayo sa sariling pondo nang hindi kinakain ng ganid na lohika ng pandaigdigang ekonomiya.

Sa puntong ito higit na lumilinaw ang definisyon ng civil society bilang bahagi ng sektor na non-governmental at non-profit. Mayroon itong pagkilala sa sariling hangganan dahil ang pananatili sa mga hangganang ito ang nagsisilbing ambag ng civil society sa proseso ng demokratisasyon, kung saan ang direksyon at proseso ng nilalayong ideyal na lipunan ay hindi maaaring ang umiiral na sistema ng kapangyarihan at pananalapi ang magtakda. Hindi nagpapalamon ang mga NGO sa lohika ng kasalukuyang mga sistema ng pamahalaan at negosyo kung kaya maaari pa silang magkaroon ng tuntungan para punahin at paunlarin ang kalagayan ng mga maralita at iba pang naisasaisantabi sa lipunan.

Pagbibigay-diin sa mga Samahan ng Karaniwang Kapwa-tao o People's Organizations

Bagaman nabanggit na ang usaping ito sa ikalimang bahagi ng kasalukuyang pagtalakay, mahalagang ulitin ang halaga ng mga samahang nakaugat sa mga komunidad ng karaniwang kapwa- tao dahil ang kanilang kaunlaran ang sukatan ng tagumpay at kabiguan ng civil society. Maaaring umunlad nga ang kabuhayan at kapangyarihan ng mga karaniwang tao, kung naging mapang-api naman at di demokratiko ang kanilang pamamaraan at uri ng pamumuhay na kinahantungan, masasabi pa ring nabigo ang mga kasapi ng civil society sa kanilang pag-unlad.

Isa rin sa mga sukatan ng tagumpay ng civil society ang pagdami ng mga kasapi. At kung demokratiko sila, isang malaking pwersa ito na maaaring maging sanhi ng demokratikong kaunlaran. Kaya nga nilalayon, ng mga social development agencies lalo na, na maging kapartner at di lang kliyente ang mga samahang mula sa komunidad. Masasabing natupad na ang mga adhikain ng social development agencies, kung ang kanilang mga kasamahang organisasyon ay nakatamo na ng sumusunod na mga katangian: demokratiko na ang organisasyon, aktibo at may kakayanan ang mga lider, nagsasarili sa pinansya, at kaya nang paunlarin ang sarili sa pamamagitan ng pakikisangkot at pakikibahagi sa ibang mga samahan.[50]

Ang mga samahang ganito ang layunin mismo ng civil society. Hindi sila ginagamit lamang upang makakalap ng pondo o ng boto para sa pansariling interes ng mga pulitiko o negosyante. Dito nagiging mahalaga ang salitang "kapwa-tao". Kung uunlad ang ating mga kababayan kapalit ng paglaho ng kakayanang makipagkapwa, hindi masasabing may pag-unlad — bagkus ay umurong pa nga — ang ating bayan.

Awtonomiya mula sa mga Ahensyang Tagapagtaguyod ng Pondo

Hindi maikakaila ang halaga ng pananalapi sa pagpapatakbo ng Kalipunan ng mga Karaniwang Kapwa-tao. Sa katunayan, nagbabago ang hubog ng mga NGO dahil sa pandaigdigang suportang pinansyal sa post-modernong mga usaping katulad ng kababaihan, kapaligiran, kapayapaan, at karapatang pantao. Upang maiwasan ang di sinasadyang pagkakahubog na ito, may bahagi sa NGO Code of Ethics na hinggil sa pakikipag-ugnayan nila sa mga ahensyang nagbibigay ng pondo.

Isinasaad dito ang pakikibahagi ng mga partner na ahensya sa mga layunin at ebalwasyon ng mga proyekto ng NGO. Mahalagang ang mga layunin ng NGO ay naibabahagi sa ibang bansa dahil bukod pa sa pagpapalawak sa abot-tanaw ng mga ahensyang nagpopondo, pagkakataon din itong ipatupad ang demokratikong pagbabahaginan ng impormasyon at kayamanan. Sa pamamagitan ng prinsipyo ng pakikibahagi (participation) na isang pundamental na patakaran ng mga NGO, makaaasa silang maabot ang kanilang mga layunin.

Paglalagom sa mga Definisyon ng Civil Society sa Pilipinas

Sa daloy ng talakayan sa papel na ito, lumitaw ang ilang pagpapakahulugan sa civil society sa Pilipinas. Mula sa kasaysayan ng konsepto ng civil society, mababanaagan ang ilang prinsipyong ginagamit sa Pilipinas: pagiging sibilisado, etikal, hindi burukratiko, hindi lang para sa kapangyarihan o kayamanan, at ang mahalagang papel ng mamamayan sa pamamahala ng sariling buhay. Binigyang-diin din ang pagmamalasakit ng civil society sa mga pampubliko at universal na usaping katulad ng kasarian, kapaligiran, kapayapaan, at karapatang pantao. Subalit hindi uusad ang civil society tungo sa mga ideyal na ito kung hindi makikipagbuklod ang bawat isa. Malawak ang sakop ng pagkakabuklod, mula sa mga baseng komunidad ng mga karaniwang kapwa-tao hanggang sa pandaigdigang mga samahang nagtataguyod ng mga unibersal na usaping pantao. Tinukoy rin dito ang halaga ng malaya at pantay-pantay na talakayan bilang pamantayan ng civil society, lalo na kung ihahambing ito sa kapangyarihang pamantayan ng pamahalaan at sa salaping pamantayan naman ng ekonomiya.

Bawat civil society ay iba ang porma at usapin. May mga bansa nga raw sa Europa na ang mga karapatan ng mga hayop ang higit na umaabala sa civil society. Sa Tsina, hindi pa gaanong kilala ang civil society bagaman may nagsisimula nang magmuni ukol rito. Mahalagang bigyang-diin, kung gayon, ang pang-ekonomiko at pampamahalaang konteksto ng civil society sa Pilipinas upang higit na makilala ang mga hangganan at kakayanan ng sektor na ito ng lipunan.

"Philippines 2000" bilang Konteksto ng Civil Society sa Pilipinas

Ang proyektong pangkaunlaran ng kasalukuyang pamahalaan, ang "Philippines 2000," ay ibinabanderang yutopya na ang layunin ay maging kapantay ang Pilipinas ng mga kapit-bahay nito sa Asya. Tinutupad ang programa sa pamamagitan ng pag-aalok sa mayayamang bansa ng mga insentibong pangkalakal. Kaya madalas, mga dayuhan ang nagtataya ng kapital at tumutukso na ipagbili na lamang sa kanila, sa higit na malaking halaga, ang mga ariarian ng mga magsasaka at maliliit na negosyante.

Alinsunod sa ideyolohiya ng globalisasyon, malayang pinapapasok ang produkto ng ibang bansa kahit nagiging kakumpetensiya na sila ng mga katutubong produkto. Maging ang paglikas ng mga manggagawa sa ibang bansa, na nagbubunga ng pagkawatak ng mga pamilya, ay nagiging alay sa globalisasyon. Sunud-sunuran ang pamahalaan, kung gayon, sa dikta ng mga negosyong multinasyonal.

Pagkakaugat sa Kultura

Bilang tugon sa hamong ito, nagpulong ang ilang kasapi ng civil society noong Setyembre 1997 at dalawang magkaugnay na paksa ang binigyan nila ng diin: ang ukol sa pagkawasak ng pangkulturang tradisyong bayan at ang ukol sa mapangalagang pagpapaunlad. Ipinagtatanggol ng una ang balwarte ng civil society habang isinusulong ng ikalawa ang pangmatagalang kaunlaran, at pareho silang nakaugat sa lokal na komunidad. Sa pagdidiin sa lokal na interes ng karaniwang kapwa-tao, tinatapatan ng civil society ang ideyolohiya ng globalisasyon.

Lumilitaw ang kahalagahan ng kultura sa panahong hinahamon ito ng ibang mga pananaw sa buhay. Higit na nagiging mulat ang tao sa kanyang sarili kung may nagpapatingkad sa pagkakaiba niya sa dayuhan. Kaya nga sa harap ng panibagong ideyolohiya na ang pagpapakatao ay sinusukat sa paggamit ng salapi, malakas ang tuksong magpadala na lamang sa agos, o kaya'y tumutol dahil hindi maaaring tanggapin ng katutubong kultura ang panibagong ideyolohiya. Napipilitan ang katutubong kultura, kung gayon, na pagmunihan ang tunay na sarili at kung ano nga bang uri ng lipunan ang nais nilang pamuhayan.[51]

Napapag-usapan sa pang-araw-araw na buhay ang pagkapilipino ng mga Pilipino dahil sa hamon ng globalisasyon. Dulot ito, sa isang banda, ng mga migranteng napipilitang mamuhay at magtrabaho sa ibang bansa, at sa kabilang banda naman, ng dayuhang mga kapitalista na nagpapakilala ng bagong mga produktong tagapagdala ng bagong kultura. Upang hindi maging sabog ang kulturang ito, nilalayon ng civil society na "maiangkop ang pang-ekonomikong pamumuhay sa higit na malawakang buhay ng komunidad at maging katugma ito ng pang-ispiritwal at pangkulturang pagpapahalaga [ng karaniwang kapwa-tao]."[52]

Kaunlaran at Pakikipagkapwa

Tutol ang civil society sa walang patumangging pagbibigay sa mga dayuhan ng karapatang gamitin ang likas na kayamanan ng bansa nang hindi isinasaalang-alang ang mga katutubong nananahan dito. Mahalaga, kung gayon, ang konsepto ng "komunidad" at "habitat" sa usapin ng civil society.[53] Sa pagkakaroon ng ekonomiyang nakaugat sa ekolohiya, higit na mapangangalagaan ang interes ng mga karaniwang kapwa-taon sa komunidad. Dahil isinasaalang-alang ang kanilang kapakanan, magkakaroon din sila ng tunay na malasakit sa kalagayan ng kapaligiran dahil sila ang unang maaapektuhan ng kawalan, pananatili, o pag-unlad nito.

May mungkahi si Nicanor Perlas, halimbawa, na isang harapharapang uri ng ekonomiya na ang pakikipagkapwa-tao ang higit na malawakang konteksto ng pagnenegosyo.[54] Iminungkahi rin ng Asian Social Institute na maging kasosyo ang mga lokal na komunidad sa larangan ng pangangalakal upang higit na mabigyang-diin ang pananagutan sa kapakanan ng kapaligiran. At idinidiin nila na hindi lamang teorya ang mga mungkahing ito. Napatunayan na raw sa pamamagitan ng pag-eeksperimento sa ilang lugar sa Pilipinas, na hindi ang pwersa ng palengke lamang ang nagdidikta sa presyo ng produkto. Palagi nang kasangkot ang harapharapang pakikipagkapwa ng tao, na isinasaalang-alang ang tunay na pangangailangan ng tao, katarungan, katatagan ng komunidad, at kalusugan ng kapaligiran.[55]

Balewala ang kaunlaran sa ekonomiya kung isasakripisyo nito ang pagkakapwa-tao. Maraming bansa ang nawawalan ng kabuluhan sa buhay dahil kinain na ng salapi ang kanilang tunay na sarili. Sinusukat na nila ang sarili at ang kapwa nang ayon sa sukatang ekonomiko. Sa katapusan ng maghapong pagsisilbi sa ekonomiya, naiiwan silang hapo at talunan dahil nalimutan na ang kaligayahang natatamo lamang sa kandungan ng pagkakapwa-tao.

Solidaridad

Kasabay na kasangkot sa Kilusan ng mga Karaniwang Kapwa-tao hindi lamang ang mga lokal na samahan kundi ang mga internasyunal na kilusan na unti-unting nagkakaisa at nagkakabuklod upang tutulan ang pang-ekonomikong globalisasyon sa pandaigdigang antas. Nais ipabatid ng mga kilusang ito na layunin ng lahat ang paglutas sa pandaigdigang krisis sa kapaligiran dahil kasangkot nito ang lahat; maging ang mga korporasyong multinasyonal. Para sa ikabubuti ng lahat, kung gayon, ang paggalang sa mga lokal na komunidad ng mga karaniwang kapwa-tao. Sa mga lokal na komunidad matatagpuan ang mga likas at pantaong kayamanan na siyang sumasangkap sa kaunlaran.

Katulad ng isang sandwich na iniipit ang ideyolohiya ng globalisasyon, nilalayon ng Kilusan ng mga Karaniwang Kapwa-tao na harapin nang pailalim ang suliraning ito sa pamamagitan ng lokal na pakikibaka ng mga komunidad, habang sinusuportahan sila sa ibabaw ng pang-internasyonal na solidaridad ng mga Kilusan ng mga Karaniwang Kapwa-tao. Mapapansin sa mga komperensya ng mga NGO ang mga dayuhang nakikiisa sa malalalim na suliraning lokal at pandaigdig.

Nananahan tayong lahat sa iisang planeta. Mahalaga ang pakikisangkot upang malutas ang pandaigdigang mga suliranin. Hinihiling ng pakikisangkot na ito ang pagsasaalang-alang sa mga tunay na pangangailangan ng karaniwang kapwa-tao.

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Building Civil Society at the Grassroots
The Philippine Community Organizing Experience

Context of Community Organizing

In 1994, I was part of two distinct but interrelated processes. At the regional level, the Christian Conference of Asia-Urban Rural Mission (CCA-URM) conducted a review of its work since 1989. CCA-URM was a key player in the formation of the ecumenical training and organizing program called Asian Committee for People's Organization (ACPO). ACPO supported for many years what was then the Philippine Ecumenical Committee for Community Organization (PECCO) and similar community organizing (CO) programs in Asia. In the process of the review, I was part of the evaluation team that visited different Asian countries and talked to many organizers and social activists.

At the national level, I was also part of a group of young and old community organizers and development workers from the Agency for Community Education Services (ACES), Community Organizing of the Philippine Enterprise (COPE), Community Organizing, Training, Advocacy and Information Network (CO-TRAIN), PEACE Foundation, Inc., Kaisahan tungo sa Kaunlaran ng Kanayunan at Repormang Pansakahan, Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas (PhilDHRRA), and Partnership for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development Services (PARRDS) who assembled for the Rural CO Forum (RCOF). The RCOF conducted a one-year-and-a-half process of consultations participated in by some 200 NGOs whose work covers 3,000 barangays in 50 provinces. The RCOF reviewed the state of the art and state of theorizing of organizing work, particularly in the rural areas.

Both review processes reexamined the context and larger social canvas of community organizing work and identified key trends and their implications. These global, regional and domestic changes are complex and varied. But there are key trends which are most relevant to the shaping of the terrain of rural community organizing into the 21ST century. Borrowing heavily from the results of both the CCAURM and RCOF review processes as well as the "living discussions" among the many organizers and development workers, the following trends seem to be irreversible yet open to the possibility that hitherto secondary and less obvious factors may become crucial at some future time.

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Globalization and Regionalization

The process of globalization (and regionalization) is driven ever more rapidly by technology, especially of telecommunications, and by finance and trade. The dominant players are the transnational corporations (TNCs) rather than the national states. Still, some countries play a more dominant role and benefit more than others. Also, there is a "changing face and color of capital" as Asian TNCs other than Japanese compete more actively with TNCs from North America and Europe.

Globalization and regionalization tend to undermine the notion that the nation-state is the main integrating institution and locus of power. It also forces nationalism to redefine itself if it is to still play a progressive role. Compared to the TNCs and economic institutions, the regional structures for states and civil society are less developed.

The pressure and strain on local and traditional communities, already considerable from the central state, will continue to increase because of globalization.

While community organizers continue to emphasize work in local communities, they need to assist the latter in building the capacity to understand and respond to globalization. Unlike previous decades when the focus beyond the local was mainly the national, future focus must include both national and global (starting with regional), with the local-global linkages not necessarily mediated through the national.

There is greater need to build up national and regional networks of exchange and practical cooperation among community organizers, including the development of national and regional platforms of action.

Growth along the NIC Model

Rapid economic growth, especially industrialization, is predicted to continue in Asia, especially East Asia, Southeast Asia and China for at least the next decade. Whatever the political system in individual countries, the economic growth model is capitalist and there is widespread elite consensus on the desirability of this model. This model accepts that growth is uneven and inequitable, although economists argue that rapid and steady growth reduces the number of those who are absolutely poor. Another critical point is the sacrifice of the environment and questions on sustainability of this type of growth.

While there is consensus about the desirability of the NIC model, there is debate on what its strength really is. Some argue that it proves the wisdom of opening up the national economy to the global economy, and advocate structural adjustment programs (SAPs) that downplay the role of the state in the economy. Others argue that on the contrary, NICs succeeded because they followed the path of "state-assisted capitalism"; hence, they want to maintain the relative strength of the national state vis-à-vis global and domestic market forces.

Implications? New challenges for workers as TNCs integrate their operations across borders and governments compete in lowering labor and environmental standards. Environment and development will be a more important issue especially in power-generation projects and highly pollutant industries. There will be more rapid rural-to-urban migration and the growth of megacities.

The current dominant model of economic growth tends to sacrifice agriculture, the rural economy, and the farming communities. Food security is already a distinct issue. Indigenous people and communities draw more attention not just as victims but as sources of alternative visions of development.

Communities and Movements in Transition

As the dominant model of economic growth tends to homogenize the privileged upper one-third of the population and as the integrating capacity of the nation-state weakens, local communities will react in two ways. One is to assert primary identities, ethnic and religious, within national borders. The other is to identify with transborder identities, again mainly ethnic and religious. These are both vulnerable to exploitation by political leaders who channel them to fundamentalist and sectarian positions. It may include a wholesale rejection of secular modernization, since the dominant growth model is itself flawed and accompanied by erosion of community and an increased sense of disempowerment.

Social and political movements that have built up their capacities in the past two decades are undergoing reorientation and recomposition. Since organizations tend to interact with these movements, the debates, disorientations, divisions on the one hand, and renewal on the other, are necessary contexts of the renewal of community organizing.

The two challenges for community organizers are: to tap the resources of the non-government organization–people's organization (NGO-PO) community and other institutions of civil society in the service of larger communities of resistance, empowerment and solidarity, and to dialogue with other religious faiths and secular ideologies towards wider ecumenical communities. The community organizers' network itself should be part of these communities of solidarity.

Democracy and Empowerment

The dominant growth model tends to be accompanied by variations of authoritarian politics, not necessarily in the form of outright military dictatorship. Given the high-handed pressures from the West, there is a defensive recourse to "cultural specificities" on the issues of human rights, democracy and related development issues. While these are also self-serving, they touch on a valid point: the pluralism of models of democracy and development. The issue of pluralism addresses also the question of minorities and minority rights.

COs and development workers have considerable achievements in empowering communities and sectoral movements as part of the struggle for democratic governance. The double challenge: To deepen democracy, from resistance to new forms of participation, especially in post-dictatorship states. And to democratize the development process itself at the local, national and regional levels.

Militarization is still an issue especially in some countries, and remains a problem in the region as a whole with its increased capacity for arms build-up.

Alternative Models and Transition Strategies

The critique of previous alternative models of development, especially socialism and nationalism, does not mean that alternatives to the dominant model are no

longer needed or possible. In fact, there is more need today to deepen and renew such visions, incorporating the insights especially of the environmental movement and women's movements about power, hierarchy and sustainability. There is also need to explore such alternatives at more than one (usually national) level: local, national, subregional, regional, global.

Even more important, while the modeling process is ongoing, is for transition strategies to be laid out: Beyond survival and resistance, to engage in debate and negotiate with the dominant powers and their projects, and to demonstrate viable alternative programs and structures at different scales.

Constant to both is a renewal and nourishment of the spirit and of social energies, since the transition is fraught with problems and challenges, and clarity and consensus on alternatives have not yet appeared on the horizon.

History of Community Organizing in the Philippines

The new situation brought about by the EDSA uprising in 1986 saw many NGOs fumbling with their dictatorship-tested and ingrained basic assumptions of work and vision. In the reflection process, community organizers began to seriously rethink their direction and methods of work. They became keenly interested in exploring the possibilities of the civil society paradigm as an analytical and practical point of departure.

Beginnings (1972–1983)

The initial organizing programs of progressive NGOs were shaped by two interrelated factors: the particular context of the Philippines under a dictatorship, and the particular consciousness about strategies for resistance and transformation that prevailed among NGOs and partner organizations in the rural areas.

Because of the repressive context which took an increasingly militaristic form in the rural areas, NGOs adopted what they called "silent and solid" organizing. This approach was also influenced by the strategy that dominated the consciousness of the popular movement against the dictatorship, namely, the national democratic strategy.

Hence, although NGOs limited their programs to non-armed struggle, they were influenced by the calculations that open confrontations and negotiations with the authorities could not be adopted without grave risks. Also, since the basic structures of the society and the macropolicies of the government were biased against the poor, NGOs did not see many possibilities for more stable improvement in the well-being of the rural communities through microprojects.

Finally, in line with the consciousness that the most pressing problem was the elimination of the dictatorship and the establishment of democratic rule, NGOs gave emphasis to helping build the people's capacity to resist the dictatorship and to participate in the political process of dislodging it. Although not explicitly articulated, the implicit understanding was that socioeconomic transformation would happen only after the state shall have been transformed.

In so far as "Left" thinking was at work, it is safe to assume that the "statist" bias of dominant Left paradigms also influenced the thinking of many NGOs in varying degrees.

Transition 1 (1983–1986)

Even before the downfall of the dictatorship, some shifts in thinking within the popular movement affected many NGOs. Even granting the repressive character of the regime, was there not the possibility and necessity for developing and asserting open legal struggle, even on rural issues? This was understandably expressed within the parameters of the repression-resistance program, but it carried the seeds of a future paradigm shift.

Secondly, because of the broadening and deepening of the anti-dictatorship movement, questions about alternatives were posed within the popular movement. Ideas about a "transition mixed economy" and the role of POs and NGOs circulated together with debates about pluralism and coalition.

Some clusters of these ideas were associated with the concept of "popular democracy." It elaborated on the central role of people power which must be institutionalized and made permanent. Aside from the traditional centers of power like the government and political parties, there is a need to create non-government structures that enable people to exercise power over their affairs, as well as non-party organizations (people's organizations) as vehicles for people's empowerment. These additional structures and mechanisms must be developed to enable the majority of the people to exercise direct democracy.

Transition 2 (1986–1989)

The shifts in thinking accelerated, but also got confused with the dramatic changes in the political context of the Philippines with the departure of the deposed dictator in 1986.

NGOs, institutions and programs born during the years of repression had to calculate the "democratic space" that opened up, its possibilities and its limits. In addition to the overall "national" calculation, strongly influenced by the experience in Metro Manila, NGOs had to take into account the uneven changes in the rural areas where they were present. In some, new spaces opened up; in others, the space became even more constricted.

Still, because of the earlier momentum of discussions about popular democracy, mixed economy, pluralism, and coalition, some progressive NGOs were able to define their new directions in the new situation.

However, it is safe to say that in the transition period, different ideas belonging to different paradigms coexisted in many NGOs. One reason is in the nature of transitions. The other reason was the uneven development among NGOs, areas, and personnel that could be addressed only over a long process of consultations, debates and reorientation.

NGOs and Shattering Orthodoxy: Towards a Paradigm Shift

In the last years of 1980s, several events on the homefront and overseas helped bring into focus the reexamination being undertaken by NGOs on their paradigm. Most of these events had the effect of putting under question many of the "orthodoxies" or long-held views which dominated the popular movement.

First, there was the fall of socialist but authoritarian regimes and the growing clamor for democracy and peaceful settlement of armed conflicts in El Salvador and South Africa.

Second, there was the resiliency of the Aquino administration in the face of numerous coup attempts.

Third, there was the raising of the environmental alarm in the last half of the 1980s and the challenge this posed to development models.

In a more theoretical vein, certain trends established in the last half of the 1980s have brought into focus basic assumptions about the relationships between state formations and civil society, between political revolutions and social revolutions and between nature and human society. The last years of the 1980s have been described as a time of unexpected upheavals. It can also be described as a bad season for long-held orthodox ideas about human society, the environment and global development.

Based on the reflections upon their cumulative experiences and the ideas that generated and circulated among NGOs, the following key points constituted the paradigm shift:

1. Like other social movements that place a primary emphasis on local self-help action by communities, NGOs look at the relationship of state and "civil society" in a different light. Unlike previous dominant Left thinking that gave the state's power and initiative an overwhelming primacy in the transformation of society, NGOs place greater importance on the forces, structures, and initiatives of non-state, non-political party movements in civil society;

2. Regarding the state itself, NGOs are exploring what combination of approaches and struggles for its transformation are possible, with bias towards peaceful settlement of armed conflicts and intervention in the terrain of electoral struggle to transform it;

3. The raising of the environmental alarm in the last half of the 1980s, the inability of rich nations to arrest economic recession and the precarious economic growth of newly industrialized nations have shown NGOs the crucial links between economic development and the environment. An ecologically sustainable economic growth has become for NGOs an integral feature of people-centered development;

4. Changes in the immediate situation of rural communities (quantitative and qualitative) can happen even when the necessary macro changes are not quite in place. The task is to explore at what level or scale such changes can be achieved, with potential impact, nationally.

5. The recognition and consistent practice of coalition politics among different organizations and political tendencies, both at the ground level, and as part of a future democratic alternative; and,

6. The integration of international linkages and partnership in NGO strategy, both South-South and North-South.

Current Efforts in Community Organizing Work

In the last 10 years, social movement frontliners such as NGOs have been catapulted to a position once solely dominated by political parties and formations. Whereas the political terrain in the Marcos years was dominated by the political movements, the post-EDSA times can be characterized by the sharing of legitimacy and political space among progressive political and social movements. Notably, there has been the process of the NGOs' emerging independence from political movements, not just in building their own capability but also in charting their orientation and strategy.

At present, there is a level of unity and clarity among a large section of the progressive movement of NGOs, POs, and non-party political movements (NPPMs) in the strategy and tactics of debate/dialogue-negotiate/coordinate with government while maintaining their independent work and critical stance towards the latter's growth-oriented development strategy. This conclusion is being made without denying the assertions of the movement that there are NGOs, POs, and coalitions which have adopted the political strategy of outright collaboration or total opposition vis-à-vis government.

Through what they call "common-ground politics" this section of the progressive movement are developing their capacity and power from the barangay to provincial levels and are increasing their advocacy work on macropolicies to create new spaces and win more terrains of struggle while hastening the formulation of alternatives at the local, regional and global scales.

Rationale and Goal

Each community organizer has his/her own reasons — varying from the mundane and practical to the lofty and idealist — for going into the exciting world of community organizing. However, as a collective activity, community organizing is essentially concerned with empowering society's marginalized sectors. In the watershed Tagisan Conferences of 1985 as well as in the recent National and Regional Rural CO Conferences, community organizers from around the country defined their goals as empowering the people and building relatively permanent structures of people's power.

To the latter-day generation of COs, the empowerment goals of community organizing are almost axiomatic. But this was not so in the 1960s and early 1970s when community organizing as a technology was just starting to be developed. At that time it was not so clear how and if, for instance, a community's struggle for access to safe drinking water could and should be related to how political and economic power are organized in the community. Nowadays, for example, to run a successful trading cooperative, small farmers will also have to comprehend and consciously contend with the power network of the traders and middlemen. Power, in other words, is not an incidental framework of community organizing in the 1990s.

At the Partnership for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development Services (PARRDS), we see the accumulation of power by the people through concerted action as the process that links the major goals in community organizing, which are ameliorative, emancipatory and creative. Ameliorative goals address "what is immediate, direct and recuperative" — in other words, provision of life's essentials; more often than not these are the most "felt needs" of the community. But mere amelioration is inadequate, and this is why community organizing must also promote procedures, mechanics, structures and values of democracy and critical thought and practices that bring out the autonomous and creative in people. These are community organizing's emancipatory goals. Finally, community organizing should also be creative in building alternative social formations to stabilize the gains and benefits of the people's work together, even as traditional social formations are slowly being transformed to be more relevant and responsive to the people's needs and aspirations.

CO Approaches

Participants in the National Rural CO Conference in May 1994, as they shared work experiences and traded insights, validated an important observation made during the 1985 Tagisan conferences and the 1989 Tagaytay gathering of CO practitioners: there are two distinct approaches to community organizing. These are the socio-economic project approach and the issue-based approach.

In the first, the CO process begins by developing projects such as appropriate technology, health, savings mobilization, etc. The objective of this approach is not only to make the participants aware of the value of collective action (success in the project reinforces this) but also for the projects to immediately benefit the participants.

In the issue-based approach, the CO process begins by addressing the most widely felt problems in the community which could range from poor water supply and lack of access to health services to low prices of farm produce and unjust tenancy relations and land monopoly.

Community organizing is a process of constant innovation based on learnings from actual experiences. Through the years, variations to the two approaches have been evolved by COs and development workers. Although variations, the approaches still adhere to the basic CO principles, processes, and methods: (1) That the constant basis of organizing has always been the need to promote the process of people's empowerment in all spheres — political, economic, cultural, etc. Without people's empowerment, especially at the grassroots level (local communities and basic sectors), any commitment to democratization and development will be formalistic and hollow; (2) Relying on lessons learned from almost twenty years of organizing and training experiences, the basics of the organizing process do not change whatever the political situation may be. One starts with local issues and felt needs, and develops local leaders and organizations through the learning process of mass struggles; and, (3) Throughout the organizing process, one employs the methods of the progressive cycle of action-reflection-action and consciousness-raising through experiential learning.

Issue-based Organizing

The issue-based approach means organizing the most number of people, based on commonly-felt problems. Because community organizers were constantly being harassed or arrested during the time of the Marcos dictatorship, they adopted a "slow but sure" approach to issue-based organizing. Here, the CO builds "cells" or "core groups" of committed individuals before going into mass mobilization and organizing of the larger community. Today, issue development is still an important part of the CO process. Only this time, forming the cells or core groups is no longer a prerequisite to mobilization and to forming the community organization. Very recently, some NGOs made a breakthrough in another method. This is the strategy of focusing CO on agrarian reform (starting with land tenure improvement) and combining independent action with alliance work.

Sectoral Organizing

Sectoral organizing is zeroing in on specific sector/s in the community and focusing on their particular issues and concerns and developing these either for claim-making or as starting point of a socio-economic project. While emphasizing work among local communities, this approach is linked up with the concern to help build a national sectoral movement. This approach also pays distinct and integral attention to women and gender relations.

Cropline Organizing

This is similar to sectoral organizing, but it targets small farmers producing the same crops (i.e. rice farmers, coconut farmers, etc.). Cropline organizing is politically and economically strategic since it could create a potentially strong counterbalance from the barangay up to the national center to the agricultural trading blocs or cartels which hinder genuine rural development. Strong organizations and federations of small cropline farmers' organizations and cooperatives will also help promote stronger linkages between the urban and rural poor sectors.

From Income-Generating Projects to Sustainable Socio-economic Projects

One of the goals of community organizing is to build structures, processes, methods and values that promote liberative relations not only politically, but also economically. Early socio-economic work in the form of income-generating projects were mainly directed at providing immediate relief or amelioration. This no longer suffices to push for CO's emancipatory goals. Rural cooperatives and POs engaged in socio-economic work now have to aspire to build their projects up to a level that could provide more benefits to members and impact on exploitative relations in the community (i.e. undercut the influence of usurers and traders, increase the bargaining power of small farmers in the market, etc.).

Socio-economic projects with these objectives need long-term plans and strategies, capable and committed managers, outside linkages to open access to resources and technology, and organizational mechanisms and systems to promote participation as well as efficiency.

CO in Integrated Area Development

Many NGOs and POs are now starting to pursue this track, and in many cases, together with government in tripartite arrangements. Integrated area development as a strategy goes by many names: sustainable integrated area development (SIAD), community organizing-community development (CO-CD), community organizing-area development (CO-AD). Basically, this strategy is about effecting sustainable ground-level changes with potential impact on national structures and processes. These changes are not dependent on radical macrolevel changes but on the accumulation of qualitative changes in the relations and structures in small contiguous communities linked by a common resource base and market poles and by historical/traditional circumstances.

Community organizing that facilitates the formation of people's organizations and leaders is a crucial component of the integrated area development strategy. Socio-economic work and effective resource mobilization and management are also important elements of this strategy.

In terms of modeling, COs and development workers pursuing the SIAD strategy have much to learn from the continuing experience of the Antique Integrated Area Development (ANIAD) program, where community organizing is a basic requirement and an integral part of the whole strategy. Being a major development program in the Philippines (co-financed by the Netherlands), ANIAD also shows how NGOs, POs and GOs, particularly the local government, could work together.

Issues and Challenges

During the 1985 Tagisan Conferences, participants raised four major issues in community organizing. These were:

- how to achieve balanced handling of local and national issues
- the soundness of using economic projects as CO entry points
- sustaining people's organizations
- how COs are to phase out/pull out from an organizing area

In the National Rural CO Conference, the list of issues facing community organizing, specifically in the rural areas, is longer. Some of these are "old" issues, being similar to the ones raised in Tagisan; many are relatively new ones, being issues brought about by new experiences.

Combining Sectoral and Community-wide Issues

As community organizing work took root in many areas, COs found themselves more and more involved in the issues and concerns of the different sectors in the community. This is a sign of progress which is not without its share of problems, foremost of which is how to effectively meet sectoral concerns and community-wide interests at the same time. Ideally, the two need not be contradictory since meeting the needs of one sector should redound to the advancement of the common good. Also, working for the common concern of the community should spell benefits for particular sectors.

Combining Organizing Approaches

Ten years ago, undertaking the socio-economic approach was an option considered viable and desirable only when "undertaken within the context of supporting and sustaining the struggle towards people's goals." The issue now is no longer about which of the two distinct approaches — issue-based or socioeconomic projects-based — is more desirable or viable, but how best to combine these and other approaches to hasten community organizing and community development as a whole.

Working with Government

Since many community organizers and trainers, specially those who were already active during the time of the Marcos regime, are used to dealing with government as adversary, working with government as partner does not come easily. Community organizers guard their autonomy jealously; it is not surprising to find COs grappling with a "primordial" fear of being co-opted by the government on one hand, and, on the other, a rational assessment of the doability of certain reforms when worked out with government people.

The challenge is not so much the conquest of our fear, since it is healthy to be a little wary of government's motives. Rather, COs and development workers need to be better prepared to deal with government and to employ the appropriate tactics to achieve their goals. COs are snake charmers to government's poisonous reptile. We either play the right tune to make it dance or the snake will gladly bite us.

PO-NGO Relationship

Genuine partnership is the desired relationship between POs and NGOs and between COs and community leaders. In many cases though, COs end up doing most of the work and carrying most of the psychical burden. Of course, COs will have the lion's share in the workload during the early stages of organizing. But as progress is made, the community must increasingly assume the bulk of the work and responsibility of community organizing and development. The challenge is how to prepare the leaders and members of POs to be leaders in the community, from the very start of the CO processes.

COs are trained to be aware of the changing dynamics in their relationship with the PO leaders and members and with the bigger community. To a certain extent, this helps the COs guard against monopolizing the CO processes and making the PO leaders and members dependent on them. Interestingly, most PO leaders are not systematically trained to do the same, that is, to be made aware of the community organizing processes and the changing dynamics of their relationship with the community organizers.

An issue that can be said to be a real sign of the times is the occurrence of cases of competition for funds between POs and NGOs. This could mean many things: POs are becoming stronger and able to source their own funds, fund sources are thinning out, etc.

The Search for a Viable Scale of Development

NGOs are in a better position given their close links with the grassroots to evaluate development strategies and link up with national and global trends. The challenge is in "scaling up" development activities by NGOs-POs and in enhancing popular participation and influencing governance. The question is how to do this especially on a scale that is sustainable.

Two issues have to be confronted here. One, locating the level and scale of economic and political interventions which could broaden initial successes to the point of being able to impact microlevel structures, and two, the types of intervention which must be undertaken to promote a positive environment for development work as a whole.

Linking Local, National and Global Movements

The slogan "Act Locally, Think Globally," has inspired many community workers but for our own particular situation this slogan is inadequate. Perhaps it is better that our COs think and act locally, nationally, and globally. Issues of justice are interconnected even more than we previously thought. To be effective in our organizing work, actions and struggles for justice have to be pursued on the local, national and global levels. Our actions must also be informed by the changing contexts in Asia and the world and the impact of these changes on the people's movement.

Sustainability of CO programs

Sustaining CO programs means three things: (1) securing funds on a long term basis, (2) building competency in a particular area of concern, and (3) taking care of the COs and PO leaders. All of these are, of course, interrelated. Without a secure fund source, COs will be greatly constrained in undertaking long-term program development and capability-building.

As more and more NGOs and POs emerge from the woodwork, securing funds increasingly becomes a question of packaging project proposals and becoming competent in at least one important line of work. Some NGOs are even going into income-generating enterprises (investments, consultancy, etc.) to help build long-term financial security.

On the other hand, taking care of COs means not only providing for their bread and butter (and sometimes a little jam), but also allowing for the growth and nourishment of their spirit and soul in the form of training programs, retreats, camaraderie, solidarity, etc. Aside from the COs, PO leaders must also be sustained and nourished. As the CO processes develop, more and more PO leaders will find themselves with less time to devote to earning a living and being with their families. Local leaders who are "promoted" to provincial, regional or national leadership roles are even pulled out from their communities. The financial and psychical needs of "full-time leaders" must be met.

Components of an Evolving Strategy

An organizing strategy is a long-term course of action which tells how to get from one 's present position to another position. It is a sort of navigational chart which helps define the relationship of one's actions to the actions of others, a guide to fixing one's bearings.

An organizing strategy would be premised on (1) the vision and goals or where one wants to go and why, (2) a reading of the climate or situation in which one operates, (3) an inventory of one's inherent and accumulated capabilities and resources, and corollarily, of the capabilities and resources that should be acquired along the way, and (4) the kinds and forms of actions that must be taken.

The various concepts and approaches discussed in previous sections of this paper are elements in search of an overall framework and perspective. This may not be immediately possible but, at least, we can identify the following main lines of a working but evolving strategy.

The Distinction and Combination of Social Movements and Political Movements

As community organizers, our bias is the transformation of power relations where these are most entrenched: at the local level and other microlevel structures like family, gender, etc. But this does not mean that we are no longer concerned with the fate of the Philippine state, only that the main form of our intervention will be in developing the electoral struggle which includes electoral reforms and victories and the peaceful settlement of armed conflicts. In this sense we are aligning ourselves with the growing movements of diverse non-political party and non-government formations working for social transformation. This is distinguished from the political movements or diverse organizations and forces — usually party-based — directly challenging the legitimacy of those in power and contesting their hold on it.

The Distinction and Combination of the (National) Sectoral and Multisectoral Approach and the Area-focused (or Community-centered) Approach

Policies with far-reaching impact — a function of power — may be decided at the national/central level, but the organization and accumulation of power (economic, political, and cultural) may actually be more acute at the local level or grassroots. In this sense, a distinction should be made between sectoral and multisectoral work that is geared towards intervening (influencing, blocking, diluting, etc.) in policy-making, and area-focused or community-centered work/approach that is primarily interested in achieving a certain degree of actual change in the structures, mechanisms and processes at the grassroots. National sectoral and multisectoral work includes mass campaigns, policy advocacy and lobby work, tit-for-tat media campaigns, etc., while area-focused work includes community organizing, leadership formation, accessing and managing resources, building sustainable socio-economic enterprises, institution building, federation-building, etc.

Combining Action on Local, Regional and Global Levels

I would like to emphasize the significance of regional-level work and how this combines and interacts with our work in the local and global arenas. This is partly because in the past we have not been as consistent as we would like to be in developing our work in the region. True, there are a number of NGO regional initiatives and networks particularly in community organizing and community development where we are active and key players. But these regional NGO tie-ups must be complemented by a regional network of people's organizations.

The drive to build the Asia Pacific as the next century's economic fountainhead is leading to the further marginalization of Southeast Asia's millions who are too poor to cash in on the wealth generated by the much vaunted tiger economies. Meanwhile, avenues for protest and democratic participation in policy-making are being blocked by the despotic-nationalistic regimes in the region. In the light of these trends, it is imperative that we help promote regional networks of social movements that will build and strengthen the solidarity of poor people for empowerment and democracy.

Developing the Urban-Rural Nexus in Politics and Economics

The development projects which government and the corporate sector have embarked on are promoting the conversion of agricultural lands for industrial and housing purposes, which in turn dislocates hundreds of thousands of poor rural communities. The "new landless" migrate to the cities in search of jobs, swelling the ranks of the urban poor and putting tremendous pressure on already limited resources (e.g. water, energy, food, land for housing, etc.).

Meanwhile, in the so-called regional growth centers, rural and urban poor communities exist alongside each other as factories and industrial plants sprout on former agricultural lands.

A comprehensive strategy for sustainable development must address this intimate relationship between the urban and the rural. For starters, rural communities are being wiped out by the expanding regional growth centers; government's development strategy has become a concrete community issue. Also, the growth center's new labor recruits are the sons and daughters of poor farmers being threatened with land conversion; labor organizing and peasant organizing are now truly intimately related.

Requirements of Rural CO

Given the intricacies of the current situation and the issues and challenges facing rural community organizers and development workers, what would be the basic requirements of rural community organizing in the 1990s? To reformulate: what would be the important tasks to push forward rural organizing?

Continuing Training in Community Organizing

Continuing training in community organizing starts not by asking how organizing could begin, but how to develop and nurture POs and COs in the long term. This can be both built-in or integral to the program of NGOs and POs, and a joint effort of organizations working for rural development.

Continuing Grassroots Leadership Formation

Parallel to the formation program for COs should be a leadership formation program for PO leaders which aims to improve the quality of individual and collective leadership in the grassroots. A grassroots leadership program should not only equip leaders with new skills and knowledge, but also make them conscious of the dynamics of community organizing and the changing relations in the community.

Popular Education for Rural Communities

Popular education should be distinguished from community organizing, although the two processes have many common features like consciousness-raising and learning from action-reflection. But popular education goes beyond the traditional action-reflection approach of CO to include explicit educational activities. People can also learn through reading, travel, interaction, training programs, and other methods that are not necessarily part of the CO cycle. They also learn through participation in CO processes like issue development and issue mobilization.

Popular education for rural communities aims to provide access to information and new knowledge and skills to leaders, organizers, and even ordinary PO members so they can better themselves as individuals and as a community.

Defined and Monitored Stages of CO Intervention

As a guide to COs and trainors, we need to define the main features of the stages of development of the PO. We also need to establish the definite quantitative norms for organizational targets. It is necessary, for example, to establish the scale or the minimum and maximum number of members in an organization that would encourage optimum participation and consolidation.

As a whole, the monitoring and evaluation system that needs to be installed by COs and trainors should be able to explicitly describe the various stages in community organizing, the quantitative and qualitative targets per stage, the type of intervention demanded and the time frame involved. This system should also be open for the validation of the community partners. Community organizing is as much science as art; an appropriate monitoring and evaluation system will help prevent wasteful trial and error.

Development of Organizing Teams

The traditional product of CO training programs is the trained individual organizer. This remains a valid goal, but it has two problems. First, there is a low "survival rate" of trainees owing to the high qualities of skills demanded by traditional CO training programs. Secondly, a CO training program focused on forming good individual organizers also tends to reinforce an individualistic view of social involvement and work ethic.

The concept of organizing teams allows us to put together organizers who, individually, might not have all-around qualities and skills, but as a team would complement and sustain each other. This approach, however, must guard against the danger of the team's achievement being used to cover up for individual irresponsibility.

Developing Minimum Performance Standards and Indicators

We want development work to be considered as a full-fledged profession, and not, as some would put it, a "dead-end choice of young idealists" — although being passionately idealistic is a common trait of good development practitioners. Developing minimum performance standards and indicators will enable development programs to systematically and rationally evaluate their trainees, organizers and trainors, as well as help development practitioners to gauge their own growth as professionals in the business of facilitating social change.

Ensuring Long-Term Funding Support for CO Work

The number of trained community organizers and trainors has not grown as the number of NGOs themselves. In fact, inadequate support to the training and overall sustenance of COs and training and organizing programs has been blamed for fast turnover and slow expansion of the ranks of COs and development practitioners.

There is also the matter of NGOs' chosen field of work and locus of concerns. Not as many NGOs and POs as desirable are actually focusing their work on key result areas (KRAs).

Very few NGOs are stable enough to sustain work in a community beyond three years — the average time frame of most projects. In most cases, this is not enough time to build and test people's attitudes, skills, and knowledge needed to sustain and build on their earlier gains. NGOs and POs need access to funds committed to more long-term grassroots engagements.

Rigorous Theory Work

While constantly seeking to improve the practical elements of our respective CO programs, we must also address the need for the more theoretical aspects of people's empowerment, and devote additional efforts to clarifying our perspectives.

Organizers are supposed to be conscious, deliberate, and creative people who will suffer anything except becoming irrelevant and atrophied. Undertaking serious theory work will help ensure that organizing will not become a routine as organizers accumulate experiences.

Rural COs should also engage in continuing efforts to refine and elaborate our strategy in recognition of and in dialogue with a variety of existing political perspectives represented by party and non-party political formations and movements.

By Way of Ending this Paper

The community organizing work of many NGOs, especially those involved with the Rural CO Forum (RCOF), has spanned over 20 years. Since 1986, CO work of NGOs has undergone reorientation, not only because they had to adjust to the change in government and the political situation, but because they pursued new insights into people's empowerment and sustainable development. This reorientation and learning process has taken almost a decade and has been marked by major

changes in NGOs' understanding of CO work in their relationships with partner organizations and with their communities.

The shared tradition of community organizing followed an issue-based strategy which in the years of resistance was linked to a national strategy of political opposition. After 1986, this political orientation underwent a process of review and refinement. Part of it is about the distinct role of NGOs as participants in social movements in relation to political movements. Another part is the effort to balance the concern to help build national, sectoral and multisectoral movements with the concern for local area-centered empowerment and development. These refinements are now components of an evolving strategy.

Most of the NGOs in the RCOF are concerned with local work, and new systematic efforts at coordination and synergy are being made at this level. There has been a new appreciation of the local communities as sites where new initiatives have chances of showing results based on the existing resources and capacities of people's organizations and local leaders.

In defining their initial "bottom-up" empowerment perspective, many NGOs in the RCOF have been influenced by the continuing discussions and explorations on "scales of sustainability." The devolution of political power to local government units and the designation of local growth centers are further stimuli and inputs into this search. The direction and thrusts of many NGOs over the past 10 years have operated within the framework of combining democratization and development processes within a defined area of operations.

Many NGOs thought that the perspective of their work would be to help local leaders and communities "scale up" to the level of the "biodistrict." Such districts would be defined by the ecological and market systems and the level of social organizations. After a few years, NGOs realized that there were as yet no operating institutional and program expressions of these concepts.

So some NGOS, while retaining the biodistrict and the province as the strategic scaled-up unit, have scaled down to the framework of barangay-bayan. With the dismal results of their participation in the 1992 presidential elections and the passage of the Local Government Code, NGOs and POs decided to bring new agendas into their empowerment framework: Elections as a strategic terrain of struggle, and local governance as the smaller but promising terrain for popular struggle and empowerment.

The reviews and refinements by NGOs remain unfinished and the maturation process is still ongoing.

Apart from their own periodic and short-term assessment and evaluation activities, NGOs have not done a comprehensive and collective evaluation to determine if their intervention work has created a dent and meaning to the target beneficiaries, the partner people's organizations (POs) and their communities. In December 1995, the RCOF and Philippine CO Society (PhilCOS) adopted the "key result area" or KRA framework which they call the OCCO-BREAD framework, as a common measure among NGOs and COs in evaluating the effectivity of their work at the barangay or community level. The framework focuses on nine KRAs and provides a number of achievement indicators per KRA to be realized in the process of organizing intervention. These KRAs are divided into two sets.

"OCCO" stands for four areas of concern as the community evolves into a strong and mature people's organization. Particularly, these areas of concern are: (1) organizational development; (2) critical, creative, collective consciousness-raising; (3) coalitional efforts and advocacy work; and (4) overcoming gender and other biases. "BREAD" refers to the achievement of palpable gains in the areas of: (1) basic services and infrastructure; (2) resource tenure improvement; (3) economic self-reliance strengthening; (4) agricultural production and ecological nurturance; and, (5) democratic participation in governance. "OCCO" and "BREAD" are inseparable from each other. "OCCO" develops as people pursue "BREAD" concerns. But gains in regard to "BREAD" are made possible by the enhancement of "OCCO".

This year, the RCOF and PhilCOS embarked on a six-month project to evaluate a sample of 330 barangays to collectively determine the gross and net effects of their social intervention work the past six years or so. The barangay as the base of Philippine democracy has new powers including control of some funds under the Local Government Code. The barangay elections in May 1997 would provide NGOs and POs the chance to measure their collective impact.

The key question is related to the end goal of community organizing: establishing empowered sustainable POs and rural communities. Long after the CO and NGO have phased out (both physically and in terms of functions), how many POs have been maintained and sustained? How many relatively backward communities have been transformed into "bastions" of "new politics" and socio-economic power? Unfortunately, at present, we lack the information and empirical data to get a hardnosed sense and assessment of the communities penetrated by NGOs for further growth and development.

The ongoing RCOF and PhilCOS project is an attempt to address these questions. In the context of "scaling up," there are, however, a number of issues and debates which have come to the fore:

▪ Historically, community organizing in the Philippines tended to focus on the community organizer, very often an outsider to the community, hired or based in an NGO. In one forum, an issue was raised about government organizers (GO) and a strong opinion put forward was that GOs should not interfere. NGOs can say this to GOs but both are outsiders. The key issue here is the relationship between the community organizer and the community, or the relations between outside intervention and sustaining the organizing processes. One approach is for the outsider-organizer to become organic to the community as in the model where organizers become staff of POs, especially at the federation level. The other is phase-out, where outside intervention is absorbed into the organizing processes. In both, the CO disappears physically and in terms of functions and becomes a component of sustainable processes.

The role of an organizer is different from that of a leader. But in fact, the organizer is also a leader. How about leaders who are not organizers? In the traditional CO programs it is mainly the organizers that get continuous training, so much so that they tend to exercise undue influence on the leaders. The definition of leader in the CO tradition is functional: the CO identifies issues at the same time spotting and developing leaders for community mobilizations.

The felt need is to emphasize grassroots leadership formation within the context of strengthening people's organizations. Investing in the education and training of

PO leaders, in the long run, might be more cost-effective. Organizers may come and go, but PO leaders will remain in the community.

At the heart of any CO program is not so much the process but the communities themselves: the people's organizations and their leaders should ultimately be the subjects, the main participants and bearers of whatever is sustainable, when NGOs and other institutions are gone.

As one reactor said in a 1994 forum on CO within the integrated area development framework: "All of us are outsiders. We can help but ultimately it's the insiders who have to do it and who are stuck with it anyway. And insiders are those who reside, who are there and who will be there after we are all gone."

▪ The other dilemma is: What are the adjustments that need to be made in orientation and methods of CO work? COs in the Philippines have a general consensus that the organizing process is not a matter of simple addition, one-plus-one, of community organizations or people's organizations in a barangay or community. The basic tradition and strength of community organizing in the anarchist tradition is the constant renewal of energy at the horizontal or basic community level.

Community organizing's strength is in waging struggle, mobilizing, and making claims for basic services or the defense of rights. However, fulfilling the minimum basic needs of the PO and the community should be balanced by also raising incomes and creating surplus beyond subsistence levels. For the PO to be sustainable in both the social and financial sense, the issues of savings mobilization and cooperative economic activities have to be addressed. Professional COs are paid staff. Leaders must not only have surplus time but also resources by developing their entrepreneurial capacities.

There is acceptance of the need for vertical or integrative structures to scale up the capacity of POs to federate across barangays and the respective turfs of NGOs. But POs themselves have to stand and address new agenda such as electoral intervention, local governance, enterprise development and marketing and others, not just to enhance capacities and increase incomes of people but also to change the situation. The needs of Philippine democracy and political stability require relatively stable structures that can address the balance of dynamic challenges of reforms from above matched by effective and mature POs and communities from below.

▪ The next point is related to the question of consolidation of democracy and making democracy a key factor for development. The current thrust towards decentralization and devolution of powers provided for by the Local Government Code offers possibilities for new combinations of state power and civil society at the local level. This means developing the strategy of enhancing the capacity of local government units combined with the effective participation of civil society, developing the synergy between the two to implement social reform and social development programs and synergizing reform possibilities from above and transforming the more dominant conservative structures (e.g., patron-client).

For example, a recent breakthrough on the part of one NGO, a PARRDS member, is the refined approach and relatively successful testing of a strategy that focused community organizing on agrarian reform and land tenure improvement and

combined independent action with alliance work with reformers within the Department of Agrarian Reform at both the municipal and provincial levels. This strategy has achieved substantial results and the resolution of agrarian cases like the transfer of ownership of lands to agrarian reform beneficiaries, especially the POs. From gains won in land tenure improvement, the POs are now into productivity systems development and making the agrarian reform community (ARC) concept concrete and real. Another kind of dynamics is being developed through PO mobilization and NGO negotiations with the municipal agrarian officer and linkage with the local government unit. This strategy has achieved a focus on agrarian reform as the foundation of social reform and development and a synergy of social reform forces outside and inside government.

▪ NGO-PO-GO relations and local governance have been confronted by NGOs from a comprehensive, structural and almost abstract sense. Ignoring government, NGOs tend to reproduce GO services relying on their own limited resources. They forget to give the state its due role and make up for GO incompetence. NGOs usually start with and maintain independence from the dominant development process and players. They see their role as alternative institutions or as shadow governments.

Integration is the task of local government units. With the institutional mandate and capacity for overall planning, they can outstrip NGOs who do not specialize. The NGOs' distinct competence, on the other hand, is in empowering POs autonomously of government. Government always wants clients and other opportunistic formations and does not develop autonomous POs. To become mainstream and to challenge governance, NGOs must situate themselves in a position of competence and strength and represent a definite slice of governance.

At the municipal and community levels, the primary relation is between people and government. Most NGOs are not municipal-based; they have field presence through their COs who are not usually locals. POs are in place but discussion and discourse on development paradigms are lodged in the NGOs. And the point of view of the community is not yet the starting point.

In some municipalities, a new combination of power has emerged, i.e., "progressive" mayors and strong POs. With the convergence of the Social Reform Agenda and Minimum Basic Needs (SRA-MBN), NGOs must situate themselves in this development and maximize opportunities for scaling up their work and impact.

Many PO leaders have considered local politics and governance as important. To maximize these, capability-building programs are needed to enhance the qualities of leadership required. More importantly, NGOs should review their CO tradition and approaches and refine their empowerment framework at the barangay-bayan level.

This paper will end on a sobering point. There is the need for a variety of methods and conceptual proposals to distinguish ameliorative changes within existing structures we cannot change. And to aim for emancipatory goals, seemingly abstract but necessary for empowerment of people. It must be reiterated that no one has the monopoly neither of the right to organize nor of the concepts of community organizing. In the end, the key point is that in the processes of community organizing and intervention work, people come out stronger and less vulnerable and finally less dependent than those who presume to help them.

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The last section "By Way of Ending this Paper" are notes culled from our ongoing discussions within the Partnership for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development Services (PARRDS), the two co-sponsors meetings of the 1997 Grassroots Leadership Conference, and discussions with some peasant PO leaders.

NGO-PO Relations in Cooperative-Building *The Case of the Cooperatives Foundation of the Philippines, Inc.*

Introduction

A study by Robert Putnam on Italy's civic traditions suggests that when people involve themselves in civic associations, a process is set off that allows trust, cooperation, initiative and responsibility to flourish. These traits, considered to be among the major components of "social capital," are the necessary ingredients for a vibrant economic life. Putnam measured the degree of "civicness" of Italian regions, among others, by the intensity of membership in trade unions, cooperatives, religious lay associations, sports associations, and mass political parties. Where such horizontal networks of civic engagement are lacking and only their common loyalty and dependence on a patron or king define people's bonds, civic inertia sets in. People do not feel responsible, have limited alternative visions, and lack the initiative to change.[1]

The rise of such horizontal networks of voluntary equals like people's organizations is therefore both an indicator and a necessary condition of progressive change. People's organizations are structures through which individuals arrive at common solutions to their problems. They are venues in which people work to help themselves. As such, they weaken traditional structures of control that derive power from people's lack of solidarity.

Private voluntary development organizations, or NGOs, are supposed to trigger or facilitate self-organization and civic processes through their programs. Along with the churches, social movements, and other private groups, NGOs have facilitated or assisted the formation of popular organizations. Philippine NGOs intensified their development work in communities after the fall of the dictatorship in 1986. The strategies they have employed are varied and innovative: training, organizational development, credit, infrastructure, and basic services. They have also facilitated the process of organizing and developing cooperatives either as a component of their development program, or as their centerpiece approach. In general, NGOs facilitate the formation of mechanisms and structures in the communities to enable the people to manage their economic, political and social affairs. The development of people's organizations, or the creation of networks and structures through which the poor may sustainably pursue self-reliant efforts for development, is therefore considered a hallmark achievement of an NGO.

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For insights into the various issues attending NGO-PO relations as this goal is pursued, we can take off from a specific case. Here we describe and analyze certain dimensions in the relations. These include the process of how the PO beneficiaries are identified; the nature and characteristics of the partnership between the PO and the NGO; the objectives of the NGO in assisting the PO; the level of success of the NGO in empowering the PO; and strategies of the NGO to prevent dependency on the part of the PO (if this is a tendency of the PO).

The experiences of the Cooperative Foundation Philippines, Inc. (CFPI) and its partner groups in cooperative-building present a suitable case for analyzing the self-reliance–dependency dynamic. In its 20 years of operation, CFPI has intervened in various provinces, designing cooperative systems and providing consulting services to cooperative projects. In recent years, it has focused on cooperative-organizing and development work in Bataan, Bulacan, Davao del Norte, and the national capital region (NCR).

Since 1988, CFPI has been greatly influenced by the results of an action research project conducted in Sri Lanka and Thailand by Koenraad Verhagen, formerly of Cebemo.[2] Of great interest has been his critique of conventional cooperative promotion among the poor which, accordingly, failed to really help them. CFPI continues to test Verhagen's methodical approaches in promoting cooperatives among the more remote farmers, poor urban dwellers, workers, and women by using the principles of self-reliance and member-participation.

A cooperative development program entitled Cooperatives for the Poor (CFP) was implemented from July 1990 to June 1993, co-financed by the Netherlands-based organizations Cebemo and ICCO. About 400 primary cooperative groups were developed in the provinces of Davao del Norte, Bulacan, Bataan, Laguna, and Metro Manila. These groups were assisted through the program staff who rendered general services in basic education and training, project identification and feasibility study preparation, resource mobilization and financial intermediation, and local linkages.

The second phase of the CFP program is now being implemented. This three-year Cooperative Development Program (1996–1998) aims to increase the impact of cooperatives being supported by CFPI and strengthen their self-capacities in entrepreneurship and claim-taking. Cooperative federations and councils are being set up in the impact areas as a means to enhance their business capacities through higher economies of scale and to institutionalize their claim-taking and bargaining capabilities. Among the target areas for the formation of cooperative federations and cooperative councils are the municipalities of Calumpit and Pandi in Bulacan; Kapalong, Laac, and New Corella in Davao del Norte; Hermosa in Bataan.

The activities of CFPI and its partner-beneficiary groups span a continuum ranging from the identification process, organizing process, training process, resource mobilization and resource provision, management consultancy, linkage-building, higher-level organizing, and monitoring and evaluation. These are considered the key activities towards the development of cooperatives organized under the program.

Context of the Program

The story of Philippine cooperatives in this century has been largely the story of government-directed programs in cooperative development. New actors, however, started to emerge from within the anti-Marcos, pro-democracy movement. It created a broad network of popular organizations and socio-political movements that were instrumental in promoting self-help and cooperativism among their constituents. After the February 1986 revolution, a wave of civic energy found expression in new cooperative organizations. The revolution was an elite-led uprising, and its product a regurgitated version of pre-martial law democracy. But its symbols were imbued with popular ideals of empowerment and participation. Its memories have remained powerful in consolidating democracy and the peaceful road to transformation. It was encapsulated in a new national motto expressed by Corazon Aquino days after the revolution: "*Magtulungan tayo.*"[3]

There was thus a general feeling among the social and popular movements that the changed situation demanded new forms of activities. With varying degrees of enthusiasm, many organizations welcomed the idea of gearing their activities towards taking advantage of the chance to participate in the new regime. These feelings found expression in greater NGO involvement in local development.

CFPI's ground-level organizing started at a time when government was riding on a massive wave of civic energy unleashed by the upheaval in EDSA. The Aquino government was promoting people empowerment, participation, and cooperative development as the hallmarks of its program. Cooperative organizing intensified in many areas. In Central Luzon, it became an expression of the people's efforts to rebuild their communities and livelihood following the eruption of Mount Pinatubo. This revival was partly in response to government's livelihood assistance programs that made cheap credit available in areas affected by the eruption.

Partners' Identification Process

NGOs usually have a framework for selecting specific groups as target beneficiaries who may avail of their development services. Usually the framework consists of a set of criteria based on ownership of assets, access to services or to jobs, or location of the potential beneficiaries. The targets of the CFP program are the poor, as the program title made clear from the start, specifically those outside the ambit of development services by government or other NGOs. Identifying the program participants was actually a dynamic process in which people's groups were encouraged to compare their priorities with the thrusts of the program.

Engaging POs in Debate

An aspect of the partners' identification process was the advocacy directed to PO coalitions. CFPI contacted several groups and engaged them in discussions on the direction of the popular movement in the post-EDSA transition. The main element of CFPI's arguments was that empowerment consists not merely in being able to crystallize demands as the basis for mass campaigns to push policy change. It must also consist in enabling the POs to directly demonstrate their social and eco-

nomic alternatives through actual cooperative projects in their communities or within their sectors.

In areas where CFPI's organizing work involved ideological groups as potential partners, a point of debate was the role of cooperatives in the larger socio-political struggle. Some PO coalitions thought, quite legitimately, that cooperative organizing among their membership should rationalize the socio-economic component of their program and serve to consolidate the membership. Some local activists further imagined, however, that cooperative projects must also be a source of income to subsidize the advocacy and political work of the people's organizations. CFPI fieldworkers, for their part, cautioned potential partners that cooperatives ought to be provided space for autonomous development. Viewing cooperatives as simply "fund raisers" for advocacy or political work might prove to be counterproductive. The test of a cooperative's success ought to be in its ability to viably provide goods and services needed by members and the disposition of surplus would have to be decided democratically by members themselves.

Some groups encountered by CFPI opposed the cooperative idea. To this day there are still some groups that view cooperatives as either government instruments or as very traditional institutions that only promote "economism" and "reformism" to the detriment of the struggle for fundamental social reforms.

On the other hand, there were those who took the view that cooperatives should be organized only as an attached body or committee of a PO. In Laguna for instance, some community activists suggested that instead of organizing a fisherman's cooperative as a new entity, the existing fisherman's organization should instead have a cooperative attached to it. The coop would function as a committee of the PO to serve the economic needs of the members. In CFPI's view, the idea had some merit and any form suitable to the needs of the group ought to be respected. After all, a cooperative is a people's organization owning and operating an economic enterprise for the benefit of its members.

The problem, however, was that in many people's organizations, membership is not well defined. Mass-based support is manifested during times of mass campaigns, when deeply-felt issues elicit wide participation. In normal times (not during mass campaigns), most of those considered members do not exhibit membership behavior such as paying their dues and fulfilling organizational obligations. While this arrangement may be tolerable in the case of POs that are involved primarily in advocacy work, this certainly cannot be the case in cooperatives. In a cooperative, members vote on policies, elect officers, and share in the costs, risks, and benefits of the cooperative enterprise. Thus, not all the members of an organization could be automatically considered as members of an attached cooperative. Even in an attached cooperative, every one must establish individual membership and meet cooperative membership requirements and criteria, including participation in its capitalization. In other words, under whatever circumstances, a cooperative must address the "free-rider problem" right at the start.

In the parlance of the Cooperative Code, cooperatives whose membership is open only to the members of an association (or PO) are classified as "associational cooperatives." In some cases, local activists contacted by CFPI were concerned about the need to promote "coops based on strong people's organizations." Accordingly, this would distinguish "people's cooperatives" from the "traditional mainstream cooperative movement." In this view, people's organizations are mainly the socio-

political organizations of the basic sectors whose activities are oriented to the sectors' economic, social and political interests. While it is an acknowledged strategy to ensure strong POs from which to build cooperatives, there is nothing in the cooperative form that prevents members or the cooperative as a whole from pursuing socio-political goals such as securing a voice for themselves in the decision-making process. This flows directly from the fact that cooperatives, simply put, are people's organizations conducting cooperative activities and operating a cooperative enterprise oriented to the needs of members.

"Work-through-partners" Approach

CFPI established formal partnerships with groups with whom it had sufficiently established broad agreements on the cooperative strategy. There were three variants of the work-through-partners approach:

First, direct partnership is established with the local organizations of the target sectors or with their PO federation or coalition. This is called the "PO partnership approach." In Bataan, where CFPI began operations in August 1990, partnerships were established with groups such as the *Aniban ng Manggagawa sa Agrikultura* (AMA), *Katipunan ng Bagong Pilipina* (KaBaPa), *Alyansa ng Magbubukid sa Bataan* (ALMABA), *Lakas Mangingisda ng Bataan* (LAMBAT), Forum for Women's Concerns, Association of Democratic Labor Organizations, Federation of Free Workers, *Samahan at Ugnayan ng Pangisdaan sa Orion*, and with irrigators associations, farmers associations and other groups. Partnerships with these PO or PO federations attained varying levels of success.

Second, partnerships were established between CFPI and the NGOs that were also implementing cooperative development projects. Among these NGOs were the PRRM, *Balikatan*, IPD, World Vision International, BBM Community Development Project, and the Lingap Kaunlaran Project.

Third, CFPI directly initiated cooperative-building among informal or unaffiliated groups.

The main approach was the first two; the third was practised only later. Thus, the beneficiary identification process was done through work-with-partner organizations. A partner organization could be a PO (which might be part of a larger socio-political coalition). The idea was that the partner organization would be responsible for identifying who among their organized constituencies or groups within their reach were more or less prepared to embark on a process of cooperative organizing. This approach has been rationalized, partly, in that it was better (and "politically correct" as sometimes claimed) to initiate cooperatives among the organized groups. An organized group was considered to be more likely to have gone through some form of organizing and conscientization process (social preparation as it is sometimes called). In such a case, cooperative-building could be more focused and effective.

Partnership with each group was formalized through a memorandum of agreement stipulating the role and responsibilities of CFPI and the partner group. Under the agreement, there would be joint planning of the activities. CFPI took care of the personnel (cooperative development specialists) and the "technology" — the technical and consulting provision — while the other party was expected to deliver the actual organizing work and follow-through.

In some cases, groups took part in the program through their own initiative, without mediation from their PO coalition or their supporting NGO. Mostly these were the unaffiliated groups who decided to form their coop, sought the advice and assistance of CFPI as an institution with the relevant resources, and agreed on the terms.

In other cases, however, CFPI conducted broad promotional campaigns through its participation in local NGO-PO networks and in activities facilitated by the local government. Generally, NGOs such as CFPI have their vision of development which they seek to test in practice, and responding to specific requests for assistance is an opportunity toward that end. In fact, NGOs generally do not merely respond to requests; they actively seek out POs with whom they can jointly pursue their vision. In effect they want to show that the POs need them just as they need the POs.

"Direct vs. Indirect Cooperative Organizing"

Many, if not most, cooperatives in the Philippines consider themselves part of the "cooperative movement." Other cooperatives identify themselves primarily as part or extension of a labor movement or a socio-political movement. Some may not even identify themselves as part of a social-popular movement at all and simply see themselves as a group with some special relationship with a patron — a government agency, an NGO, or a politician. Some POs that organized cooperatives among their members with CFPI's assistance were identified through the partnership that CFPI clinched with their larger socio-political coalition or movements. These movements regarded cooperativism as an orientation having only a secondary importance in relation to the primary socio-political orientation.

To those with a "cooperative-sector or cooperative-movement mentality," however, the cooperative ideology can very well provide the conscientizing and visionary framework for organizing a popular-social movement. Instead of directly organizing coops among the unaffiliated, CFPI stressed the "work-through-partners approach" because it wanted to show the popular and social movements that cooperative development is consistent with their visions of an alternative society. Its adoption of this approach was actually an adaptation to realities in Philippine civil society: many groups CFPI was dealing with wanted to ensure that the primacy of their movement would be maintained. There is no sense, however, in absolutizing the PO-partnership approach. In CFPI's experience, it was only one of the options in promoting cooperatives among the people.[4]

The Organizing Process

The process of organizing a cooperative usually begins with an orientation seminar with the specific group that has expressed interest in forming a cooperative. The orientation package consists of clarifying basic ideas about cooperatives, such as the broad and legal definitions, types and forms, and the common reasons for forming cooperatives. Afterwards, the group is asked to clarify among themselves the possible issues and tasks that might go into the initial organizing process. Thus, CO facilitates initial action planning by the group.

CFPI devised a set of criteria to apply to the two basic stages of cooperative organizing, the initiation stage and the operation stage. A third stage, development and sustainability, applies to groups that have hurdled the first two.

A group is considered to be in the "initiation stage" of cooperative organization if it has at least 15 members who have undertaken a pre-membership education seminar (PMES) and who have fully paid the membership fees they have set. In case the initial share-capital contributions from all members have not yet been fully paid, the group must at least have a concrete program of capital and resource mobilization including a defined schedule of payment of the shares. The members should have been able to set up a steering committee or an *ad hoc* board and to define the organizational structure. There must be an operational recording system, even in its simple form (inflow and outflow). Organizational and business planning, as well as the documentation of this process, must be ongoing and in the process of completion. The documentation of these plans is to be reflected in three basic documents: the code of by-laws, the articles of cooperation, and the economic survey or feasibility study.

There are more to these criteria. It is here that such behavioral aspects as group solidarity and commitment are actually being developed. Solidarity and commitment cannot be attributed to a group if it cannot even raise the necessary membership fees needed for documentation expenses.

A group is said to be in the "operational stage" if the officers and the organizational structure have been formalized, organizational meetings are being conducted regularly, and documentation has been finalized. A simple bookkeeping system should be operational and the business or economic project of the group, ongoing and operational. A minimum of P2,000 share-capital subscription should have been fully paid in. A program for continuing capital build-up must be in place according to the plan of the group.

Some of these criteria are based on the law covering cooperatives. Republic Act 6938 requires a cooperative applying for registration to have a minimum membership of 15, an initial paid-in capital of P2,000 (certified by a treasurer's affidavit and a bank certificate), and a complete set of the code of by-laws, the articles of cooperation, and the economic survey. An initial capital of P2,000 may be too small an amount to start a business, but it is the minimum amount a group needs to be registered as a cooperative. At any rate, some groups actually started with just this amount.

In most NGO organizing approaches, building "generic people's organizations" is the first step, involving bonding and social preparation. CFPI-assisted cooperative organizing in Davao del Norte, however, took off from a well-established institution: the Basic Christian Communities (BCCs), locally known as the *Gagmayng Kristohanong Katilingban* or GKK. These are organizations of Catholic parishioners organized by the Social Action Centers under the local dioceses. Started during the martial law period, today the GKKs, administered by lay persons, function as the church at the sitio level. The officers of a GKK include a president, vice president, treasurer, secretary, and auditor and support positions composed of lay persons. Usually a GKK comprises 50 households. There may be one to three GKKs in a barangay.

Early church interventions focused on the municipal level, and this was where the early coops were formed involving farmers, employees and small businessmen,

mostly living in the poblacion. The approach failed to reach the very poor at the barangay level. Although advantages of scale can be seen in the municipal-level cooperatives (they have large business volumes), these could not involve the people in the far-flung areas. CFPI advocated cooperative organizing at the barangay level. Thus, it coordinated with the church through the head of the Social Action Center of the Tagum diocese. Consultations with the parish priests followed, some of whom agreed to call GKK leaders to a dialogue with CFPI. GKK leaders who were receptive to the idea agreed to consult their members. Cooperative organizing started in 1990.

In the early stages of organizing, CFPI conducted coop orientations, social investigations, and analysis of local resources and capabilities. Two-day pre-membership education seminars were conducted. Participants provided the food and other seminar expenses. CFPI provided one set of training materials for each primary organization. The concrete output of each seminar was the group action plan — when to elect officers, how to operationalize a capital build-up scheme, and what economic project to study.

In most of the primary coops organized in the upland areas, the usual choice was the consumer cooperative store. Capital build-up took about three months on average, after which the consumer store business could be started. The consumer coops eventually expanded their operations to marketing of both production inputs and outputs. There were 18 such coops whose volume in 1995 ranged from P110,000 (the size of a small sari-sari store) to P3,990,000 (the size of a grocery). As of December 1995, 36 coops organized mostly through the CFPI-GKK partnership posted an average business volume of P635,919.

CFPI's task was to facilitate capability-building through coaching and troubleshooting to linking with outside agencies. It also assisted in project studies and sourcing of capital. External capital sourcing came as a task at hand only after internal capital build-up had been maximized. Only two coops have external loans today.

In the province of Bataan, 54 groups were initiated into cooperative-building under the program. Of these, 41 became operational as fledgling cooperatives at the end of the program. In addition, 60 groups outside of the target groups were provided cooperative development services through joint counterparting arrangements between the assisted groups, local assisting institutions, and CFPI. Sixty-eight groups organized or assisted were registered as cooperatives at the end of the program in 1993.

In the town of Hermosa particularly, 17 cooperatives reached initiation stage under the CFP program.[5] Most of these are multipurpose cooperatives. A multipurpose cooperative, by definition, is a combination of at least two of the following cooperative types: credit, consumer, producer, marketing and service. Some have long been existing as self-help groups, such as the *Lupon ng Pamayanang Pangkabuhayan* that was an offshoot of an adult education program of PRRM in 1978. The women members initiated a livelihood program by raising money to procure a hog and later expanded into duck-raising. With CFPI's assistance, they converted the organization into a cooperative.

A farmers' group, the Sagrada Familia Multipurpose Cooperative in Barangay Balsik, Hermosa, Bataan was one of such groups assisted by CFPI. The farmers picked up the idea of forming a cooperative from government promotions, accord-

ing to Sagrada board director Del David. Follow-through organizing activities, however, began with the intervention of two cooperative organizers of CFPI whom the group contacted through other groups in Hermosa that were already being assisted by CFPI. Eighteen farmers enlisted as founding members. They decided to put the required share per member at P1,000 each. David explained that P100 was for the membership fee and P900 was for the share capital, the latter to be paid in four installments. The group conducted a general meeting during the town fiesta, followed by another general meeting to formalize the cooperative by adopting a set of by-laws and electing the officers. They decided to name their coop after the name of the local parish, Sagrada Familia. Registered with 19 members, the cooperative now has 48 members, with 16 more applying to join, according to David.

Members decided what project to undertake and develop based on the limits of their capital, manageability, and their own preferences. Naturally, it had to be a project that would allow members to participate as consumers needing goods and services or as producers needing production inputs and production facilities. The Hermosa cooperatives decided to engage in the provision of daily consumer goods, supplying livestock feed, palay trading, provision of credit, renting out farm machinery, raising livestock (ducks, hogs, poultry) and food-processing (making *tocino*).

The Training Process

The training process is the heart of the cooperative capability-building process. The basic training package is the pre-membership education seminars (PMES) facilitated by COs. In the PMES conducted among groups initiated in Bataan and Davao (and elsewhere), the opening topic was "marginalization," followed by the "need for cooperative action and organization," followed by the basics of cooperative building (organizing strategies, planning, legal questions). In the "marginalization" workshop, participants were asked to identify perceived problems and then to see these problems in connection with other issues or structures. Among organized, politicized groups, the workshop results were predictable: poverty is caused by unjust or unresponsive structures at the local level (oligopolistic merchant traders, usurers, loggers, landowners, etc.), at the national level (corrupt, elite-dominated government) and at the global level (TNCs, World Bank-IMF). Others, less politicized perhaps, gave equally relevant factors, such as overpopulation, lack of discipline and unity among the people, lack of skills and education, etc.

Trainors made no attempt to present a grand narrative of what is wrong with the world (it was not even necessary for politicized groups). Nevertheless, there was every emphasis on the capacity of individuals to make a difference in their communities if they work together cooperatively. While many of CFPI's trainors have strong political views, they are aware also that cooperative training is a completely different ballgame from the "teach-in" approach of the socio-political movements.

Furthermore, while the implicit assumption was that inequitable asset ownership and power structures spell poverty, the fact remains that the poor have somehow survived. Despite structures, they hurdle difficulties, adjust to conditions, calculate their options, and come out alive. In other words, they do not just sit there and allow structures to ravage them. They do something to increase their chances of survival. The Filipino in fact has a word for it: *diskarte*.[16] There are spaces in the

lives of the poor where these structures have less control and where change, pending the resolution of large-scale social and political issues, is possible and beneficial.

A culture of self-responsibility among individuals therefore is a function of worldview. The extremist, one-sided view of things drowns out the role of the individual. Overemphasis on the structural interpretation can in fact breed the idea that because people are victims, they need to be helped, and that because society is completely unjust, society owes them something. The alternative is a balanced and realistic view that provides enough focus on individual transformation and individual initiative. Then collective action and organization becomes meaningful. Individual and group formation, therefore, were the explicit cooperative training objectives.

The broad model being tested by CFPI was the concept of the associative sector supporting the economy of the poor. The associative economy as envisioned is composed of their self-help groups, cooperatives, and other membership organizations. Through networks of horizontal and vertical linkages in economic and non-economic aspects among and between these organizations, it is envisioned that the claim-making power of the poor over resources and public policies and their bargaining power in the market will be enhanced and strengthened. The development of countervailing power vis-à-vis the state and private market forces crowns the external agenda of developing self-reliance. The internal agenda is to institutionalize consistent participatory methods in determining the goals of the cooperative, mobilize the members' own resources, and distribute the tasks and benefits.

The basic principles of self-reliance and member participation were presented both as a set of normative characteristics and as objective guidelines for cooperative operations.

Management Consultancy

The reliance of fledgling organizations on the expertise and other resources of NGOs may be cited as a form of dependence. On the other hand, when an organization has to rely for advice on someone that it believes to know better in the technical sense, that is not being dependent, but being wise.

In the initial phases of organizing, CFPI provided the required technical intervention in the form of training and consulting services. These were provided in the various phases, from the initial planning to the actual conduct of economic activities. Community organizers (COs) assisted the cooperative in planning, designing management systems, installing bookkeeping and accounting systems, and preparing studies for possible economic projects. These were provided through a standardized training package of information and skills and through group-specific workshops and consultations. The assistance package emphasizes attaining self-reliance by building organizational and business capabilities.

The officers of the cooperatives, both in the case of the primaries and the federation in Bataan, actually did most of the day-to-day legwork such as consultations and monitoring. However, there was a real tendency in some primaries to rely on the COs' advice for every conceivable problem in the organization. In this case,

posing as a know-it-all would have been disastrous, both to the PO and to the reputation of the NGO. At the same time, pounding on the principle of self-reliance each time a difficulty comes along can easily be interpreted as a sign of lack of respect and confidence. In most cases, however, well-organized consultations among the members themselves were able to bring out the needed solutions, which was how it should be. Many PO leaders in fact tried to do it this way.

Later, CFPI initiated the formation of a trainors' pool and bookkeepers' pool in each of the areas. Participants were individuals from various coops who are willing, upon request, to assist other coops in the area. Thus, additional coaching and consulting work required by the primaries could be provided, with higher replication effect through the volunteer pools with their more advanced training.

Higher-Level Organizing

The formation of functional linkages and networks among cooperatives is a natural extension of cooperative development. As the International Cooperative Agreement (ICA) principles declare, cooperatives serve their members most effectively and strengthen the cooperative movement by working together.

In Hermosa, higher-level organizing among the CFPI-assisted cooperatives began after the program's basic organizing phase ended in June 1993. The initial concern was to unite the 17 cooperatives under a bigger structure that could facilitate joint planning. With a higher-level structure, the delivery of CFPI's services could be more focused and easily facilitated. Some of these services were provided to program partners in common. For instance, in all its program areas, CFPI provides bookkeeping and accounting seminars and basic management courses to representatives of targeted primary cooperatives. As in the formation of volunteer pools of trainors and bookkeepers, however, support services can be provided with higher replication effect by developing a leadership core from among the various primary cooperatives instead of individually servicing numerous primaries. The assistance could be directed to the development of skills among the leadership of the federation or whatever higher-level structure may be preferred by the primary groups.

The Hermosa cooperatives easily warmed up to the idea of a larger structure. Leaders met in December 1993 to discuss the idea. There was no blueprint or concept paper on the form of structure to be established. Everyone agreed, however, that a federation could be a mechanism and venue to address common concerns. At that point, however, they only had the vaguest idea of what a federation could do in terms of agricultural activities.

All of them were agricultural coops and most of them knew each other. Even the women's group in Balsik was a farmers' group. The tricycle drivers cooperative was also composed of farmers, driving being just one of their off-farm activities. As farmers, they knew that their common concern was their limited access to farm irrigation, post-harvest facilities, credit, and markets. A cooperative federation — a secondary or tertiary business organization whose members are primaries or secondaries — could effectively address some of these concerns.

Building a federation, however, would entail a lot of work, especially in meeting formal and legal requirements and in identifying feasible and viable projects

that address the needs of the primary coops. The law allows the registration of a cooperative federation if it has a minimum of five primary cooperatives as members and a capitalization of P25,000. CFPI organizers advised that initially, while seeking to meet the legal criteria, a council could be formed whose member coops can consult each other on organizational and business issues and problems. Thus, the Hermosa Cooperative Development Council was launched as a transitional body towards the formation of a municipal federation. A program of action to build the Hermosa Cooperative Federation was prepared and a steering committee was formed to prepare the economic survey and business studies and to conduct consolidation activities.

The Action Research and Planning Process

The cooperative organizing process was in the form of an action research project in which the project beneficiaries were involved in analyzing and identifying solutions to their problems. The aim was to develop economic activities and projects through which they could overcome their present constraints. Thus, after the basic coop orientation and consultations, members started to discuss the possible economic activities that could address their common concerns. Most of the primary groups chose to engage in savings and credit operations and in consumer goods provision.

In Hermosa, the council, or the ad hoc federation enlisted 20 primary cooperatives as members, all of which had attained operational status. These coops were engaged in providing consumer goods, supplying livestock feeds, palay trading, credit, farm machinery services, livestock raising, and food processing. The most crucial activity was rice farming with livestock raising as a subsidiary activity. The group decided that rice milling and marketing would be the most appropriate collective project. It also considered operating a cooperative drugstore.

Ireneo S. Egenias, general manager of the Hermosa federation and board member of a primary coop, envisioned a municipal federation that would take care of marketing their produce and protect small farmers from price manipulation by the traders. Moreover, he believed that the federation would be a great help in providing education and training and even moral support to members.

Every member agreed that marketing should be the priority. As a first step, the federation officers surveyed existing mills in the area as part of the feasibility study. They also started negotiating with PACAP, a funding agency, for a P700,000-loan to begin marketing palay.

An assessment of the federation after a year of its ad hoc existence revealed certain problems in the operation of the primaries. These included weaknesses in the management and administration of projects, control, auditing and recording of expenses, and in the division of tasks. Cited as factors were the leaders' lack of experience and training on the principles and techniques of management, storekeeping, auditing, trading, and other activities. Because training was not always available, the group resolved to regularize the systematic discussion of problems so that each member could learn from their own experiences and from other member cooperatives.

Due to the lack of funds, the officers relied on their own efforts instead of hiring a management staff. The staff of CFPI-Bataan provided secretariat support during federation meetings. Members shouldered the expenses for the meetings. As in most local organizing, leaders carried a heavier load of the work. Because the federation's leaders were also chairpersons or general managers of their respective groups, they tended to prioritize the needs of their primary organizations.

Eventually, the federation was able to come up with the required capitalization and documentation for registration. However, the Cooperative Development Specialist (CDS) of Bataan refused to endorse the group for registration. The federation was told to come up with a consolidated financial statement of member cooperatives, a requirement that is not actually stipulated by law. The federation leaders began to suspect that the CDS actually favored the existence of only one federation for the entire province. An existing federation, the Bataan Federation of Multipurpose Cooperatives, was organized through the former Bureau of Cooperative Development (BACOD). It was later reorganized as the Bataan Federation of Cooperatives after most of its members received loans from the Land Bank. The Hermosa Federation leaders, however, thought that it was ineffective and largely non-operational.

It is now being debated in the cooperative sector whether to allow new federations where there are existing ones. The argument is that many federations existing side by side will prove to be uneconomic. Proponents of legislation limiting the registration of cooperatives recall the ACCFA-FACOMA experience in the 1950s when government sponsored the establishment of farmer's marketing cooperatives at the municipal level and these all failed miserably. In the 1970s, the government adopted the area marketing cooperative (AMC) model, which covered provincial operations. Still, most AMCs established under this program also failed.

It makes sense indeed to convince farmers to band together under one unified provincial cooperative marketing system. Achieving economy of scale is one of the most fundamental purposes of cooperation. However, given the uneven development of organizing across towns, establishing such a provincial system would require goading, pushing and coercion, as it probably happened in the past when cooperative development was considered to be a state project. Institutions created from above are not sustainable because their supposed clients from below do not feel responsible for its success.

Desirable and efficient systems should be achieved and this can best be decided by the cooperatives themselves. Before pushing for higher-level formations, it is better for local structures to operate and allow the process of linkage and movement-building to set in, in a combination of civic and market processes. The alternative would be technocratic solutions belonging to a bygone era. The issue is whether the law should mandate the exact structure and stages of development of cooperatives. Thus, legislating limitations runs counter to the very idea of an autonomous cooperative movement.

Feeling that it needed legal registration anyway, the Hermosa federation decided to register first with the Securities and Exchange Commission while still pursuing registration with the Cooperative Development Authority. Since under R.A. 6938 only CDA-registered entities may use "cooperative" in their business names, the group had to call itself the Hermosa Federation for Cooperation. As an incorporated organization, it can enter joint ventures and projects and take other opportu-

nities coming their way. There is also a cultural dimension. Legal registration is like a stamp of approval that organizational work has been amply done.

Linkage Building

Building a network of linkages with government agencies, private firms and banks, traders, and other NGOs is a must for fledgling cooperatives to survive. These can provide support, service, collaboration or at least tolerance for the smooth functioning of cooperatives.

Local Networking

Even at the start, the federation was already participating in activities jointly conducted by NGOs, such as the campaign against the Expanded Value-Added Tax (E-VAT), the series of planning meetings for the proposed provincial cooperative bank, and the social reconnaissance survey conducted by NGOs for the JICA-supported Central Luzon master development plan. In various ways, the council tried to establish linkages with government and private groups relating to cooperatives.

Soon after its formation, the Hermosa federation started participating in local activities and structures. It joined the Municipal Cooperative Council (MCDC) of Hermosa, a tripartite body composed of cooperatives, NGOs and government agencies. The formation of such councils are mandated by a presidential order and is being implemented by the CDA in order to better involve local officials and local agencies in cooperative development efforts in their areas. The federation is also a member of the Bataan Cooperative Development Council where CFPI is also a member. The municipal or city mayor, or the governor in the case of the provincial councils, chairs such councils. The implementing rules provide that the vice-chairman should come from the NGOs. In her capacity as chairperson of the Hermosa Federation for Cooperation, Mrs. Villa Oliva was elected vice chairperson. Other officers of the federation also won seats in other local bodies. Del David, board director of the federation, was elected to the ad hoc committee of the Municipal Agricultural and Fisheries Council.

Federation officials, however, thought that the MCDC lacked direction. Meetings were not held regularly. Only the federation members were the most consistent participants in the MCDC meetings while other participants constantly changed. Consequently, planning was affected. Dissatisfaction with the performance of the MCDC led to a decision to field candidates in the local elections. In 1995, four federation officials vied for seats in the Sangguniang Bayan. One of them, Mr. Oliva, the chairman of St. Peter's Cooperative and a board member of the federation, won a seat in the municipal council. Later, he was elected to the Cooperative Committee and the Education Committee of the Sangguniang Bayan upon endorsement by the federation.

Cooperatives in Politics

Political participation per se may be cited as an indicator of empowerment, but participation in the pursuit of a principled program is something else. The

Hermosa coop leaders ran on a platform of cooperative development, an action that in itself was a novelty in the area.

In other areas covered by CFPI, cooperative leaders also opted to vie directly for seats in the local councils, either as independents or as party-affiliated candidates on a cooperative platform. In Davao del Norte, 90 leaders of CFPI cooperatives won seats in the barangay councils. Aiming for cooperative-oriented local governments has thus been proven a viable option.

Cooperatives are traditionally seen as "non-political." Carried to an extreme interpretation, it means that cooperatives are not supposed to campaign openly for particular candidates and its officials are not to run for political office. However, cooperative principles simply assert that persons may not be denied membership or services on political grounds.

Cooperative political organization and action may take various forms. At the local level, cooperatives have taken advantage of constitutional and Local Government Code provisions on the right of POs to be consulted and participate meaningfully in making decisions. Although cooperatives and the NGO/PO community in general have yet to skilfully maximize these provisions, it is also true that the current participatory mechanisms have their own limitations.

A political role does not run counter to the basic cooperative principles. Political action is an extension of the cooperative's mission of building its countervailing power and ability to respond to the needs of members and to shape its environment. This certainly is not lost on the Hermosa federation.[7]

Resource Mobilization and Credit

Capitalization of the cooperative economic project, as a matter of principle, comes from the members of the cooperative who will after all be its main users and beneficiaries. Accessing loans from external sources must be seen only as complementary to the resources internally generated from its members. Overdependence on external loans, as many cases have shown, serve only to undermine the self-reliant potential of coops.

Using Own Resources and Credibility

In the case of the Sagrada Familia Cooperative, the members agreed to initially embark on farm-input provision. With an initial capital of P9,500, they procured fertilizers needed by the member farmers. Later, they were able to buy, mill and market their rice as well. Their demonstration of business capability soon earned the respect of the provincial government, which provided the cooperative with solar dryers and water pumps. These were distributed to members whose farms were not irrigated.

Then with P225,000 borrowed from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) at seven percent interest, a thresher, a reaper, a trailer, and two hand tractors were procured. The machines were rented out to all farmers in the area. This has made it easier to amortize the loan.

Later, the coop acquired more hand tractors with a P50,000 loan from PRRM, an NGO that has been educating them on palay diseases. They got the loan at 18 percent interest, payable in two years.

General Manager David explained that while government agencies and NGOs were only too willing to provide them new loans, the federation exercises restraint, preferring to pay their old loan in full before getting a new one.

Today, the Sagrada Familia farmers avail themselves of the needed credit, fertilizers, water pumps, and harvesting machines from their cooperative. They now rely on it to market their produce. By sticking to the policies they set, the members have enabled the Sagrada Familia Multipurpose Cooperative to make everything work for them. David said, "We keep everything open. We report everything. Earnings from renting out the machines are posted at the office. A CPA audits our financial statements. For example, we have a member who farms five hectares but harvested only 17 cavans of palay. His crops were attacked by *tungro* (mildew). Despite this misfortune, he still paid his P5,000 fertilizer loan. He was a good debtor. Some of us thought we must forego collecting the interest. However, we knew this could set a precedent. Others might also claim that their crop had failed. As of the moment our policy is not to forego the collection of interest."

Apparently, government assistance through the provision of loans was effective in the case of the Sagrada Familia. Similar government credit facilities made available to coops and POs have not all produced good results. Why? Before the formation of the Sagrada Familia cooperative, leaders said, the farmers relied on informal lenders. The fact that informal lenders were thriving indicated that the small farmers' credit was viable and profitable. Farmers were able to repay, and on time. If they could be credit-worthy with the informal lenders, they must be more so under their new cooperative.

In the case of the Hermosa federation, leaders believed that so far the biggest problem was the lack of capital and financing of some member cooperatives. They lacked the capital to expand the volume of stocks, pay liabilities, cover losses, and pay for operating costs. Members were slow to pay in their capital subscriptions. A year after the federation was set up, share-capital payments to it covered only the agreed initial paid-up capital. Payments for the subscribed shares had not yet been completed.

Because the members were small cooperatives, the federation decided that capital would also have to come from sources other than the member cooperatives' small surpluses. Thus, since 1994, the ad hoc federation has sponsored fund-raising raffles. Since share-capital payments and income from the raffle were kept in the bank to be used for projects, there was hardly anything to spend for operating expenses. Hence, operating expenses were kept at a minimum and usually paid for by voluntary contributions from member cooperatives or from the officers' own pockets. The federation netted P55,000 from the raffles. Rather than letting this money lie idle in the bank, they later decided to make the amount available to member primaries in the form of production loans. A member-cooperative can borrow up to P5,000 at 2% interest a month, payable in six months. The federation is thus trying to work out a careful process of building its internal resources towards its envisioned marketing service.

A Little Success that Could Have Been a Disaster

Meanwhile, the CFPI clinched a P1.5 million loan fund from the Development Assistance Program for Cooperatives and People's Organizations (DAPCOPO) through the Agricultural Credit and Policy Council (ACPC), an attached agency of the Department of Agriculture. The loan fund was made available to CFPI-assisted cooperatives, with the idea of helping the coops in hastening their members' own capital build-up efforts. Under the terms, a coop availing of the loan had to match the loan amount by 10 percent of its own capital. Organizers agreed to charge 20 percent based on accumulated balance, with a 10 percent effective rate based on monthly amortization. In Davao del Norte, total loans released under this program amounted to nearly P500,000.

The CFPI Davao field unit believes, however, that the loan program retarded the capital build-up effort of some coops who used their existing funds as the matching funds instead of raising new capital from members. Instead of becoming more focused as a self-help promotion institution, CFPI got into the details of monitoring the performance of the coops or, in general, to pry into the management of the borrowing coops. This was a fundamental defect of the credit program. Fortunately, only 12 coops availed of the loans, with only three experiencing difficulties due to production failures. Although the loans have been outstanding, there have so far been no defaults in repayments. Although the Davao area has the highest rate of successful use of the loan, the field unit has learned why a credit program can sometimes be more of a negative rather than a positive contribution to the self-reliant efforts.

Trust, Credit and the Moral Hazard Problem

One of the most frequent complaints of primary coops that provide credit is the difficulty in collecting loan repayments from members. Several reasons account for this. At the level of individual enterprises, production problems entail heavy costs, and a more developed cooperative system ought to provide production consulting and support in addition to what is provided by government extension workers. There are shortcomings too, right at the organizational level, in the design of the credit program, and in operational policies. But culture and values ultimately lie at the core of the problem.

Cooperative loans are not collateralized. The cooperative credit idea in fact rests on the principle that a member's collateral is his own character. Group cohesion and maturity, therefore, are of utmost importance. Members must appreciate the concept of credit-worthiness, of the cooperative values and principles, that policies are set and decided by members, that irresponsible individual actions hurt not some faceless institution but themselves and their fellow members. In Sagrada Familia, with government loans coming in and made available, the cooperative maintained a spirit of trust and discipline by being transparent in its activities.

This brings up the much cited tendency of "target beneficiaries" to rely on external funding sources. Whenever an organizing process takes place, people expect the organizing agent — government or NGO — to produce credit funds for them. Somehow the poor know that there are huge amounts of excess money out there and the only problem of those holding it is how to spend it meaningfully enough.

With this comes the problem of moral hazard and adverse selection. With costless or cheap money about to come in, everyone becomes so poor and unable to save or raise money on their own. Apparently, there will always be those who borrow without intending to pay back the loan, or who will plead inability to pay with every difficulty they encounter. Worse, those bold enough to do this are not exactly the neediest.[8]

Credit, however, is a form of social capital. In most cases it is impossible to fund projects purely out of savings and endowments. Thus, one has to tap the available savings of another individual (informal lenders), or a group of individuals (cooperatives and banks). For such savings to become available for loans, there must be a culture of honor and trust where transactions and contracts are held sacred. If these values are absent, no amount of "education and training" can redress the situation. However, people's organizations can be so institutionally designed that the moral hazard and adverse selection problems can be minimized if not eliminated. When, in a very concrete sense, people don't own their institutions nor the money they spend, they don't feel accountable or answerable to their peers. But when they have stakes in the collective project, when their share in it — money — is hard to part with because it is scarce, then they act responsibly and become concerned.

Being able to access loan assistance from government agencies is not always a hallmark of achievement. In fact, government agencies were only too eager to offer loans. Some cooperatives were not very keen about getting loans, believing that more organizational work still had to be fulfilled. They believed that they were ready to access loans if they could match the loan with their own equity and organizational consolidation.

In the real world, credit will be made available to those projects with the best prospects of paying off, because of the project's viability, and on account of the debtor's character. It is therefore wiser to maximize the use of one's own resources first to avoid paying interests to someone else. When capital is mostly from external sources, the debt burden becomes proportionately higher. As much as possible therefore external funding must not exceed whatever internal resources the organization is able to mobilize. Thus, mobilizing one's own resources makes good organizational sense (in terms of inculcating responsibility and concern among members) and makes good economic sense as well. It is in the cooperative style of organization that the pooling of individually shared resources or capital is tested.[9]

Civil Society Making Civil Society?

Various private voluntary service institutions or NGOs have been serving the needs of local cooperatives in terms of training, technical support, financing and other aspects. Being service institutions that consider cooperative promotion as a major component of their work, they can be regarded as comprising a larger system of self-help promotion, following the terminology of Verhagen.

The entry of some NGOs into cooperative development marks a qualitative departure from conventional cooperative development. NGOs tend to be more focused and their approaches and methods more locally grounded. Their stature as private organizations makes them less vulnerable to political manipulation and

bureaucratism. It has often been said (by donor agencies, by the World Bank) that NGOs do tend to be more effective and innovative than government in terms of facilitating ground-level organizing and development programs. The real test for NGOs is their ability to set up functional mechanisms (such as cooperative federations or networks) for the autonomous and self-reliant development of their clients. Once they have made themselves redundant at this level, NGOs can move on to upscale services needed by their strengthened and more sophisticated former beneficiaries.

What are the effective mechanisms for developing self-reliance? Several ideas can be crystallized from the experiences of NGO-PO partnership in cooperative-building discussed here:

(1) Self-reliance ought to be the guiding principle of organizing, right from the start of the mutual identification process between the NGO and the PO as partners in development. The people's groups must appreciate the NGO programs as befitting their priorities at the moment.

(2) Organizing and capability-building must be seen as an integral part of a participatory action research process through which the intended beneficiaries identify their constraints and the solutions to overcome such constraints. If NGOs are honest, they will admit how hard it is to organize viable economic activities at the level of the very poor. The point, however, is that it is worthwhile to continue working systematically with the poor, even if one does not have all the answers to their problems.

(3) Training must be a participatory process of forming individual and group values and combining the NGOs' technical knowledge and the experiences of the local groups. Practical and concrete approaches facilitate understanding, but elaborate theories may only mystify the target groups with ideas of "historical inevitabilities." No matter how immediately unalterable the larger environment, there is always room for change and that room can always be expanded in the course of the empowerment process.

(4) No single NGO or institution can ever supply all the requirements of development and it is wise to establish right away that autonomous organizations, POs and coops should be able to establish relationships with any actor that matters in their environment.

(5) Organizations can be designed such that costs, risks, and benefits are shared right from the start. Priority should be given to mobilizing internal resources, and strategies that tend to relegate this to the sidelines must be discontinued. This principle is explicit in the cooperative form of organization. At the same time, there is nothing in the cooperative form of organization that could prevent its members from pursuing other economic, social and political goals.

Because the effectiveness of government in initiating people's organizations is severely limited, NGOs provide an alternative source of technical, consulting, and sometimes even financial support.[10] It is indeed more workable that 'civil society creates civil society.' However, while the existence of NGOs may be seen as evidence that a civil society is alive, it is the existence and vibrancy of POs and other membership organizations that accurately indicate the strength of civic life. POs are people taking action; NGOs are technicians serving the needs of POs, whose

actions are all that will matter. It could very well be that the technicians would someday be directly employed by the POs and cooperatives.

Some leaders of national cooperative organizations, however, have nothing but disdain (and envy?) for the NGOs. Where NGOs fail to be consistently participatory and systematic in their program implementation, they can actually set back cooperative development in the areas where they operate. This is especially true for those with cheap credit funds and grants to dish out. Instead of promoting self-reliance, they encourage the dole-out mentality and the idea that cooperatives are mainly mechanisms by which people can access grants.

Cooperative action and organizations are an expression of people taking initiatives to shape their lives. Cooperatives in the Philippines have had limited success. It may even be true that certain areas of the economy can be more effectively handled by private firms or by the state. Nevertheless, self-responsibility, self-reliance, honor, trust, and civic duty that are shaped and manifested in civil society organizations are traits that pave the way for economic and social engagement and cooperation to flourish. These are, in fact, the very substances of social capital.

The cooperative idea is based on the belief that people's problems can be addressed or solved through collective economic, political and social action. By taking advantage of scale economies in marketing their products, farmers for example can undermine the power of the traders. By exercising political options (petitions, lobby, etc.) they strengthen their claim-making power and influence over policies and resources. Therefore they need to develop business and entrepreneurial skills and advocacy skills as well. Most important, however, is the idea that something can be done in the here and now to improve their lives.

ENDNOTES

1 Robert Putnam, with Robert Leonardi and Raffaella Y. Nanetti, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993). Putnam studied the relationships between civic traditions, economic development, and the performance of the regional governments in Italy. He shows how economics, history and culture interact dialectically, instead of merely asserting that they do.

2 Koenraad Verhagen *Self-Help Promotion: A Challenge to the NGO Community* (Amsterdam: Royal Tropical Institute and Oestgeest: Cebemo, 1987), and *Co-operation for Survival: An Analysis of an Experiment in Participatory Research and Planning with Small Farmers in Sri Lanka and Thailand* (Amsterdam and Geneva: Royal Tropical Institute and International Cooperative Alliance, 1984).

3 An important challenge to Aquino's credentials as a cooperative advocate is provided in Dr. Tiongson's book on the experiences of the Medical Action Group cooperative in Davao.

4 Edgardo Gonzales, "The Cooperatives for the Poor Program: Preliminary Notes," *Ang Koop*, March 1995. Dr. Gonzales was part of a three-person team that evaluated the CFPI's three-year program in 1994. He was critical of CFPI's decision to shift from the partnering and networking approaches to the direct- organizing approach. "For CFPI, the long-term implication of a policy choice of direct organizing would be a loss of capacity to provide impact at higher levels of cooperative-building. That would suggest that the gains from direct organizing do not outweigh the benefits of collaboration, and CFPI must struggle to simultaneously preserve the partnership and retain some maneuverability in selecting beneficiaries." With regards the partners approach, however, he also said, "a dedicated partner creates the stimulus for explicit organizing below. The downside of this selection process is that it precisely passes over the poorest sections who do not receive support from any organized group."

5 The CFPI-assisted cooperatives in the different barangays of Hermosa, Bataan are the following: Maite Multipurpose Cooperative (Maite), Palihan Farmers Irrigators' Association Multipurpose Cooperative (Palihan), Palihan Women's Multipurpose Cooperative (Palihan), Women's Multipurpose Cooperative (Burgos), Saba Multipurpose Cooperative (Saba), Lupon ng Pamayanang Pangkabuhayan Multipur-

pose Cooperative (Saba), Culis Farmers Multipurpose Cooperative (Culis), Saint Peters Multipurpose Cooperative (Hermosa), Psalms Multipurpose Cooperative (Bamban), Saint Joseph Multipurpose Cooperative (Mandama), Hermosa Veterans Association Multipurpose Cooperative (San Pedro), Sagrada Familia Multipurpose Cooperative (Balsik), Balsik-Saba TODA Multipurpose Cooperative (Balsik), Balsik Women's Multipurpose Cooperative (Balsik), Fatima Multipurpose Cooperative (Bacong), Kalakalan Hermosa Cooperative (San Pedro), and Christ the King Multipurpose Cooperative (Cataning).

6 In Verhagen's works, attention is focused on the so-called farmers' self-defense structures allowing them to hurdle adverse economic conditions.

7 Currently, there are some efforts towards the formation of a cooperative party. The cooperative movement has served as machinery for harnessing cooperative votes in favor of candidates who carried the cooperative platform, as in the case of the Aquino (1992) and Pimentel (1995) campaigns. Cooperatives default, however, from developing their own political movement, thus merely hitching a ride with elite parties.

8 Speaking before cooperative leaders in November 1996, Dr. Cayetano Paderanga, a member of the Monetary Board, said that "access to credit in the rural areas is probably more important than how cheap it is. More important than providing cheap credit is the provision of various services so important to households at the lower end. These services are among those provided by the informal lender such as supplier's credit and information, informal crop insurance, quick emergency credit lines, consumption loans, and others. One of the important 'services' needed is the initial credit information to start the household's credit history. This is among the most difficult barriers to credit access. A major part of developmental activities in these circumstances is to prepare and support households and firms to participate in the market process by providing — more efficiently and cheaply — those services we have mentioned."

9 Also from Dr. Gonzales' report on CFPI's three-year program: "Complementary financial assistance comes externally — often in the form of credit, production inputs or loans from the Land Bank or the ACPC — but such extra-resource provision is a litmus test of the poor's ability to help themselves, especially since aid is typically perceived as an instrument that increases the dependency of the poor on large, established aid-givers. This wariness about the perceived true nature of outside assistance, and a fierce self-regard to adopt autarkic means in order to assert organizational autonomy, have led a few cooperatives (e.g., Hillside, in Kapalong, Davao del Norte) to resist any extra-resource provision."

10 Hans H. Munkner, *Chances of Co-operatives in the Future: Contribution to the International Co-operative Alliance Centennial 1895-1995* (Marburg/Lahn: Marburg Consult for Self-help Promotion, 1995). A renowned cooperative expert, Munkner advises that "instead of continuing the practice of using government services for promoting cooperatives with the inherent danger of politization and bureaucratization, the establishment of a cooperative development foundation could be a better alternative."

MA. TERESA RAMOS MELGAR

Shareholders in the Environment
A Case Study of the NGOs for Integrated Protected Areas (NIPA)

The consortium known as NGOs for Integrated Protected Areas, Inc. (NIPA) brings together 18 non-government organization (NGO) and people's organization (PO) networks, coalitions and organizations. It serves as the main NGO partner of the Philippine government and the World Bank in the implementation of what is called the "Conservation of Priority Protected Areas Project" (CPPAP), otherwise known as the Integrated Protected Areas System (IPAS) program. The latter is a seven-year program which aims to promote a community-based approach to resource management, conservation and development in 10 identified priority protected areas (PAs) in various parts of the country.

Officially set up on December 14, 1993, the formation of NIPA was the product of an arduous process of debate and negotiations that reflected, on the one hand, the rivalries and conflicts that often undermine NGO-PO efforts to build common advocacies on a variety of development issues and concerns, and on the other, their capacity to work out their differences for the sake of a bigger and more urgent agenda.

This case study of NIPA explores some of the issues and problems that often arise as development NGOs and POs attempt to build coalitions for a common project. I have chosen to focus on NIPA because I feel that its experiences may offer some interesting insights as to how diverse members of the NGO-PO community grapple with their differences, in order to forge unities and working relations on an important issue like biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

The paper will begin by reviewing the context surrounding the formation of NIPA, and drawing some highlights from its rather controversial beginnings. From here, it will examine how NIPA has managed to surmount the initial "tensions" that accompanied its formation, by exploring the factors which have contributed to more cooperative relations among its diverse membership. Moving out of the consortium, the paper will then explore how NIPA has attempted to address its differences with some sections of the NGO-PO community, as well as other political forces who have publicly expressed opposition to the project. Finally, the paper will attempt to show how the project is actually being implemented on the ground by providing an overview of the operations of a host NGO in one protected area.

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The CPPA Project in Retrospect

The rapid, and ultimately, irreparable loss of the country's rich biological diversity has long been one of the major issues of concern to environmental groups and advocates in the Philippines.[1] According to the Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB), the Philippines is losing its wealth of animal and plant species at an alarming rate: already, 125 species of birds, 27 species of mammals and 11 species of reptiles are classified as threatened and endangered.[2] The most glaring indication, however, of the continuing loss of biodiversity is the rapid depletion of the country's primary forests due to the combined effects of commercial logging and the encroachment of resource-poor peasants and migrants into logged-over forest lands.

Over the years, the major mechanism that Philippine authorities have employed to conserve biodiversity has been the establishment of protected areas (PAs) within major wildlife habitats and other natural settings harboring unique ecological features. This approach prohibits the commercial exploitation of such areas, and mandates their conservation for scientific, educational and recreational purposes. In 1932, the National Parks Law (Republic Act No. 395), which was enacted under the American colonial government, established game refuge, bird sanctuaries, and national parks and reservations as the earliest categories of protected areas.[3]

Nonetheless, their designation as protected areas did not prevent private corporations, and in some cases, even government entities, from undertaking extractive activities such as logging, quarrying, mining and energy exploration in these areas. In part, this may be attributed to the absence of management plans that would regulate the activities in the area, and the weak enforcement capacity of government agencies and institutions concerned with protected-area management. On the other hand, where management plans have been drawn, these were often poorly designed and were made without the participation of communities who traditionally depend on the resources found in these areas for their livelihood.[4] Indeed, most of the country's national parks and reservations have long been home to indigenous peoples and migrant communities.

In a bid to come up with a more comprehensive and effective program in protected-area management, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), with the support of the World Bank, began to explore how the IPAS approach to parks management and biodiversity conservation may be applied to the Philippines. In 1990, the DENR tapped an NGO circle composed of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Philippines Program, UP Science Research Foundation, and Foundation for Sustainable Development Inc. (FSDI) to undertake what would later be known as IPAS I — an 18-month study to develop the technical framework and design for an envisioned IPAS project in the Philippines.[5] The study would also identify proposed protected areas based on an assessment of their biological and ecological value.

In the meantime, new legislation on protected areas, incorporating much of the project design developed in IPAS I, was passed by Congress in June 1992. Known as the *National Integrated Protected Areas System (NIPAS) Act* (Republic Act 7586), the new law effectively repealed the Parks Act of 1932. That same year, the DENR issued its implementing rules and regulations (Department Administrative Order No. 25, 1992) for the NIPAS Act.

Unlike the 1932 law, the NIPAS Act recognizes that a key ingredient in the effective management of protected areas is the active involvement of local and indigenous communities who live within or adjacent to the PAs, and depend on the resources found there for their food, shelter and livelihood. Hence, it provides for a much broader role for these communities to define the appropriate strategies and participate in the conservation and management of the natural resources found in their locality.

The vehicle envisioned to facilitate such involvement was the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB), a site-based, multisectoral administrative body which would be responsible for developing and ensuring the implementation of plans, programs, rules and regulations related to the management and conservation of resources found in the PA. The PAMB would include representatives from the DENR, local government units (LGUs), indigenous cultural communities (ICCs) and POs and NGOs in the area.

With the new legislation in place, the DENR proceeded with the second phase of the project, or IPAS II, which called for the implementation of the CPPAP in 10 priority areas earlier identified in IPAS I. Funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the CPPAP was designed to be jointly undertaken by the Philippine government through the DENR, the World Bank which serves as trustee for the GEF, and a national NGO partner. It was in this context that the NIPA NGO consortium was born.

The Road to Consortium-Building

The formation of NIPA as the lead national NGO partner for the implementation of the CPPAP was not unattended by controversy. In fact, the road leading to its eventual establishment was probably one of the most contentious and difficult processes which NGOs have had to undergo in recent years.

The controversy started in early 1993 when the DENR began its search for a national NGO, that, together with the US-based World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF),[6] would take the lead in the implementation of CPPAP. Earlier, the World Bank and the DENR had agreed to tap the WWF as NGO co-implementor of CPPAP, in order to avail of its experience and expertise in protected area management.

After a shortlisting process, the DENR eventually nominated the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM) to be the national NGO partner for the CPPAP. This came about after the World Bank rejected an initial proposal by DENR Secretary Angel Alcala to designate the Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE) as the national lead NGO for the CPPAP implementation.[7] Secretary Alcala had reportedly nominated the FPE upon consultation with some NGO representatives who sit in the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD).[8]

In April 1993, PRRM agreed to be part of the project, and the World Bank, finding no objection to the choice made by DENR, gave its nod to the proposed PRRM-WWF partnership. Under an arrangement subsequently worked out by DENR, PRRM, WWF and the World Bank Resident Mission, a joint PRRM-WWF project team would be formed at the national level to oversee the implementation of CPPAP. PRRM would take the lead in community organizing and advocacy, local networking and livelihood development, while WWF would represent the partnership to the

World Bank on financial matters, be responsible for financial and grant management, and provide expertise on parks management.[9]

The proposed arrangement, however, was soon contested by the NGO members of the PCSD, who objected to the granting of project and financial management responsibilities to a foreign NGO, namely WWF. In a statement, they expressed reservations over the arrangement on the following grounds: 1) a foreign NGO would exercise control over funds intended for the Philippines; 2) it fails to give due recognition to the capability of local NGOs and POs to manage such a project; and 3) the negotiations for selection of an NGO partner in an undertaking as important as the IPAS project were conducted with an "overwhelming lack of transparency."[10] This position was subsequently adopted by the PCSD in a resolution certified by its chair, NEDA Director General Cielito Habito — a move which the PCSD NGOs considered a major victory from their end. The resolution stipulated, among others, that "the lead role in a project that uses funds for the Philippines should be performed by Filipino organizations."[11]

Faced by stiff opposition from NGOs in the PCSD, DENR Secretary Angel Alcala eventually wrote Thomas Allen, World Bank country representative, to propose a five-point alternative scheme for the management of IPAS. According to his proposal, the DENR would ask the PCSD NGO Secretariat to initiate a process of setting up a national NGO consortium as the implementing mechanism for IPAS programs in the country. In effect, the DENR, with the support of the PCSD, was asking the World Bank to rescind its earlier approval of the PRRM-WWF partnership, in order to explore the consortium option. Not surprisingly, PRRM was extremely disappointed with DENR's action, especially since it was not given much of a chance to respond to PCSD's criticisms, and likewise, was not formally informed of DENR's change of heart.

On October 21, 1993, Thomas Wiens, World Bank task manager for the IPAS project, responded by saying that the Bank was amenable to the DENR proposal, provided that the proposed consortium would be able to meet eight conditions.[12] If these conditions could not be met or accepted, the option was to make the entire grant to the Philippine government, which could then contract with NGOs or consulting firms for technical assistance. Later, in a meeting with World Bank representatives, the PCSD NGOs and PRRM affirmed the importance of direct NGO involvement in the IPAS II program, and agreed to work out an acceptable formula to resolve the representation problem in the CPPAP project not later than December 15, 1993.

From here, the NGO-PO community proceeded to work quickly. In what would be known as the NGO-PO General Meetings on IPAS, representatives of 22 networks, coalitions and organizations coming from various persuasions and carrying different advocacies, convened in a series of meetings to thresh out problems and concerns related to NGO-PO involvement in the CPPAP. Given the controversy that had accompanied IPAS, as well as the tensions that had marked these groups' previous attempts at forging common policy advocacies, the discussions were unsurprisingly characterized by a lot of debates and political undercurrents.

In particular, the debates and discussions centered on the nature and structure of the entity that would serve as co-implementor of CPPAP, how it could be sustained, what would be the terms of its relationship with government and the World Bank, how local POs and NGOs could be involved in decision-making, as well

as other concerns related to the implementation of the project, such as the issues of ancestral domain and biotechnology prospecting. Nonetheless, as Horacio Morales Jr., NIPA's first chairperson/president puts it, "the discussions were fruitful in that... a lot of the issues involved [were clarified].[13]

Eventually, it was decided to adopt the consortium formula as the vehicle for NGO-PO participation in the implementation of CPPAP. On December 9, 1993, or a week before their self-imposed deadline, the NGOs for Integrated Protected Areas, Inc. or NIPA consortium was formed. Of the original 22 NGOs-POs who participated in the consultation, 18 agreed to become members.[14] Less than a week later, on December 14, 1993, NIPA was officially registered at the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) as a non-stock, non-profit organization.

The formation of NIPA has been viewed as a landmark event that brought together these NGOs and POs, "which had long functioned independently, and in some instances, in opposition to each other," in a pioneering mode of partnership for a common development agenda. As one account of NIPA's formation aptly puts it:

> ...in the end, the common realization of the importance and urgency of implementing a comprehensive protection system for the remaining niches of biodiversity prevailed. The NGOs recognized that any further delay in the implementation of the project could leave the identified sites unprotected resulting in serious biodiversity losses. One important decision agreed upon at the early stage was to give importance to the program objectives (biodiversity conservation and sustainable development) than to the individual NGOs' agenda. The high level of magnanimity among the NGO participants led them to try and make the consortium concept work in favor of the CPPAP.[15]

Empowering Local Communities

The CPPAP represents an attempt to implement a new strategy in protected area management in a manner that eventually devolves control and management of local resources to the communities that depend on them. Central to this project is the belief that those who live off a natural resource base are ultimately its best protectors; hence, they should be primarily involved in, and be the main beneficiaries of programs towards conservation and development.[16]

A crucial component of the CPPAP strategy, therefore, is the mobilization of communities to play a leading role in the management and protection of their natural resource base. This approach, in turn, requires organizing the local and indigenous dwellers, and the forging of partnerships among them and with other social and political institutions and sectors, such as the local government units (LGUs), churches and academe, in the development and implementation of concrete strategies that address the twin goals of resource management and community development.

The implementation of CPPAP in 10 priority sites will be supported by a GEF grant of $20 million over a seven-year period.[17] Of this amount, $17 million will be directly managed by NIPA while $3 million will go to the DENR. NIPA will implement three of the four program components, namely, resource management, socio-eco-

nomic development, and technical assistance, coordination and monitoring, while the DENR will handle site development.

At the site level, NIPA shall undertake these programs in partnership with host NGOs, who are based in the locality, and who shall be selected according to a process previously worked out by NIPA and DENR, and articulated in the latter's Administrative Order No. 5 (1995). As host NGOs, they will, among others, take the lead in organizing the communities, and undertaking activities (e.g. education and training in resource conservation, local networking and advocacy, etc.) designed to enhance the people's capabilities to participate meaningfully in the formulation and implementation of management plans for the protected area. The host NGOs are also expected to help the communities develop alternative livelihood programs to lessen, if not eliminate, their dependence on unsustainable methods of resource use.

After seven years, the host NGOs will phase out from the areas, with the expectation that the communities shall have attained a sufficient level of popular organization and economic development, as to participate in the management and protection of their natural resource base. The DENR will then take over in monitoring and ensuring the implementation of management plans developed by the communities themselves, through the Protected Area Management Boards.

So far, host NGOs for nine of the 10 priority sites have been chosen, all of whom have begun operations.[18] In some of the priority areas like the Bataan National Park, Mt. Kanlaon, Agusan Marsh and Mt. Apo, the host NGOs are themselves consortia or coalitions of local NGOs, POs and other citizens groups, formed for the purpose of implementing the CPPAP.

Making the Consortium Work

As a consortium of NGOs and POs representing diverse persuasions and viewpoints, NIPA is continually faced with the challenge of maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect, openness and cooperation among its members, and with its partners in program implementation — the DENR, LGUs, and host NGOs, among others. Now that it is entering the second year of actual project implementation on the ground, it should be interesting to examine how NIPA has managed to maintain its "consortium" character, what issues and problems have been encountered along the way, and how NIPA has attempted to address these problems in a productive manner.

Within the consortium itself, it seems that the initial tensions that resulted from the project's controversial beginnings have given way to a much more relaxed and cooperative atmosphere. A number of factors seem to have helped bring about this condition.

A Pluralist, Working Board

A major factor accounting for the currently "healthy" relationship of the NGOs and POs in NIPA is the presence of a working Board of Trustees. As in most coalitions, the NIPA board is an active and pluralist one where all of the major NGO-PO groupings or tendencies in the NIPA membership are represented.

Anticipating early on the problems that may arise in constituting the board, the NIPA member-organizations decided to adopt what they call a "clustering" approach, where they identified themselves openly, according to clusters or groupings of NGOs-POs who more or less share the same orientation. Out of this process, four clusters were identified: (1) HARIBON/Green Forum cluster; (2) CONVERGENCE cluster; (3) CODE-NGO and the like; and (4) independents.

In turn, the member organizations belonging to each cluster nominate their representatives to the board every two years. As agreed upon, the "HARIBON/Green Forum," "CONVERGENCE" and "CODE-NGO and the like" clusters shall have two representatives each, while the "independents" shall have three. All the officers of NIPA are elected by the board from among themselves, with the understanding, however, that the various positions shall be rotated among the different clusters for every term.

The result of this "clustering" approach has been to ensure that, at least in terms of structure, no single NGO-PO grouping will dominate decision-making in a crucial body like the board. Likewise, seeing to it that all clusters will have the chance to occupy different official positions in NIPA, including that of chairperson, has proven to be an important confidence-building measure for the clusters involved in the consortium.[19]

Of course, this is not to say that the cooperative relationships came without hard work. During its first year, the board had to meet at least twice a month to put NIPA's operations in order. Problems that tended to undermine working relationships within the board also cropped up occasionally. But according to Gregorio Magdaraog, the current president, these problems may be attributed more to "personality differences" rather than to overt political or ideological ones, or even to major differences on how to view the project.[20]

Like in most coalitions, decision-making in the NIPA board is done, as much as possible, by consensus. However, in cases where consensus cannot be reached, the board does come to a vote. So far, however, there has not been an instance where board members had to resign or go on leave because of major differences over an issue. On occasions when a vote was taken, those who held dissenting positions were compelled to respect the decision.

A Very Concrete Project

The concrete nature of the project has likewise contributed to NIPA's continued existence as a pluralist initiative. Unlike other NGO joint initiatives which address a broad range of issues and concerns, NIPA's mandate is very specific, which is to co-implement the CPPAP in the 10 pilot sites. Hence, for one, the decisions that have to be made by the board are very specific to the project (e.g. selection of host NGO, budget realignments, etc.), which in turn, give little room for political and ideological differences among NGO-PO members, or other possible sources of conflict, to come into play.

This is especially true given that the project is now being implemented, and most host NGOs have begun their operations. As Minerva Gonzales, NIPA vice president for external affairs puts it, the bigger question now is how to ensure effective implementation of the project on the ground, rather than how to get the NGO-PO

groupings to work together, as this stage has been surmounted insofar as NIPA is concerned.[21]

At the same time, NIPA executive director Ester Isberto believes that credit must also be given to the members of NIPA for not bringing into the consortium whatever problems they may have with each other in other joint NGO initiatives, or if they do have certain differences within NIPA, for not raising these to the confrontational level.[22] Concurring with this view, NIPA vice president for internal affairs Karen Tañada feels that the consortium is not likely to be the venue where the so-called "dynamics" among NGOs will be played out. Instead, she believes that problems or differences among NGOs are more likely to surface or be discussed in other NGO initiatives which address a broader array of concerns (e.g. Anti-Poverty Summit, PCSD, etc.).[23]

Horacio Morales Jr., another NIPA board member, provides an interesting insight into the cooperative relationships that have been established among the NGO-PO clusters in NIPA. He opined that in the past, the attitude of NGOs tended to be one of "eliminating each other." Today, they appear to have reached a healthier mix of "cooperation and struggle" in their relationships. Perhaps, he suggested, these NGOs have realized that they will be working with each other for some time, basically because they all see the need to engage the state in the course of their development work. In this context, Morales feels, that NIPA members are trying to build more positive relations with each other and limit their conflicts to a manageable level.[24]

An Innovative and Pioneering Experiment

Finally, one other factor which has contributed to the coming together of NGOs and POs in NIPA is the pioneering nature of the project itself, which in turn creates positive pressure among the consortium's members to make it work.

The CPPAP is pioneering in many ways. As stated earlier, it represents the first major initiative to implement a more community-based approach to protected area management and biodiversity conservation. Hence, the experiences derived from this project could become an important source of lessons and insights for communities in other areas which will later be included in the integrated protected areas system. Likewise, should this project succeed in achieving its objectives, its community-based approach could serve as a useful model, specially for government, in addressing other pressing environmental and development problems and concerns.

The project is likewise unique in that this is the first time that government is co-implementing a major program in environmental conservation and development with an NGO-PO consortium. For NIPA, therefore, the participation of NGOs and POs in the CPPAP gives them the chance to influence the direction and implementation of the project, in ways consistent with their vision of greater local autonomy and empowerment. It also allows them to explore the potentials of more collaborative relationships with government, and to prove that NGOs and POs, despite their political or ideological differences, are viable partners in conservation and development.

Finally, what makes the CPPAP pioneering is that this is the first time the World Bank is directly involving NGOs and POs as partners in project implementation, and channeling a significant portion of the funds for them to manage. Over the years,

the World Bank has been under increasing pressure to solicit the meaningful participation of citizens groups and NGOs in developing solutions to problems that directly affect people at the grassroots. Because it chooses to deal only with governments and their agencies, which often fail to appreciate the complexity of the issues faced by local communities, many World Bank projects end up only exacerbating the problems they aim to resolve.

NGO-PO participation in the project thus gives them the chance to define new modes of relating with the World Bank — a goal which, in NIPA's view, is worth exploring since the GEF grant does not fall under the Bank's traditional lending program, and thus may provide greater room for NGOs to introduce more participatory practices in this relationship.[25] In addition, the project gives NGOs and POs the opportunity to demonstrate the capacity of civil society agents to manage and utilize official development assistance more effectively. Indeed, NIPA board members believe that the success of NGO-PO participation in CPPAP could influence how the Bank will relate with citizens groups and NGOs in other parts of the world, at least in administering the GEF.

To sum up, NIPA members are aware that much is at stake in the success of the project, thus, they are under pressure to maintain the viability of the consortium as co-implementor, by not allowing whatever differences they may have with each other to undermine the progress already made.

Opposition from Other Sectors

If there are substantial "tension" points concerning the NIPAS Act and the CPPAP, they are more likely to be found, not within NIPA itself, but outside the consortium, that is, in the relations between, on the one hand, NIPA and the host NGOs, and on the other, the DENR, local government units (LGUs) in the pilot sites, and other sections of the PO-NGO community, as well as other political forces, who have publicly expressed their opposition to the project. Since this paper is primarily concerned with the dynamics among various sections of civil society, the next part will focus mainly on the last item, that is, NIPA's interaction with those sectors who hold different views on the project.

It is no secret that right from the start, some sections of the PO-NGO community, as well as other political forces, opposed the project. These include a number of indigenous peoples' organizations and federations, notably the Kalipunan ng Mga Mamamayang Katutubo ng Pilipinas (KAMP) and their advocates, some NGOs concerned with the issue of biotechnology and the improper use of indigenous knowledge systems, and the underground Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

The KAMP Position

According to its spokesperson, Marilyn Quieres, KAMP is opposed to the implementation of the NIPAS Act and the CPPAP because these "violate the indigenous people's rights to their ancestral domains and to self-determination." They believe that both the law and the project do not represent solutions to their struggle for their ancestral domains; instead, they fear that implementing them will only lead to further displacement from their lands, and erosion of their traditional cultures and way of life.

In terms of the Act itself, KAMP is critical of the zoning mechanism which will be employed in the protected areas. They believe that dividing the area into zones, each with a specific set of management objectives and strategies, will limit the activities and traditional mobility of indigenous peoples.[26] They are also highly critical of the project's livelihood component, which they see as a ploy to co-opt the indigenous communities and divide their ranks. Finally, they question government's sincerity in protecting the environment in light of other measures which it recently approved, such as the Mining Act of 1995, which they believe will cause irreversible damage to local ecosystems.[27]

For its part, NIPA recognizes that the NIPAS Act and the CPPAP, as they are presently conceptualized, fall short of granting indigenous communities outright ownership of their ancestral domains. Nonetheless, they believe that both the law and the project provide certain opportunities with which to realize some of the indigenous peoples' demands, gain further leverage and broader support for their claims, and strengthen their struggle for self-determination in the long term.[28]

One such opportunity they see is the creation of the site-based Protected Area Management Boards (PAMBs), which will be responsible for administering the protected areas. The NIPAS Act provides that each indigenous cultural community (ICC) present in the area shall have a representative in the board; thus, indigenous peoples, along with POs and NGOs, can participate actively in the formulation of plans, policies, rules and regulations governing the protected area.

Another opportunity is the development of Protected Area Management Plans by the PAMB, which NIPA believes can be crafted in a way that grants recognition to ancestral domains in the protected area. In the process, according to NIPA, some of the indigenous peoples' demands may be realized on a local level, even in the absence of a separate legislation governing recognition of ancestral domains.[29] This, however, will require not only the active intervention of ICCs, POs and NGOs in the development of the management plans, but also sufficient public pressure from organized local and indigenous communities below. Moreover, the adoption of the zoning mechanism in protected area management, according to NIPA, is site-specific and is supposed precisely to take into account the particular conditions prevailing in each area, including the specific needs and ways of life of indigenous cultural communities.

Finally, the NIPAS Act, according to project participants, recognizes in principle the indigenous peoples' claim over their ancestral domains.[30] In fact, they say that it is the only piece of legislation which categorically recognizes the indigenous peoples' rights over their ancestral domains and expressly prohibits their eviction and resettlement from their present occupancy without their consent.[31] Moreover, the NIPAS Act makes a distinction between indigenous cultural communities and tenured migrants living in the protected areas. This, according to NIPA, is important since it recognizes the practices of indigenous peoples as more ecologically sustainable.[32]

The CPP Position

Outside of KAMP and their allies, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) has likewise released an official position condemning the NIPAS Act and those engaged in its implementation.

In a position paper released by the international department of the CPP's central committee, the CPP dismissed the IPAS project and other environmental programs being implemented by what it called "imperialist-funded NGOs and POs" as a mere "cover" to enable foreign multinational firms to "scout resources for grabbing and exploitation." The paper likewise referred to NGOs and POs engaged in these projects as the "third sector of neocolonialism." Although it did not explicitly state how the CPP-NPA will deal with the IPAS project, the paper nonetheless hinted that the underground forces will "ban" it in areas under their influence and control.[33]

According to NIPA Executive Director Ester Isberto, the CPP's opposition is a cause for concern, because for one, CPP-NPA forces are said to be present in at least five of the 10 priority areas.[34] Although, at this point, they have not physically intervened in the implementation of the project, still, it has been reported that in some areas, CPP-NPA forces have been discouraging the communities from participating in the project.

In Morong, Bataan, one organizer affiliated with the Bataan NGO Consortium (BNC), the host NGO for Bataan National Park, was taken for questioning by NPA forces during a community meeting over which the organizer was presiding. According to some accounts, the NPA cadres warned the local residents who had gathered in the meeting not to participate again in any activity related to the project. Later, however, NIPA and the BNC were informed by the underground leadership that such move was not authorized and that the NPA cadres had acted on their own. The BNC organizer has been released, and there has been no other incident of this kind in Bataan.

Some NIPA members feel that the "dynamics" currently prevailing in the Left may partly explain the CPP's, as well as its allied organizations' opposition to the project. Indeed, it is perhaps no secret that, as a result of the current rift in the Left, both the underground movement and some sections of the PO-NGO community have split into various camps. At least two of these groupings, which have often been called, rather simplistically, as the "reaffirm" and "reject" camps, are now believed to be locked in a wide-ranging and at times, extremely fierce rivalry for hegemony in the progressive movement.

In view of these "dynamics," some NIPA members believe that the CPP and other groups identified with the "reaffirm" camp are opposing the project, in part, because some of the NGOs and POs implementing it are identified either with the "reject" forces or with the other groupings in the fragmented Left. The "reaffirm" group is said to be suspicious that these forces will use the project as cover to establish their presence in areas under their influence and to win over the communities to their side. In this regard, much of the opposition, according to some NIPA members, may be seen as inevitably "political," in that they are fueled largely by issues that have little to do with the project itself, but more with the ongoing intramurals in the Left.

Dealing with the Opposition

Despite their differences over the CPPAP, NIPA nonetheless recognizes that project oppositors like KAMP, as well as the underground Left, also constitute part of the many sectors who may have a legitimate stake and interest in the complex

task of rebuilding the country's ravaged environment. Hence, in the spirit of furthering democratic participation on the issue, the consortium has tried to dialogue with these groups, in the hope that they will be able to work out their respective concerns regarding the project.

However, for now, KAMP appears closed to any further discussion on the project with NIPA. Early last year, KAMP members in Central Luzon refused to take part in a dialogue with NIPA board members, which an NGO worker, who had contacts in the area, attempted to put together. When asked whether the national leadership of KAMP would still be open to a future dialogue with the consortium, federation spokesperson Marillyn Quieres replied that they see no point in this, since they have already made known their position on the issue to NIPA, and they are not likely to change their views in the future.[35]

As for the CPP, while NIPA has not been able to conduct any formal dialogue on the issue with them, some consortium members have nonetheless managed to hold informal talks with contacts in the underground Left. In one such discussion, an underground figure in the regions was said to have suggested that one way by which NIPA may be able to gain support from their constituents, is for the host NGOs to get a widely respected local figure to endorse the project.

For now, the NIPA Board has decided that it would no longer come up with a written response to the CPP's position paper. Instead, it has encouraged the host NGOs to explore ways by which they could dialogue with the underground forces in their area, as well as with other sectors who may be opposed to the project, in order to clarify the goals of the CPPAP and resolve issues of concern to both parties.

So far, efforts along this line have been made in at least two areas: North Cotabato and Bataan. In North Cotabato, project participants have managed to hold a series of dialogues with local leaders of the underground Left, as well as some *lumad* organizations, who had earlier opposed the implementation of CPPAP in Mt. Apo National Park.

According to one NGO worker who regularly monitors developments in the area, though both groups still maintain their distance, in the sense that they would not commit to any form of official participation, it appears that they are beginning to open up to the project, if only for pragmatic reasons. In his view, these groups "are probably beginning to realize that the project will push through, and so they are opening up if only to be able to monitor its implementation."[36]

In Bataan, local project participants for the Bataan National Park have likewise been able to hold talks with the underground forces in the area, in a bid to clarify the project's objectives. Accordingly, the latter have agreed not to intervene in its implementation, provided that (1) community organizers, forest guards and other staff members of the host NGO will be properly identified; (2) they will have no military escort in their activities; and (3) they will give the frequency should they use a radio in their operations.[37]

Interestingly, some local organizers believe that the underground Left in Bataan may also be beginning to open up, because some people's organizations identified with them are now participating in the Community Based Forest Protection Brigades (CBFPB) which were organized in line with the project.[38]

As for the Aeta communities in the Bataan National Park, project participants claim that they have so far not expressed any substantial opposition to the CPPAP.

At the same time, according to Roselle Fernandez, project coordinator of the BNC, the main concerns of the cultural communities in the Park, for now, do not relate to the NIPAS Act or the project itself, but to other issues affecting them. These include long-standing conflicts with migrants over the use of the land and resources in what has been declared an Aeta reservation area in Tanawan, Morong, and increasing encroachment by academic institutions under the Bataan State College in another reservation in Bangkal, Abucay.[39]

The View from the Ground: Focus on the BNC

At this point, it is perhaps instructive to examine how a host NGO is actually implementing the project at the ground level, where it interacts with a variety of actors and players in the field. The next section will thus provide an overview of the work being done by the Bataan NGO Consortium (BNC), which is the host NGO implementing the project in the Bataan National Park, one of the 10 priority sites for the CPPAP.[40]

The Protected Area

The Bataan National Park (BNP) covers a total area of 23,688 hectares, with about 14,000 hectares, or more than half of these, harboring virgin or old-growth forests. The protected area consists of 27 barangays in seven municipalities: Bagac and Morong in the west, and Balanga, Abucay, Samal and Orani in the east.

Like most of the country's national parks, the one in Bataan has long suffered from general neglect and lack of implementation of the law. Over the years, titles granting "ownership" to vast tracts of the National Park land have been acquired by individuals, some of whom are identified with local politicians. Many of these lands have been transformed into coffee farms and plantations, or have otherwise been cleared of their once flourishing forest cover. Illegal surveying and selling of "rights" over portions of the national park became even more rampant after President Ramos declared the entire Morong town as a special economic zone, and approved the establishment of the Bataan Technology Park at the 380-hectare former Philippine Refugee Processing Center complex.

At the same time, various forms of unsustainable extractive activities have been going on within the Park. According to one estimate, around 50 to 60 percent of communities living in or adjacent to the park engage in some form of resource extraction from the forests as their primary means of livelihood. The most lucrative of these is what is known as "carabao logging," whereby a contractor, usually a more well-off individual, would hire a group of local residents to cut down old-growth trees in the forests, using chainsaws and other tools. The wood derived from the trees is then used in building medium-sized fishing vessels.[41] Contractors have been known to pay local Aetas to serve as guides and stand guard while the trees are being felled.

The BNC

The Bataan NGO Consortium is currently made up of five NGOs and POs which have been operating for some time in Bataan. These are: the PRRM branch in Bataan,

whose main focus is promoting community-based resource management in coastal areas; Cooperative Foundation of the Philippines-Bataan (CFPI), which is into cooperative development; Balikatan ng Taong Bayan (BALIKATAN), which also undertakes community organizing and livelihood development; Bangkal Sagip-Gubat, which consists of foresters from the Bataan State College, and Sagip Kalikasan ng Bataan, a multisectoral people's organization in the uplands, composed of local communities, members of the academe, LGUs and other sectors.

As in the case of NIPA, the initial stage of the BNC's formation was basically a period of adjustment. In fact, one of the earliest challenges faced by the BNC was that of balancing the different frameworks and traditions that members were bringing in to the consortium. The task, according to Randy Dacanay, former BNC project coordinator, was not always an easy one. Often, there were differences between those members coming from an activist, community-based tradition, and those with a more technical background in resource management and conservation. This became especially evident when project implementation began.[42]

To provide a common ground for approaching the project, the members of BNC decided to adopt what has been called as the "stakeholdership principle" in development, which affirms that local communities and indigenous peoples who depend on a natural resource base for their food, shelter and livelihood, have the biggest stake in protecting their environment; hence, they should have a primary role in any program for conservation and development, and be its main beneficiaries. While the adoption of such a principle did not prevent differences from arising among the consortium members, it nonetheless provided a viable starting point for addressing these differences in a more productive manner.

The BNC began its operations in October 1995. At present, the BNC has 12 project staff (including the project coordinator, organizers, etc.), six park rangers and seven volunteers. Members of the staff are divided into the technical support group, which undertakes resource assessment and related concerns, and the community development group, which handles tasks related to community organizing, networking, policy advocacy and livelihood development.

Implementing the CPPAP

To operationalize the project, the BNC currently undertakes activities in the following areas: (1) project mobilization; (2) site development/resource management; (3) community development; 4) networking and advocacy; (5) information, education and campaigns; and (6) monitoring and evaluation.

One of the main challenges in implementing the project was to get the target communities to appreciate the importance of protecting and conserving the resources left in the vast forests of Bataan National Park. Fearing the loss of their source of livelihood, some communities were initially hesitant to take part in the conservation activities being spearheaded by BNC. In some barangays of Orani and Morong, BNC organizers had to contend not only with the lack of environmental consciousness, but also with resistance in the form of threats from those engaged in illegal extractive activities in the park.

On the other hand, initial meetings with local government officials, including the provincial governor, often proved to be frustrating for the BNC staff who found themselves faced with mostly token gestures on the issue of environmental conser-

vation. During these meetings, the BNC discovered that very few local government units were aware of the responsibilities that come with having a national park in the province. In fact, prior to the launching of the CPPAP, there was hardly any program that directly addressed the rehabilitation and protection of the Bataan National Park and the development of alternative sources of livelihood for local and indigenous communities. Even the local DENR seemed barely capable of enforcing the laws on protected areas, as seen in the numerous illegal activities that went on unabated in the park.

Persistence eventually brought some encouraging results. A year after setting up operations, and conducting community organizing, education, networking and advocacy activities vis-a-vis the local governments, BNC now counts the following among its major accomplishments:

Setting up of Community-Based Forest Protection Brigades (CBFPB)

Prior to the formation of the forest protection brigades, various types of organizations were already present in the communities surrounding the Bataan National Park. Some of these were organized by NGOs, while others were put together by government line agencies. Thus, instead of organizing another group from the ground, which they felt might not be viable since it would only compete for membership from the communities, the BNC decided to tap the existing community associations to take part in forming the CBFPBs.

So far, nine CBFPBs have been organized in priority barangays, drawing their membership from cooperatives, youth groups, church associations, the Sangguniang Kabataan, etc. The brigades, which have all been given training in forest protection, aim to undertake concrete projects to rehabilitate and conserve the resources in the Park. In Baranggay Nagbalayong, Morong, the CBFPB is currently putting together a reforestation project in watershed areas that will also serve as an alternative source of income for people in the community who are engaged in illegal resource extraction from the forest.

BNC is likewise actively coordinating with other autonomous people's organizations who are undertaking their own forest protection activities. One of these groups, the Task Force Kalikasan, was organized in 1992 immediately after the Ormoc tragedy, where killer floods swept through the denuded mountains of this village in Leyte and claimed more than 2,000 lives.

Concerned that the same tragedy might happen to Bataan, given the growing degradation of the National Park, some residents began to organize themselves with the goal of promoting environmental consciousness in the surrounding communities. Today, in addition to holding education and information dissemination activities on the environment, volunteers of Task Force Kalikasan patrol the Park, guarding it against illegal extractive activities.

Reactivation of the Protected Area Management Board (PAMB)

Organized a year after the NIPAS Act was passed, the PAMB for the Bataan National Park, has, since then, become a bloated and moribund body. In 1995, when the BNC began its operations, more than half of the PAMB's over 60 members, who were mostly barangay and local officials, were inactive.

With the support of the DENR's Protected Area Superintendent (PASU) and people's organizations in the area, the BNC spearheaded a campaign to streamline, and at the same time, reactivate the PAMB. The BNC staff, among others, paid calls on its incumbent members, specially the barangay representatives, whom they believed to be potential allies on the issue of sustainable resource management. The goals of the CPPAP were explained to them, and they were encouraged to help reactivate the PAMB. Likewise, the BNC coordinated with POs, NGOs and indigenous peoples groups in the area to ensure that their representatives would be able to participate regularly in PAMB deliberations.

Today, the new PAMB has been streamlined to a more manageable body with 48 members. Initial measures have been undertaken to regulate large-scale commercial activities in localities covered by the protected area. The PAMB recently rejected the application of Orani Mines to undertake quarrying activities in Bagac, and is currently disputing the plan of Sylvaco Eco-Tourism to set up operations in the Park. The BNC, at present, helps convene PAMB meetings and assists in its operations.

Engagement with LGUs and DENR on Conservation and Development Issues

Finally, one other major accomplishment of BNC was to get local government units and the DENR to address squarely the issue of environmental degradation and the violation of laws on protected areas. An important strategy adopted along this line was to lobby the Municipal Planning Development Committees (MPDCs) to promote programs on forest protection and livelihood development for communities dependent on the Park's resources. So far, six of the MPDCs have expressed support for these issues. Recently, the Morong municipal council also passed a resolution strictly prohibiting the cutting of trees in parts of the protected area falling under their jurisdiction.

As for the DENR, the BNC has managed to develop fairly strong links with Protected Area Superintendent (PASU) Juanito David, who has been supportive of BNC's efforts to organize and train local communities in resource management.

Nonetheless, the DENR's effectiveness in promoting conservation efforts is hampered by its poor credibility at the grassroots. According to the BNC and other people's organizations, one of the main problems facing protected area management in Bataan is the connivance of some DENR people with those engaged in illegal activities in the Park.[43] The organizations have been monitoring closely how the DENR will proceed with the prosecution of those caught violating the law on protected areas. The DENR is now under pressure to sink its teeth into these violations, if only to demonstrate that the NIPAS Act is indeed going to herald substantial changes in protected-area management.

Conclusion

Coalition-building among NGOs and people's organizations as a means of implementing concrete development initiatives on the ground, is a relatively new addition to the range of activities now taking place within the broad PO-NGO community. Indeed, it may be seen as a product of the 1990s, fueled in large part by the

emergence of development work as a legitimate arena for popular input and intervention, and the rise of NGOs as important players in the promotion of development alternatives. Prior to this, coalition-building was mainly seen as an activity primarily undertaken by the so-called "political blocs," in their attempt to overcome traditional rivalries, attract broader constituencies and build common policy advocacies around specific issues or sectoral concerns.

The NGOs for Integrated Protected Areas, Inc. or NIPA represents today one of the more relatively successful efforts to bring together NGOs and POs with a variety of perspectives and political persuasions, in a pioneering mode of cooperation and partnership for an innovative project such as the CPPAP. While it is too early to say if the project will make a substantial impact on resource- management strategies on the ground, what is clear is that the first stage — that of getting diverse NGOs and POs to acknowledge a stake in it, not as individual entities, but as a consortium — has been hurdled.

In many ways, NIPA's experiences in the last three years have drawn a window into some of the many sources of conflict and tensions that often frustrate NGO-PO efforts to build consensus around specific issues or initiatives. These so-called "tension" points include not only the more "philosophical" ones, such as the current multiplicity in perspectives or approaches to development work, social transformation and related concerns, but also the more everyday, down-to-earth problems faced by NGOs and POs. The latter include competition in accessing funds and in project implementation, a varying appreciation of the role and contribution of foreign or international NGOs to local development efforts, and even personality differences among development workers and leading figures in the NGO-PO community. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to discuss each of these issues, suffice it to say that such "tension" areas are real, and can become a deadweight to NGO-PO coalition-building projects unless they are handled in a productive, responsible and transparent manner.

In the case of NIPA, one strategy which has worked to reduce the preexisting tensions, so to speak, among some members of the consortium, was the "clustering" approach. Here the NGOs and POs openly acknowledged, from the start, where they were coming from in terms of perspectives or orientation. Aside from promoting greater transparency in their relations, this approach provided a handle by which to address potentially ticklish issues concerning representation in NIPA's decision-making structures and participation in the project. In turn, other time-tested practices in coalition-building, such as pluralism in the Board, decision-making by consensus, the adoption of mutually acceptable procedures and criteria to guide possibly divisive decision points (e.g. selection of host NGOs), and shared responsibility for the project, have helped weave a more cooperative relationship among the NGO-PO clusters in NIPA.

This is not to say that there are no other potential sources of differences, conflicts or tensions among the project's participants and supporters. In this light, one issue worth examining in the future concerns the possibly distinct dynamics that may evolve between, on the one hand, NIPA, and on the other, the World Bank, DENR and local host NGOs respectively, or between the host NGOs and their partners on the ground, as they proceed with project implementation. For while all these sectors and institutions agree with the goals of the CPPAP, each of them, nonetheless, operates around a distinct set of traditions, assumptions and prac-

tices which may not necessarily complement, and perhaps may even conflict with each other, when they grapple with concrete problems and issues.

How will NIPA, for instance, deal with the World Bank's reportedly stringent parameters concerning the budget, and balance this out with the heavy, and at times unpredictable demands of organizing in the project sites? How will regional and local DENR units respond to direct NGO-PO participation in, and management of funds for the project? Will they welcome this and treat it as an opportunity to enhance their effectiveness on the ground, or will they see it as an infringement on their traditional turfs? What types of relations will NIPA develop with the diverse host NGOs in the project sites, and how will such relations impact on the latter's work with local communities?

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that in terms of NIPA's program, one dimension which has yet to receive substantial elaboration is that of gender and its articulation in the agenda of protected-area management and community empowerment. Given how critical yet often neglected this dimension has been in the advocacies of many coalitions, it should be worth examining how NIPA, if ever, will address gender-related concerns, and what new dynamics or practices these may introduce among NIPA's diverse members and partners on the ground.

For the moment, what is quite clear is that in terms of perspectives on the project, the more substantial differences lie not so much within NIPA or among project participants, but outside this circle, that is, between NIPA on the one hand, and some indigenous POs like KAMP, as well as the underground CPP-NPA, on the other. While NIPA sees the project as an arena which can be maximized to effect significant changes in resource management and allocation in the protected areas, KAMP, the CPP and its allied organizations look at it as a ploy to further disenfranchise indigenous peoples and peasants of their limited resources and sow division among their ranks. In the meantime, a major complicating factor has been the rift in the Left, which has made it much more difficult for NIPA to conduct substantial dialogues with POs, NGOs, and some of the underground forces who continue to actively campaign against the project.

In this context, perhaps one other issue that NIPA's experience has called attention to concerns the underground Left and its potential ability to either facilitate or hinder the development initiatives of NGOs-POs on the ground. Indeed, how does one begin to deal with a rather new and difficult situation — perhaps unimaginable in the past — where opposition to certain NGO-PO development initiatives may come, not only from the state or vested elite interests, but from sections of the underground Left as well?

To be sure, there are no simple answers to these dilemmas, and NIPA, to its credit, has taken the prudent step in opting to dialogue with all sectors who have a stake in the project, and attempting to work out problems as they move along. And since its implementation will continue for six years more, it should prove extremely interesting to monitor how NIPA will navigate the many other potential sources of conflict and tensions concerning the CPPAP, not only among its members and partners in the project sites, but with other sections of society as well. Only time will tell if NIPA can sustain itself as a truly pluralist, cooperative and pioneering initiative, or if it will just be another exciting, but ultimately short-lived experiment in the tenuous terrain of NGO-PO coalition-building.

ENDNOTES

1 This paper adopts the World Resources Institute's definition of biological diversity as the "genetic variation within a species, and the diversity of species and ecosystems they inhabit." See *World Resources 1994–1995: A Guide to the Global Environment* (New York and Oxford: World Resources Institute, 1994), p. 315.

2 Department of Environment and Natural Resources/Environment Management Bureau, *A Report on the Philippine Environment* (1992).

3 Marvic Leonen and G.M. La Viña, "Obstacles to Harnessing Creativity: Philippine Efforts to Conserve and Sustainably Use Biological Diversity," *Philippine Natural Resources Law Journal* 5 (December 1992): 123.

4 Ibid, p.124.

5 The study was conducted using the proceeds of a small debt-for-nature swap put together by the US-based World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

6 This NGO was previously known as the World Wildlife Fund.

7 In a letter sent to the DENR, Thomas Wiens, World Bank Task Manager for the IPAS project, explained that the World Bank rejected the FPE because the FPE, which was barely starting then, did not have "enough capability or track record to take a lead role in the management" of the project.

8 Composed of representatives from government agencies and non-government/people's organizations, the PCSD was set up immediately after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) or the Earth Summit in 1992. It is mandated to review and ensure the implementation of the commitments made by the Philippines during the summit. The PCSD is headed by the Director General of the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), with the Secretary of the DENR as Vice Chairperson. Its membership consists of 14 other government agencies and seven NGOs.

9 NIPA, "A Case Study on NGO-GO-WB Dynamics in a GEF-Funded Philippine Integrated Areas Project," a paper presented by NIPA at the Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting of the NGO Working Group on the World Bank, April 22, 1996.

10 "Highlights of the History and the Establishment of the NGOs for Integrated Protected Areas (NIPA) Inc.," *Counterpart*, March 1994, p. 6.

11 PCSD Resolution No. 1, "Recognition of Local Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)/People's Organizations (POs) as Lead Entities in the Implementation of NGO/PO-Initiated Projects in the Philippines," July 30, 1993.

12 The conditions provided by the World Bank were as follows: (1) the NGO consortium must be a legal entity under Philippine law, able to enter into a contract with an international organization and capable of duly carrying out its legal obligations under the grant agreement; (2) the Bank's immunities must be provided through the necessary MOA from the President of the Philippines (or similar appropriate arrangement), as previously contemplated under the WWF-PRRM partnership, to the satisfaction of the Bank's legal department; (3) the consortium should reflect (through its membership) the requisite institutional capability to implement the project (environmental and community development expertise); (4) there should be evidence of fiduciary responsibility such as (i) security in the form of financial assets of the consortium against advances of grant funds; (ii) government guarantees, or (iii) a very tight process of financial supervision; (5) the consortium must accept the general project design and conditions of implementation included in the project documents, in particular, in terms of reference for selection and the conditions of operation for a PMO, for selection and operation of NGOs at the field level, and for design and operation of the Livelihood Fund. While improvements in design can be contemplated and discussed, the overall design has gone through a two-year preparation and approval process, and reopening questions of basic design would force the project preparation process back to initial steps; (6) there is a potential conflict of interest in the process of selection of NGO for field implementation level by the consortium, which can be overcome if the process laid out in the project Technical Report is followed (short listing, request for proposals, joint GO-NGO selection); (7) the consortium must recognize that technical expertise in protected-area management is lacking in the Philippines, and some [expatriate] assistance will be needed in this area; and (8) there must be a realistic deadline for acceptance by a suitable groups of NGOs of their participation in the project on the aforementioned terms.

13 Interview with Horacio Morales Jr., August 21, 1996, PRRM office, Quezon City.

14 The members of NIPA are the following: Association of Foundations (AF); Center for Alternative Development Initiatives (CADI); Community Extension, Research and Development (CERD); Convergence for Community Centered Area Development (CONVERGENCE); Cooperative Foundation of the Philippines, Inc. (CFPI); Earth Savers Movement Inc. (EARTH SAVERS); Green Forum-Philippines, Inc.; Haribon Foundation for the Conservation of Natural Resources (HARIBON); Mindanao Environment Forum; Nature Crusaders of the Philippines Foundation; Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP); Philippine Federation for Environmental Concerns (PFEC); Philippine Institute of Alternative Futures (PIAF);

Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM); South East Asian Institute of Culture and Environment (SEAICE); Tambuyog Development Center; Tribal Communities Association of the Philippines (TRICAP); and Women's Action Network for Development (WAND).

15 NIPA, "A Case Study on NGO-GO-WB Dynamics in a GEF-Funded Philippine Integrated Protected Areas Project," April 22, 1996.

16 Some NGOs refer to this as the stakeholdership or citizenship principle.

17 The 10 priority protected areas consist of coastal, marine, forest and wetland ecosystems. They are as follows: Batanes Islands, Northern Sierra Madre (Palanan Wilderness), Apo Reef Marine Park, and Bataan National Park, all in Luzon; Mt. Kanlaon National Park in the Visayas; and Mt. Apo National Park, Siargao Island, Mt. Kitanglad National Park, Agusan Marsh, and Turtle Islands, all in Mindanao.

18 Only the host NGO for the Turtle Islands in Tawi-Tawi has not been chosen at this point.

19 From 1993–1995, Horacio Morales Jr. of PRRM, an NGO belonging to the CONVERGENCE cluster, served as chairperson/president of NIPA. The following year, when NIPA decided to divide the position into two distinct posts, Atty. Domingo Egon Cayosa of Green Forum was designated as chairperson, while Gregorio Magdaraog of the Nature Crusaders of the Philippines Foundation, an organization which identifies itself with the "independents," was elected president. Both will occupy their posts from 1996–1998.

20 Interview with Gregorio Magdaraog, August 22, 1996, Ten Knots Office, Makati.

21 Interview with Minerva Gonzales, August 26, 1996, CERD office, Quezon City. The same view was expressed by other Board members in separate interviews.

22 Interview with Ester Isberto, August 15, 1996, NIPA Office Quezon City.

23 Interview with Karen Tañada, August 23, 1996, WAND office, Quezon City.

24 Interview with Horacio Morales Jr., August 21, 1996, PRRM office, Quezon City.

25 During the negotiations with the World Bank, for instance, NIPA was able to convince Bank representatives to modify one of their conditions, which would have required the consortium's members to show proof of substantial assets, as evidence of "fiduciary responsibility." Instead, NIPA came up with a counterproposal which guarantees a professional and highly accountable process of financial management. After a series of talks, the World Bank eventually accepted this proposal.

26 Among the management zones being promoted by the DENR for adoption in the protected areas are the following: strict protection zone, sustainable-use zone, restoration zone, habitat management zones, multiple-use zones, buffer zone, cultural zones, recreational zones, and special-use zones. See the DENR's implementing rules and regulations for the NIPAS Act (Administrative Order No. 25, Series of 1992) for the definition of each zone.

27 Interview with Marilyn Quieres, September 18, 1996, KAMP office, Quezon City.

28 Gregorio C. Dionisio, "The Integrated Protected Area System: Prospects and Challenges," *Rural Reconstruction Forum*, July–September 1994, p. 38.

29 Ibid.

30 Provisions concerning indigenous cultural communities can be found in Chapter VII and in various sections of the DENR's implementing rules and regulations for the NIPAS Act.

31 Nonetheless, NIPA believes that government should manifest a clear commitment to the issue of ancestral domains, by undertaking the following: 1) speed up the identification, delineation and recognition of ancestral domains through surveying and issuance of Certificate of Ancestral Land/Domain Claims (CALC/CADC) as provided by DENR's Administrative Order No. 2 (1993), and the enactment of an appropriate law covering ancestral domain; 2) further develop and improve existing baseline information by coming up with a participatory ethnographic survey for each protected area; 3) ensure that both these surveys are accomplished before the management plan for each area is finalized.

32 Gregorio C. Dionisio, "The Integrated Protected Area System: Prospects and Challenges," p. 38.

33 See "On the Issue of the Environment in the World and the Philippines," March 31, 1995, issued by the International Department of the Central Committee of the CPP.

34 Interview with Isberto, August 15, 1996, NIPA office.

35 Interview with Quieres, September 18, 1996, KAMP office.

36 Interview with Gregorio Dionisio, Manager, PRRM Natural Resources Management Unit and Field Operations Office for Coastal and Protected Areas, August 22, 1996, PRRM office, Quezon City.

37 Interview with Randy Dacanay, PRRM Bataan Branch Manager and former CPPAP project coordinator for the Bataan NGO Consortium (BNC), October 10, 1996, Balanga, Bataan.

38 Interview with Benny Sangcal, BNC organizer and member of BALIKATAN, October 10, 1996, Balanga, Bataan.

39 Interview with Roselle Fernandez, October 10, 1996, BNC office, Balanga, Bataan.

40 The researcher chose to focus on BNC as a sample host NGO for this case study because it has progressed relatively further than most host NGOs in terms of project implementation. Likewise, at the time this study was undertaken, Bataan was the most accessible among the protected-area sites.

41 According to one resident, a contractor could earn as much as P100,000 per boat.

42 Interview with Dacanay, October 10, 1996, Balanga, Bataan.

43 Based on discussions with members of the Community-Based Forest Protection Brigade, October 10, 1996, Nagbalayong, Morong and two members of the Task Force Kalikasan, October 11, 1996, Morong, Bataan.

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KARL M. GASPAR

Abante, Atras, Abante: *Patterns of the Mindanao Catholic Church's Involvement in Contemporary Social Issues*

Introduction

Abante, abante, atras, atras
Abante, abante, atras, atras
Adto sa tuo, adto sa wala
Abante, atras, atras...

(Forward, backward
Forward, backward
Move to the right
Move to the left
Forward, backward...)

This action song, often heard during breaks in the seminars, assemblies, and meetings of the Base Ecclesial Communities (BECs) in Southern Philippines, might well describe the pattern of the Mindanao Catholic Church's involvement in contemporary social issues.

Known not only in church circles in the Philippines but throughout the world as progressive, the Mindanao church was first to popularize many of the currently acceptable prophetic theological concepts and pastoral programs embodied in the Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines (PCP II).

It was first to set up the BECs, which in the late 1960s was referred to as Basic Christian Communities (BCCs). The network of BECs in Mindanao spread out extensively across the region and mobilized the people around justice and peace issues during the height of the martial law regime. The impact was such that a top-ranking military man referred to them as "the most dangerous form of threat from the religious radicals... (who) are practically building an infrastructure of political power."

It was first to publicly denounce martial law, and called on Marcos to lift it, long before other groups found the courage to do so. This was at the second Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference (MSPC II) held in November 1974, an event that was even covered by the Hong Kong-based *Far Eastern Economic Review*.

The Mindanao church was first to set up a coordinated program for the conscientization-organization of marginalized sectors including peasants, fisherfolk, workers, urban poor, and the lumad.

It was the first in the country to articulate its vision of becoming a Church of the Poor.

Its radical profile peaked in the early 1980s. Midway through this decade, it faced an internal crisis. The bishops decided to distance themselves from those who they believed operated from a Marxist-Communist ideological framework. This led to the collapse of a coordinated regional pastoral program.

Each diocese was left to do its own thing; consequently, very few continued to support justice and peace programs for fear of "infiltration and manipulation." Catholic pastoral workers joined forces with progressive Protestants in order to sustain justice and peace efforts. But, without the full support of the dioceses and the confidence of the Bishops, the effectivity of these efforts considerably diminished.

Just before EDSA erupted, the Mindanao church landscape took on different colors. There were those who aligned with the moderate groups supportive of Corazon Aquino. There were others who joined the broad boycott movement. Still others fully supported the armed struggle. With such diverse political and ideological positions, it was no longer possible for the Church to speak with one voice.

In the immediate post-EDSA scenario, the diversity of positions remained. The bishops and other moderate church leaders — taking their cue from the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) — fully supported voters education and monitoring of election results, as well as ecological programs. The radical groups, in conjunction with the evolving non-government organizations (NGOs), were more preoccupied with mobilizing resources to support the peasants' quest for genuine land reform, to oppose land conversion and development aggression, and to expose continuing militarization in the countryside.

In the 1990s a series of non-related events have taken place and helped to change this pastoral landscape. The PCP II Acts and Decrees popularized the theological concepts and pastoral thrusts that surfaced in Mindanao in the 1970s. This led to a reminder of the need to take seriously the call to become Church of the Poor at a time when the poor are resisting the impact of Philippines 2000. This has been especially true for the lumads who have felt more intensively the impact of development aggression. Even before the radical Left's internal crisis, there had arisen new openings for progressive pastoral workers to work again within the mainstream church, where the local bishop provided the openings. The eruption of the Left's ideological crisis helped to widen these openings, as well as encouraged more pastoral workers to go back to their roots.

In this context, a growing number of pastoral workers are quite interested in pursuing discussions regarding the Church's role in civil society. Like other groups in the National Capital Region, they are also asserting their place in building civil society.

This may yet bring back the days when the Mindanao church could speak with a coordinated voice. The signs are favorable for this development. One breakthrough event towards this was the Mindanao-Sulu Church Peace Congress, held June 24–26, 1996, where the Catholic bishops, priests, religious and lay workers

in Mindanao expressed their support for the peace process and hailed the creation of the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD) as a significant step "along the tortuous road to peace." Committing themselves to set up a regional coordinating body to oversee the implementation of appropriate pastoral actions plans for peace and development, they have acknowledged that only through such coordination could their involvement in social issues have a far greater impact on the lives of the poor.

Backgrounder

There is no doubt that the Mindanao church — if it gets its act together — can be a formidable force in the arena of civil society. It has the numbers and resources, power and influence at all levels of society.

The 1995 Catholic Directory reported that Mindanao has 10,836,452 Catholics, who constitute 69 percent of the total population of 15,752,978. (See Appendix I for a breakdown of the population by diocese.)

Mindanaoan Catholics are spread throughout 445 parishes in 21 ecclesiastical jurisdictions (archdioceses, dioceses, prelatures and apostolic vicariates). The following statistics show part of its personnel force:

Diocesan Priests	751
Religious Men (Priests/Brothers)	498
Religious Women	1,461

If one were to include lay pastoral workers and the BEC lay leaders — most of whom are volunteers — one can estimate the number to exceed 10,000, definitely a force to contend with.

These days, there is no longer a monolithic Mindanao Catholic church. There are different parts with varying realities that constitute this church. Labels like conservative and progressive, traditionalist and radical, reactionary and prophetic are no longer typologically appropriate. Elements of the institutional and the people's churches are expanding their interaction and coordination. The differences between them are no longer so clear and distinct.

Still, it is important to make distinctions regarding how this Church is involved in social issues.

There is the ecclesial reality which, at the base, is identified as the BECs usually made up of 50 to 500 families. A number of BECs of the rural barangays and the poblacion constitute a parish. The average population of a parish in Mindanao is 24,352 people. A number of parishes make up a diocese; in Mindanao, there is an average of 21 parishes per diocese.

Involvement in social issues can very well take place at the BEC level where the parish is able to generate that kind of dynamism at the base for a number of reasons, namely, the readiness of the members to take such an option, the capacity of their leaders to mobilize people's participation, the willingness of the parish

priest to provide them support and the urgency for such an action to be taken. In most cases, these actions are undertaken at the parish level, involving a number of BECs. The key factor is the initiative of the parish priest and the presence of a committed core group ready to collaborate with him. At the diocesan level, it depends on the strength of the Social Action Center and the skills of its director.

At the regional level, there is the Mindanao-Sulu Social Action Secretariat (MISSAS), which is supposed to coordinate the efforts of the different Social Action Centers or directors in carrying out social action, justice and peace, ecological and development programs. Still at the regional level, there is the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference that triennially brings together delegates from the 21 dioceses to report on their respective situations and pastoral realities. But then, whatever recommendations are agreed upon are left to the dioceses to implement.

Considering the juridical character of this ecclesial reality, the bishops exercise strong control and authority over these structures, through the Local Ordinary at the BEC/parish/diocesan levels and the fellowship of bishops at the regional level. Given this reality, coordination with NGOs is limited to those considered safe.

Outside of the ecclesial reality, however, there are other realities that permit greater autonomy.

In areas where women and men religious congregations are present, they are able to set up programs that respond directly to social problems especially those affecting the marginalized sectors. Some of these are joint programs or coordinated with the diocese/parish; some are local initiatives operationalized independently. In some cases, the coordination is with a local NGO or a people's organization (PO). The choice of such a partner is not restricted to only the moderate ones.

There is also the associations of churchpersons e.g. the diocesan clergy of Mindanao-Sulu (DCMS), Sisters Association in Mindanao (SAMIN), the *Kapunongan sa mga Layko sa Mindanao* (KALAMI) or the Lay Association of Mindanao. All have involved themselves in particular social issues.

Still another form of church presence in the lives of the struggling poor is the work being done by church institutions that are part of a national organization. These include the mission partners of the Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (AMRSP), namely the Rural Missionaries (RMs) and the Task Force Detainees Philippines (TFDP); the Basic Christian Community-Community Organizing Mindanao, Inc. (BCC-CO), and the Socio-Pastoral Institute (SPI). These are closely aligned with POs/NGOs that are committed to organizing the oppressed sectors and that launch campaigns on issues such as the Expanded Value-Added Tax (E-VAT), General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), increase in oil prices, the anti-terrorism bill, the IFMA project, development aggression and the like.

Origins of Contemporary Involvement

The Mindanao church began to involve itself in social issues in the period following the historic Second Vatican Council (Vatican II, 1962–65). More than the other regions in the country, due to a number of factors the Mindanao church was

more receptive to the changes proposed by Vatican II, especially in pursuing the social action apostolate.

Most of the region's bishops, reacting positively, provided leadership in undertaking these new pastoral initiatives. Most of the priests in Mindanao at the time were foreign missionaries and members of religious congregations, collectively more progressive than the diocesan priests of Luzon and the Visayas. Many of the missionaries, belonging to congregations that experienced the upheaval in China, had become more sensitive to the plight of the poor. Most religious congregations seriously studied the documents of Vatican II and enthusiastically tried to learn from the experimentations taking place in other parts of the world.

On the other hand, the newly ordained diocesan priests — whose formation took place during and just after Vatican II — also heard the call for greater involvement in the lives of the people who in the late 1960s were facing a worsening socio-economic and political situation. For their part, most of the laity — especially the peasants, fisherfolk and plantation workers who had migrated to Mindanao from other depressed regions in the country — readily responded to the idea of a church committed to social justice.

Following the establishment of the National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA) in January 1966 by the CBCP, a number of dioceses in Mindanao opened their own Social Action (SA) Centers. Tagum, Ozamis, Butuan, Malaybalay, Cotabato, Iligan were the first to do so. Mindanao was the first to organize the SA Centers/Directors into a coordinated regional body named MISSAS, and NASSA's first regional office was set up here.

Land problems, credit needs, livelihood assistance and poverty alleviation were among the first issues to be tackled. A few looked into the problems related to Muslim-Christian relations and the further marginalization of the lumads (indigenous peoples).

Thus, the SA Center initially got involved in providing backup support to the Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) for the education and organization of the peasants, organizing credit unions and other cooperatives, setting up model agricultural projects that introduced more productive methods of farming, teaching women handicraft skills, putting up feeding programs for malnourished children, providing free clinics and modest housing units. Most also engaged in the family life apostolate, encouraging couples to practice natural birth control. A number organized out-of-school youth towards mobilizing them in parish activities. For those who were working among the lumads, the first efforts were in the areas of literacy, and the provision of dole-outs, whether food, clothing, or medicine.

In the early 1970s, the bishops decided to convene the MSPC, bringing all the dioceses into "a forum of ideas, a communion of churches." The first one was held in Davao City in November 197. For the first time in Philippine church history, the bishops, priests and religious listened to the voice of the ordinary laypeople as they expressed their faith-life concerns. A secretariat was set up to coordinate the pastoral efforts and facilitate the implementation of conference recommendations.

Ten months after, Marcos declared martial law. A few foreign missionaries were either deported, or interrogated and later placed under surveillance. Many other churchpeople — priests, religious, lay leaders and pastoral workers — were

arrested, tortured and detained. Those who managed to elude arrest moved elsewhere or went underground.

For two years, the church was silenced. But in late 1974, at the MSPC II held in Cagayan de Oro, the conference delegates inevitably revealed the impact of martial law on the lives of the people. Thus, the decision to call on Marcos to lift martial law. Not surprisingly, he ignored it.

Severe political repression pushed the church to rethink its concept of development and how to be in solidarity with the poor. It was decided to merge MISSAS with MSPCS to ensure better coordination between pastoral and justice-development efforts.

The MSPCS joined hands with TFDP and looked after the needs of political detainees, monitored human-rights violations in the countryside and exposed these abuses in the evolving alternative media. With new tools of analysis and more effective organizing techniques, changes were introduced in the education-organization of oppressed sectors.

New schemes were introduced and integrated into the social action apostolates. The Federation of Free Farmers was abandoned, because it had compromised with the Marcos regime; organizing among the peasants and plantation workers became more political. Free clinics led to community-based health programs. Social-awareness seminars became conscientization sessions where structural analysis served as the focal point. Youth organizing shifted its focus from parish activities to propaganda work using creative dramatics as a tool for conscientization. To make the education programs more effective, systematic research and documentation were conducted, e.g. on the role of transnational corporations and the new elite in Mindanao's economy, the expansion of agribusiness plantations, and the evolving spectrum of political forces.

At the height of martial law, only the church had the power and clout to initiate these metalegal efforts. Traditional political parties, the media, the academe, civic organizations — all other sectors of what would be the civil society at that time — were effectively controlled and allowed themselves to be subjugated by the state. It was common knowledge that the revolutionary movement, building its bases in the countryside, was the only other force that resisted the dictatorial government. Eventually some progressive church elements would enter into a dialogue and working relationship with the underground, if not actually join it.

Against this setting, POs/NGOs were born, most of which can trace their beginnings to efforts initiated by the progressive church groups. They were then called legal institutions (LIs).

Such developments naturally led to greater repression of churchpeople. A growing number of lay pastoral workers and BEC leaders would be arrested, detained or salvaged. Such persecution further intensified church justice and peace efforts.

On the other hand, key leaders of the church, especially a few influential bishops, were disturbed by the conflict orientation of many organizing efforts which they claimed left little space for reconciliation. They believed that the popular tools of analysis were Marxist-influenced and tackled only the economic and political spheres of society. They were also convinced that many church programs

— at the regional and diocesan levels — were infiltrated by the communist underground and that church funds were being siphoned to support the armed struggle.

The internal crisis erupted during the MSPC IV, held in late 1980 in Pagadian City. In the next three years, tensions would rise further as the radical church elements — empowered by a re-reading of the Bible from the perspective of liberation theology — asserted their right to influence the direction of church programs in the light of the heightened people's resistance, just before and after Aquino's assassination. On the other hand, the key leaders became even more agitated as they saw themselves losing control and became more convinced that all radical church elements were taking orders from the NDF-CPP-NPA. The relationship between the two forces operating in the church arena deteriorated. In a way, this polarity merely reflected the bigger division in Philippine society.

Unfortunately, a creative conflict-management strategy failed to surface that would have brought the two forces together in a manner that would make them agree to disagree, and yet not abandon their fellowship and working relationship. There was no third party, composed of influential key leaders acceptable to both groups, who could broker and maintain communication lines for the sake of unity. Possibly, the church dynamics of that period could not provide such a third party with such a strategy.

The bishops were the first to give up. They used the "infiltration-manipulation" issue as the rationale for their decision to dissociate from the MSPC secretariat, in effect closing it down. Years later, the bishops would reconvene the Conference, but until now they refuse to bring its secretariat back to life. MISSAS was allowed to remain but under their full control, especially when it came to the procurement and use of funds from partner agencies abroad.

The progressive bloc joined forces with the Protestants and their contacts with the Moro and lumad groups to set up the Mindanao Interfaith People's Conference (MIPC) whose secretariat was set up in Davao City in 1985. Most of the programs that the bishops didn't want to support were continued; while efforts were made to build solidarity with foreign groups — church-based, NGOs, human rights advocates, trade unions, artists and cultural workers, and the like — linked to the movement in various ways.

A year later, the February uprising erupted and things were never the same again. Major changes took place in the political arena that would drastically affect church involvement in social issues — this time with a greater plurality than before.

Post-February 1986 Involvement in Social Issues

This section will tackle the Church's involvement in the major social issues affecting Mindanaoans in the following areas: advocacy for clean elections, local governance, ecology/development aggression and lumad concerns, poverty alleviation, people empowerment, gender sensitivity, human rights advocacy and the like. The area of facilitating Muslim-Christian dialogue will not be taken up in detail as this will covered by another case study.

Advocacy for Clean Elections

In late 1985, Marcos was pressured to call for snap elections. In their January 1986 meeting, the CBCP took up this issue and came up with a pastoral letter exhorting the people to get involved in the elections and to vote according to their conscience. They repudiated the position of those who called for a boycott. Since then, the Mindanao church has taken to heart the challenge to encourage the people to critically participate in electoral exercises and to mobilize them towards clean elections.

Mindanao's local churches — from the diocesan to the BEC levels — have actively participated in all the elections conducted since 1986. These efforts were coordinated by the NASSA-initiated Voters' Organization-Training and Education Towards Clean, Authentic and Responsible Election (VOTECARE), which sought "to educate, organize, and mobilize workers in the diocesan social action centers nationwide to ensure free and honest elections... (and) to encourage people to be involved in the establishment of democracy by voting responsibly." VOTECARE was endorsed by the CBCP in their May 5, 1992 statement.

Although its performance varied from diocese to diocese, nonetheless, VOTECARE chalked up gains in the following: voters' education, skills training on poll-watching, holding candidates fora and covenant signing, setting up of voters' assistance centers, poll-watching, conduct of quick local counting, and monitoring the performance of elected officials.

Edilberto Guyano, NASSA's VOTECARE promotions and publications unit program officer, claimed that "almost all the dioceses have been actively involved in VOTECARE activities, except the one regarding the monitoring of the elected officials' performance." This was confirmed in interviews with a few bishops conducted for this paper and a survey among key churchpersons in the different dioceses. While cheating and the buying-selling of votes were not totally deterred (such a fact being validated by Aquilino Pimentel's campaign to expose *dagdagbawas* schemes), still, VOTECARE can validly claim that without the watchdogs, the election anomalies could have been worse.

As expected, VOTECARE faced all kinds of problems. Local traditional politicians attacked it for taking partisan positions and for supporting the opposition. This was especially true in places where the church was known to favor candidates who had been active pastoral leaders, e.g., in the BECS and mandated organizations. In other parishes, one set of candidates and the VOTECARE officials had already been at odds even during the martial law period, e.g. in Lakewood, Zamboanga del Sur.

There is no denying that in a number of areas, the church — despite its claim to be neutral — did support certain candidates, directly or indirectly, quietly or openly. Parish priests supported them for various reasons: to provide an alternative model of leadership that is more participative and pro-poor, to fight corruption, to come up with viable development projects, to acknowledge their long service to the church, and the like. A few priests pushed lay leaders to run and provided financial and moral support. There were even complaints that some used the pulpit to campaign for their chosen candidates.

It is common knowledge that Congressman Gregorio Andolana of North Cotabato won because of massive support from the BECs across the diocese of Kidapawan. He was not the only one, although there were not too many.

A study conducted in six parishes in 1994 found that a number of BEC leaders ran for office in the most recent barangay elections but only a small minority won. A number of reasons were offered to explain this phenomenon: lack of know-how and political astuteness to play the game of political patronage, limited funds, weak political machinery, and inability to shake off a radical profile. An interesting reason given was that the voters did not want honest individuals to become corrupted once they join the government, preferring to keep them as BEC leaders.

Local Governance and Cooperation with Government Organizations (GOs) and Local Government Units (LGUs)

Compared to election advocacy, the church's involvement in local governance has been less inspired. Indeed, it has done little to live up to VOTECARE's mandate to monitor the performance of elected officials and to help push for serious implementation of the Local Government Code (LGC). The study conducted for this paper showed a consensus among the respondents, namely, that church involvement in this issue has been poor.

A number of reasons can account for this weakness. An insight is shared by PBSP executive director Ma. Aurora Francisco, who claims that "because the church took a combative position vis-à-vis the State during the martial law period, they are uncomfortable in dealing with government." There is also the claim that key church leaders have stayed away because they are either too busy with so many tasks or just don't have the patience to study issues in depth. While a few influential churchpersons played politics in Aquino's corridors of power, things changed somehow under Ramos. The vast majority, however, heeded the ethical call to refrain from engaging in partisan politics. Getting involved in the mechanisms of the Local Government Code was seen as taking a partisan role. Besides the church leaders may not be so different from the ordinary citizens who lose interest in politics once the winning candidates take office.

While many repeatedly stated that politics is one arena where the laity could assert their vocation, very few leaders collaborated with the latter towards evolving viable models and guidelines. More often than not, the few non-traditional politicians who succeeded in providing alternative leadership did so on their own, with very limited systematic input from the church.

One other reason could be the fact that MISSAS and the Social Action (SA) Centers have not fully recovered from the internal crisis of the mid-1980s. With decreasing funding assistance from foreign agencies, in many dioceses the SA Director is not full-time and there are very limited finances and personnel. This situation has made it difficult for them to work out and implement a realistic strategic plan that incorporates the establishment of partnerships with POs/NGOs on one hand, and the GOs/LGUs on the other hand.

Unlike other dioceses/parishes in the Visayas and Luzon — where a few priests have served as chairpersons of the Provincial Agrarian Reform Coordinating Committee — church leaders in Mindanao have not shown interest in this tripartite approach promoted by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR). "This is sad,"

according to Hector Soliman, DAR undersecretary for field operations and support services, "because the church can help to convince landowners to support the CARP program by voluntarily offering their land for sale and to neutralize the call of some legislators who want to suspend its implementation."

PBSP's collaboration with the church has waned, Francisco observes, since the latter opted not to be involved in local governance issues. This is true for other NGOs/POs who have been engaged in such issues and have appropriated the LGC for their own ends. This is ironical considering the church-based origins of many NGOs/POs in Mindanao. As a result, the church failed to gain insights which the latter were able to attain by engaging the GOs in such partnership.

Responses to Ecological and Development Aggression Issues Affecting Most Especially the Lumads

Responding to the needs of the lumads was quite widespread in Mindanao during the glory days of the MSPCS, one of whose strongest programs was a collaboration with the Episcopal Commission on Tribal Filipinos (ECTF). Support programs for the lumads weakened in the mid-1980s. when ecological concerns became more pronounced.

The Columban Fathers in Western Mindanao were the first to draw attention to the urgent ecological problems that needed a strong response from the church. The call spread across the island. In 1987–89, the BECs of San Fernando, Bukidnon, with the assistance of the Scarboro and Redemptorist missionaries, barricaded the roads to stop logging trucks from transporting round logs. This also took place in Midsalip, Zamboanga del Sur with the backing of the Columbans. These mass actions — the first throughout the country — led to the cancellation of logging licenses.

In time, the twin concerns for the lumad and ecology fused with the greater impact of development aggression, triggered off mainly by the Ramos government's Medium-term Philippine Development Program (MTPDP) or Philippines 2000, and the Mindanao Development Plan.

These government programs set the stage for the planned entry of mining concerns; infrastructure for energy generation (e.g., gigantic dams); ecotourism; tree plantations (e.g., the Integrated Forestry Management Agreement or IFMA) and the like. Most projects have been judged destructive in so far as the ecology and the lumads are concerned. The lumads and their way of life are particularly threatened, since generally the projects are sited in areas claimed by them as their ancestral domain.

Church support for the lumad and lowland communities opposing these projects has been reported in various places in the region, including a mining project in Kalilid, Butuan diocese; a dam project in Molave, Pagadian diocese; ecotourism and mining projects in Lakewood, Ipil prelature; the geothermal plant in Mt. Apo, Kidapawan diocese; a mining project near Lake Sebu, Marbel diocese, and the IFMA project in Davao del Norte.

Many church groups in solidarity with them share the lumads' belief that their future can only be secured if they have control over their ancestral domain. This has been articulated by practically all the lumads of Mindanao. A group of churchworkers — in collaboration with NGOs such as the Legal Research Center

(LRC), Kaliwat, SILDAP-Sidlakan, et al. — have decided to support the lumads' quest for control of their ancestral domain by entering into the Departmental Administrative Order, Series of 1992 (DAO-2) scheme of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR). Others, for various reasons, are hesitant to go into DAO-2 and would rather concentrate on strengthening the lumads' own organizations.

Church response to these issues, however, has been erratic. In some dioceses — like those mentioned above and the ones in Tandag, Tagum and Digos — there has been moderate to active involvement. But in others, involvement has been poor, an observation validated by the findings of the survey conducted for this paper.

While ecology was a major concern in the late 1980s and early 1990s, today there seems to be less concretization of this concern. The only clear programs implemented in a few dioceses are the promotion of organic farming, e.g., popularization of the MASIPAG rice; reforestation and backyard tree-planting, and experimentations in alternative intermediate technology, e.g., in power generation.

Poverty Alleviation

This was the area where SA Centers had the most projects before the advent of the Marcos dictatorship. Most were involved in cooperatives, from credit unions to marketing coops. In some dioceses, cooperatives were set up in all parishes. There were also livelihood projects involving the women, e.g. handicraft, nutrition, and buy-sell endeavors. Many of these projects failed to prosper, mainly because of mismanagement. Very few have continued to exist and have since moved out of the convents where they used to transact business, e.g., the cooperatives in the Davao provinces.

By the time cooperatives made a comeback in the post-dictatorship period, the church had very little to do with them. And yet many NGOs are presently into cooperativism in a big way, convinced that cooperatives do make a significant impact on local economies. Only a few dioceses, led by Kidapawan, have maintained a strong interest in coops. By the early 1990s, a parish-based coop such as the Sta. Catalina Multipurpose Coop, were already capitalized in the millions of pesos. Today, SA Centers have shifted towards forming GKK-based coops. By and large, however, the NGOs have taken over from the church in promoting cooperatives and little coordination has taken place between them.

Regarding other forms of socio-economic projects, there have been too few to make a dramatic impact. Programs providing capital assistance to small vendors and traders helped them to expand their microenterprises. Health groups have helped community women to earn money through the sale of herbal medicine. There are some handicraft projects, including the marketing of lumad products. Gardening, livestock-raising, pig-/goat-/carabao-dispersal projects have also been promoted.

The reasons why church involvement in this area has been limited include those already mentioned: the weak SA Centers, financial constraints, and limited collaboration with NGOs. Other reasons include the fast turnover of SA Directors and parish priests, affecting project continuity; lack of skills in management, communication and monitoring; and the attitude that such efforts are mere palliatives.

The weakening of MISSAS was a contributory factor. Unlike non-church service institutions, e.g. Management Alternative Group, Inc. (MAGI), Pro-Team, TACDRUP, and the like, MISSAS did not grow with the times. Its personnel in training and projects development could not provide the needed backup to local diocesan-parish groups. In the end, POs/NGOs turned to other institutions offering training services.

Considering this reality, it is not surprising that all respondents of the survey for this paper concluded that church involvement in poverty alleviation is just moderate.

People Empowerment Through Education and Organization

Along with human rights advocacy, this area was a priority social apostolate of the Mindanao church until it got embroiled in the debilitating internal crisis. This led to the weakening of the Church's support for the education-organization of oppressed sectors, especially if these programs were seen to be too influenced by the underground movement.

The work initially undertaken by the church was taken over by POs/NGOs which originated from church-based institutions and a few remaining church organizations. These included the Rural Missionaries (RMs), BCC-CO, SPI and the SAMIN, with their own networks of diocesan priests, religious, seminarians and laypeople. The MIPCS was also supposed to provide assistance, but later concentrated on solidarity work.

The tensions and ensuing division within the broad Left, however, further weakened the efforts to support the empowerment of the poor. As indicated by the answers of the respondents, many dioceses are only moderately involved in people empowerment. Moreover, these efforts no longer have the cohesion of the early 1980s, as cooperation and networking suffered drastically. Many of these programs run parallel to each other, even as they take place within the same region.

Having fewer members among both religious women and lay associates, the RMs are presently concentrated in North and South Mindanao. They give priority attention to peasants-fisherfolk; occasionally supporting the struggles of women and lumads. Considering their limited resources, their efforts are focused on "encouraging and motivating people of goodwill especially churchpeople to work and commit their resources in the service of uplifting the peasants and to support the peasants' quest for justice and freedom, and land." They only play a support role in organizing these sectors and collaborate with other NGOs who do direct organizing. Their support services include research and documentation, literacy-numeracy, health, and socio-economic work. Sr. Alma Catambay, MM, the national coordinator, claims that "our relationship with the local churches where we are present is good; there are no problems in terms of the working relationships of our sisters with the bishops and parish priests." More often than not, however, the RMs are left on their own and receive no substantial support from the latter.

This is true also of the BCC-CO network in Mindanao, whose members are present in almost the same areas as the RMs. As part of its vision-mission, BCC-CO formulated a strategy of "strengthening BCCs in worship, evangelization, service and temporalities with the direction of taking care not only itself but also helping

in the establishment and consolidation of people's organizations (peasants, workers, urban poor, women, youth and tribal Filipinos.)." It finds itself in the same situation as the RMs insofar as the mainstream church is concerned. There is a general attitude of tolerance but active collaboration takes place only in a few parishes throughout the region.

As for the Mindanao SPI, their current thrusts include "launching activities for faith-life expression and pastoral renewal processes and training for church communities to help build up and consolidate new and existing sociopastoral agents; and serving grassroots communities through appropriate pastoral and rural development initiatives towards self-reliance, genuine people empowerment and integrity of creation." The latter involves helping communities build up people's organizations (indigenous peoples, peasants, urban poor fisherfolk and women) and activating church support to assist rural initiatives. While a network of churchpeople continues to avail of SPI services, these have diminished due to the same problem that most NGOs have faced, namely, dwindling funds.

SAMIN, with its members spread across the region and within and outside the mainstream church, has greater outreach. Its subregional gatherings are also more active in conducting assemblies, study sessions and evaluation sessions. At their last assembly in 1996, a Plan of Action for Lumads was drawn up which included "advocacy on lumads and lumad women, deeper study session on culture and cultural sensitivity, networking and alliance-building with lumad organizations and support groups, making available resources for lumads, and networking among SAMIN member-sisters involved in lumad work."

Immediately after this assembly, SAMIN provided support to the second assembly of the PASAKA Regional Lumad Confederation, composed of the Bagobo, Manobo, Dibabawon, Matigsalog, Mandaya, B'laan, Ata-manobo and Umayamnon tribes who are mainly from Southern Mindanao.

For the lowland communities, the problem of land continues to rage — both for landless peasants and those working in agribusiness plantations. Because the church does not have a unified vision on how to express its solidarity with the peasants, church groups have various strategies. One example is their approach to the DAR's tripartite program: some collaborate; others refuse to do so. In Basilan, retired Bishop Jose Ma. Querexeta in collaboration with the National Federation of Labor would like to see greater cooperation with the DAR and DENR towards making the plantation workers co-owners of the commercial farm. In Agusan del Sur and Bukidnon, NGOs headed by priests have entered into partnership with the DAR. This is also true for Xavier University and SEARSOLIN. But there are others who go along with the POs/NGOs in ignoring the agrarian reform program and instead strengthening the resistance of peasant communities to what they consider the US-Ramos regime.

Hardly a ripple was created by whatever little work was done by the church to organize the peasants in areas affected by land conversion. If any noise was made to defend the rights of peasants and fisherfolk displaced by the Cagayan-Iligan Corridor, it came from the NGOs/POs but not from the local churches. When the Davao congresspersons sought to declare a 25-year moratorium on CARP implementation, the leaders and spokespersons of the Davao dioceses did not think it important to speak with one voice in opposition, despite the CBCP's 1987 pastoral exhortation on agrarian reform.

Peasant advocates among churchpeople long for more actions like the one taken in the parish of El Salvador in the Cagayan de Oro archdiocese. A group of 42 farmer families from Hinigdaan — who organized themselves into the Sala Landless Association — successfully occupied portions of their land that a lessee refused to give up even when their agreement had already expired. The parish priest, the SA Director and Archbishop Jesus Tuquib, along with the RMs, other NGOs/POs and church/media people supported their cause.

In many cities of Mindanao, from Davao to Cagayan de Oro, urban poor communities are being ejected without definite relocation sites. Many workers still go on strike to fight for a just wage. Fisherfolk complain of being victims of big usurers and capitalists. There are always concerned churchpeople who provide them support; but most efforts are too little, too late.

Promotion of Muslim-Christian Dialogue, Human Rights Advocacy and Gender Sensitivity

In areas where there is a significant Moro population, involvement of the Church in promoting Muslim-Christian dialogue has been poor to moderate, according to the respondents. Marawi, Basilan, Zamboanga and Cotabato stand out as the areas where there are concrete efforts by churchpeople. The statement of the Mindanao Catholic Church Peace Congress hailing the creation of the SPCPD while calling on Christians, Muslims and lumads "to journey together into the way of peace by giving peace a chance," is a most significant move towards expressing goodwill; this would have tremendous repercussions in the future.

"It cannot be denied that the human rights situation in the country, including Mindanao, has improved; but there is still so much that needs to be done," according to Sr. Salud Moraleda FMM, head of the TFDP national office. The TFDP is still mainly involved in human rights education work and documentation-dissemination of human rights violations. Unlike in the past, it is no longer as involved in providing assistance to political detainees and their families and in organizing work. It still maintains offices in Ozamis, Dipolog, Pagadian, Zamboanga, Davao, Marbel, Cagayan de Oro and Butuan, from where other areas are covered. Due to financial cutbacks, there are not as many offices and personnel as before. A few of these offices are still located in church convents/compounds; most now work closely with parish priests and key church figures.

Sr. Moraleda claims that TFDP maintains a favorable working relationship with the dioceses in Mindanao except for one. There has been an increase in support by the local churches. Many seminarians have been drawn into their activities. Differences within the organization, which the newspapers got wind of, led TFDP to declare independence from all ideological forces and to be firm about being nonselective in providing their services. This has somehow improved its relationship with the dioceses.

Most of the respondents reported a moderate involvement of the Church in human rights advocacy. This could partly be explained by the drastically lower incidence of human rights violations, with less militarization taking place in the countryside. Many dioceses no longer believe that human rights advocacy work is a priority; in some places, the work of the local Commission on Human Rights is visible.

Sr. Moraleda, however, contends that human rights advocacy work involves educating the oppressed sectors about their sectoral rights, especially in the context of development aggression. This should remain a priority for the church, as also indicated by PCP II documents. But the fact is that the Church cannot be more actively involved because of the reasons already indicated.

Responding to the needs of women and promoting gender-sensitivity are not yet major priorities. There is more work done by POs/NGOs in this area. Very few respondents believe there is a very active involvement of the Church in this concern. Most indicated poor to moderate involvement.

Because women constitute the majority of those attending church activities — especially sacramental, liturgical and similar pastoral activities from the bible-sharing groups to BECs — the urgency to reach out and to organize women is not strongly felt at the base. Church groups hardly have any coordination with NGOs engaged in women organizing and gender-sensitivity training. A number of women religious congregations and associations identify women as the key target for their work e.g. health and family education, but again these efforts are not coordinated at the diocesan and regional levels. Sustainability is also a problem.

Combating the government's promotion of artificial means of birth control has preoccupied family-life programs of the church. Bishop Juan D. D. Pueblos of Butuan, however, said that based on his experiences "the people in the rural areas resist the government's program." As to NGOs pushing the government line in birth control, Archbishop Carmelo Morelos of Zamboanga claimed that "there has been no conflict between church groups and NGOs in terms of what birth control they promote." But according to a religious sister who is a member of a women's organization, her group advocates the use of artificial means of birth control but opposes abortion; confrontation with the church is avoided by not openly pushing their stand.

In terms of promoting the laity's active participation, the Mindanao Church has gone a long way. Many dioceses involve lay leaders in most decision-making processes through regular assemblies attended by priests, religious and laypeople. This is also true in many parishes where pastoral councils are already operative. However, when decisions regarding social issues need to be implemented, monitored and evaluated, it is still mainly the parish priests who are responsible. In a few cases the SA Center staff are involved. One data that is disturbing is that after three decades, only two out of 21 SA Directors are lay people.

Summary: Problems and Prospects

The Mindanao church — consciously or unconsciously, as one body or constituted by different parts — is definitely part of the civil society. Interacting with the political and economic institutions that constitute the powers-that-be in the country today, it strives to influence their policies, programs and activities. From the days of the dictatorship up to the present, it has intervened so that justice and peace, which are integral elements towards democratization, may reign.

Believing that "ministering to the needs of the poor and oppressed... (is) a moral option, a moral obligation," the church championed the people's human rights during the period of repression. Through its programs for the conscientization

and organization of the disenfranchised, it supported the people's aspiration to participate actively in making decisions that affect them, thus internalizing democratic values. In the process, they were empowered to contribute towards setting up a just and caring society.

Its finest hour took place in the 1970s to the early 1980s, when it asserted its power and authority towards setting up a communion of churches that provoked the internalization of Kingdom values among the faithful, and bonded them in consensus and fellowship towards resisting the awesome powers of the State for the sake of the poor.

Unfortunately, its forces were divided by the crisis that erupted in the mid-1980s owing to differences in ideological, political, and theological perspectives as well in pastoral approaches. To a considerable extent, this division has persisted until today with various groupings trying to peacefully coexist with one another. Acknowledging the contentious issues that affect their relations with one another and with the other sectors, they still find it difficult to act jointly for the sake of the same communities of people that they want to serve. These issues and how these have been dealt with — where there are attempts at resolution — include the following:

Issues	How they are dealt with and resolved
1. Differences of view as to what constitutes genuine development and its consequences in relation to ▪ type of priority programs, ▪ processes of organizing the communities, ▪ defining sustainable development.	At the regional level, key leaders (bishops and their influential advisers), except for a very few, have been reluctant to initiate dialogue even on the basis of "agreeing to disagree." Thus, there have been no attempts to even acknowledge the conflicting positions towards some level of identifying where collaboration is possible. This is both in relation to other church groups and the NGOs/POs. At the local diocesan level, there have been rare instances where the bishop and his key advisers agreed to try to work out a common view of the local situation towards greater collaboration. But these have been limited to issues affecting communities, and not a result of long-term planning sessions together. Progressive church groups are continuing explorations with NGOs/POs towards resolving tensions and improving working relationships through evaluation sessions and joint studies.
2. Relationship/collaboration with the range of NGOs/POs and GOs/LGUs.	A segment in the church would rather be kept isolated from NGOs, POs, GOs, LGUs. Another segment (including those with power and influence) tends to be more open to collaborating with GOs/LGUs and moderate NGOs/POs. Still another segment would collaborate with any group they would deem to be pro-poor and are open to considering the people's demands (although on a case-to-case, issue-to-issue basis).

The different groups do not relate to one another, while the third has tried to explore collaboration with the second group towards establishing tactical links. However, the situation remains fluid and collaboration among the three is still not possible.

For now, all groups are reluctant to discuss how conflicting situations could be resolved. They resolve the issues where this can be done but this is at the level of corporate projects or campaign implementation, specially where urgent issues need to be responded to quickly, e.g., the lumads' quest for their ancestral domain.

3. Authoritarianism of those with power and influence in the official church, which hinders collective decision-making and people's participation in such matters as the choice of persons assigned to key roles in the dioceses/regional bodies, giving key positions to laymen and women, and willingness to be evaluated re: performance of their tasks, transparency in the handling of funds, etc.

This area remains very sensitive. In the absence of a viable forum where there is willingness to express and listen to the ventilation of such issues, there can be no way to resolve this tension area. This is especially true at the regional level (although at the last MSPC, there were rumblings at the margins.) At the local diocesan level, informal fora allow for such ventilation but only when the bishop allows it. But these remain rare instances.

4. Short-term framework of church planning, making it difficult to ensure project continuity. (Most key positions are held for about three years.)

During evaluation sessions, there have been suggestions to keep key people at their posts for longer periods (vicars, pastoral directors, SA directors, justice/peace coordinators, parish priests, etc.), and to choose individuals with the appropriate orientation, skills and attitude. (Funding institutions have also pushed for this, with some success.)

5. Lack of interiorization of interfaith dialogue, dialogue of faith and life, inculturation, etc., key concepts arising out of Vatican Council II, echoed by PCP II, and identified pastoral priorities in Mindanao.

The Episcopal Commissions on Inter-Religious Dialogue and on Indigenous Peoples have both tried to promote dialogue, but are hampered by limited resources. Only a few dioceses have been able to respond to the challenge. Recent opposition to the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development from within the church showed that deep prejudices remain which have not been challenged in local church fora or study sessions.

There has been far more favorable response to be in solidarity with the indigenous peoples than with the Moro people. It is easy to understand why: lumads are fair game for direct or indirect proselytization.

6. Tendency of church personnel to be satisfied with the knowledge they already have.

For a number of reasons — including limited resources, wariness about using the analytical tools learned in the 1970s, lack of initiative on the part of seminaries and universities, inability to tap lay experts or facilitators — systematic steps are not being undertaken to generate interest in issues affecting culture and society for instance, through study sessions, sabbatical studies, provision by convents of updated reading materials. However, seminars of this type have been organized by some groups or congregations.

But despite the conflicts within, the Mindanao church has continued to assert its role in civil society. If it can move towards uniting its different parts and get its act together, once again it will be a major force affecting the lives of Mindanaoans and shaping society for the good of the poor and the powerless. But to do that, it needs to read the signs of the times and respond accordingly.

It has to initiate more efforts towards healing and reconciliation among its ranks. One concrete move is to duplicate what NASSA did at the national level in June 1996 when it brought together all individuals, groups and institutions — regardless of theological and ideological perspectives — who have been involved in BCC/BEC work through all these years. In the process of sharing their experiences, they realized they have more commonalities than differences and agreed to explore greater coordination and collaboration in the future.

It has to seek greater collaboration with NGOs/GOs, especially those that have consistently served the poor and who wish to establish closer ties with the church. While maintaining the stance of not engaging in partisan politics, it should critically collaborate with those groups/individuals among GOs/LGUs who show a commitment to making government accountable to the people, by serving their needs and being transparent regarding funds.

The Church needs to truly practice what it preaches in terms of lay empowerment. More lay leaders should be involved in decision-making processes at the diocesan and parish levels, as well as take on important key positions e.g. SA Directors. It should support the laity in playing their role in the political arena, not only in casting their votes, but in pressuring the government to allocate resources for the poor, to promote ecology and human rights, and to resist the central government's projects that dislocate rather than help the people. Its institutions should devote themselves more to building the capability of lay leaders.

Assignments of priests and religious should follow strategic planning sessions where priorities are better identified and the distribution of assignments guarantees the implementation and continuity of priority pastoral programs. Mobilization and allocation of resources should be done wisely. Good financial management should be looked into to stretch the value of limited resources. Greater efforts at raising local resources should be creatively explored.

Conclusion

The Mindanao church made a major *abante* in the late 1960s to the early 1980s. From mid-1980s to the early 1990s, it made an *atras*. From 1991 to 1996, a number of events have unfolded at the national and regional levels, helping to construct a new context that could lead to a transformed pastoral paradigm.

These events include:

- 1993: The publication and popularization of the PCP II Acts and Decrees which has legitimized what used to be popular only in the peripheries of the institutional Church.
- 1994: Eruption of consolidated actions on national issues (e.g. E-VAT, GATT) and against development-aggression projects.
- 1995: the Asian Journey convened by Fr. Dog Galenzoga that brought together churchpeople engaged in Muslim-Christian dialogue to Cagayan de Oro City and helped to renew networking and coordination.
- The PANAGTAGBO or a Gathering of Mindanao POs/NGOs for the advancement of Indigenous peoples rights (1995) held in Kidapawan, convened by the Kidapawan TFP, Kaliwat, LRC and Sidlakan, which redefined the priority tasks in taking up more effective solidarity action with and for the lumads.
- Massive support for and satisfactory performance of VOTECARE in the May 1995 elections.
- The MSPC IX that brought together 270 delegates in Kidapawan, which Bishop Federico Escaler SJ enthusiastically referred to as "very much like the early MSPC Conferences in terms of the expression of the Church's concern for social issues." At the Conference the delegates reflected on the costs and benefits of the Mindanao Development Plan, the Mindanao peace process and the GRP-MNLF talks, and widespread gambling. They vowed "to realign and redirect pastoral programs, ministries, movements and organizations so that these will truly become agents of renewal; immerse ourselves in the lives of the poor, reorient our leadership styles and leadership structures so that the poor will be able to participate in decision-making processes that affect them; and to review our various policies so that they become pro-poor."
- 1996: The Mindanao People's Assembly for Peace, convened by Archbishop Fernando Capalla in Davao City, attended by 81 participants — Christians, Moros and lumads. At this assembly the delegates stated that they "commit themselves to become peacemakers and enjoin all to create a Culture of Peace and earnestly urge the GRP and the MNLF to maintain their ceasefire agreement." They also called on those concerned to enact an ancestral domain law, establish development projects that recognize and respect the right to life and to self-determination, create a society free from the instruments of war and violence, provide basic government services especially in depressed areas and conduct sustained peace education.

- The Church's participation in the highly-publicized campaigns against lotto in the cities of Cebu and Davao, echoing the earlier resistance of the people in Cagayan de Oro City to the opening of a gambling casino there.
- The NASSA BCC-BEC conference which involved a number of delegates from Mindanao. A statement that came out of this conference stated that: "As a direction, BEC requires a process that respects our people's journey in faith and spiritual heritage, utilizing the dialogue of the Gospel and the human situation and the promotion of Kingdom values in light of their day-to-day struggles — all these for the preservation and promotion of human dignity. It also employs methodologies and strategies that commence with the faith reflection of the BECs in their situation, discerning the courses of action to take, and allowing fresh experiences of conversion and 'paradigm shifts' towards social transformation." After the conference, the delegates agreed to sum up the BCC-BEC experiences in Mindanao towards greater collaboration.

All of the above signs tend to show that the Mindanao church is again in an *abante* phase. The clearest sign is the June 1996 Mindanao Peace Congress where the church leaders categorically stated that:

> Peace is not just the absence of war. It is the wholeness of life where every person can live with dignity. Peace must be based on justice for all, whether they are Christians, Muslims or indigenous peoples. This peace respects the truth, grows in love and is exercised in freedom. The religious freedom of everyone must be respected and assured. Human life and human dignity must be protected. Development must be integral, sustainable and ecology-friendly. People's participation in the peace process and development initiatives must be assured. Genuine social, political and economic reforms, the rehabilitation of combatants, the continuous confidence-building, and healing of wounds among those who have become victims of the armed conflicts, have to be considered to ensure lasting peace.

These then are the prospects if the Mindanao church is to become a major player in civil society. But this can only happen if it goes beyond issuing statements, and — with passion and compassion — fleshes out its words in concrete programs responsive to the urgent social problems and coordinated at various levels, from the base communities to the whole region.

If this can be done soon, the people in the BECS will have reason to celebrate the rebirth of a truly prophetic Church by singing one of their favorite action songs:

Dinhi malipayon,
Didto malipayon,
Bisan asa kita malipayon...
La la la la la la la la....

(Here we are happy,
There they are happy,
Wherever we are, we are happy...
La la la la la la la la la la...)

ENDNOTES

1 Also popularly known in Mindanao as Gagmayng Kristohanong Katilingban (GKK). See *Acts and Decrees of the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines* (Manila: Secretariat CBCP, 1992), pp. 52–53.
2 Also known as Mindanao-Sulu Church, composed of the 21 ecclesiastical areas in Southern Philippines, and constituted by the laity, diocesan priests, religious women and women and the bishops. Throughout this article, it will be referred to as the Mindanao church.
3 Galileo Kintanar, "Contemporary Religious Radicalism in the Philippines," *National Security Review* (June 1979).
4 Karl Gaspar CSsR, *Readings on Contemporary Mindanao Church Realities* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1994), p. 20.
5 See *Proceedings of the MSPC IV Conference* (MSPCS, September 1990).
6 Warren Kinne, *The Splintered Staff: Structural Deadlock in the Mindanao Church* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1990).
7 This was the setting up of the Mindanao Inter-Faith People's Conference in 1984.
8 "We Must Obey God Rather Than Men," CBCP Pastoral Letter, February 13, 1986.
9 John J. Carroll, SJ, "Civil Society Revisited," *Intersect* (July 1994), p. 10.
10 Statement from the Mindanao Peace Conference held in Davao City, June 24–26, 1996.
11 However, the National Statistics Office in their Statistical Yearbook Projections claimed that the projected 1995 population of Mindanao is 16,760,242.
12 *What is the MSPCS*, a booklet published by the MSPCS, 1978.
13 Ibid.
14 See *That We May Remember* (Quezon City: Promotion of Church People's Rights, 1989) for stories about church people persecuted during the Marcos dictatorship.
15 See Carmen Abubakar's case study on Christian-Muslim Dialogue also in this volume.
16 See *Votecare*, a manual published by CBCP-NASSA for the May 1995 elections.
17 Ibid.
18 See Appendix B for survey form and its results.
19 Conducted by the Redemptorist Itinerant Mission Team among the BECs of Arakan, San Fernando, Josefina, Tubod, Dumingag and Mahayag parishes, March 1995.
20 Charlito Z. Manlupig, "Agrarian Reform in Mindanao," a paper prepared for a consultation of NGOs in Mindanao on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, no date indicated.
21 Karl Gaspar CSsR, *A People's Option, To Struggle for Creation* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1990).
22 "Ethnocide," compiled by the Solidarity Action Group for Indigenous Peoples (SAGIP), *SAMIN News* (July–September 1995), pp. 4-5.
23 Levita Duhaylungsod, "Missing Notes in Development," *NASSA News* (November–December 1994) pp. 4–9.
24 "Organic Farming, A Response of the Diocese of Digos to the Needs of Its Farmers," *NASSA News* (March–April 1989) p. 3.
25 Rainier R.A. Ibaña, "Civil Society and the Common Good," *Intersect* (October 1994), p. 16.
26 "RMP Vision, Mission and Program," *SPARKS* (November–March 1996), p. 1.
27 "BCC-CO: Toward a Renewed Church and a Transformed Society," *Ekklesia* (Second Semester 1995), p. 5.
28 Report to the Third General Assembly, February 22–28, 1996.
29 "Affinity with Lumad spirituality affirmed during 12 Assembly," *SAMIN News* (January–March 1996), p. 3.
30 Thirsting for Justice, A Pastoral Exhortation on Agrarian Reform, CBCP Pastoral Letter, July 14, 1987.
31 "Philippines 2000: No Rosy Path for Human Rights," *Philippine Human Rights UPDATE* (March–April 1996), pp. 2–7.
32 As reported by the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, June 16–17, 1996
33 "Statement of BEC Promoters," prepared by delegates to the NASSA-sponsored National Consultation of BEC Promoters on the Social Concern of BECS in the Philippines, June 18–21, 1996.

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ANTOINETTE RAQUIZA

Philippine Feminist Politics
Disunity in Diversity?

Over the years, feminists worldwide have become increasingly critical of the concept of "sisterhood." Though aware that women experience oppression as women, they note that women's identity also rests significantly on other factors, such as class, ethnicity, race, and citizenship. These latter characteristics create basic differences among women, making solidarity among them less natural than the term "sisterhood" would imply.

Diversity among feminism's interpretations of women's realities suggests that as a paradigm for social transformation, it does not, *by itself*, provide sufficient basis for women's broadly unified political action. Moreover, the fact that women encounter multiple and varied sources and levels of oppression also accounts for substantial variation in feminist activity. In combination, both the diversity of women themselves, and the variety of oppression that they face help explain the ambivalence with which many feminists regard centralized and hierarchical modes of oppositional politics.[1]

For women of the global South, the tension between genuine feminism and national political expression is particularly salient. In such societies, women's movements have been intimately rooted in their peoples' almost uninterrupted struggles against a succession of colonial, neocolonial, and authoritarian regimes. Given this almost constant backdrop of more comprehensive statist struggle, women in such settings face a consistent array of choices between accommodating that national struggle or adopting a less centralized but more thoroughly feminist expression.[2] In these particular settings, it seems that women face a choice: either a feminist perspective will place inherent limitations on women's ability to build a tightly-knit, comprehensive women's political center, or the high level of consolidation necessary for national, political activity will be possible only under certain circumstances and through specific modes of actions.

This paper examines this question in relation to the Philippine women's movement. In what may be a typical pattern, the Philippine women's movement is quite diverse. The present women's movement can be divided along three general, though not mutually exclusive, strains: (1) advocacy-oriented women's organizations pushing for reforms in official policies and processes; (2) the ideological/political feminist organizations, whose tradition is rooted in the mass movement; and, (3) non-government organizations, providing specific services and education to grassroots

women. This diversity calls attention to the relationship between the movement's different strands, its potential for broad and unified expression, and its relationship to genuine feminist perspectives.

The history of the Philippine women's movement, taken in light of the above considerations, raises an important question. The Philippine women's movement has, at specific moments and using different strategies and tactics, been able to mobilize under one organizational vehicle. In the early eighties, key women's organizations found common cause in the height of the democratic struggle against the Marcos regime, and created a broad political center under the guise of GABRIELA. In more recent years, the women's movement has produced a more sharply defined feminist discourse — one that is markedly less tied to a statist or class analysis than had previously been the case. The development of this feminist discourse, however, has accompanied the growth of different, smaller centers for feminist activity.

One way of interpreting this historical trajectory is in terms of an inherent tension, alluded to above, between women's assertion of a genuine feminism (the expression of which tends toward decentralization) and women's efforts to join their struggle with broader political movements, an association that may take place at some sacrifice to feminism itself. Nevertheless, in studying the dynamics between the women's movement and national, political formations, two additional considerations, evident in the Philippine case, require attention: the character of the political regime under which women's activism takes place, and the concrete political forms through which women make their claims. Any comparison between the broad women's political front, GABRIELA, and the fragmentation of the contemporary women's movement must acknowledge the vast political changes that accompanied the movement from one phase to the next. Indeed, the context of struggle may greatly influence the relationship between feminism and the women's movement, or between the women's movement and other political movements. Under dictatorship, the strength and pervasiveness of the state question exert a powerful pressure on all forms of social and political dissent. Movements of all kinds come to see the satisfaction of their demands as tied to the question of national power and political regime, because the very force of the dictatorship channels all such questions through the national capital. Under such circumstances, claim-making will tend toward a statist expression, and individual and diverse movement organizations will tend to gravitate around larger and more centralized movement forms.

For the women's movement, this pull toward national centers often occurs at the expense of feminist perspectives, such as the neglect of private arenas of struggle. That is, if a tension between feminism and national politics generally does exist, the dictatorial context almost certainly tilts the balance between the two away from feminism, and toward more statist perspectives. But the converse is also likely true: when dictatorships transform into more formal democratic arrangements, and as formal democracy takes root, the political regime will exert a comparatively less centralizing pull over women's organizations. In this light, the very character of the contemporary state also defines the parameters of feminist expression.

This paper argues three interrelated points. First, to more fully understand the dynamics within the women's movement, one must take into account the distinctiveness of feminism's political expression from that of more traditional class-based modes of opposition. Second, the women's movement's political potentials are

strongly influenced by the character of the political regime within which it operates, an influence that becomes particularly prominent during state transitions. Third, within the parameters established by feminist politics and macro-political structures, the women's movement's effectiveness will largely depend on its ability to give genuine feminist perspectives a powerful, consolidated political expression.

This paper seeks to provide an analysis of the Philippine feminist movement, focusing on its theoretical moorings and praxis under changing political contexts. The succeeding section provides a brief history of the movement, highlighting the movement's unity-building efforts as a function not only of class-oriented politics but also of structural conditions. The next section attempts to establish how the growth of feminism itself impacts on the construction of sisterhood in contemporary circumstance. The paper concludes by examining the movement's trajectory, and the challenges of unity-building.

Brief History of the Women's Movement

The women's movement consists of different kinds of women's organizations, pursuing the range of concerns from the provision of specific women's welfare needs to the political advocacy for women's empowerment. This heterogeneity can be attributed to Philippine society's development, with key political transitions providing the impetus for a particular response from women. To understand the movement, one needs to see it as a conglomeration of varied and specific historical legacies.[3]

Filipino women's mobilizations have always been inextricably linked to the people's struggles for national sovereignty, social justice, peace, and democracy. Until recently, their political participation largely came in the form of their individual membership into broad national movements or as members of women's organizations affiliated with those movements. This phenomenon is not uncommon in post-colonial and highly stratified societies where improving women's lot depends greatly on effecting radical societal changes. As one feminist writer noted, by joining the nationalist struggle, these women were "laying down the pre-condition for their own liberation as women."[4]

Yet, against the march of history, women did rise for themselves, to develop their own social movement. In the Philippines as elsewhere, these periods of broad women's mobilization seem to have been associated with profound political changes that created moments of opportunity for women, who responded by putting together large-scale movements knit together by broad-based solidarity. Based on feminist historical accounts, these mobilizations cluster around three separate conjunctures: in the 1930s, during the nation's transition from a colony to a commonwealth; in the early 1970s during the eve of martial law; and, in the early 1980s as the anti-dictatorship struggle neared its peak.[5]

The American colonial period was particularly noteworthy as it gave rise to an incipient feminism whose strongest advocates came from the ilustrado class. The recognition of women's right to vote was a product of a 30-year advocacy, starting in 1905 with the founding of, among others, the Asociacion Feminista Filipina (Philippine Feminist Association) and in 1906 with Asociacion Feminista Ilonga (Ilonga

Feminist Associations). Many other women's organizations sprouted with the twin goal of improving women's socio-economic condition and pushing for women's participation in public affairs, particularly by getting out the vote.

The campaign vote took on various forms, from the individual lobby of Pura Villanueva Kalaw, an influential woman leader, that resulted in the filing of a women's suffrage bill in 1907, to networking with American and Filipino policy-makers, and media work. Due to lobbying, Act No. 2217 allowing women to vote was passed in 1933. Yet, in 1936, the all-male National Assembly that was formed a year after the establishment of the Philippine Commonwealth to draft a new constitution, insisted that recognition of women's suffrage would come only with the concurrence of at least 300,000 women to the issue in the national plebiscite. Thus, to finally get the vote, the suffragists had to rely on a massive campaign, targeting the potential women electorate itself. They were able to muster 447,725 affirmative votes to the question regarding women's suffrage in the 1937 plebiscite.

The struggle for women's suffrage, as it galvanized women around a concrete issue, is considered a turning point for Filipino women as it ensured broad women's participation in public life even if only through the ballot.[6] While part of this movement's strength lay in the colonial government's support,[7] it succeeded mainly because of mass mobilization. It is not surprising, then, that women began to realize the potency of forging alliances. Different women's groups led by the Women's Club of Manila, formed in 1920 the National Federation of Women's Clubs in the Philippines that, in turn, set up a General Council of Women in 1936 as the propaganda arm of the suffrage movement.[8]

This moment of solidarity proved short-lived, however, partly due to the tactical nature of the campaign itself. For the succeeding two decades, organized women's activism expressed itself in two seemingly diametrically opposed fashions: the upper or middle class-dominated organizations pushed for reforms to better advance women's position. On the other hand, women in the left, notably members of the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP) that was founded in 1930, provided a critique of the neocolonial, elite-dominated social order that the former worked within.

Feminist stirrings once again emerged in the early 1970s, the eve of the imposition of martial rule. With the formal founding of the Malayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan or MAKIBAKA, women raised the stakes in the struggle for women's specific rights and welfare. The organization's political orientation distinguished it from other all-women groups. Many of its members belonged to the new communist-led national democratic movement that had then split with the PKP, and thus carried a clear class bias for the poor majority. MAKIBAKA, however, also differed in that it was the first organization that criticized patriarchy. Perhaps its most celebrated mass action was a protest against the Miss Philippines beauty contest on April 18, 1970. Unfortunately, martial law compelled many student activists, including MAKIBAKA members, to go underground. In light of the intense repression that followed, MAKIBAKA merged with the fledgling Communist Party of the Philippines (Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong Thought).

Despite its brief existence, MAKIBAKA did establish a model for Philippine women's liberation. It was the first women's organization that stressed the strategic import of women's organizing toward defeating both elite and male rule. Accordingly, it began to forge a comprehensive alliance with peasant, working class, and urban poor women on the basis of gender oppression as well.

The so-called woman question was given full play in the early 1980s as women's organizations, linked to either the moderate and radical opposition, formed in response to worsening economic and political conditions. Among these were the National Organization of Women, identified with the United Democratic Opposition (UNIDO) and the Concerned Women of the Philippines (CWP), founded in 1978 to push for the restoration of civil liberties. Identified with the old communist party, the PKP, the Katipunan ng Bagong Pilipina (KABAPA) was formed in 1975 to undertake community organizing. The national democratic movement, on the other hand, initiated the Center for Women's Resources (CWR) and the Women's Center for Women Trade Unionists in 1982 and July 1983, respectively. Completing the multi-class and multi-sectoral character of the women's movement were elite-dominated organizations like the Alliance of Women for Action and Reconciliation (AWARE) and national democratic sectoral organizations for peasants (AMIHAN), workers (KMK), urban poor (SAMAKANA), professionals (WOMB) as well as the students and youth (SAMAKA).

Two other organizations deserve mention for unflinchingly calling themselves feminists even when the progressive movement itself generally viewed feminism as elitist or divisive. Pilipina, initiated in 1981 and formally launched a year after, raised the importance of women's empowerment in social development and cultural work while Kalayaan, founded in early 1983, sought to advance feminist discourse within the national liberation movement. Pilipina is identified with the social democratic tradition while Kalayaan's leading members were then national democrats.

The slaying of opposition leader Senator Benigno Aquino proved a critical point in the democratic movement. Women, in large numbers, trooped to the streets, together with the hundreds of thousands who mobilized spontaneously. October 28, 1983 stands out as a red letter day for Filipino women: that day marked the first broad-based women's march. An organizing committee was formed, composed of women from the different political spectrum including Tingting Cojuangco of AWARE, Petite Peredo of SAMAKANA, Girlie Villariba of CWR, and Aida Santos of Kalayaan.[9] The march organized by a broad spectrum of women's organizations revealed to the polity the potency of women as a political force. This broad unity, manifested in street demonstrations, paved the way for the founding of GABRIELA in March 1984.

GABRIELA, in its formative years, was a multisectoral coalition wherein both liberal and left-leaning women united. Its breadth was reflected in its national council wherein women from the CWP, PILIPINA, Kalayaan, and national democratic organizations sat. The first and second chairpersons, Mita Pardo de Tavera and Mary Concepcion Bautista, respectively, represented civic, professional women's organizations and would eventually occupy government positions in the post-dictatorship period. Nevertheless, national democrats occupied key organizational positions and composed the majority of its grassroots members.

The political and economic crisis in the early 1980s laid the foundations of, as it determined the parameters for, the broad-based women's movement. The radicalization of a significant section of women, including many elites who had previously stayed away from contentious politics, helped project an alternative role for women in society. The crisis spawned new citizens movements, notably, the consumers movement and development work, where women played significant roles. Equally important, because of their presence and advocacies, women's spe-

cific sectoral demands such as the provision of maternal benefits and a non-sexist education were included in the progressive agenda.

That said, GABRIELA was a coalition founded along an anti-fascist rather than a feminist unity. To preserve the alliance, the more controversial feminist issues especially those touching on sexuality were relegated to the background. Under the GABRIELA umbrella were both pro-life and pro-choice organizations and individuals, for instance. Moreover, GABRIELA activists gave priority to women's issues that could directly challenge the dictatorship. In this connection, since political exigencies made the ouster of the dictatorship an almost immediate goal, differences in women's orientations and even political-ideological moorings became secondary considerations.

It was against this backdrop that the women in GABRIELA confronted the candidacy of Corazon Aquino, the slain senator's widow. Aquino's entry into the presidential race against Ferdinand Marcos in the snap 1986 elections posed peculiar problems for the coalition. On one hand, Aquino's campaign not only carried a staunchly anti-fascist line but also drew support from the broad segment of the population, and from centrist and left-leaning liberal forces with which key non-national democratic women leaders in GABRIELA identified themselves. On the other hand, the regime launched a sexist counter-campaign, which painted Aquino as a "housewife" with no role to play in politics.

The snap elections broke the unity in GABRIELA. In the midst of the debates that ensued within the coalition, cleavages in political orientation between the center and left began to show, with the former opting for outright support for Aquino and the national democrats advocating a boycott position on the elections. Kalayaan, with its members then expanding to include non-national democratic feminists, had called for "critical participation" on two counts: first because Aquino, despite her elitist origins, presented a clear possibility of ousting the Marcos regime, and, second because of the belief that feminists must likewise respond to the regime's anti-women campaign line.[10] What finally caused the split, however, was the manner in which the national democrats ensured that the boycott position was upheld when the issue was put to a vote. A lone regional representative, herself a national democrat, was allowed 20 or so votes to tip the balance in favor of boycott.

Since the split in 1986, women's organizations began to move in different directions. GABRIELA, now made up mostly of national democratic activists, regrouped: from a multi-tendency political coalition (i.e., of the center and left), it has since become a coalition of the basic sectors, organized under the national democratic banner. Alliances among the former members were then forged on a per issue basis (e.g., violence against women, health and reproductive rights). There is presently no broad women's center, carrying a comprehensive political agenda. Rather, the women's movement today is mainly characterized by tactical alliances and decentralized operations. The broadest alliances, representing the widest spectrum of Filipino feminist politics, so far have been either project-based or issue-based. One example of the first was the International Women and Health Meeting, held on November 3–9, 1990, which was attended by 38 organizations and networks.[11] To date, the broadest, and longest-running, coalition — in terms of the representation of different ideologies — is Sibol, launched in July 1992 to push a women's legislative agenda.[12]

The above discussion provides some initial inputs into the construction of women's solidarity. State transitions were also periods of great agitation among women and moments when they seem most compelled to forge broad unities. Yet, the character of the alliances at the center of these mobilization periods varied, depending on the conditions surrounding and organizing strategy demanded by the upsurge. One way of distinguishing these different alliances is along vertical and horizontal axes. Horizontal linkages represent political unities across different, independent women's organizations and networks, regardless of their ideological orientations. Vertical linkages, on the other hand, represent ideological-political unities forged usually across classes or sectors. Different movement organizations may emerge along primarily horizontal or vertical alliances, what we might call cross-ideological and cross-class unities, respectively. An example of the former was the women's suffrage movement while that of the latter was MAKIBAKA. As may be gleaned from these two examples, horizontal linkages tend to have broader representation yet be more tenuous than vertical linkages, formed by women organizations subscribing to one ideology.

The nature of cross-class and cross-ideological unities also differed, depending on the threat posed or opportunity offered by each conjuncture. In the 1930s, the minimal attention given to vertical linkages may partly be due to the political opportunity present at that time. The move toward decolonization required the state to widen its social base, a condition that opened the door for women of privilege, previously excluded from the political process. In this sense, the suffrage movement, a tactical alliance around a specific campaign, stressed horizontal linkages (that is, alliances of different national urban women's organizations and networks). On the other hand, the seventies saw MAKIBAKA, pushing for structural and strategic change, forging vertical linkages. MAKIBAKA itself was particularly critical of the "first wave" of Philippine feminism[13] and shunned alliances with such women's organizations. If these two earlier moments demonstrated strong tendencies for either horizontal or vertical linkages to dominate most political conjunctures, the polarizations that occurred during the 1980s regime change provided conditions that favored the simultaneous expansion of both sorts of alliances. The highly centralized state apparatus facilitated the consolidation of women across both class and ideological lines. As the regime alienated both a growing segment of the elites and the impoverished majority, broad tactical unities emerged. The revival of the women's movement in the 1980s came with women maximizing both vertical and horizontal unities.

The restoration of elite democracy proved another turning point in the women's movement. Having dispatched their common enemy, the different political forces often went their separate ways, partly to build their own political stock under the Aquino administration. Disagreements on how to view the new dispensation that afflicted coalition-building in the broad popular movement also divided the women's movement. Those who advocated participation in the Aquino campaign chose to maximize openings in the new government. A key example was the entry of former GABRIELA leaders into Aquino's cabinet and the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, formed by Imelda Marcos. On the other hand, those who advanced the boycott position continued to view the new government with distrust, and largely cast their lot with the radical protest movement. These political differences would greatly influence the growth of the different women's organizations.

More significantly, however, the ensuing "democratic space" also occasioned a reexamination of feminism, only somewhat articulated at the peak of the anti-dictatorship struggle. As mentioned earlier, partly because of expediency, women's issues were integrated into the larger political contradiction obtaining at that time between fascism and democracy. With this focus objectively removed, women's organizations began to explore gender as a distinct arena of struggle and patriarchy as a cross-class phenomenon. It is noteworthy that it was only in the post-Marcos period that women's movement activists more freely called themselves "feminists," and that the question of autonomy began to gain wide currency in women's circles. Since then, women's campaigns and work along issues like women's health and reproductive rights, violence against women, and lesbian rights have also gradually gained their own steam.

Evolving Feminist Politics

Feminism as a distinct social movement is a relatively recent phenomenon in the Philippines.[14] Most practitioners would point to the years following the ouster of the Marcos regime in 1986 as the period when feminism became a material force in the country's body polity. As women from the different political parties and formations sought their own space to develop their own perspectives and alternatives to problems plaguing women and Philippine society as a whole, they also began to articulate a more systemic critique of patriarchy, view women-specific issues from a strategic frame, and develop organizations, relatively or completely autonomous from male-dominated movement formations.

In a sense, therefore, feminism has enabled organized women, representing the various shades of the country's political spectrum, to develop their own set of unities. Within the progressive movement, feminists generally concur on the following points: 1) "the distinctness of the women's movement from the comprehensive political struggle"; 2) the need to simultaneously address class and gender; and, 3) the urgency of carrying both women's practical needs (e.g., livelihood as well as health and other social services) and strategic interests (e.g. gender equality, self-determination, women's empowerment).[15]

Despite these broad agreements regarding principles and strategies, however, the feminist movement has been given to fractiousness. In explaining this movement character, many have rightly pointed to the different movement leaders' political affiliations as a major source of conflict.[16] Obviously, then, these divisions originate at the level of the progressive movement — the larger universe, after all, within which substantial segments of the women's movement operate. Accordingly, tensions within the feminist movement itself reflect external political conflicts.[17] This insight has, in turn, raised the validity of the feminist organizing principle of autonomy.

Such an analysis stands on historical fact. Because women's political action, up to the 1970s, had been so intimately linked to the peoples' movements for social justice and sovereignty, their most critical contribution to challenging the gender divide was through their participation in the general, political struggle. Whether consciously or not, these women did not only break away from gender stereotypes but also acquired organizational skills and movement experience for their own political development.[18] In this context, women activists, including those

belonging to exclusively women organizations, necessarily carried the orientations of the political movements they happened to belong to during this period.

At the same time, an organization's feminism is nuanced by its leaders' political line, determining its strategy in the post-Marcos period. Pilipina, for instance, has positioned itself for mainstream engagement, with some of its members strategically located for this purpose as well.[19] That it has been able to quickly seize opportunities under elite democracy, in contrast to its more political/ideological counterparts, may be due to its implicit social democratic, parliamentary orientation.[20] In contrast, the more ideological currents, represented by groups like Kalayaan and Gabriela that arose from the national democratic tradition, underwent a more experimental phase and seemed only recently to decide on their definite course of action. Kalayaan, whose emergence was itself an innovation within the nationalist struggle, maintained its autonomy vis-à-vis the orthodox left, and its leaders have since adopted a multi-tactical approach to women's problems.[21] On the other hand, since the departure of moderates and non-national democratic radicals, Gabriela has aligned itself even closer to Bayan, a national democratic, multisectoral formation maintaining an almost exclusively statist agenda.[22] As may be gleaned, women's political standpoint also influences their eventual choice of feminist activity.

Yet, to leave the explanation of women's disunities as a function of different political lines alone appears inadequate in light of other recent developments. Except for GABRIELA, the other women's organizations have over the years exercised more and more autonomy from their respective political blocs.[23] Moreover, in keeping with the feminist principle of "unity in diversity," feminists do not seem inclined to give "sisterhood" a consolidated organizational expression.[24] In light of such feminist organizational principles that promote heterogeneity, it is important to recall that the broad unity in GABRIELA in the early 1980s was primarily anti-fascist, rather than feminist.

In examining the apparent disunity among its ranks, one needs to look elsewhere as well — to feminism itself as a brand of new politics, and to the larger political environment. For several other reasons, the feminist movement differs substantially from other national political movements. The struggle for women's empowerment extends across a range of political arenas with which broader class-based movements can often not keep pace. The struggle for gender equality often is most closely fought in isolated and private realms — as women assert their rights and identities against men who are in no sense state agents, and in many ways less susceptible to centrally directed political strategies. In terms of the goals that women frequently seek as well, feminist movements often fit uneasily into the broader rubric of the political movement. Class-based movements seek a range of outcomes, from policy reform to state-replacement. In many cases, feminist movements, while interested in transforming basic social, economic, and political structures, however, also pursue less tangible goals related to identity and culture.[25] As such, the cutting edge–issue of sexuality and the location of the family as a critical site of gender politics deconstruct traditional concepts of power.[26] In this light, forging broad political unity within the feminist movement proves a more difficult process, relative to class-oriented movements that are geared toward macro-level politics.

While national political bloc relations continue to influence unity-building among feminists,[27] new or potential sources of tension have also arisen. One is between "organic" feminists who give higher premium to experiential gender politics,[28] and

the more ideological feminists, who seek to raise everyday feminist politics to theory.[29] Conflicts between these two tendencies, in fact, first became apparent when their different proponents coalesced to create DIWATA, a women's funding mechanism in 1991; this effort saw the consolidation of two networks, the Pilipina-led Women's Action Network for Development (WAND) and the more ideological Group of 10 (G-10).[30] The other tension is between the different generations of feminists. Many key feminist leaders today are products of larger, political movements and are thus informed by their engagement with national political actors. In contrast, many younger participants encountered politics within the womb of the feminist movement itself. This difference in generational experiences may give rise to different approaches to feminist activism, particularly as it relates to the national political struggle.[31] Examining the implications of these trends is beyond the scope of this paper. However, understanding such dynamics demands refinements in analysis of solidarity-building within the movement, to range this with feminism's own conceptual tools and the changing political situation in each stage of the movement's development.

Challenges to Sisterhood

The Philippine feminist movement's diversity, while a fount of internal debates, nevertheless provides it flexibility and maneuverability. In the ebb that the protest movement experienced after the ouster of the Marcos regime and restoration of formal democracy,[32] the women's movement was among those that rebounded with relative ease. In fact, the years that followed did not only see the women's movement adapt to the new political situation; feminism itself began to flourish. As may be discerned, feminist politics suited the requirements of a democratization process that lessens the gap between state and society.[33]

With the devolution and dispersement of state power, women's movement cadres began to explore and respond to the different dimensions of power as it impacts on its own constituency. In this, feminism provided a fresh perspective from the traditional, statist strategy. That the left was marginalized in the 1986 people's uprising that finally ousted the Marcos regime due to its boycott of the presidential elections also added to feminism's attraction.[34] Women thus had access to a theoretical framework that could guide their activism amidst a fluid political situation and opportunities present in participatory political processes. One Filipino feminist scholar notes: "The very diversity and heterogeneity of the issues, goals, and strategies in women's organizing [are] now viewed as giving feminism its dynamism and vitality."[35]

Yet the increasingly decentered expression of feminist politics raises the old specter of marginalization: has it been the case that as a more genuine feminist perspective has unfolded in local and dispersed formations, it has sacrificed political power? The answer to this question is perhaps a tentative, and hopeful, no. While feminist political organizations seem to be smaller and more localized, the past several years have nonetheless produced significant developments in the realm of coordination among these formations. Feminist unity on issues such as the anti-rape bill, domestic violence, the rights of women overseas workers have indicated something important about the current conjuncture: that the political potentials of feminism do not only depend on its ideological development and its political con-

text. Within that context, the manner in which women seek to press the feminist agenda, is also a significant determinant of the movement's potentials. Hence, by way of concluding this piece, let us turn to the practical implications of the argument for women's movements in the current conjuncture.

There are costs and opportunities in the emergence of feminism as the women's movement's guiding perspective. Among the costs, many involve the extent to which the pursuit of truly feminist objectives has demonstrated itself to be, in political terms, inconvenient. Take, for example, the question of domestic violence. Although, as we shall see shortly, a good deal can be accomplished on this front via national policy advocacy, the beginning of the struggle to empower women lies in face-to-face interventions with women suffering from abuse in their homes. Efforts to empower women, to coax them into denouncing their tormentors and taking measures for their own liberation most effectively takes place in small and intimate settings — in shelters, community organizations, local associations. Even where women's activities on the policy front produces legislation to protect women in their homes, the crimes themselves remain private and often secret. Justice demands that victims arrive at some initial sense of empowerment. The pursuit of these important issues takes the women's movement away from national and political expressions — and this is a clear cost.

At the same time, this local advocacy can and has become the foundation for a more national political expression from women — based, however, not on the construction of a comprehensive political center (what we might call the GABRIELA 1984 model) but rather on the coordinated efforts of women to pass specific bits of legislation. Because SIBOL pushes women's issues, previously located in the private realm, into the public debate, it continues to appeal to the feminist movement's multilayered activism. That SIBOL has so far maintained its broad composition also manifests how the struggle for concrete policy reforms galvanizes a wide range of women advocates, in and out of government — a condition that makes it a highly viable enterprise.[36]

The key to the current situation, then, is to recognize and take explicit account of the inherent fractiousness of the women's movement in planning and executing feminist politics. This means perhaps foremost that a mature feminism will tend to operate simultaneously on several different levels, and according to several different modes of praxis. Issues of individual empowerment, gender and sexual freedom, and the redefinition of identity will all most effectively be addressed in these small and dispersed formations. In this respect, the organizational expression of feminist politics exactly and accurately will mirror the assertion that women labor under multiple and private loci of oppression, an assertion that forms the heart of the feminist critique of traditional class politics.

At the same time, feminists need to consider new forms of linking up with the larger, national movements if their political agenda is to impact on a broader, public audience. Feminism presents certain dilemmas for a Philippine movement that seeks to build a broad constituency. On the one hand, various sociocultural institutions — notably, the family, church, media, and the educational system — continue to reinforce traditional values that promote women's submission to male authority. Patriarchal ideology is so strong that a counter-hegemonic movement can only hope to develop pockets of resistance, even within the progressive movement. These conditions partly explain the slow progress feminism had made up to the mid-eighties. On the other hand, in a country where more than 60 percent of the population are

dirt poor, feminists wanting to improve women's status need to address the survival issues confronting its natural constituency: unemployment, homelessness, food insecurity, inadequate social services, and civilian violence. It is these issues that mass organizing, usually aligned with national, class-based movements, usually appeals to.

The women's movement, if operating in ways that are now more autonomous from national political formations, need to re-examine its relationship with these groups.[37] If, as was demonstrated earlier in this paper, women's movements in democratic settings tend toward more vertical, rather than horizontal patterns of alliances and organizations, these class-oriented movements continue to pursue horizontal organizing that links workers, farmers and the urban poor to progressive intellectuals and members of the bourgeoisie. While it may be unwieldy for the women's movement to retain large organizational formations, they can still extend the reach of feminist politics by setting out explicitly to influence political blocs and parties. Indeed, it is noteworthy that among the most promising modes of activity in the left today is an increasingly common series of gender-sensitivity trainings being given by women's organizations and desks to movement audiences. In this light, the movement becomes more than a vehicle to assert a transformative vision: it becomes an arena of feminist struggle itself. Victories in this realm hold the promise of producing multiplier effects via the movement's own subsequent advocacy.

The decentralized base of feminist organizational politics may be linked to the periodic but broad national structure of coalition work around specific policy goals. The local bases of the feminist movement, then, do not have to be called to mount a continuous campaign of intervention in national politics. Indeed, such a campaign may well require the actual sacrifice of some of the newest and most vibrant aspects of the current feminist mood. But it will require that women in dispersed and local formations pay extremely close attention to the national political debate, and retain a vigilance to protect and assert their interests when threat or opportunity arise.

The recognition of the distinctiveness of feminism leads us to reconceptualize the women's movement itself. Today's movement has already embraced new modes of activity that distinguish it from either the suffragists, with their narrow attention to policy reform, or activists who subsumed the entire project to the question of state rule. Today's feminist politics requires more nuanced, and a sharper appreciation of the connection between private and public political realms. It requires also that women establish broad unities with other movement formations on shared policy objectives, without sacrificing the local and decentered bases of more genuine feminist intervention. It requires, finally, that the women's movement develop collective tactics that range from the personal and private to the political and public, and that feminists deploy this entire range of tactics in an appreciation that together they reflect the genuine character of modern feminism.

ENDNOTES

1 One study, for instance, on a single-issue U.S. women's coalition points to the tension between the demands of coalition politics and the requirements of feminist organizational forms. The writer argues that this tension can be resolved if coalition initiatives are issue-specific and time-bound, particularly when the movement is facing a common threat or exceptional opportunity. (Gretchen Arnold, "Dilemmas of Feminist Coalitions: Collective Identity and Strategic Effectiveness in the Battered Women's Movement," *Feminist Organizations: Harvest of the New Women's Movement*, Myra Marx Ferree and Patricia Yancy Martin, eds. [Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1995].)

2 To bring out the dynamics within the women's movement, the paper makes a distinction between the women's movement as part of the larger, political struggle and feminism which is a social movement in its own right. Broadly defined, the women's movement is a social movement that advances women's specific demands, such as their rights and welfare, through women's collective action. In the Philippines, wherein many women's issues are inherently tied to macroeconomic and political policies of the national government, many women's organizations had emerged from and been aligned with class-based national political movements. On the other hand, the feminist movement is one which seeks to explicitly challenge, transform, and redefine gender relations.

3 Data and insights from this section are based on the following pioneering works: Nora Angeles, "Feminism and Nationalism: The Discourse on the Woman Question and Politics of the Women's Movement in the Philippines," Unpublished masteral thesis submitted to the UP Political Science Department, September 1989; Fe Mangahas, "The Status of Filipino Women from Pre-Colonial Times to the Early American Period," *Kamalayan: Feminist Writings in the Philippines*, edited by Pennie S. Azarcon (Quezon City: Pilipina, September 1987); and, Aida F. Santos-Maranan, "Do Women Really Hold Up Half the Sky? Notes on the Women's Movement in the Philippines," *Diliman Review*, Vol. 32 Nos. 3–4, May–June, July–August 1984.

4 Mangahas, p. 17.

5 Filipino women have, since the colonial period, participated in the overall nationalist struggle. However, for the purpose of this paper, only the periods wherein their mobilization carried a distinctly feminist content shall be examined.

6 Ibid, p. 18.

7 In one correspondence, the daughter of the founder of the nationalist Aglipayan Church, Liw Aglipay, writes that the suffrage movement had gotten the backing of no less than President Manuel Quezon and even the Catholic church. See "Correspondence with Liw Aglipay," published in James S. Allen, *The Radical Left on the Eve of War* (Quezon City: Foundation for Nationalist Studies, 1986), p. 113-114.

8 Angeles, p. 115.

9 Ibid, p. 189.

10 Interview with Anna Marie Nemenzo, executive director of WomanHealth on 15 September 1996. Nemenzo, a KM member during her student days, was with the Concerned Women of the Philippines in the early eighties, before joining Kalayaan upon its founding.

11 For this meeting, there were seven Philippine convenors: WomanHealth (which acted as the secretariat), Gabriela, CWR, WRRC, KaBaPa, Pilipina, and Samakana. All in all, 38 organizations, including those in regions outside Metro Manila, participated in the meeting. Out of this conference, the Alliance for Women's Health was born although it now only counts 13 organizations as active members. (Interview with Dulce Natividad of WomanHealth on January 19, 1997.)

12 Sibol was then initiated by the Women's Legal Bureau and the Center for Legislative Development (formerly called the Congressional Research and Training Services). Member-organizations include: the Women's Research and Resource Center (WRRC); Ugnayan ng Kababaihan sa Politika (UKP); Institute for Social Studies and Action; Pilipina; Women's Education, Development, Productivity and Research Organization (WEDPRO), the Democratic Socialist Women of the Philippines, and Makalaya. (Interview with Fatima Baybay Alcantara of the CLD on 19 January 1997.)

13 Philippine feminism of the 1930s resembled the "first wave global women's movements" of their time, largely oriented toward an "ameliorative, reformist ideology that supported rather than challenged traditional gender roles." Janet Saltzman Chafetz, Anthony Gary Dworkin, and Stephanie Swanson, "Social Change and Social Activism: First-Wave Women's Movements Around the World," *Women and Social Protest*, Guida West and Rhoda Lois Blumberg, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 302.

14 Angeles refers to this period as the nationalist women's movement's third phase when a "clear feminist orientation" began to develop. On the other hand, she delineates the first phase as the time women mobilized for nationalist politics and the second phase as when they entered sectoral organizing to better highlight women's class position. See Angeles, pp. 232–242.

15 Pi Villanueva Reyes, "In the Womb of Today's Women's Movement," *Conjuncture*, Vol. 1 No. 10, September 1988, pp. 6–7.

16 While many women's organizations claim to be autonomous, one can find key members in the leadership who belong to and are active members in broad, national political centers. Political blocs within the popular movement include the social democrats/democratic socialists, "independent" socialists, popular democrats, and the national democrats. A discussion of these blocs is beyond the purview of this paper; suffice it to say that each movement formation subscribes to a different political orientation, strategy for social change, and political program, among other things.

17 See, for instance, Angeles.

18 Mangahas, p. 17.

19 The past and present executive directors of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women are PILIPINA members. PILIPINA chair Teresita Deles and national council member Jurgette Honculada are representatives of the NGOs and women's organizations, respectively, to the multisectoral Social Reform Council, headed by President Fidel Ramos.

20 As Karen Tañada, a PILIPINA officer, stated: "[S]ocdems participate in elections and try to get positions in government in order to push the implementation of their minimum program, and also to support the movement in its mass organization work." (Karen Tañada, "An Overview of Social Democracy" in *Conjuncture*, vol. 1, no. 3 [1987], p. 3.)

21 Kalayaan's trajectory is partly also a function of its changing constituency. Kalayaan formed when five women then belonging to different CPP collectives decided to create an autonomous space for feminist expression, outside the party structure. (Interview with Aida Santos on October 4, 1996. Santos, among the five, was then performing propaganda work.) Immediately after its founding, it included women from the non-national democratic left (later to be identified with the independent socialist organization, BISIG, founded in 1987). To date, its membership include young feminists who have had little experience with both the national democratic and socialist political blocs.

22 Gabriela has since become a coalition of national democratic women's sectoral organizations (e.g., Amihan, KMK, AND SAMAKANA). In the period 1992–1993, it began to relinquish its membership in the various women's coalitions as Sibol and the Group of 10, a loose alliance of women's organizations pushing for a comprehensive women's development agenda. In its stress on cross-class vertical linkages, Gabriela has since more closely followed Makibaka's footsteps.

23 In fact, women activists even during the early eighties had shown some, though limited, capacity to transcend conflicts that mar unity-building within the larger progressive movement. Alliance-building among the different political forces suffered a major setback in May 1985 when the liberal and social democratic organizations walked out of the founding congress of what was then to be the broad anti-dictatorship coalition, BAYAN, charging that the left had imposed its will on them through a "mechanical majority." Despite the rupture, women from both sides of the divide continued with GABRIELA. The 1986 split, therefore, while political in nature was also a product of GABRIELA's internal dynamics.

24 Separate interviews with Karina Constantino David, PILIPINA member and executive director of HASIK, and Nemenzo, on October 2 and 5 1996, respectively.

25 In this sense, the feminist movement approximates a "new social movement," exhibiting the following components: 1) a recognition of multiple axes of oppression; 2) the politicalization of personal space (e.g., alternative lifestyle and interpersonal relationships); and, 3) the reassertion of identity politics as a movement goal. Besides women and gender, other new social movements include those revolving around peace, environment, youth, race, and indigenous peoples. See, for instance, Alberto Mellucci, "The new social movements: a theoretical approach" in *Social Science Information*, vol. 19, 1988.

26 PILIPINA, for instance, redefines power: "[W]omen had to confront the question of power: what kind of power? They had clearly disavowed power that meant domination, control, wielded for self-interest, in pursuit of chauvinist ends. This is 'power-over' as differentiated from 'power with'.... 'Power with' is akin to the concept of empowerment which is the process of gaining strength and knowledge by marginalized individuals and groups to overcome discrimination and further their interests." ("Women: Gaining and Wielding Power," *Isyung Pinay*, Issue Paper #4, n.d., p. 1)

27 As evident from a PILIPINA newsletter statement on dilemmas the organization has in dealing with women's groups allied with progressive parties and movements. "More specifically, we refer to the major section of the women's movement that remains under the ideological thrall of the dominant left, or at least lives under its influence, and for whom sisterhood and even gender seems readily subsumed to class and politics. Party dogma, sectarianism, and hegemony have long blocked the formation of broad people's coalitions. This sectarianism has precisely led to the internecine war that engulfs the dominant left. Will women's groups within the latter's purview follow the lines drawn or are they able to eschew the party line, distance themselves from the conflict, and think through the issues on their own terms? How do we work out the contradictions that bedevil our relations with these sisters with whom we share a socialist affirmation?" PILIPINA, "The Promise and Problematique of Sisterhood: Not Quite a Love Letter," 17 July 1994.

28 As Karina Constantino David writes: "We are essentially organic feminists.... We had quite naturally assumed that the affective and the cognitive components of feminism and gender issues could not be divorced. We could not convince ourselves that a somewhat clinical and detached perspective was the

track to follow.... When an issue becomes the object of knowledge, of academic concern, the domain of experts, does it tend to force out of the picture the very emotions that led to its recognition?" (Karina Constantino David, *Gender Seminar for Men: The HASIK Experience* [Quezon City: Harnessing Self-Reliant Initiative and Knowledge, Inc. and the Philippine-Canadian Human Resource Development 1995], pp. 17–18.)

29 As Kalayaan leader and Women's Crisis Center executive director Raquel Edralin Tiglao points out, "As feminists, while it is not possible to theorize without the benefit of experience, there is a need to continually sharpen and refine lived experience. We have entered new arenas, but toward what? The question remains: Do we still believe in revolution?" (Interview with Raquel Edralin Tiglao on October 5, 1996 and January 19, 1997.)

30 DIWATA was set up in 1991, upon the initiative of the Canadian International Development Assistance (CIDA) which initially contacted the Women's Research and Resource Center (WRRC) to conduct a study on the Philippine women's movement. Unable to agree on the WRRC paper, the women's organizations participating in the DIWATA process divided into two, the G-10 and WAND coalitions. The G-10 founding members came from left, political movements (notably, Gabriela and Kalayaan). WAND, on the other hand, was identified with the social democratic movement as well as the non-aligned social development NGOs. (Based on an interview on September 15, 1996 with Merci Fabros who was with WRRC in 1991. See also Karen Tañada, "Diwata: The Making of a Broad Women's Unity," *Conjuncture*, March 1991, vol. V, no. 3, p, 7. Tañada referred to DIWATA as a coalition project, "a process of rapprochement between two formations.")

31 Aida Santos, for instance, depicts the generation gap as follows: "The younger women who had enthusiastically followed the dreaming of their elder sisters began to feel their own set of frustrations and to define their own sets of problems and struggles. Unable to grasp or having merely a peripheral appreciation of the core principles and issues of the 'older' generation, as that milieu, some said, by now is far too removed from theirs.... Meantime, the elders shook their heads, unable to understand the impatience of the youth, some flagellating themselves for a feeling of inability to further stoke the initial fire that burned brightly in the age of golden opportunities and the alliances between generations of women and men." The fire, she refers to, was lit in the seventies when thousands of youth across the country heeded the call of their older comrades, founders of the Communist Party of the Philippines (Marxist-Leninist-Mao Zedong Thought). Excerpted from a letter to sisters and friends, dated July 15, 1996.

32 Demobilization during this period has been attributed to the breakdown of the cross-class tactical alliances forged in the fight against the Marcos regime. On one hand, the elite section joined government or reverted back to routine modes of political participation while many grassroots-based, political movements adopted a wait-and-see attitude toward the new government, exploring ways to influence it and its policies. See Vincent G. Boudreau, "Of Motorcades and Masses: Mobilization and Innovation in Philippine Protest," *The Revolution Falters: The Left in Philippine Politics After 1986*, Patricio N. Abinales, ed., (Ithaca, New York: Cornell Southeast Asia Program Publications, 1996).

33 Boudreau, in discussing the challenges posed by a liberalizing state to the progressive movement, observed, "[A]s the Philippine state opened more participatory points of access, movement organizations and sectoral coalitions once oriented almost exclusively toward protest evolved more into some combination of interest groups and service centers.... Therefore, in place of the massed demonstrations with a broad national agenda of the sort which often occurred during the mid-1980s, those who observe Philippine protest may look instead for small-scale and more specific patterns of interest representation." Ibid, pp. 79–82.

34 As may be gleaned from Santos' letter: "....[W]ith the dictatorship regime gone, and triumphantly scarred and made wiser by our political experiences, we defined new arenas for our passionate politics and found a new niche in our activism in the NGO movement. I do not clearly remember anymore how I ended up in the NGO world, and got absorbed by it for close to a decade. All I remember is that feminist politics enchanted my imagination...." Excerpt from Santos' letter to sisters and friends.

35 Delia Aguilar, "The Feminist Perspective" in *Conjuncture*, volume 1, numbers 5 & 6, 1988, p. 3.

36 In fact, it can be said that SIBOL began from where the suffrage movement left off, advancing the parliamentary legacy by imbuing it with gender politics and consciously linking it to a grassroots constituency.

37 This challenge has been succinctly argued as follows: "Both local resistances and new social movements must come to an understanding of the systemic impediments to their emancipatory projects. They must also build alliances with other groups if they are to work toward a more humane world." A. Belden Fields, "In Defense of Political Economy and Systemic Analysis: A Critique of Prevailing Theoretical Approaches to the New Social Movements" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds. (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1988), p. 141.

CARMEN ABUBAKAR

Interreligious Dialogue and the Making of Civil Society *A Study of the Silsilah Movement*

This paper is an attempt to examine two phenomena: interreligious dialogue and civil society, and how they influence each other. It focuses specifically on the Silsilah Dialogue Movement based in Zamboanga City.

Dialogue Defined

Generally, interreligious dialogue is defined as a two-way communication between persons or groups. Dialogue is a sharing of self — what one is and what one has — so that mutual enrichment takes place. It means openness to know, love and appreciate people of all beliefs and ideologies.[1]

Several forms of dialogues have been identified such as:

a. Dialogue of life, referring to dialogue at the level where people of differing religious persuasions live and work together and enrich each other through the faithful practice of the values of their various religions without the necessity of formal discussions;
b. Dialogue of social engagement, referring to the level where people of various beliefs can cooperate in the execution of development projects, in defining the family and its values, in joint projects to help populations suffering from drought, famine or stark poverty, in looking after refugees and especially in the promotion of justice and peace;
c. Dialogue of communication of religious experience, in the form of prayer, meditation and ascesis. Recollections, silence, fasting and other exercises for self-mastery, pilgrimages, experiences of God, contemplation and mysticism are areas of sharing between deeply committed believers;
d. Dialogue of being together to pray, as when believers in various religions came together on October 27, 1986 in a World Day of Prayer for Peace in Assisi, Italy;
e. Dialogue of theological discussion, where religious experts exchange information on their beliefs and practices and seek mutual understanding through sincere discussion.[2]

Cardinal Arinze advanced several reasons why interreligious dialogue has become an urgent question today. Due to the ease of global communication today, he said, *religious pluralism* in the world is a fact. The Roman Catholic Church cannot

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afford to ignore other religions that are the way of life of a greater part of humanity. Then there is the *desire for communication* with others that is awakened with the availability of opportunities for global intercommunications. Interreligious dialogue promotes the participants' *growth and understanding* of their own faiths. And finally, such dialogue builds cooperation in society through the strengthening of values such as mutual respect, justice, peace and fraternal collaboration among citizens.

Although interreligious dialogue is deemed necessary, not everybody is convinced of its value. On the part of some Christians:[3]

a. Church-centered thinking on the mission of Christians in society, manifested in theological reflection and catechesis, cause religious individuals to be too preoccupied with "making converts" and to be uninterested, hesitant or even closed-minded as regards dialogue.
b. Some have a fundamentalist attitude that does not allow for religious pluralism and creates difficulties in accepting people of other religions as they are.
c. Theological terms or language is used that is irritating for Christians and even more for people of other faiths.
d. A superiority complex is manifested towards adherents of other religions.
e. Pastors and lay leaders lack the proper formation, and communities at the grassroots level are inadequately prepared for direct and day-to-day contact with peoples of other faiths.

On the part of people of other faiths, some of the obstacles are the following:

a. There is suspicion that Christian-initiated dialogue could be a disguised form of Christianization.
b. The fundamentalist attitude of some turns at times into religious fanaticism.
c. Hostility arises from the identification of Christianity with western colonialism, and of religion with a particular national identity.

According to a Christian scholar, the most feared effect of dialogue among Christians is the dilution of the religious message, not to mention its effect on proselytization as a primary duty of the church. Among non-Christians, dialogue is perceived as "an ecumenical camouflage, for the old missionary motive in modern disguise".[4] In spite of these fears and suspicion, however, dialogue activities continue.

What do Muslims think of dialogue?

According to Al-Haji U.N.S. Jah,[5] Muslims consider dialogue as constructive and commendable. Dialogue is justified according to a verse in the Holy Qur'an which reads:

Say O people of the Book
Come to terms as between
us and you; that we
worship none but Allah,
that we associate no
partners with Him, that
we erect not from among
ourselves lords and patrons

other than Allah, if they
turn away, then say 'Bear
witness that we are Muslims'.
(Al Imran, 3:64)

Another verse is also cited to stress the Qur'anic view of pluralism:

If Allah had so willed, He
Could have made you a single
People, but His plan is to
Test you in what He has
Given you, so strive as in a
Race in all virtues. The return
of you all is to Allah. It is He
That will show you the truth
Of the matters in which you dispute.
(Al-Ma'idah, 5:51)

Based on these verses, Muslims are expected to welcome dialogue. The writer notes however, that for any constructive dialogue to take place both communities "should not learn about each other from sources that are unsympathetic, critical or even hostile...."[6] He further notes that the Qur'an makes it incumbent on the Muslim to convey Allah's message to all humanity but underlines the fact that the Qur'an also states: "Let there be no coercion in religion" (Al-Baqarah, 2:256).

While dialogue is not disallowed, some Muslims are also not convinced that they should undertake or participate in its activities for the reasons already cited.

In spite of the obstacles and detractors present in both communities, Muslim-Christian dialogue has nevertheless made progress. In general terms, its rocky journey may be mapped optimistically by the establishment of specialized institutions in England, Rome (Italy), the USA and here in the Philippines.

In more specific terms, however, the progress of dialogue appears a shade less bright. This can be gleaned from the findings made by the Christian-Muslim advisory meeting convened in Malta by the Office of Inter-Religious Relations of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in September 1995 to reflect on the Mission and Dawah Statement issued 20 years ago (1976) at the Chambesy Conference in Geneva. The final statement of the 1976 conference as reported by *Muslim World* paid particular attention to:

> ...the undeniable fact that many of the Christian missionary services today continue to be undertaken for ulterior motives. Taking advantage of Muslim ignorance, of Muslim need for educational, health, cultural and social services, of Muslim political division and general weakness and vulnerability, these missionary services have served purposes other than holy proselytism, that is, adding members to the Christian community for reasons other than spiritual. Recently revealed linkages of some of these services with the intelligence offices of some big powers confirm and intensify an already aggravated situation. The conference strongly condemns all such abuse of diakonia (service).[7]

In this regard, the 1995 meeting made two significant observations:[8]

1 That those who signed the statement did not commit their institutions, which may not be able to exercise authority over or influence those engaged in humanitarian and/or missionary activities;
2 That the competition in mission continues unabated in many areas, especially in Africa.

On the whole, the statement seems to point to the fact that while dialogue is accepted in principle, its practice is not necessarily carried out by all. It does not alter the fact however that there are Muslims and Christians who are convinced that dialogue is imperative in the development of better relationships, and that their number is slowly growing.

Civil Society

The term refers to "civic space" that occupies the middle ground between government and the private sector where neighbors talk to each other to work together. Benjamin R. Barber in his book *Jihad vs. McWorld* describes this space accordingly[9]:

> The neighborly and cooperative domain of civil society shares with the private sector the gift of liberty; it is voluntary and is constituted by freely associated individuals and groups; but unlike the private sector, it aims at common ground and consensual (that is, integrative and collaborative) modes of action. Civil society is thus public without being coercive, voluntary without being privatised. It is in this domain that...traditional civil institutions such as foundations, schools, churches, public interest and other voluntary civic associations properly belong.

The writer notes that civil society has been eclipsed by government and other forces such as markets and corporations. Caught between the state and corporate monopolies, civil society gradually lost its prominence and instead became privatized and commercialized, serving private ends.[10]

Schools became interest groups for people with children (parents) rather than the forces of a free society; churches became confessional special-interest groups pursuing separate agendas rather than sources of moral fiber for the larger society; voluntary associations became a variation on private lobbies rather than the free spaces where women and men practiced an apprenticeship of liberty[11].

One of the basic characteristics of civil society is its liberal character, its noncoercive nature and the equality of its members[12]. To recreate civil society, the writer suggests that existing institutions be reconceptualized and repositioned. Citing the United States as an example of this process, he means:

> ...turning again to schools, foundations, voluntary associations, churches and temples and mosques, community movements and the media, as well as myriad other civil associations and removing them from the private sector, repositioning them instead in civil society. It suggests helping citizens to reclaim their rightful public voice and political legitimacy against

those who would write them off as representing only hypocritical special interests.[13]

After the 1986 people's revolution, the Philippines has been often described as having "the most dynamic civil society in Southeast Asia." Civil society in this case refers to the politically active sector composed of NGOs (non-government organizations), POs (people's organizations) and other COGs (cause-oriented groups) and political organizations. Together, they became the organized base of a citizens' movement aiming to transform society.[14]

Broadly defined, Philippine civil society would include all "voluntary or free associations of citizens within the ambit not only of the popular sector but also the private corporate sector". Among the collectivities that make up civil society, the Church, specifically the Catholic church, is considered as having a strong influence since more than 80 per cent of the population are baptized Catholics.[15]

One of the problems that continue to beset the Philippines is the peace and order situation in Mindanao. Because it also affects the development of the country in general, the Philippine government has made a strong effort to find solutions to the problem. The churches have also tried a parallel program to bring peace and harmony among the population mainly through interreligious dialogue.

The objects of dialogue in this case are people nurtured in "separate" identities based on religious or ethnic differences. What would it take to transform their sometimes contentious relations towards establishing a civil society working for common goals? Can the process of dialogue between two communities with experiences of hostility against each other be a key step towards this development?

The Interreligious Dialogue Movement in the Philippines

Muslim-Christian dialogue started in the 1970s as a result of Vatican II which encouraged Catholics to dialogue with people of different cultures and faiths. Among the earliest churches to start a dialogue program was the National Council of Churches which developed PACEM (Program Aimed at Christian Education about Muslims) in 1981. It was an interfaith dialogue involving tie-ins with academic institutions to hold forums and seminars both for Muslims and Christians. Two-week classes were held in Manila three times and twice in Mindanao, with 20 to 40 participants attending. In 1996, however, the plan to revise this program has put the classes on hold.

Another NCCP program was PACT (People's Action for Cultural Ties). Started in 1983, it was active in the Duyug Ramadan project which tried to introduce Ramadan to Christians. Duyug Ramadan continues today as a solidarity night with Muslim communities in Tandang Sora (Quezon City) and in Quiapo (Manila). The celebration is usually made at the end of Ramadan when the local people prepare a feast for their guests. Cultural programs are usually presented.

The NCCP also launched the Peace Forums in 1989, a continuing activity, where information and discussion updates on the peace process are presented to church people and leaders, students, and NGOs. NCCP has a Muslim-Christian Desk and the publications *Sandugo* and *Duyug Ramadan*.

Most of these programs are undertaken by the national organization. Member churches are encouraged to undertake their own projects but so far only two have incorporated dialogue as a church program. One of the active churches is the UCCP which conducts exposure programs for their seminarians in Mindanao. After ten years of dialogue experience, it still remains for more churches to undertake the activities on their own.

The first Muslim-Christian dialogue summer course was started by the Dansalan Research Center founded by the late Peter Gowing and based in Marawi City. The Center, now known as the Peter G. Gowing Memorial Research Center, also had a research and publication arm that was very active in conducting studies about Muslims in Mindanao. One of its regular publications was the *Dansalan Quarterly*.

In January 1990, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) formed the Commission of Interreligious Dialogue as a separate entity from the Commission of Ecumenism. It is headed by Bishop Fernando R. Capalla.[16]

Can a dialogue organization help in the formation of civil society by bridging the gap between Muslims and Christians and forging solidarity between the two communities so that they can work together towards common purposes and goals? To find out, a study of the Silsilah Dialogue Movement was undertaken.

The Silsilah Dialogue Movement

Organization of Silsilah

In 1984 a group of Muslims and Christians started to meet for prayer and discussions as a way of going deeper into their own faith. It was a loose gathering with no organizational structure. During this year, Fr. Sebastiano D'Ambra, PIME, joined the group and with his leadership the loose grouping developed into an organization called the Silsilah Dialogue Movement.

Silsilah means chain, a word which expresses relationship with God. To quote:[17]

> [Its] choice... as the key word of the Islamo-Christian Dialogue Movement can be traced back to the time when the founder, studying Islam at P.I.S.A. in Rome, discovered in the Sufi spirituality (Islamic mystics) the word "silsilah" (chain) that they used to express their desire [for] unity with God. The concept of "silsilah" can also be applied as a Christian approach to dialogue with the idea of developing a deeper relation with God, starting from God's message revealed through Christ in the history of salvation. The Muslim stress on the greatness of God and the Christian stress on the love of God might bring Muslims and Christians closer to the same and One God through the chain of dialogue.

The term *Silsilah* is used as a symbol of a particular process of dialogue with the following characteristics:

(1) a chain of unity that binds together all people of living faith in genuine friendship;
(2) a spiritual chain uniting people in the experience of the divine dialogue;

(3) a transforming chain that challenges Muslims and Christians together to seek peace and harmony.[18]

As explained in the same publication, the main goal of the Silsilah Dialogue Movement is to promote deeper understanding and better relations between Muslims and Christians with particular emphasis on the spiritual dimension of dialogue. The word "better" stresses a "sincere" dialogue encompassing all aspects of life; the word "deeper" stresses the point that the Movement is promoting prayer, sharing, witnessing, collaboration and action as a means to unify the two communities.[19]

The vision of Silsilah calls for a God-centered dialogue. The approach assumes that "God is the Creator and creation is the expression of God's desire to enter into dialogue with humanity. Thus God becomes the origin, the fountain and source of our experience of dialogue." Silsilah further stresses great sensitivity and respect in dealing with the distinctive elements of Islam and Christianity, emphasizing those that are held in common while recognizing the particular characteristic of each religion. It is also important to avoid developing feelings of superiority or inferiority in living with people of different religions. In this manner, Muslims are encouraged to become better Muslims and more committed to their Islamic faith, and for Christians to do the same. It is hoped that by joining hands, harmony and peace in the world may be attained.[20]

Organizationally, the Silsilah Dialogue Movement includes other structures like the Silsilah Foundation, Emmaus, and Metro Manila Muslim-Christian Dialogue. Its officers also serve in these other organizations. There are coordinators responsible for the implementation of the activities under its various programs, as described below.

Silsilah Programs

Annual Summer Course

The first Silsilah Center opened in 1985 at San Jose Road, Zamboanga City. Its initial programs included research and small seminars. In 1986, Silsilah started what has become its Summer Course on Muslim-Christian Dialogue intended for professionals, seminarians, priests, nuns, lay people and potential leaders. The course is supplemented by a public symposium with a panel of speakers discussing current issues.

The core program of the Movement, the Summer Course is made up of a basic course that runs for three weeks and a special course that runs for another two. The basic course takes up both Christian and Islamic religious teachings while the special course is issue-oriented and can vary in content every summer. These topics are usually based on current trends or phenomena affecting Muslim-Christian relations. A committee proposes the relevant topics for approval by the Silsilah Council which has 17 members, four of whom are Muslims and 13 are Christians.

Since 1988, Silsilah Summer Courses have adopted the following themes: "Prayer and Dialogue" (1988), "Religion, Culture and Politics" (1989), "Spirituality of Dialogue" (1990), "Building Peace Through Dialogue" (1991), "Islamic Da'wah and Christian Mission" (1992), "Prayers in Islam and Christianity" (1993), "Dialogue in God's Creation: Promotes Peace and Harmony" (1994), "Preservation of Life through

Dialogue: Promotes Peace and Harmony with Creation and Among Believers of Living Faiths" (1995), and "A Challenge to Believers of Living Faiths" (1996).

As can be gleaned from this list, spirituality is the main focus and approach to dialogue and forms much of its content. It is assumed that improvement in the individual's spiritual sphere will in turn influence his relationships with others. However, it is also granted that the internal transformation of individuals or societies takes place slowly or gradually over a long period of time. As a member of Silsilah notes referring to change of attitudes: "It is hard to unwind what has been there for four centuries. Dialogue is a project of a lifetime." Members of Silsilah admit that dialogue is a slow process and needs strong commitment.

Silsilah Summer Basic Courses are intended to give basic information on the two religions largely to correct misunderstandings and draw out commonalities while appreciating differences. It is argued that learning the correct information will in time reduce biases and prejudices, and hopefully establish respect and trust. If these attitudes are translated into practical actions in the course of an individual's dealing with others, it is assumed that conflict will in time be transformed into harmony.

Dialogue therefore intends to transform individuals, then communities and nations. To move from one stage to the next, however, the people who share or join in dialogue must proportionately grow bigger in number every year. More important, the effect of dialogue should be able to make itself evident in the many critical areas that beset Muslim-Christian relationships so that the movement will spread and gain wide support.

A look at the people who participated in the Movement through the summer courses therefore is useful in gauging the work of Silsilah. A total of 365 participants have enrolled since 1987. These data came from registration forms of the Silsilah Summer Course. (Table 1)

The figures reflect the large majority of Christians who have participated in the program (77.55%), while Muslims (22.45%) make up a smaller number. The disproportionate ratio between participants seems accounted for by the fact that the movement is largely perceived as a Christian undertaking. Not surprisingly, most of the sponsors of participants are Catholic religious institutions. Perhaps the dissemination of information is not as wide among Muslim institutions; or if these are reached at all by Silsilah's announcements, they are not ready to send participants. At present, rather than in dialogue, Muslim initiative is more pronounced in Dawah or Tabligh activities calling on the faithful to return to a fuller commitment to their religion.

Table 1 Number of participants according to year and religious affiliations

Year	No. of Participants	Mus-Chr
1987	36	8 - 28
1988	42	13 - 29
1989	66	11 - 55
1990	28	8 - 20
1991	51	10 - 41
1992	34	7 - 27
1993	21	9 - 12
1994	40	9 - 31
1995	23	5 - 18
1996	24	4 - 20
TOTAL	365	84 -281

One important reason for this situation as noted by observers is the suspicion and mistrust on the part of some Muslims as to the real intention of the Silsilah Dialogue Movement. Part of this suspicion may arise from the impression that Muslims are less visible in the organization. In 1988, one participant made this comment: "I noticed that the staff is composed of mostly Christians. It would be good to ac-

commodate more Muslim brothers in the staff; to make it really a dialogue where decisions are shared by both."

Today, two Muslims are ranking members in the organizational structure, one as finance officer and the other as a former vice-president, now public information officer. In all, there are eight Muslims and 18 Christians in the organization. It was also pointed out that no "significant" Muslim personalities have joined as active members. Some who were with the organization have left. One explanation cited by a member of Silsilah is that "those who left the Movement may have found it less meaningful or relevant to their lives; or maybe they do not agree with the vision and mission of the Movement." On the other hand, some of those who have left or have become less active in the Movement explained that their departure was due to disagreements over organizational policies and approaches, as well as personal differences, and not because of its mission or vision.

Table 2 Distribution of participants according to sex

Year	Male	Female
1978	13	23
1988	32	10
1989	35	31
1990	17	11
1991	34	17
1992	16	18
1993	8	13
1994	23	17
1995	12	11
1996	14	10
TOTAL	204	161

Mistrust and suspicion were also apparent among some Christians who think that Silsilah is a Muslim organization (because of its name) or a pro-Muslim organization promoting Muslim welfare.

One notices from the data that the Summer Courses are by nature small classes. This is basically a matter of budgetary concern. Although each participant pays P1,500 (current charges for 1997) to cover tuition fee, library fee, board and lodging and a registration fee upon application, organizers claim that the amount is not sufficient to cover all expenses necessary for the conduct of the Summer Course. Thus Silsilah relies largely on donations to subsidize its programs.

Other relevant data regarding the participants are presented below:

The figures show that those in the ages 31 to 40 and 41 to 50 have the biggest participation. This has led to comments that the youth sector has been ignored. Although the definition of youth includes those who are below 35, the meaning clearly refers to those 20 and below. Reference to the youth identifies a sector of the population among whom a change in attitude can be significant in terms of the future. Thus far, Silsilah participants have come from the more mature sector of the population. Since many are seminarians or religious people, the age profile may not change in the near future. To target the youth population, espe-

Table 3 Distribution of participants according to age

Age Range	Year									
	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96
20 below	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
21 - 30	2	3	5	0	5	10	6	3	14	15
31 - 40	13	14	17	2	11	15	8	10	4	7
41 - 50	8	8	15	9	5	0	3	9	0	1
51 - 60	8	8	15	9	5	0	3	9	0	1
61 above	2	5	4	0	4	2	1	0	2	1
TOTAL	36	42	66	28	51	34	21	40	23	24

cially those who are in the university and colleges, a different program must be evolved.

Male participants also outnumbered females by more than half of the total, although there were years when the females outnumbered the males. Nevertheless, since there are more males in the religious organizations than there are females, the overall pattern will probably continue unless the organizers adopt a clear policy of gender parity in the application process whenever possible.

The figures also show that the clients are largely college-educated, again leaving some sectors of the population unrepresented. This is not unexpected since, according to the organizers, the Summer Course is basically intended for degree-holders.

Table 4 Distribution of participants according to educational background

Level of Education	**Year**									
	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96
MA	5	5	11	2	2	1	2	5	4	3
Coll. grads.	26	29	45	9	25	24	15	26	15	17
Enrolled	5	8	0	17	24	9	4	9	4	4
TOTAL	26	42	66	28	51	34	21	40	23	24

Other criteria for selection are the relevance of Muslim-Christian dialogue to the applicant's present work, and the individual's commitment to such dialogue. One 1995 participant voiced his doubt regarding this particular limitation: "Can much be accomplished in bringing together people who already have a heart for dialogue and are in agreement about its value? Should we not instead have here soldiers and rebels and those who destroy peace?"

As already noted, most of the participants came from religious institutions. Non-religious institutions are represented by a few government organizations like the regional office of OSCC, two state colleges and a state university. There have been participants from some private colleges. So far, only two Islamic organizations, the Islamic Club at the Notre Dame of Jolo Boys Department and the Tawi-Tawi Dawa Foundation, Inc. have participated.

The most obvious data from these tables is that only a few people have been reached in ten years. Although Silsilah organizers expect a multiple ripple effect to carry the dialogue message from this small number, such expectations may not be valid since there has been no follow-up on whether these alumni actually passed on the Silsilah message in their actual work or personal relationships. The recent organization of Silsilah alumni should be able to fill in this gap.

Immersion/Exposure

An integral part of the Summer Program, starting in 1990, is the immersion and exposure period. This calls for participants to live with a Muslim or Christian family for at least two nights. For the experience to be successful an orientation is given the participants; afterwards, a feedback mechanism is used to elicit their reactions, some of which were written down. Generally, Christians were more personal in describing their feelings; Muslims were more reticent, describing instead the situation and commenting little on their personal feelings. Some samples are cited below:

> It was a touching experience to be with the family of a Muslim. The family accommodated me to the best of their ability and I really had enough time to share with them their struggles in the past ... these things have made me realize that if my family went through the same experience, we might also have done the same... We would fight back for what we had lost or we might take the law into our hands... (*a Christian*, 1995)

> Given the historical conditioning that Christians and Muslims cannot live together in harmony, it was not easy for me to sleep in a Muslim home or stay in a Muslim community. But contrary to my fears and expectations, I was welcomed like a real member of the family and I felt the warmth of their love... (a Christian, 1995).

> It is a well-organized and very peaceful community. We can say without any hesitation that the Muslims and Christians can work hand in hand and live together in harmony. (*a Muslim*, 1995)

Most comments however reveal the fears, biases, and prejudices of the participants and how these were reduced (if not completely eliminated) during encounters with Muslims or Christians and living with them even for just a short time.

> This is my first time ever to have an opportunity to really live in a Muslim community. I just couldn't imagine myself living with Muslims. I've had my deep biases against them. The lectures given haven't fully freed me from my biases. Another feeling is fear since I would be exposed in a community whose culture is very unfamiliar to me — I am afraid I might offend them... (*a Christian*, 1995).

> My host brother (a Catholic family) has cautioned me to be careful, not to trust completely. Of course, I do not blame him for his sentiments. I do hope however that in the long, long process of living and interacting with some members of their community who are Muslims; his pains would be assuaged. He would be able to forgive. His is a long ago story, yet to the present, he brings along with him his deeply buried hurt and pain, his mistrust, biases, and prejudices. (*a Christian*, 1995)

> I realized I was mistaken in thinking that Christians are so critical. I realize that not all Christians have a bad character. (*a Muslim*, 1995)

> I discovered that they (Muslims) were not averse to having Christians live with them. Maybe they kept their bias well-reined in during our stay or they don't have one at all. (*a Christian*, 1995)

> My attitude has always been being open to them (Muslims) and desiring to really know them and their ways. I have been lucky to have no nega-

tive experiences with them. In the market in Molave, one of my good "suki" is a Muslim woman. We became friends. One of our Muslim students, a girl, came to see me when she needed help. (*a Christian*, 1992)

As a Muslim, there has never been any problem since I live among Christian families and I am a product of a religious school, Notre Dame. (*a Muslim*, 1992)

From these comments, it is possible to say that some of the misunderstandings had to do with painful personal experiences as a result of the conflict in Mindanao. Both Muslim and Christian families suffered from the militarization and the war between armed groups. They blame each other and it would take a long time for the hurts and pains to be forgotten.

Other causes of misunderstanding are the lack of contact and the biases and prejudices that have grown between communities, fueled by media and other writings that remain colonial in content and orientation. In areas where contact is established such as in markets, schools and neighborhoods, Muslims and Christians have relatively less problems in relating to each other. Sometimes these relationships are substantial enough for cooperation to take place. In other cases, they are not and both can fall victims to vested interests which make use of religious sentiments to fuel conflict.

Participants have also made suggestions regarding the Summer Program itself. Most of these suggestions call for a multipronged set of activities which in effect would widen the spread of dialogue. While attention has been given to some, its highly centralized organization constrains Silsilah from doing more. However, it can do much to popularize the movement by undertaking more public-awareness activities and networking with schools and the media.

A project was recently undertaken with Rey Banagudos, president of the National Union of Journalists in the Philippines, Zamboanga branch, involving a series of five round-table discussions. Funded by the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, the RTD would initially invite 25-30 participants from different sectors of society. These fora will eventually be opened to the public after proper evaluation. The topics discussed in the first RTD were the following: Dialogue of Life in Muslim Communities, Dialogue of Life in Christian Communities, Muslim-Christian Relations in School, School System and Islamization of Education. Speakers came from both Christian and Muslim communities. One aim of these discussions is to highlight the role of media in presenting objective information to the public.

Publications

To complement the summer program, Silsilah has a publications arm that has produced six books so far and the quarterly *Silsilah Bulletin*. The latter is distributed mostly to professionals and institutions and other interested readers here and abroad. As an outreach program, however, it is limited largely to those who can read English and have access to copies.

Movement toward Muslim-Christian Dialogue (MMCD)

Based in the University of the Philippines Diliman, this chapter of Silsilah was formed after a conference attended by representatives of Muslim and Christian institutions on October 3, 1992. At the organizational meeting, it was suggested by

Michel de Gigord, one of the speakers, that the secretariat be co-chaired by a Christian and a Muslim.[21] "I personally feel that it is very important that the secretariat is co-chaired by a Muslim, that it is seen by everybody as a co-responsibility. It must not appear as something led by a Christian," he said. Michael Mastura, then a congressman, and chair of Khairiyah Foundation, suggested that the new organization be based in a neutral place instead of in a Christian church or building.

Prof. Wadja K. Esmula, dean of the Institute of Islamic Studies, and Msgr. Bayani G. Valenzuela are the current co-chairs of MMCD. Out of five members of the board, however, there is only one Muslim.

MMCD intends to provide the venue for discussions on the different religions in order to promote a climate of respect, understanding, goodwill and mutual cooperation. (However, it excludes politicians on the ground that the latter may use dialogue for political ends.) On the other hand, it emphasizes sharing of resources and building linkages with established Muslim groups, educating people on the commonalities rather than the differences.

Among the important issues MMCD wants to support are education, family planning and leadership role for women. In 1994, it held a National Conference on Muslim-Christian Women's Dialogue, the proceedings of which were published as a book. In 1995, it sponsored a similar dialogue between Muslim and Christian students, as well as five weekends of an Interfaith Prayer Pilgrimage in commemoration of the Katipunan Centennial. One weekend was spent in Maharlika Village in Taguig (M.M.) where two speakers spoke on: "Islam's contribution to nationhood" and "Islam Means Peace." Thirty-five people slept overnight with host families, 20 of them distributed among Muslim families.

Santa Cruz Elementary School

In 1989, the Silsilah Elementary School was established at Santa Cruz Island. It sits on a 1.1 hectare piece of land bought from a private individual. The idea of a school was actually started by a German lady who frequently visited the island. In 1972, she looked for a sponsor to build a school and Silsilah came in. Today, 77 children attend classes there from kindergarten to grade 6. Tuition is free and meals are provided twice a week.

There are four regular teachers (three Christians and one Muslim) and the principal is a retired public-school teacher. Another Muslim teaches religion but he is not considered a member of the regular staff. All the staff are nonresidents but stay in Santa Cruz during the week. Aside from two men who were employed to operate the motorized banca carrying the staff and supplies to and from the island, the residents appear not to have any significant role in the school set-up.

There is no public school in Santa Cruz. Without Silsilah, pupils would have had to travel by sea to Barangay Sta. Barbara on the mainland, which could be dangerous for them in bad weather. Upon graduation from the elementary grades, they must go to high school in the city.

The school has organized the community to build sanitary toilets and greening the island. Some livelihood projects were introduced but were not successful.

The impact of the school has been quite phenomenal in the sense that the children receive a free education that would not have been possible otherwise. Yet, in some cases, children are not able to take advantage of this opportunity because

they are helping parents in fishing or in other livelihood. Generally, on feeding days, more pupils attend school. This attests to the depressed economic condition of their families.

At the same time, the school faces an uncertain future due to budgetary constraints. Repairs and improvements that are needed have been delayed due to lack of financial support. A plan to turn over the school to the Ateneo de Zamboanga was scrapped because many of the Silsilah Council members rejected the move.

Solidarity Project at Seaside Lower Calarian

In 1987, Silsilah put up a kindergarten school in the Lower Calarian area. Today, there are 75 children distributed in two classes. The school offers free tuition and school supplies, as well as free meals four days a week. As a counterpart, the mothers prepare the food and contribute towards the cooking gas and water needed in meal preparation. A Muslim woman has been teaching here since the school opened. Although a public elementary school is located within walking distance, mothers find it convenient to have their children attend school right in their own neighborhood. Most important, they have commented approvingly that there was no proselytization going on.

Besides the kindergarten project, the Silsilah Foundation has also organized adult literacy classes and a Mothers' Club offering seminars on health, marriage counselling, religious formation and livelihood projects. It provided funds to cement pathways used by the community.

Another regular project is a medical clinic attached to the school under the Mother Care Program. As for livelihood projects, Silsilah has tried to provide income-generation support but, though well-intentioned, they were not those expected to bring in steady income.

In December 1996, after consultations with the community, Silsilah presented a Harmony Award to the United Muslim-Christian Urban Poor Association of Lower Calarian, as well as to four individual families who were supportive of Silsilah projects. A committee made up of Silsilah members and community residents have agreed to work towards a project on Education on Harmony, Peace and Solidarity.

A Muslim worker who is a local resident acts as coordinator of the various projects. The families of two other Muslim Silsilah members also reside in this area. Together, they form the bridge between the Silsilah and the community. Interaction between the community and Silsilah is coursed through them. The religious sister who supervises the preschool has begun to be invited to attend community events. The mothers, however, are more active in interacting with Silsilah because of their involvement in the school and as direct beneficiaries of the project. Members also host participants of the summer immersion/exposure program.

It goes without saying that Silsilah has established a working relationship with this community, a relationship that essentially appears on the surface to be relatively like that of any NGO. However, since these activities are confined to this community, the establishment of better relations is also limited to that between the residents and the organization.

Silsilah Integrated Development Program

In 1989, Silsilah purchased a 10-hectare lot in Pitogo that would become a venue for the summer courses. Once developed, the area will also include a hous-

ing project for Muslims and Christians, to be known as Harmony Village. Part of the land has been planted to cash crops.

Emmaus

The Emmaus community was formed in 1987 by a group of women wanting to live prayerfully and practice the Christian way of life. The main objective is simply to maintain a presence in the community. It was the first Silsilah Dialogue Community, officially established on February 8, 1987 in Sta. Catalina, Zamboanga City.

Emmaus acts as a bridge between the two communities. Its members provide counselling to parents and young people. Sometimes they facilitate meetings and negotiate family conflicts (mainly among Christians). Last year, through their mediation, a landowner agreed to sell his property through the newly-organized Martha Drive Urban Poor Association.

Tensions in Interreligious Dialogue

All these projects are meritorious. But the picture will not be complete if the apprehensions of observers are not included. First, most apprehensions centered on the tendency of Christian missionaries to go into depressed Muslim areas and making Muslims not only the objects of their charity, but also of fund-raising abroad. Second, there are fears that the projects would encourage a dole-out mentality and develop dependence on the part of the residents. Thirdly, Muslims are hired simply as token representatives of the community to assuage suspicions.

The ability to make these projects a cooperative endeavor between the two communities will significantly reduce these negative impressions The extent of Muslim involvement in the administrative set-up is vital in creating a more positive outlook. For instance, the idea of partnership with Muslim organizations in undertaking community projects has not been thoroughly explored or tried. There are several Muslim NGOs which can serve the purpose. It remains for the two communities to plan a common endeavor which can be administered in partnership, without one side making all the executive and administrative decisions.

A sense of partnership with the residents in the project areas must be carefully introduced towards the enculturation of self-reliance and autonomy. Residents should be tasked with some responsibilities so that they can contribute to the projects. A future take-over of the residents in the administration of projects should also be in the plans and training them for this purpose should be undertaken. In other words, projects should lead to empowerment rather than dependence.

The Silsilah Dialogue Movement and the Making of Civil Society

In the past 10 years, the various activities of Silsilah are expected to have bridged the cultural divide between Muslims and Christians, especially in Zamboanga City where it is based. According to one Muslim, however, Muslims continue to feel the hostility of the Chabacanos and Silsilah has not changed this attitude: "it's be-

cause Silsilah is just *sila-sila*", referring to the small circle of people involved in the movement.

On the other hand, a dramatic breakthrough was made with the recent decision by Archbishop Carmelo Morelos of Zamboanga City encouraging seminarians to participate in the Silsilah Summer Course before ordination. Bishop Romulo dela Cruz of Basilan has made the same move. Ateneo de Zamboanga has also undertaken a formation for faculty members on Muslim and Christian dialogue. Since 1992 Pilar College has had a teacher of Islam handling religious classes for their Muslim students, followed by the Zamboanga State College of Marine and Science Technology in 1994. In October 1996 at the Zambasuli Region Triple Consultation, Catholic representatives consisting of program directors, coordinators, women religious and church workers from Zamboanga, Basilan, Sulu and Ipil met to evaluate programs and activities in their localities and to examine Christian attitudes towards Muslims. They decided to enter into collaboration with Silsilah in terms of education formation.

At this stage it can be said that the Silsilah Dialogue Movement is still laying the foundations for better relationships between Christians and Muslims. Relevant and thought-provoking is an observation made by a Christian scholar, who has been involved in Christian-Muslim dialogue in a country where Muslims are similarly situated as a minority group: "We found that there could be no good relations or dialogue unless Christians acknowledge that Muslims had to face discrimination, inequality and or injustice...Only when Christians were prepared to support Muslims in that struggle were good relations possible."[22]

This means that interreligious dialogue must inevitably address not only theological or cultural issues but political and socio-economic problems as well because these are the areas that critically affect the lives of people whether Muslim or Christian. In situations where there are obvious political or economic disparities, dialogue partners should not only show support or concern, but actively advance or raise critical issues for the formation of policies that will resolve socio-economic and political inequities. This will go far in demonstrating solidarity.

Observers say that Silsilah has moved very slowly, (members say cautiously), in these aspects. The debate over the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development is a case in point. Since Zamboanga was the seat of opposition to the SPCPD, one comment was that Silsilah should have been at the forefront of organizations providing venues for dialogues on the subject. The role of Silsilah was also deemed important since religion was raised as an issue of concern dividing the pros and cons.

Perhaps it is the mission of Silsilah that prevents it from participating more vigorously in these type of issues. This is not the case with a new organization called the Forum for Muslims and Christians Solidarity (FMCS), a loose federation of 10 organizations (Muslim and Christian NGOs and POs, and churches). As an organization, it does not shy away from political issues but recognizes political activism as part of dialogue. It does not draw away from politics but participates in political debates in order to find expression of unity on political issues. It aims to unite the two faiths to define peace and development in Mindanao. For this purpose, FMCS thinks it is important for Christians to understand the political struggle of the Muslims and for the Muslims to understand the rights of the Christians in Mindanao.

Certainly, civil society can be served by these two types of organizations. For Silsilah, however, establishing understanding and respect between communities should just be a first phase that will quickly grow into an active cooperative endeavor to make life better on the practical level. It has undertaken this type of activity in Lower Calarian and in another instance where Christians and Muslims were threatened with the loss of their homes because of a change in ownership of the piece of land they were occupying.

It is in these situations that the understanding between two communities can be tested. Success in cooperative endeavors perhaps will better demonstrate whether ideas learned and acquired through reading and listening to lectures can result in something productive on the societal level. Yet, the irony is that in cases involving the masses, very few of them would have attended a formal course. This is why it is urgent to bring dialogue to the mass level. It is here among the people where the tension is most often felt. In December 1996, for instance, 200 Muslim houses were burned down in Barangay Bual, Sultan Kudarat. In Sipad, Lanao del Norte, hundreds of Muslim and Christian families fled their homes for fear that fighting would erupt between the Maranaos and the Bisaya after the town's vice mayor was killed.

Civil society requires most of all a collective endeavor based on equality among participants who are motivated by the general welfare, not just of any particular group. Interreligious dialogue can work toward this end first by establishing the foundation of understanding, then by making dialogue itself a process of empowerment in the pursuit of social justice and equality. But to succeed in civil society, it has to be an "activist" type of dialogue rather than a "quiescent" one that is content to circulate among its small circle of adherents, or among its project communities. The metaphor of dialogue as a "seed growing silently" as described by proponents must be transformed to one that calls for vigorous cultivation so that the seeds will grow more quickly and bear fruits abundantly.

Silsilah has this potential because its founder is strongly committed to dialogue, not only as a response to crisis, but as a way of life. But a look into its activities is necessary if dialogue is to grow into a force in civil society.

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Nurturing the Seeds for Action
The Bolinao Cement Plant Controversy as a Case for the Academe's Involvement in Social Issues

Introduction

On August 6,1996, in a historic decision, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) denied with finality the application of Pangasinan Cement Corporation for an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC). This meant that the proposed plant would not be able to proceed because of its potentially harmful impact on the environment. The decision effectively scuttled the Pangasinan Cement Corporation's plans of exploiting the limestone resource in Bolinao, estimated to last for 130 years of quarrying, but only after a head-on battle between the proponents and the townspeople.

The battle, widely described as "bitter," engaged the joint forces of the community, non-government organizations (NGOs), the academe, the press and certain pro-people political leaders on the one hand, and the project proponents, some highly placed politicians, and even a member of the University of the Philippines (UP) Board of Regents, on the other.

Both sides to the controversy cite the significant role of the academe in enlightening, uniting, and mobilizing the people to oppose the cement plant project. It is inaccurate, however, to give full credit to the academe alone. Bolinao is a dynamic community whose channels for people's participation in self-determination are wide and accessible; the people acted on their own initiative.

In this unprecedented demonstration of people deciding on their own future, the academe served as a catalyst in providing critical information and educating the people about their stake in the controversy: their land, their sea, their river, their livelihood, their health; in other words, their life.

Armed with scientific and technical knowledge on the environmental impact of heavy industries such as the cement plant, the community refused to accept industrial development for its own sake. It rejected efforts by the proponents to entice them with immediate gains such as municipal revenues, feeder roads, jobs, and economic boom.

The townspeople demanded that the project be measured by the standards of environmental feasibility, and the proponents were compelled to argue on the terms dictated by public pressure: compliance with the requirements of community acceptance and sustainability for the future generations of Bolinaoens.

This paper aims to trace and document the pivotal role of the academe in helping the community achieve its victory; the academe's linkage with the other sectors involved in the controversy; and the university's own internal struggle in deciding whether to be a mere arbiter of the conflicting parties, or an advocate of either side. At the same time, this paper is a reflection on the experience, focusing on the academe as a part of civil society, its role, the problems and issues, and the mechanisms for advancing the cause of civil society.

The Controversy

In early 1994, a consortium of multinational corporations proposed the multibillion-peso cement complex and applied for an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC). The complex would include a cement factory, a 45-megawatt coal-fired power plant, a quarry site, a 10-kilometer conveyor belt from the quarry site to the factory, and a two-wharf terminal port. The proposed site was Sitio Guiguiwanen in Barangay Luciente I. The quarrying, however, would affect a much larger area: 6,280 hectares in at least five barangays.[2]

The *Data Description for the Pangasinan Project* submitted by the Tuntex Distinct Corporation provided the necessary data for a proper assessment of the possible hazardous effects of the cement factory.

The factory itself was to be located less than 300 meters from the UP Marine Science Institute's (MSI) marine laboratory. The location was some 250 meters from the seashore. The proximity of the factory to a marine reservation, by itself, readily caused alarm among the Bolinao townspeople and the scientists working at the MSI. The construction was anticipated to cause sedimentation. Once operational, the factory would emit pollutive chemicals that could irreversibly destroy the nearby coral reefs and deprive marine life of shelter and breeding grounds.

The power plant was projected to require 100 tons of fresh water per hour. Compared with the hourly consumption of 2.5 tons of fresh water for the entire town center, the exploitation rate is obviously excessive. This is particularly distressing because Bolinao has a limestone substratum that retains little water.[3] The power plant would surely bleed Bolinao dry of its groundwater in a few years.

Apart from fresh water, the power plant would also need 1,050 tons of sea water to cool down its machines. Thus the salt water would become hot after circulating around the machinery. The high-temperature water would be reintroduced to the sea, again a potential cause of massive destruction of the 8,000-hectare marine habitat.

Quarrying, which would be carried out near the town's major tributary, Balingasay River, would lead to siltation due to the soil and debris from the quarry sites, especially during heavy rains. Silt would devastate not only the river but also the sea to which it flows. The proponents of the plant stated that large-hole blasting would be employed,[4] a technique that has been shown to cause great ecological disturbance and danger to the geophysical integrity of surrounding areas. Health hazards would also be posed by the dust particles released by quarrying activities.

Apart from this, the quarry site in Barangay Estanza would displace 225 families and adversely affect 3,273 others, as well as devastate the town's remaining

1,060-hectare wooded area near the quarry site, either through deforestation or ecological disturbance.[5]

The construction of a seaport with two 280-meter wharves near the cement factory would entail dredging which would outrightly alter the coastline and destroy marine life around the area. Port operations would result in chemical pollution from the estimated 140 vessels calling on the port every year, not to mention possible oil spills from ships and container vessels.[6]

The conveyor belt, passing through a wide expanse, would be "itself a great disturbance on the environment and the community."[7]

Effluents and emissions from the cement plant complex, including toxic substances such as sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide, would intrude into the town's air, soil and water, and in the long run, would inevitably lead to the degradation of the town's environment, and affect the health and well-being of the community.

A major impact of this development would have been the increase in sediment load of coastal waters. Human activities such as deforestation, erosion, road construction, dredging, and open-pit mining would cause siltation, or an increase in the levels of suspended solids in the water. Silt diminishes light penetration, which may eliminate organisms valuable as food for larger marine life. This in turn reduces the net primary productivity of coastal waters. Perhaps the most damaging effect of siltation is that run-off decreases the reproductive success of corals by as much as 50% to 86%.[8]

Electrical power-generating stations and certain industries have been known to discharge effluents of higher temperatures that are potentially harmful to marine ecosystems. Even a slight change of 1° to 2°C can have a strong impact and an increase by 3°C can outrightly destroy animal and plant life in the affected regions.[9] Industrial wastes and oil spills can cause widespread destruction in marine ecosystems.

It was projected that the project would "turn Bolinao inside out,"[10] the statement applying both to the environment and to the social and political situation in the municipality. The people rightly made a stand to prevent the ravaging of their homes and livelihood, and to protect the future of their children.

The UP CB-CRM Program: The Beginning of the Academe's Involvement in Social Issues in Bolinao

Before the controversy broke out, the University of the Philippines had already been very visible and involved in Bolinao. As early as 1986, the UP Marine Science Institute had been conducting research on resource management of the Lingayen Gulf, with special emphasis on the coral reefs located in the Bolinao-Anda Shelf. For eight years, research focused on the biology and culture of giant clams. In 1987, a new research was started concerning the seaweed industry and the management of seaweed resources in the country. The need to integrate the socio-economic component into research activity became apparent when very limited success was achieved in transferring the seaweed-culture technology to the local fishers.[11]

Realizing the need for a more interdisciplinary approach to coastal resource management, a participatory action research project for Community-Based Coastal

Resources Management (CB-CRM) was initiated in 1992 by a team of faculty members and researchers from the MSI and the UP College of Social Work and Community Development (CSWCD).

The CB-CRM Project in Bolinao aimed to:

1 Develop interactive means to mobilize coastal communities toward collective coastal resources management through community organizing and environmental education;

2 Establish participatory mechanisms through which people's organizations at various levels are legitimized, institutionalized and strengthened by society and by law;

3 Determine and evaluate appropriate coastal resource and environmental management strategies which will ensure a sustainable base of living resources in the coastal area;

4 Identify and develop culturally appropriate, gender-responsive and environment-friendly sustainable livelihood that will address the need for food and cash, and which will alleviate direct harvest pressure on living coastal resources;

5 Devise networking mechanisms through which efforts to manage coastal resources at the barangay and municipal levels are linked to provincial, regional and national levels of governance to achieve maximum viability and impact of the management program; and

6 Document the process of evolution toward a community-based coastal resource management program through an interactive learning process between the community and the research program, for use in evaluation, training, networking and application to other coastal communities.

One of the initial activities in operationalizing the research was the multisectoral forum held in July 1992. Members of local organizations, the local government, line agencies, the private sector and the academe attended. The body agreed to establish mechanisms that would ensure a more sustainable system of managing community resources in Bolinao. The sharing and discussion of the people's ideas, plans and activities concerning the management of resources were among the priorities for collaborative undertakings. Thus, towards the last quarter of 1992, training and exercises on participatory rural appraisal were carried out. By December of that year, a ban was declared on the commercial gathering of sea urchin. In the following month, January 1993, the participants of the community workshop mandated the UP-MSI, CSWCD and the Plan International, an NGO, to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the people's resolutions concerning the following:

- continuing study and sharing of knowledge and experiences on community resources management;
- development of appropriate technology;
- strengthening of local organizations;
- encouragement of savings, cooperation and trade; and
- coordination and support among the various agencies, NGOs and people's organizations.

The expanding work and heightened expectations made intensive community organizing and mobilization more important.

In the middle of 1993, the Haribon Foundation for the Conservation of Natural Resources, an NGO, was asked to join the project and carry out community organizing in the site. In the succeeding months, the project team carried out community organizing activities, resource management and livelihood development, and established linkages with the various institutions and organizations. It was at this stage of working with the people of Bolinao that the cement plant proposal entered the scene and grabbed the attention of the people and the research team.

Refocusing the Research Direction Towards Advocacy

In a meeting held on July 17, 1994, the proponents of the cement plant presented and validated the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the project prepared by GAIA South, the consultant hired by Tuntex. Three days later, the concerned citizens of Bolinao held a meeting to discuss the implications of the EIA. They inquired and wanted to learn more about the possible effects of having a heavy industry in their midst. The CB-CRM project staff were around to provide and clarify data pertaining to the cement plant.

Responding to the community's call for reliable and comprehensible information on the issue, the CSWCD conducted a socio-economic study on the cement plant from July 22 to August 3, 1994. Findings indicated that the social acceptability of the cement plant was not as widespread as the proponents claimed. The majority of the people were against its establishment, and the few who did approve of the project happened to be the politically powerful people in the community and others who anticipated directly benefiting from it, such as the owners of real estate in the proposed project site.

As part of the educational and advocacy component of the action research project, the CB-CRMP sponsored the second Coastal Resource Management Forum on August 5–6, 1994, with the theme: *Ang Cement Plant Complex at ang Yamang Pangkalikasan ng Bolinao*. Fishers, farmers, civic leaders, local government officials, and the media attended the forum. Also present were Senators Leticia Ramos-Shahani and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. This event proved to be a fateful convergence of the stakeholders who would be adversely affected by the establishment of the cement plant. The people took their cue from the forum and initiated a vigorous campaign against the project.

While the first CRM Forum held in July 1992 crystallized the unified desire to protect the critical habitat in Bolinao and the "long-term productivity of naturally renewing systems," the second forum focused on the cement plant issue and affirmed the community's conviction to uphold sustainable development over economic progress which jeopardizes the environment. As a result, the participants in the CRM Forum II arrived at a consensus, embodied in a policy paper identifying the environmental, social, cultural, health, economic, and scientific issues involved in the proposed cement plant complex.

The CRM Forum II was held at an opportune time when the people of Bolinao were considering their options and searching for answers to questions on the best option for a better future.

Among the first sectors to openly oppose the project were the teachers. The Bolinao District Teachers' Association (BOLDTA), composed of more than 300 public elementary-school teachers passed a resolution expressing their opposition to the cement plant. In the statement, the school teachers voiced their concern for "the worldwide, national, provincial, and local programs for the conservation, preservation, and protection of our natural environment." The teachers declared that they "unequivocally oppose the establishment of the cement plant."[12]

At this juncture, too, the community started to polarize into "pros" and "antis." The Movement of Bolinao Concerned Citizens, Incorporated (MBCCI), spearheaded the opposition. Identified with the proponents were House Speaker Jose de Venecia and Nelia Fe Gonzales, a member of the UP Board of Regents and a ranking official of the Tan Yu Group.[13]

The UP academic community was itself at a crossroads, deciding whether to be an arbiter between the two camps, or to be an advocate of one side. It did not readily take sides nor was it immediately unified in its stand on the cement plant issue. Even UP President Emil Q. Javier, on the occasion of MSI's Marine Laboratory celebration, cautioned individual members of the academe to limit their involvement to the conduct of information campaigns rather than openly opposing the project. That some powerful government officials were pushing for the establishment of the cement plant probably made the UP administration wary of making a stand. This did not deter, however, the individual efforts of other members of the academe.

In conjunction with the other sectors that became closely engaged in the battle, the academe went through its own internal struggle. The following section traces the evolution of its ultimate and unequivocal stand on the issue, interspersed with the efforts of the community, the media and some government officials to prevent the establishment of the destructive heavy industry in Bolinao.

Intensifying Campaign

In September 1994, MSI Director Dr. Edgardo Gomez drew attention to the Bolinao cement plant controversy during a meeting of the UP Diliman Executive Committee, composed of the Chancellor, Vice-Chancellors, Deans and other officials of UP Diliman. In response, a multidisciplinary technical review committee was formed composed of experts from the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, the School of Economics, the College of Engineering and the College of Science. The review committee evaluated the environmental impact assessment of the proposed factory and came up with the findings pointing to the unacceptability of the project. Health, environmental and social risks, among others, far outweighed the proposed benefits from the cement plant. The points raised and the issues identified by the committee were later used by opposition groups in their information campaign.

In November, the CB-CRM program staff conducted community meetings in barangays Balingasay, Arnedo, Binabalian, Luciente I, Luciente II, Lucero and Poblacion. During these meetings, the CB-CRM program implementers distributed information sheets, discussed the environmental impact assessment process, and highlighted the effects of the cement plant on the marine life and environment as a whole.

Similarly, the Sangguniang Bayan (SB) members who favored the establishment of the plant held on November 11–12 a series of consultations in Barangay Tupa, Patar and Ilogmalino. But instead of finding out what the people think about the cement plant, the SB members tried to convince them that it would not be pollutive, but would bring progress to the people and the municipality. During these meetings, the presence of the CB-CRM program staff in Bolinao was questioned. Proponent individuals identified UP with the opposition.

On October 7, it became manifest that the community would be expecting, even soliciting, the academe's active involvement in the movement opposing the cement plant. Bolinao community leader Jacobo Clave, a former executive secretary of Marcos, wrote Dr. Gomez expressing support for the position taken by the MSI as contained in the policy paper of the CRM II Forum signed in August 1994.

Other members of the UP academic committee, besides the CSWCD and the MSI, which were directly involved in the community, started expressing their stand on the proposed cement plant. On November 16, the College of Science's Executive Board, composed of institute directors and chairpersons of departments, drafted and signed a position paper opposing the project, during its 199th meeting.[14] The Board invoked the country's commitment to abide by the spirit of the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED) wherein the Philippine government pledged to protect the oceans, seas, and coastal areas within its jurisdiction, as well as to protect, rationally utilize and develop its living resources. The position paper stated that:

> The operation of the cement plant complex will result in pollution, erosion, and siltation, economic dislocation, health impairment, and constrain the national and international logistical capabilities in marine science; and undermine the foundation of basic human existence, incongruous with sustainable socio-economic progress.

This paper was later adopted and endorsed by the UP Diliman Executive Committee on January 18, 1995.

Earlier, on December 7, 1994, individual faculty members of the CSWCD who were part of the implementing team of the CB-CRM Program, gained momentum in their backyard when the college faculty unanimously adopted a position paper supporting the community's efforts to stop the establishment of the project in their town.[15] The CSWCD expressed support for the "pursuit of sustainable activities in Bolinao that do not jeopardize the long-term carrying capacity of the environment." The position of the CSWCD was based on its stated vision for "transformed socio-economic, political and cultural structures through the sustained collective participation of all sectors toward a humane, democratic sovereign Filipino society where people are empowered and free to realize their potential."

In the succeeding meeting of the University Council of UP Diliman, the opposition position was approved by an overwhelming majority vote. The highest academic body of the university, the council is composed of all faculty members with the rank of Assistant to University Professors. Other campuses followed suit: UP Visayas endorsed their open letter to President Ramos on February 23, 1995 "strongly opposing" the cement plant complex.[16] UP Manila approved their position paper on April 12.[17]

Back in the field, a public hearing was scheduled by the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) on February 24, 1995. Under the law, the project proponent is required to notify the public 20 days before the hearing through publication of the notice in a newspaper of general circulation, which must also be circulated in the locality. But in complying with this requirement, the Pangasinan Cement Corporation published the notice of hearing in the Manila Chronicle, which is not distributed in Bolinao. Anticipating the lack of information about the public hearing, the CB-CRM staff went to the affected barangays and conducted information campaigns and posted notices of the meeting.

For the period of January to March 1995, an extensive information drive was conducted by the oppositors. The CB-CRM intensified its support by distributing information materials, conducting community meetings and small-group discussions. An increasing number of people became aware of the issues and started to side with the opposition. On the other hand, barangay captains siding with the proponents tried to block all these efforts.

Internationalization of the Issue

The internationalization of the issue evidently signified that public pressure had been mounting and calling worldwide attention to the controversy. Again in this respect, the academe played a role as conduit between the people of Bolinao and the international community. On March 1, 1995, MSI Director Edgardo Gomez's letter was published in *Asiaweek*, reacting to its feature on Tuntex's industrialization initiatives in the Philippines. His letter exposed the Taiwanese interests' efforts to "buy out the opposition and circumvent environmental regulations."

Other international organizations subsequently became interested in Bolinao because of the threat looming over its marine habitat. At the International Coral Reef Initiative Workshop, held on May 29 to June 2, 1995 in Dumaguete City, 64 participants from all over the world signed a resolution stating that "proposed heavy industries cannot be made pollutive, even with application of the best practicable technology, and therefore, are in direct contradiction to the principle of sustainable development that is premised on marine resource protection and conservation."[18]

The United Nations Development Program, which provided technical assistance in setting up UP's marine laboratory in Bolinao, communicated with DENR Secretary Victor Ramos on September 15, 1995. Through Resident Representative Kevin McGrath, the UNDP stated that it is "counting on [Secretary Ramos'] leadership to ensure that the anticipated adverse impacts of the project on Bolinao's coastal environment" would be considered in deciding on PCC's application for an Environmental Impact Assessment.[19]

On October 10, 1995, a workshop on the Western Central Pacific Living Marine Resources Identification was held at the Marine Science Institute. Marine scientists from twelve countries attended the workshop and became aware of the "undesirable effects [of the proposed project] on the fragile marine environment." The scientists signed a letter to President Ramos, citing that improperly located industries like the cement plant would jeopardize the socio-economic future of Bolinao and cause "severe detriment" to the coastal ecology in the long term.[20]

Another letter to the President concerning the plant came from Dr. Stephan Kinnemann, senior vice president of Kreditanstalt fur Wiederaufbau (KFW) on Feb-

ruary 27, 1996.[21] KFW was one of the agencies involved in the German Financial Cooperation with the Philippines. Dr. Kinnemann reminded President Fidel Ramos of his agreement with KFW that economic growth in the Philippines would be "compatible with environmental protection," and that "in the eyes of the world, you are the guarantor for a stable development in the Philippines." The letter mentioned with particularity the "problem" posed by the plans to build a large cement factory in Bolinao. On May 7, 1996, the International Collective in Support of Fishworkers sent a solidarity statement addressed to the Bolinao fisherfolk, encouraging them to continue with the "struggle to demand respect of (their) livelihood and (their) beautiful island."[22]

More encouragement to the local community came from Panama City in June 1996, when the 8th International Coral Reef Symposium passed a *Resolution to Protect the Bolinao-Anda Reef Complex*. A total of 719 participants from 73 countries signed the resolution, urging the Philippine government to protect the coral reefs, which are "among the vital support systems of the world and on which thousands of fisherfolk depend for their livelihood," by allowing only light industries to be established in the vicinity.

The pressure from the international community no doubt was material in the DENR's eventual decision to scrap the project. On the local scene, significant developments were also taking place.

In the national elections held May 8, 1995, Jesus Celeste, former President of the MBCCI, won the mayoralty of Bolinao against cement plant proponents Mateo Caasi and Merito Miguel. Celeste said the victory was a "clear indication that the people of our town did not want the cement plant." Later, however, Mayor Celeste turned around to accuse UP of brainwashing the people to oppose industrialization in Bolinao and of being interested only in ensuring UP's continued stay in the community. He also stated that UP deliberately fed the community with misleading information. Members of the local as well as the national media started calling the mayor a "pro-cement convert."[23]

On January 15,1996, DENR officials told the MBCCI that a cabinet-level EIA Review Committee would be constituted to review the recommendation denying issuance of an Environmental Compliance Certificate. Among the proposed members was UP President Javier. The opposition groups, however, doubted whether the new review committee could be impartial. They called the creation of the high-level technical committee "highly irregular" because the move was made "just because the proponents were not happy with the initial recommendation."[24]

On June 28, 1996, the recently constituted Expanded Review Committee went to Pangasinan to meet local officials in Lingayen and inspect the proposed site in Bolinao. After calling on Mayor Celeste, the group proceeded to the UP marine laboratory for a dialogue with the opposition group. In the morning, hundreds of residents assembled in the front of the town church for a prayer rally. They also showed their support for the opposition group in the afternoon meeting with DENR Undersecretary Antonio Laviña.

After more than one month of deliberations, the Committee came up with the final recommendation to deny Pangasinan Cement Corporation's application for an ECC and the rest, as they say, is history.

Some Reflections on the Academe's Involvement in the Issue

It is said that the victory of the people of Bolinao is a triumph for all those who desire a better environment and more sustainable development. The struggle has been documented and publicized, such that the people of Bolinao have been nominated as among the contenders for the "Filipino of the Year" award given by a leading newspaper. The experience of the struggle is worth remembering. It serves as an inspiration to people facing the same challenges in pursuing their own agenda. For those in government, the experience challenges them to review their policies and look into the actual implementation of environmental review mechanisms. For the academe, it is good material for reflection and learning. This section presents some of these reflections.

Their involvement in the Bolinao issue was a concretization of the social contract between the concerned academics and the community in support of the people's agenda and vision.

If there is one very significant factor that determined the commitment and involvement of the academics in the cement plant issue, that would be the social contract entered into by the faculty and staff implementing the CB-CBRM program and the people of Bolinao. Even without a formal memorandum of agreement, a consensus was built on mutual trust developed in the process of social integration, community-building and partnership in several endeavors. The decision to take a position against the proposed cement plant was anchored on the vision and agenda of the people with whom the faculty and staff were working. Even before the proposal was made, the researchers' commitment to support the host communities had already been laid down and operationalized. The people's vision and agenda had been set towards ensuring a more sustainable system of managing the community resources of Bolinao. The UP faculty and staff working in the field subscribed to these.

The unity forged between the people and the multisectoral group for the academe, specifically the UP-MSI and CSWCD CBRM program, served as a mandate for the latter to help the former in achieving their goals. So that when the academe had to take a position, they took the side of the people who had not only given them their mandate and trust, but had also cooperated when their programs were introduced in the area. Somehow, taking the other side would cast them in a very hypocritical light, reinforcing the impression that the academe is good only in words, but not in deeds.

Identifying with and supporting the people's agenda is a basic principle in working with the people. This was a primary consideration of academe in weighing its options. This brings us to the reaffirmation that the process of sorting out and practicing the social responsibility of academe becomes more meaningful when one gets in touch with the people. The strong motivation among the UP-MSI-CSWCD CBRM faculty and staff to push their social responsibility in Bolinao was not merely because the UP program and property in the area would be adversely affected, but because they could see the social, economic, political and environmental implications of setting up the cement plant. Such an understanding of the environment and the people's conditions was possible because the faculty and staff were also based in the area, living with them and constantly interacting with the community.

The confidence to pursue the issue was backed up by scientific findings and analysis, which were also instrumental in reinforcing the oppositors' position, as well as in strengthening the partnership between the academe and the people.

While it is true that the involvement of academe was influenced by social and political factors, their decision was not without objective and scientific bases. Being recognized experts in their field, the scientists from MSI opposed the cement plant because their studies pointed to the fact that it would have a monstrous impact on the environment. The scientific and technical findings of other groups, such as the committee formed by the UP Diliman Chancellor, reaffirmed their position. Such findings proved very useful and effective in creating awareness and helping people understand the position they were taking, as well as in countering the arguments of the proponent side.

The position, therefore, of academe stood on moral, scientific and legal grounds. On such a solid basis, it became much easier for the academics to lift their feet off the usual neutral ground. In the Bolinao issue, the people's opposition to the cement plant fit squarely with the assessment and ideological viewpoint of the concerned academics, hence, a partnership was built.

International pressure was made possible through academe's strong linkages with the international community of scholars and academic bodies.

One resource base of academe is the faculty's well-established linkages with the international community of scholars. Most of the international exposures were initiated during academic conferences in which the issue of the Bolinao cement plant was discussed. Besides those coming from the local groups, the letters and position papers coming from international bodies, admittedly or not, brought considerable influence to bear on the final decision. In a country where international image is at the top of government's concerns, policies that could subject the national leadership to criticism by global bodies are likely to be given a second thought, if not abandoned.

Since the issue of environment is a global concern, however local it may be, geographically speaking, international environmental advocates cannot fail to ignore such a violation of nature. Harnessing these potentials as experienced by the MSI proved to be effective in popularizing the issue, encouraging local advocates and putting pressure on the decision-makers.

The University's academic freedom, respect for pluralism, and tradition of espousing and developing progressive and critical thinking contributed to the formulation of a positive institutional and collective stance.

The academe, either as individual members or as a collective body of the university, has the right to take or not take a position on a social issue. The varying interests, values and perceptions of individuals concerning these issues, and their corresponding responses, are protected by the academic freedom enjoyed in the university. With this respect for pluralist views, it becomes a very significant event whenever a university like UP comes out with an institutional position on social issues.

The Bolinao experience is an example of how academe could take responsible social action. The various disciplines bent their collective efforts and expertise in addressing the issue, as when the marine and social scientists joined together to support the people of Bolinao. This became an opportunity for problem-focused interdisciplinarity of the social and natural sciences which has been proposed as one of the attributes of the social sciences in the university.[25]

From the small group of faculty and research and extension staff engaged in the CBRM program in Bolinao, a collective and institutional stance against the entry of the cement plant was evoked and achieved at the various levels — college board and faculty assembly, university executive committee, and the University Councils of UP Diliman, Manila and the Visayas. This mobilization of the academe in support of a particular issue is very much in line with the University's desired role and significance in nation-building, as stipulated in its strategic plan.

The conscious inculcation of values in education such as fearlessness in pursuing unorthodox ideas, courage and compassion in the face of oppression and injustice, and empathy and service to those in need, will strengthen the resolve of our people to confront the multiple challenges of the 21st millennium even as they address the unfinished business of the 20th century: the poverty and inequality which is the lot of most Filipinos, unresolved ideological and ethnic conflict, massive labor migration, the underdevelopment of the agrarian sector.... the dismal state of science and technology and the deteriorating educational system.[26]

This consciousness of academe leads to involvement in national and social issues. Considering the status and role of UP and public recognition of its significance, any institutional and collective stance taken by the university can prompt the concerned parties to take notice and influence the decision-making process.

The same principles of academic freedom and plurality lead to contentions and differences in position regarding social issues, resulting in some sectors or bodies within the university not becoming a part of the common sentiment of the constituencies.

In the case of Bolinao, many oppositors in academe felt that more could have been achieved if the UP System as a whole had upheld the sentiments expressed by the various academic bodies.

It is noteworthy that academics could be found on both sides of the controversy. A consultant of the GAIA South who prepared the project's Environmental Impact Assessment, is from the College of Science. Even after the initial disapproval of the cement plant's application for an ECC, he was still defending the Pangasinan Cement Corporation, saying that its refusal to consider another site for the project was neither arrogance nor stubbornness but sound business sense, precisely because of the viability of the present site.[27]

The top university administration, nevertheless, remained neutral despite calls from the faculty for the entire university to make a stand. This behavior has been described as "strange" for a university known for its activism on issues of national concerns.[28]

Staunchly opposed to the cement plant project is the UP-MSI, led by Director Edgardo Gomez. Even the Environmental Management Bureau, the government agency charged with implementing the EIA system, recognized the role that the

institute played in the assessment process. In a memorandum dated Jan. 17, 1995, Elmer C. Hernandez of PCC's Basic Industry Department cited that the "MSI, though not a direct party to any approval/permits needed by the firm (PCC) could influence the decision of the approving agencies. PCC is exerting all efforts to appease the research station."

Hernandez's view was not unique. The EIA Consultant mentioned that it was a "gross oversight" on PCC's part not to have consulted the MSI from the outset, although he blamed the institute for "refusing to negotiate." In a statement quoted extensively by Doyo, the UP marine scientists "raised a six-point environmental challenge" which the proponents failed to address: the effect of quarrying on nearshore marine habitats; depletion of groundwater; the possibility of soot fallout from the power plant; the pollution from cargo ships; dredging the channel to accommodate large ships; the environmental disturbance to be caused by the 10-kilometer conveyor belt. The statement also pointed out that the cement plant complex is "not an island unto itself or hermetically sealed; it will turn Bolinao inside out".[29]

These opinions are well-founded. Members of the academe had taken on the challenge even against Speaker Jose de Venecia, who had been identified by Jacobo Clave as the "political mogul" pushing for the project. In the same document, the scientists exposed De Venecia's interest in the project: a relative of his had sold some 353 hectares of land in Brgy. Luciente I, the proposed site, to a member of the UP Board of Regents, who was also associated with the Tan Yu group of companies. The group is among the investors in the proponent PPC. The scientists saw this as a conflict of interest on the part of the UP regent.

Nevertheless, the experience showed that the collective efforts of the many through the different academic bodies can surpass individual or personal positions taken by sectors in the university that run counter to the collective sentiment. This predicament is recognized by the faculty themselves. In taking an institutional stance, consensus had to be forged. In the last faculty conference, it was agreed that "while there have been specific instances in the past when UP took an institutional position and there might be such future situations, the difficulty of forging consensus in a university community with diverse positions makes it more likely for the faculty and staff to take positions on specific issues as scholars or as members of organizations/communities."[30]

The kind of involvement of the academe in Bolinao was that of partnership, where the people took the lead and the academics facilitated.

The partnership that took place can be described as one where the people, specifically the MBCCI, was the prime mover and stakeholder in the case, with the UP-MSI-CSWCD team in Bolinao providing the necessary support. Advocacy and mobilization by the academics through their contacts and resources, local and international, were not meant to give center stage to them. Rather, such actions actualized their beliefs and principles in support of the people and the environment. Any advocacy, education, campaigns and mobilizations undertaken by academe would have been in vain, if the people directly involved were unconvinced and uncommitted and refused to act on the issue.

As can be seen from the narrative of events, academics were involved in a supportive role by clarifying the people's options and the consequences of these.

They helped in mobilizing the people in accordance with the latter's chosen option. In doing so, the academics acting as facilitators took a stance that was congruent with the position of the people. With this common perspective, they evoked the desired response from among the uncommitted and undecided community members. Far from being remote and neutral, the academe actively engaged in advocacy, with elements of education and awareness-building, mobilization, agitation and confrontation.

The Bolinao experience affirms the significant role of academe as a constituent of civil society and in advancing the latter's ideals. Some of the mechanisms through which the academe can contribute in this pursuit are the following:

- *Training and developing students with the concepts, ideals and methodologies of civil society.* Graduates who have been equipped with these perspectives and tools can become partners and co-workers in civil society. This would mean retraining the faculty, integrating the concepts of civil society in the curriculum, and providing the necessary administrative, logistical and technical support.
- *Reorienting research towards the advancement of the causes of civil society.* The academe can assist the NGOs, POs, mass media and other civil-society actors in undertaking collaborative researches that can synthesize experience and raise the practice to theory. Participatory research even for highly technical and scientific concerns can be done, as exemplified by the experience of the MSI and the CSWCD.
- *Facilitating exchanges among the various entities through conferences, and consultations and other venues.* These exchanges can contribute to the appreciation and the resolution of issues pertaining to civil society. The university is still a recognized institution and has the credibility to call and convene the various sectors.
- *Actually mobilizing people on social issues is a more direct way in which academe can help civil society.* While individual effort is commendable, there is greater significance if the entire institution takes a united stand and action for or against social issues. There is a lot of technical knowledge and expertise which the academe can offer to the rest of civil society. As shown in the case, the academe has access to national and international linkages which can be harnessed in support of the agenda of civil society.

The pursuit of all these propositions can only take place if there is a corresponding reflection within the university so as to integrate the agenda of civil society. Institutional reorientation and commitment to the ideals of civil society are imperative to actual engagement or reallocation of resources for this purpose. This is not an easy task, especially in the academic setting where academic freedom and plurality of ideas are very much respected and valued. However, new centers of influence and power can be instituted which can work for the continuing education, organizing and mobilization of the various constituents of academe in support of the people and the agenda of civil society.

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Profit and Social Consciousness in the Business Sector

Civil Society Organizations of the Business Community

Civic Clubs

Rotary Club of the Philippines District 3810

There are 1.2 million Rotarians worldwide participating in 28,134 Rotary Clubs in 154 countries.[1] Rotary established a presence in the Philippines in 1919 with the setting up of the Rotary Club of Manila. In Asia, this was the first club to be established.[2]

For administrative purposes, Rotary clubs are bound together in districts which are supervised by district governors. As of 1994–95, there were 16,445 Rotarians in 523 clubs, and nine Rotary districts throughout the country.

Rotary District 3810 is considered by Rotarians as the most influential district since it covers the centers of government and business — Manila and Makati. It has 79 Rotary clubs. The two biggest Rotary clubs are part of this district. Rotary Club Manila has 18 clubs; Rotary Club Makati has 19 clubs.

Rotary Club of Manila has around 450 members. President Fidel Ramos is a member and so is Manila City Mayor Alfredo Lim. Rotary Club of Makati is composed mainly of businessmen and professionals. Eduardo de los Angeles, the past chairman of the Philippine Stock Exchange, is vice-president of Rotary Club-Makati West. Businessman Oscar de Venecia is also a member of Makati-West. Membership is by invitation, after a consensus is reached within the club. Members pay annual dues (at Makati West Club, P8,000 a year). Rotary Clubs provide a lot of business to hotels and restaurants since members are required to attend luncheon meetings at least once a week.

Rotary's objective is to encourage and foster the ideal of service as a basis of worthy enterprise. A member engaged in business or a profession declares a commitment to "be fair to my employer, employees, associates, competitors, customers, public" and to offer his/her vocational talents "to work for the relief of the special needs of others and to improve the quality of life in my community."[3] One of Rotary International's motto is "Service Above Self." Aside from club activities,

Rotarians are encouraged to actively support community service projects, vocational service, and international service.

While these are the declared objectives, members of civic clubs are still perceived to be after personal, professional, or corporate self-interest. And this perception is actually well-grounded.

Frank Evaristo, media liaison for Asia and the Pacific Rim of Rotary International, said people join Rotary to "find connections" and "for prestige"[4] although there are some who sincerely want to be of service to others. Lawyers seek clients, real estate agents try to sell houses or lots, contractors bid for projects, budding politicians embark on a political career. "For example, everyone wants to join Manila Rotary, because it has 450 members," said Evaristo. "If you're just a small businessman, then you're made. All the contacts you need are there."[5]

Jose Galang, business editor of *Today*, confirmed that most of those who join civic clubs like Rotary or Jaycees do so for "networking."[6] Evaristo noted that within a Rotary Club, fellowships, and calling one another on a first name/nickname basis, are practices that foster strong friendships. "They want to develop their contacts within the community for their own progress in the future," Galang said. "That's very obvious. Sometimes I observe that there's more socializing going on than relating to the community."

Rotary officials have also publicly expressed disappointment over the low level of participation in the club's public concerns. Romulo del Rosario, former District 3810 Governor, said: "How many actually participate in our service projects and activities? Most likely you'll find that 80% of club achievements are produced by only 20% of the membership."[7]

According to Victoria Garchitorena of Ayala Foundation, one major problem of Rotary is that club presidents serve for only one year. Thus, they prefer quick, charitable projects rather than developmental projects with long gestation periods. Social Welfare Secretary Lina Laigo said her impression is that most members of civic clubs pay "lip service" to their avowed commitment to serving the community.[8]

While there may be self-interest involved in joining civic clubs, Evaristo said a club or district president is forced to do serious civic work for the community. "Once you're involved, you've got to be really active and help other people. You cannot be there just for the publicity," Evaristo explained. Laigo acknowledged that there are people in civic clubs who are seriously interested in serving the community. "I think there is also a sense of commitment there. It involves their own time and effort spent. It involves their funds. I would like to think they are really seriously involved in helping."

Rotary Club has a reputation for being more serious in civic work than the Lions Club or the Jaycees, where, a former Jaycees national president said, candidates for top positions have to "wine and dine" their members. A national election in 1980 saw two candidates spend P4 million each. The Jaycees, whose members are below 40 years old, make a good training ground for young politicians.

Evaristo claims that people at the grassroots appreciate Rotary's social action work including medical/dental missions, vocational training programs, and assistance to street children.

Rotary's international relations have provided some meaningful direction to the social work being done by Philippine Rotarians. The Department of Health's PolioPlus campaign is funded by the Rotary Foundation, which raised $US246 million to help combat poliomyelitis. The money has helped 100 countries receive PolioPlus grants for polio vaccines. Rotary Foundation has committed $200 million more for polio vaccines.[9] The Philippines was the first country to receive Rotary's Health, Hunger and Humanity Grant for polio immunization. It has received $7.5 million for vaccines, social mobilization and cold-chain materials (used for transporting the vaccines).[10] Since 1993, more than 9 million children have received polio vaccines, which were 100% provided by Rotary in 1993 and 1994. In subsequent years, it supplemented government funds for the antipolio campaign.

According to Evaristo, Rotary Clubs are open to receiving project proposals from NGOs for funding. Although it is doubtful whether Rotary Clubs will fully cooperate, there are some clubs worth considering, especially those headed by sincere, credible Rotarians. If there is interaction between them, civil society organizations can provide better direction to the social work being done by Rotary Clubs, most of which have been dole-outs.

Corporate Foundations

A growing number of businesses are establishing their own corporate foundations. This type of foundation is "company-initiated and -sponsored. Business corporations that wish to administer their programs outside their structures form foundations."[11] In 1992, a League of Corporate Foundations was set up by 12 firms and it now has 30 members. Among them: Aboitiz Group Foundation, ABS-CBN Foundation, AY Foundation, Ayala Foundation, Coca-Cola Foundation, Del Monte Foundation, Far East Bank Foundation, Marsman Foundation, Meralco Foundation, Metrobank Foundation, Mondragon Foundation, Philippine Airlines Foundation, PHINMA Foundation, Pilipinas Shell Foundation, RFM Foundation, San Miguel Foundation, Sarmiento Foundation, Toyota Motors Phils. Foundation.

Victoria Garchitorena, the current League chairperson, said one of the League's objectives is to "get more corporations to set aside significant amounts to social development."[12] It also plans to share experiences of existing foundations to firms intending to establish their own.

Ayala Foundation

Ayala Foundation was established in 1961 as Filipinas Foundation by Ayala Corporation's owners "to improve the quality of life of the Filipino by contributing to the eradication of poverty in all its forms."[13] For many years, it focused on charity-oriented activities, especially vocational scholarships for children from poor families. Joseph McMicking, the owner of Ayala Corporation, felt that as an "emerging economy" the Philippines needed good technical workers.

In 1990, Filipinas Foundation changed its name to Ayala Foundation, marking "the organization's rebirth and transformation into a development-oriented institution more responsive to the needs of a growing and more complex Filipino society."[14] Garchitorena, who had taken over in 1989, said it was decided to give more attention to areas and sectors which are related to Ayala Corporation's business concerns. She explained:[15] "[Before that], you might say that Ayala Foundation's

work was really all totally divorced from the corporation. There was almost no interaction, outside of the funding, between the corporation and the foundation. I thought that wasn't the best situation because I feel also that philanthropy, or social development, must not be something external to a corporation. It must be part and parcel of the corporate value of doing good."

Ayala Land, which had undertaken real-estate development in Las Piñas, Metro Manila and in Cebu, had to relocate squatters affected by its projects. And considering the poor relocation strategy of the government, Ayala Foundation undertook a more socially acceptable program. Garchitorena said they didn't want to do what others had done in the past: just offer money to squatters and leave them. This approach often prompted squatters, after using up their money, to squat elsewhere. The foundation instead drew up an "integrated community development program" for those who chose to relocate instead of going back to their provinces of origin. It provides access to low-cost houses, assistance in construction and setting up homeowners associations, and livelihood. Relocatees are not allowed to resell the lots except to Ayala Land. "We make sure their lives improve. We give them attitudinal training, skills training, small loans for mom-and-pop shops," Garchitorena said. By the end of 1995, the program had assisted 1,721 families in 12 communities of Laguna and Cavite.[16]

Ayala Foundation likewise opted to develop depressed sectors in the business district of Makati and in other cities and provinces where it owns many properties. (See Annex A for Ayala Foundation's other community relations projects.)

Garchitorena is also involved in getting corporations to donate to NGOs. A Philippine Council for NGO Certification, established in 1996, ensures that "donations by corporations are channeled to legitimate, accountable, and capable NGOs."[17] Among the NGO networks in the Council are the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO), Philippine Business for Social Progress, League of Corporate Foundations, Bishops-Businessmen's Conference for Human Development, National Council for Social Development. NGOs apply for accreditation with the Council. Those accredited will be recognized as donee institutions for which donations by companies or by foreign donors will be given tax credits. The Council has trained 25 evaluators who will accredit NGOs. Garchitorena estimated that around P1 billion could be channeled by Philippine-based companies to accredited NGOs.

Metrobank Foundation

Due to the rising economic power of Chinese-Filipino businessmen, I chose one other foundation to see if there are differences with those owned by the Spanish-Filipino Ayalas.

Metrobank Foundation, founded in 1979, is owned by George Ty who owns one of the largest banks in the country, Metrobank, and is part owner of Toyota Motors Philippines. In 1993, on the occasion of his son's wedding, Ty donated P600 million worth of Metrobank shares to the Metrobank Foundation Inc.[18] Today, it is worth about P1 billion, making the foundation the "country's biggest philanthropical institution."[19] Ty said his donation was being made "in recognition of the debt of gratitude which we owe to our country for the success of Metrobank and all our endeavors."[20] The donation enabled the Foundation to be more self-reliant instead of asking for a yearly budget from the parent firm.

Chinese-Filipino–owned foundations are "much more conservative" in their programs than those owned by Spanish-Filipinos, according to Metrobank Foundation corporate secretary Victorino Manalo.[21] Metrobank Foundation, for instance, is heavily into making monetary donations and providing scholarships. It has shied away from labor-intensive community development programs or grassroots projects like those of Ayala Foundation. (See Annex B for Metrobank Foundation's other projects.) Manalo estimated that roughly 40% of their donations go to the education sector.

Every year since 1985, the foundation has distributed substantial cash awards to 12 outstanding teachers from public and private schools nationwide, from elementary to the tertiary levels.[22] This is its main project. Metrobank believes that helping teachers will have a greater impact than giving individual scholarships to students. "If we work with 100 teachers, we might reach at least 4,000 students. For the same amount, we may only be helping 100 students," Manalo said.

Metrobank Foundation also has a donations program. In 1995, it gave P3 million to charitable organizations and P5 million to typhoon victims.[23]

Since most of its work is providing monetary donations, it can do with a smaller staff of 10, in contrast to Ayala Foundation which has 140 employes.

The foundation had a total program budget of P60 million in 1995.[24]

Development organizations

Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP)

PBSP was set up in 1970 by leaders of 50 big corporations "as an expression of their corporate social responsibility."[25] (See Annex C for a brief background.) Its objectives are to promote "business sector commitment to social development, to help improve the quality of life of Filipinos." Together with the government and other social development organizations, PBSP aims to "deliver solutions to poverty through programs that result in self-reliance."

Executive Director Aurora Tolentino described PBSP's establishment as an "act of self-preservation." It was set up "because the business community was reacting to student demonstrations [many of which targeted] the business community."[26] Even so, she said it was a "genuine effort and genuine desire" to help in a more effective and systematic way.

PBSP member-companies pledge to allocate up to 1% of net profit to social development. Initially, 60% of that 1% went to PBSP, while 40% went to the company's own social projects. Over time, however, the ratio has decreased to 20% of the 1% going to PBSP and 80% to company projects.[27] Aside from members' contributions, PBSP also receives funding from the US Agency for International Development, Canadian International Development Agency, Ford Foundation, Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Asian Community Trust, German Development Assistance Association for Social Housing, the European Community and the governments of France, Australia, and The Netherlands.

From an initial 50 members, PBSP membership has grown to 170 firms by the end of 1995. (See Annex D for list.) They include many of the leading Philippine corporations such as San Miguel Corp., United Laboratories, Sycip, Gorres & Velayo,

Far East Bank & Trust Co. Among the new members are the Philippine Long Distance Co. and the recently privatized Petron Corporation.

After 25 years, PBSP claims to have directly and indirectly assisted 1.6 million Filipinos. It has supported 3,195 projects through 987 non-government and people's organizations.[28] It has "moved a running total of almost P1 billion in grants and brokered funds for social development."[29] However, former PBSP president Bienvenido Tan acknowledged that PBSP's impact on alleviating poverty has been minimal. Given the fact that 40% of the population live below the poverty line, Tan said its effort has been "a drop in the bucket" though "still a fairly big drop."[30] Tolentino for her part commented that the main responsibility for solving poverty lies with the government.

Companies join PBSP because it enhances their status to be in the company of the country's biggest firms. Also, providing assistance through PBSP gives members the assurance that their money is going to be well-spent. "Some companies see it as a networking investment," Tolentino said. "You make an investment and you're part of a network where you are able to generate business as well as give business to others."[31]

While most PBSP member companies are focused only on making profit, Tolentino said, a growing number of CEOs believe that "they are important to the life of this society as a sector and that they need to do things better. That the expectation of society is not just [for them] to make money, the bottomline isn't just profit. Maybe one-tenth of the CEOs who are part of PBSP think like that."

Surprisingly, member companies do not consider the tax credit on their donations as a major reason for corporate giving. A PBSP survey on corporate giving found that "most corporations do not bother to get a write-off of this," Tolentino disclosed. Under the law, companies can give up to 3% of annual net profit before tax. "It's not important to them," she said. "The tax write-off to PBSP or to another charity isn't the compelling force for them. It's not a motivating factor." The survey did not determine the factors or reasons why this was so.

On the other hand, a 1993 survey conducted by the PBSP's Center for Corporate Citizenship showed that most big companies in the Philippines favored simple, charitable initiatives rather than developmental projects which have a bigger impact on poverty alleviation. According to the survey, "cash donations to various charities and social projects accounted for 74% of the total P309 million given by 204 companies... in 1993." The bulk of the money went to the education sector followed by health, and disaster relief and rehabilitation. The high percentage of cash donations reflects the very conservative and detached commitment of big corporations to the community.

People involved with corporate foundations and the PBSP admitted in interviews, however, that their work is not pure altruism. There is corporate or self-interest involved, it makes for good public relations for the parent firm, and it also acts as a networking arm for company officials.

Ayala Foundation's policy to link its work with the interests of the Ayala Group of Companies has opened it to criticism that what it is doing is corporate self-interest. Even its seemingly radical and no-strings-attached assistance to Mangyan families in Mindoro — assisting the indigenous group to get certificates of ances-

tral domain — is seen as an attempt to build good community relations in an area where the Zobel de Ayalas own land.

Garchitorena thinks it's both altruism and self-interest. "There's a very big difference between public relations and community development. In public relations, your main focus is your company. In community development, it's the community. Now, in the process of doing good, if you can also get some goodwill for your corporation, I don't think there's anything wrong with that. I think it's legitimate... one of those win-win situations," she explained.[32]

Metrobank's Manalo said the "PR element is also crucial" as it allows bank officials to make friends in sectors like media and government. "It's a balancing act. On the one hand, there is this objective to be altruistic. On the other hand, we must admit there is a public relations element. It allows you to consolidate your influence. Finally, it's also advertising."[33] He added though that Metrobank Foundation does not actively publicize its work.

How Civil Society Views the Business Community

A society with widespread poverty and skewed income distribution is not conducive to building good relations within civil society.

When told that my paper would discuss the social responsibility of the Philippine business community, the immediate reaction from other civil-society players was: "Mayroon ba?" (Is there such a thing?) The common view is that the Philippine business community, in general, has not been socially responsible.

Consider the following responses:

(1) Cedric Bagtas, assistant secretary-general of the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (people's organization/workers):[34] May mga companies na ganyan [socially responsible]. Mayroon silang social consciousness, may social responsibility. Pero the overwhelming majority, ang iniisip lang, pera. Yung kikitain lang nila. Never mind what happens to their workers, customers. (Some companies are socially responsible. But the majority, the overwhelming majority, only think about profit.)

(2) Jeremias Montemayor, president, Federation of Free Farmers (people's organization/farmers):[35] The ordinary farmer, meaning the small farmer, owner-cultivator or farm laborer or tenant, views business as exploitative, taking advantage of them. Although in some cases, the farmers are beginning to cooperate with other forms of business, for example, in marketing, processing, and so on.

(3) Denis Murphy, executive director, Urban Poor Associates (non-government organization/urban poor):[36] There's absolutely no connection [between the business community and its responsibility to the urban poor]. They are absolutely two separate worlds. A few like Joe Concepcion and some people in the Bishops Businessmen's Conference help a little bit. But in general... it's like the urban poor world is somewhere in Africa and these guys' world is here.

Annex E provides responses from other non-government organizations on their perception of the business community's social responsibility.

Resource persons from the academe and the Catholic church presented more favorable views.

(4) Dr. Bernardo Villegas, dean, School of Economics, University of Asia and the Pacific (academe):[37] In the whole of Asia, the Philippine business sector is the one with the greatest social responsibility. I don't see any equivalent of the PBSP in any other Asian country.

(5) Fr. James Reuter, executive secretary, Commission on Social Communications and Mass Media, Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (church):[38] It's complex. If the country is not healthy, their business collapses. You can't get investors in here if the country is weak. So that the stronger they can make it, the better it is for them, so it's a double motive. But I would not question the integrity of what they are doing because the businessmen, to my mind, have more integrity than any other sector. I mean, all of the big things that have been done thus far have been done by the businessmen, really.

Reasons for negative perceptions

Those from the basic sectors I interviewed cited cases, incidents, or problems which create the perception that the business community is not socially responsible.

(1) *Workers* cited practices such as labor-only subcontracting, minimal profit sharing, lay-offs in response to globalization.

Even the big companies with corporate foundations employ labor-only contracting practices in order to reduce costs, Bagtas said. An increasing number of job categories is being subcontracted to labor agencies, such as security guards, janitors and even salesmen. Meralco, San Miguel, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. now subcontract services such as meter reading, cable line installation, power line installation, maintenance and repair services. As a result, workers who would otherwise get regular salaries and company benefits now get lower-than-average salaries and less company benefits.

Bagtas explained that if an employer were socially conscious, he would establish profit-sharing schemes with his employes. The benefit would then be directly felt by the workers. But, he lamented, less than 50 companies in the Philippines have profit-sharing schemes. In addition, a socially conscious employer should always think about the welfare of the community. But in most cases, community welfare is hardly given attention by companies.

(2) *Farmers* pointed out problems stemming from the low buying price of crops, land conversion and land alienation. Montemayor said many agricultural traders take advantage of the "desperate condition" of farmers by buying their crops at low prices and earning huge profits by selling high. Many big companies have also converted agricultural lands into industrial estates.

(3) The *urban poor* said that businessmen are able to set up establishments on land cleared by government authorities through demolition of their communities. UPA's Murphy said the private sector has to exert more effort to contribute their share to the city's resources and help provide basic services to the urban poor.

For his part, Congressman Florencio Abad of Batanes said the histories of the logging and mining industries in the Philippines do not present evidence which

would show that Philippine businessmen are socially responsible.[39] He said the evidence from our physical environment shows that the orientation of the business sector has been resource extraction without regard to sustainable development.

Intra-civil Society Relations

There is a very distant relationship between business civic organizations, corporate foundations and the other sections of civil society.

According to Ayala Foundation's Garchitorena, "We haven't been working in areas that have too many of those radical NGOs."[40] The Foundation only works with a Makati NGO network that it helped establish.

Rotary Club's Evaristo said they have not had relations with very political NGOs as the club is "supposed to be nonpolitical." He continued: "They (the members) don't want to be controversial, they tend to be more conservative. Originally, it was really just a few friends that gathered together."[41]

Metrobank's Manalo said that since their programs are national in scope, they do not interact much with grassroots organizations. He said the Foundation is "different" from the NGOs that do grassroots work. They do not "get into programs that are... too radical."[42]

Non-government organizations and people's organizations are also partly to blame. Citing principles, they have refused to work with an "exploitative" business sector. Funds from the business community are viewed as "blood money." There is also a perception among NGOs/POs that the money being allotted by the business community for social work is already programmed to fund definite projects and institutions. While this may be true for some, there are certain corporate foundations that can still be tapped for funding.

On the other hand, officials of civic clubs and corporate foundations consider their groups NGOs, so many of them see no need to work with other NGOs. It may also be mentioned that civic clubs and business foundations being conservative, they prefer to work with established institutions like the government or the Catholic church.

Working with the Church

Only one civil society player has had substantial cooperation with the business community: the Catholic church, with which the business community has had a lot of interaction and activities.

This is reflected in the presence of priests in corporate foundations and in joint projects between Rotary Clubs and the church, as well as donations to priest- or church-led organizations.

Generous donations from businessmen go to the Educational Research Development Agency (ERDA) led by Fr. Pierre Tritz. They appreciate his track record in providing scholarships to children, which really means an assurance that the money will be spent wisely, and his simple and conservative approach to helping the youth.[43] Then there is the Don Bosco Parish in Makati, whose social action projects have

been supported by the Rotary Club. The parish priest, Fr. Rocky Evangelista, is a former president of Rotary Club of EDSA.

The close ties between the business community and the church are demonstrated in the existence of the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference (BBC). "The businessmen that work with us, by and large, are those who go with the Gospel. And they believe that the bishops have integrity, that they're not out to make anything, that they're trying to help the people," said Fr. James Reuter.

In turn, the Catholic church hierarchy thinks highly of the business community. Reuter, who sits on the board of AY Foundation of businessman Alfonso Yuchengco, said businessmen are the "natural leaders" of the country, especially since politicians have failed to show good leadership. He admitted though that "you have crimes where in their effort to make money, they become thoroughly and completely dishonest. But generally, they are a tremendous asset. Even with their crookedness."[44]

The BBC played an active role in addressing political and social problems during the Marcos dictatorship. Why is it that there never was an NGO/PO-Businessmen's Conference?

It comes as no surprise that the social action work of corporate foundations or civic organizations is viewed mainly as public relations — to enhance their image. Civil society actors are also aware that companies can get tax credits through their foundations, leading them to conclude that business firms invest in social action work for corporate self-interest.

But while the general assessment is one of criticism, civil society actors acknowledged that some corporate foundations are sincere in their effort to alleviate poverty and help the under-privileged. There are just too few companies doing this, so their work has little impact on alleviating poverty.

(See Annex F for comments from civil society actors on the work done by corporate foundations, civic organizations and PBSP.)

Socio-cultural Differences

Two people I interviewed said social division was the main reason for the lack of cooperation.

Social Welfare Secretary Lina Laigo said corporations are viewed as "burgis (bourgeois)" while NGOs are "masa (masses)." She said: "Elitist is how NGOs see the corporations, and they themselves are poor. So there's that feeling of alienation. It's so difficult to get them together. I think NGOs are willing to meet them halfway."[45] Metrobank Foundation's Manalo agreed there is a "general prejudice that the rich have against the poor, and the poor have against the rich...."[46]

FFF's Montemayor believes that there will be more cooperation between business and POs only when the latter become stronger. He explained that their main task "is to strengthen the PO, strengthen it financially, technically, politically, socially, and once they are on par with the big entrepreneurs, I am sure they will cooperate. Because everybody needs everybody else, but on the basis of equality."[47]

Use of Power

There is also a perception that the business community is not exercising its collective power toward the right goals. Murphy pointed out that it would be to the interest of the business community to see to it that certain social problems are eradicated. "If business can become a political power broker, why can't it be a power broker for social causes?" he asked. "Business, if it wanted, could make a dent in the whole problem of poverty. They have a lot of power."[48]

He said there are social issues where there is no conflict of interest for the business community to get involved, including the provision of basic services like water, power, public health services, education, access to public land. In a society with five million urban poor people, he lamented, no business firm has supported their causes. Looking back at the lobby effort of the BBC for the urban poor, he said recommendations were sent to then President Marcos, "but nothing happened." The government perceived it only as a "manifesto of a few good people" and not a "real demand of business." In South Korea, he said, Korean business pressured the government to address basic services since they saw it was related to the needs of industry.

Understandably, these perceptions have caused conflicts within civil society, particularly when it comes to competition for funding.

Bagtas recalled that a few years ago, the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines protested the grant of aid by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) to the foundations of two Cebu-based companies, International Pharmaceuticals Inc. (IPI) and Aboitiz, whose "union records" were "not good." The IPI project was for reforestation; Aboitiz would put up a training center. He explained: "Why should USAID give aid to foundations of the rich? Why doesn't it give the money to foundations of the poor? Second, why give to foundations whose mother company is a union buster? That would be tacit approval of its union-busting schemes."

When PBSP set up the Corporate Network for Disaster Response (CNDR) after the 1990 killer earthquake, friction was created between it and another NGO, the Citizens' Disaster Response Center Foundation (CDRC). The latter felt that the CNDR was a rival group which might reduce its prospects of getting project funding. The friction appears to have been solved with the setting up of the Interagency Network for Disaster Response, which includes the two groups as well as the Philippine National Red Cross. PBSP's Tolentino chairs this interagency group. She said there is no conflict between the two groups since the mandate of CNDR is "to raise resources and to inventory the corporations that have resources so that in a disaster, they would be able to get those resources and pass it on to the network of NGOs that do the field level implementation."[49] CNDR now has 32 member companies.

In another instance, a multinational firm's concern for maximum profits scuttled a proposed agreement with the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (PRRM) to market solar energy products in Nueva Vizcaya. The firm, BP Solar, wanted to propagate solar energy in the province and sought PRRM's assistance. The NGO said they were willing to assist in creating a market for BP Solar as long as the firm was willing to "invest in community development." According to Lisa Dacanay, the terms proposed by PRRM were "too much" for the firm, so the arrangement did not materialize.[50]

Civil Society's Changing Perceptions of the Business Community

While these negative perceptions may lead some to conclude that cooperation between business-supported civil society groups and other civil society players cannot be achieved, some of the resource persons I interviewed noted that there is a group within the business community that has changed the way it views social problems. Moreover, they no longer believe that the traditional approach of giving cash donations to the underprivileged is an effective method of social amelioration. Given this maturity in outlook, more cooperation can be developed between this emerging group within the business community and NGOs.

Florencio Abad, the congressional representative of Batanes, attests that there are a few Filipino businessmen who have realized that the problem of poverty is one of inequity and social injustice. "They see that the problem goes deeper, that you have to go beyond management [training], that there is structural infirmity in society," he noted. "So they realize that you cannot say, 'It's poor management or lack of resources.' But that you have to deal with some political issues like access to or reallocation of assets, or political influence."[51] There is a need to support and expand this constituency in the business community. Although this constituency is still "small," he said, "these are the kinds of foundations that, if allowed to expand some more, would have a profound impact on the problems of society."

Another factor going for business-NGO cooperation is the fact that the business community is beginning to feel the strong environment lobby. Abad referred to the case of the Bolinao (Pangasinan) cement plant, which was aborted by the government to scuttle the project in response to people's growing concern for the environment. "We will be seeing more and more of that as communities begin to assert themselves. You know, people don't want to end up holding the bag, whole tracts of deforested land and floods. I think that is a good development, and business has to recognize that."

PRRM assistant vice-president Lisa Dacanay also said "there are some business people, top guns in the business world, who are really talking about corporate social responsibility."[52] In the beginning, she said, their social action work was concentrated on corporate philanthropy (which she defined as "you make so much profit, it doesn't matter what happens in your business as long as you have a clear conscience by donating this and that to some charity or the other").

This seems to still be the general rule. According to a 1993 survey of 204 companies by the PBSP's Center for Corporate Citizenship, straight cash donations accounted for nearly three-fourths of a total P309 million worth of social investments made by the 204 companies.[53] "The most visible route is still corporate-giving, which is direct and immediately gratifying," PBSP said. "Cash donations to various charities and social projects accounted for 74% of the total P309 million." Education was the top priority sector followed by health, and disaster relief and rehabilitation.

After many years of corporate philanthropy came an improved approach: a section of the business community adopted the "concept of community relations." This is where the business firm becomes an "actor in the community." But the objective is still self-centered: to make the community a better host for the firm.

Most big corporations today are involved in either philanthropy or community relations. But there is a newly emerging group within the business community that has adopted a common goal with civil society: a commitment to sustainable development, Dacanay said. She described this as a third movement within the business sector that espouses corporate social responsibility. "We are supportive of a movement within business to move towards corporate social responsibility that, at its best, will express itself in terms of internalizing social and environmental costs fully," she said.

The foreign company Bodyshop, which sells items like body lotions and perfumes, was mentioned by Abad and Dacanay as the best example of a socially responsible corporation. Incorporated into its business strategy is a commitment to protect the environment and share profits with its workers.

As more Western-educated CEOs (chief executive officers) take over management of big companies, PBSP's Tolentino predicted, they will be more willing to undertake corporate social responsibility. She said "more and more of them are thinking that corporate self-interest has got to be good for the communities." Chairman Andres Soriano III said PBSP members believe that "corporate citizenship is not an option but a responsibility."

There has also been a change in how business and NGOs view each other. In the 1960s up to the 1980s, business was viewed as exploitative by NGOs, which was in turn perceived as being radical or communist. "I think there has been a big change from that," said Abad. "And that's because there have been increasing dialogues between business and these development agencies."

Tolentino noted that the decline of ideological conflict has created a better climate for civil society relations. The split within the leftist movement, she said, has "made it much more difficult to get a consensus among all of them about business being bad." On the other hand: "There are major forces from the ideological Left that are now thinking: can we change our paradigms because we're falling by the wayside and becoming anachronistic? Can we change them so that we can begin to broaden the areas of consensus?"[54] She said the policy shift of some leftist groups to "build solidarity" against unsustainable economic growth has created room for cooperation with the business sector.

With more attention being given to other countries by the international community, there has been a reduction in foreign assistance to NGOs in the Philippines. Consequently, many NGOs have closed or cut back their operations. They should consider looking at the local business community and government as alternative sources of funds, Abad suggested, in the face of a continuing decline in funding from Northern NGOs and official development assistance to the Philippines.

For its part, PBSP has been able to assume the role of being a bridge between NGOs and the business community, Tolentino said, facilitating dialogue and brokering funds for other NGOs and POs.

An initiative was launched by the League of Corporate Foundations to channel more funds from the business community and foreign donors to accredited NGOs. Though well-intentioned, the initiative was criticized by some NGO leaders because it involves the setting up of a Philippine Council on NGO Certification, which they fear will act as a centralized, regulatory "Big Brother-like" office. This effort, these leaders said, will only lead to the exclusion of NGOs who refuse to submit to the

accreditation process and ultimately, to conflicts and distrust between business and civil society and within civil society itself. Perhaps some compromise can be reached by eliminating the accreditation process and pooling the funds to create a source of interest-free or low-interest loans for interested NGOs.

Abad criticized the NGO community for relying too much on foreign assistance and for not being self-reliant. Some NGOs have also been found to have misappropriated funds they have received. "The NGO community has to start depending on their own creative ways of building the resources to conduct their affairs," Abad said.

Precisely, Dacanay said, the decline in official development assistance, including assistance from Northern NGOs, has prompted local NGOs to seriously consider establishing joint projects or partnerships with business firms. PRRM will be setting up a unit to deal with sustainable economic development and corporate social responsibility. "Having matured, we are now prepared to face business, engage the corporate world, engage foundations, present our advocacies," she said.

There has also been a shift in the way some NGOs view the concept of profit. Dacanay explained the move on the part of NGOs and civil society actors to really set up businesses as part of their resource-generation strategy. "So we are not against making profit. It's a legitimate objective but we are critical about profit as the bottom line," she said. Again, PRRM has set up an investment committee to put up social enterprises whose objective will not only be profit but also service to the community and sustainable development.

Sustainable Development as a Bridge

While it may take several more years before trust and confidence materialize between civic groups, corporate foundations and other civil society players, there is a common agenda which can serve as a bridge for cooperation: sustainable development. This issue has been accepted as a common concern of government, business, and the rest of civil society.

Philippine Agenda 21, developed by the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD), contains the country's commitments to the Earth Summit.[55] The PCSD is the body tasked to monitor and ensure implementation of commitments made at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). Originally, it was composed of 16 government departments and seven NGO/PO representatives. Representation of the business community was initially opposed by NGOs who felt that it would dilute their environmental concerns.

Clark Soriano, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) consultant, said Philippine Agenda 21 "hinges on the success of the cooperation and partnership between government, business, and NGOs."[56] This tripartite partnership of government, business and civil society as a whole is still lacking in the Philippines, however, according to UNDP deputy representative Shun-ichi Murata.[57]

Dacanay said engaging business will be a long process. PRRM prefers that corporate foundations go beyond charity and community relations work. It will try to convince corporate foundations to "enhance their appreciation of corporate social responsibility." She said this new movement "will have to also take off the

ground within business itself... with pressures from outside." She explained:[58] "When we talk of engaging the market, it means assisting, building consciousness among the decision-makers in business, to imbue in them corporate responsibility. That's one area. Another area would be directly working with them in order to develop programs that are sensitive to the environment and to social objectives. Then, third is actually engaging them by pressuring them to stop this, change their ways, etc."

Dacanay and TUCP's Bagtas also stressed that the government has a critical role to play in promoting corporate social responsibility. It should implement the many rules and regulations which can make the business sector respond to environmental concerns. It can also help promote corporate social responsibility through incentives; for example, firms that provide employee stock ownership plans should get tax incentives.

The realization that sustainable development should be seriously addressed by all sectors led San Miguel Corporation and the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines to conclude a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) which incorporated community welfare and environment concerns. In 1995, management reached a CBA with three bargaining units at the brewery plant in Bacolod City. The CBA created Labor-Management committees that will design and implement environmental programs.[59] Their task is to propose and implement programs on environmental management, education and training, health and safety-ensuring environment, environmental programs.

Luis Corral of the TUCP pointed out that this provision is exceptional since most CBAs are concerned mainly with wages and livelihood concerns. "There is no separate culture for sustainable development," he said. "There is a need to educate both business and labor. We have to develop a culture within trade unions to push for environmental concerns."[60] Corral said this effort has to be replicated nationwide.

Other Recommendations

The PBSP is pushing the belief among business leaders that "corporate citizenship is not an option but a responsibility." But it appears that there is still a long way to go before a critical mass of business leaders accepts this philosophy.

Judging by the size of PBSP membership, its 181 members in 1996 constituted a mere 3.6% of the top 5,000 companies in the Philippines. Many of these should have no difficulty allotting 1% of net profit to social development, especially when business is good. Considering that PBSP has been existing for more than two decades, the growth in membership has not been encouraging: five new members a year for the past 25 years.

From my conversations and interviews with business executives, many of them feel that the big income tax and corporate tax payments they make already constitute a sufficient contribution to social development. Thus, they see no need to make additional contributions. Ayala Foundation's Garchitorena said this thinking reflects our culture: one which is family-oriented rather than community- or nation-oriented.

Thus, government should provide more incentives to companies that allocate 1% of net profit to social development and ecological protection. Even small firms should be encouraged to make social investments.

Some observers have noted the need for trust in order to build civil society. As one social analyst said, in the Philippines there is low trust beyond the family level.[61] A regular conference between the business community and civil society, similar to the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference, on areas of cooperation, possibly joint ventures on sustainable development, can help build trust. PBSP's Tolentino said suspicion between civil society groups can be overcome by "working on the things you agree with and see if you can build confidence and trust."

On the part of NGOs and POs, they should explore tapping business firms and civic groups based in the Philippines for funding of their projects. As a first step, the business community may consider funding projects or causes which do not directly conflict with their interests. "If foreign donors of development assistance can channel these funds through NGOs, why can't Philippine business do the same," said *Today* business editor Jose Galang. "They should work with NGOs, not against NGOs."[62] The Catholic Church, given the high level of trust it enjoys, can act as a broker between the business community and civil society groups.

In order to be more accepted by civil society, business companies should try to separate corporate interests from their social investments. Encouragement should also be given to those business leaders who actually get involved in social action work.

Summary

Civic clubs, corporate foundations and non-government organizations backed by the business community are basically aimed at promoting their own interests.

While these business-supported civil society groups are ostensibly aimed at promoting a social good, i.e., social consciousness and helping the poor, their basic objective of self-promotion overshadows their social work.

Except for the church, other civil society players generally have a cynical view of the social action work of the civic clubs and business-supported NGOs. This negative perception will remain until and unless a critical mass of businessmen and corporations use their collective power to address urgent social concerns such as public health, housing, and sustainable development. Other civil society players have to be convinced that the business community is sincere about social welfare. Otherwise, efforts to build good relations within civil society will be fruitless.

The small number of corporate foundations and PBSP member companies does not create the right atmosphere for close ties and relations within civil society. The government and the business community should provide incentives for the establishment of corporate foundations and membership in PBSP. Pilot projects between corporate foundations and other civil society players on alleviating poverty and promoting sustainable development should be promoted. These may help build trust and confidence within civil society.

ANNEX A: AYALA FOUNDATION'S COMMUNITY RELATIONS PROJECTS[63]

Financial assistance from the US Agency for International Development and Ayala Corporation was tapped for Ayala Foundation's Makati Development Program. It seeks to "improve the quality of life of the urban poor in 18 of Makati's poorest barangays." Since 1994, the program has assisted 6,400 beneficiaries through scholarships, skills training, job placement, livelihood credit and feeding programs.

In 1995, Ayala Foundation helped provide skills training to 500 Makati residents, and placed 85% of those trained in related jobs. Skills training was done at the Makati Rotary Foundation Training Center in services such as security, food and beverage, building maintenance and allied services. Meanwhile, a total of 200 technical and vocational scholarships have been awarded to students at the Don Bosco Technical Institute and the Pamantasan ng Makati. Under the Enterprise Development Program, P1.2 million in credit was released in 1995 to 22 organizations for livelihood projects. The Barangay Integrated Development Program provided feeding and mass immunization to three depressed barangays.

Linking up with the interests of the Ayala Group of Companies (for example, Laguna Technopark, Purefoods Corporation) enabled the Foundation to "tap the resources of the corporation." Companies that have put up factories at the Laguna Technopark have hired some of the people who have benefited from the Foundation's skills training program.

Ayala Foundation has also assisted 150 Mangyan families of Puerto Galera, Oriental Mindoro to get certificates of ancestral domain covering 2,500 hectares of land from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. Having secured legal claim over the land, the Mangyans are provided with "security to pursue long-term agro-forestry programs and preservation of the environment." Ayala Foundation has sponsored livelihood projects like cooperative fishing, basket production, orchid growing, jeepney transport to help provide additional income for the Mangyan families.

The shift to a more development-oriented foundation required a bigger plantilla. From 30 staff in 1989, the number of Foundation employees rose to 140 in 1996. At the same time, the shift made it easier for Ayala Foundation to involve executives and employees of the Ayala group in social action work. In 1996, it set up the Ayala Volunteer Corps and encouraged volunteers to spend their spare time with the Foundation's work. Thirty-five volunteers have participated in its projects.

ANNEX B: METROBANK FOUNDATION'S OTHER PROJECTS[64]

Metrobank has a program that gives full college scholarships to 100 students yearly — P14,000 per school year for scholars in Metro Manila and P10,000 for those in other regions.

In 1995, Metrobank Foundation began a P10 million assistance program for the country's top regional science high schools. The program was supposed to "recognize the importance of science literacy and fluency in English in the global market."

The Foundation also owns the Manila Doctors Hospital and assists in the hospital's charity programs and medical missions.

Around 25% of its funds are allocated to international programs. It provides awards and scholarships to school teachers and students in the People's Republic of China (PROC) and Taiwan. In 1995, it gave donations to the victims of the Kobe earthquake. These donations, said George Ty, are supposed to "convey to the international community that the Philippines can also be a benefactor."

Another major project of the Foundation is an annual national painting competition that "encourages the pursuit of excellence and creativity by showcasing the best works of young Filipino artists."

In 1995, Metrobank Foundation provided P1 million for the procurement of dental and medical equipment of the Philippine National Police. Another P1 million went to the Armed Forces of the Philippines which used it to link the computer system of the Philippine Military Academy in Baguio with the Internet.

ANNEX C: PBSP'S SOCIAL ACTION WORK[65]

Given its long history, PBSP has been able to learn from the different social development models it has implemented. Its first five years were the "trial-and-error years." Its costly P16 million Sambahayan urban resettlement project in Mandaluyong was deemed a failure since only low middle- to middle-income families could afford the units.

Since 1991, PBSP has adopted a more holistic approach through the Area Resource Management (ARM) strategy. This is being implemented in 13 areas: National Capital Region, Pampanga, Quezon, Antique, Cebu, Western Samar, Negros Occidental, Bohol, Davao del Sur, North Cotabato, Cagayan de Oro-Iligan Corridor, and Samal Island. ARM is a "sustainable development strategy that focuses on the maximum use of resources in a specific area, taking into consideration existing socio-economic, ecological and organizational systems." PBSP says it "helps poverty groups gain control of coastal, lowland and upland resources and become owners of anchor enterprises." PBSP's role is to provide basic resources, infrastructure and social services, new skills and technologies, credit and market assistance.

In 1994, a social credit mechanism similar to the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh was set up. It provided capital for livelihood activities in Metro Manila. Far East Bank, Citytrust, Solidbank, Metro Pacific, Philips provided start-up funding.

Other projects were reforestation in Marinduque, setting up core houses for Mt. Pinatubo-displaced families in Pampanga, promoting coastal resource management in Ragay Gulf, Quezon, among many others.

Other major activities of PBSP are technical assistance in project management, organizational development, training and dissemination of new technologies, and resource accessing.

In 1992, it established the Center for Corporate Citizenship to promote the practice of corporate citizenship among chief executive officers in the Philippines and in the region. The Center conducts an annual study on corporate-giving trends. It also identifies projects on environment, education, countryside development which business leaders can assist.

ANNEX E: How Other Civil Society Players View the Social Responsibility of the Philippine Business Community

MARIE LISA DACANAY, Assistant Vice-President, Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement (non-government organization):[66] We recognize three major actors in the development process: the state, the market, and civil society. At the moment, the problem is that the market is in the hands of a few corporations and individuals who monopolize control over resources and decision-making. We believe that the market, by itself, needs to be democratized. It just so happens that it is now dominated by corporations and individuals whose primary objective is simply profit as the bottom line.

JOSE GALANG, Business Editor of *Today* (media):[67] Feudalism is still very much present in most Philippine corporations. That's why they rely more on the paternalistic way of running their businesses. Very limited efforts are seen, in general, towards exercising social responsibility to society.

FLORENCIO ABAD, Liberal Party member (political party):[68] If you're talking about the business community in general, I don't see it that way. In fact, their bottom line is enhancement of business.

ANTONIO TUJAN, Executive Director, IBON Foundation (non-government organization):[69] In the Philippines, there is very weak social responsibility. For example, many businesses cannot afford to provide social services as part of a collective bargaining agreement. So, for example, only large firms have retirement schemes. Many companies do not provide for housing, education, or health benefits.

ANNEX F: Comments From Civil Society Players on the Work Done by Corporate Foundations, Civic Clubs, and PBSP

CEDRIC BAGTAS:[70] As long as their intention is good, okay. But they may be doing it for PR, and that's not good... For some, foundations are devices to get around taxation. It's case to case. Some are doing a good job, like San Miguel, Ayala. I don't know about the others. If membership in PBSP is taken as the measure for social responsibility... they are so few. If the measure is for companies to be "green" or pro-environment, again these are so few. The biggest companies are in PBSP, but probably not even the top 1,000 are there. Not all of the top 1,000 are there. [When told there are around 170 member companies in PBSP, he said: '170 out of 325,000 enterprises!"]

JEREMIAS MONTEMAYOR:[71] Those who are affected are grateful and happy [if business shows social responsibility]. They are like beautiful islets in an ocean of misery. PBSP? How many farmers will it reach?.... Oftentimes, it is a form of paternalism. They think of what is good for the peasant, but they do not sufficiently ask the peasant: what do you think is good for you? And that requires patience and time.... It is like a balm for your conscience, Salonpas [medicinal plaster] to relieve your conscience. You prove to yourself that you can become very rich and yet very charitable. But is that possible?

What is needed is a total overhaul of the socio-economic system. It is in the Constitution: redistribution of wealth and power. And wealth is basically land.... The problem of poverty and wealth is not an economic issue alone. It is not pure production itself but also sharing. Without sharing, there will be no big market for any crop because the masses have no purchasing power. But if there is sharing, there's a market.... They are sharing only the remnants. That is good in itself, but it's sort of like tossing a few Christmas gifts. Because the sharing here that I am referring to means adjusting your prices. And in the case of farmers, sharing your land with them.

DENIS MURPHY:[72] They may be helping a few families there. But there are five million urban poor people. And their basic problem, of the squatters anyway, is insecurity. I've never heard the Ayalas urge that we give land to the poor, much less offer land to the poor.... It's traditional charity, what the church did for years and what the rich people have done for years. You do a little bit but it has no impact on the whole. There may be goodwill. I'm not saying they're bad people, but it has no impact. No, we don't look down on them, but what we've done also hasn't made a dent.... Business, and us, and all the NGOs together, we haven't really made a dent.

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Media Responsibility and the Politics and Business of Media Ownership

Overview: *Democracy and the Press*

Without doubt, the Philippine press is one of the freest in Asia. When Ferdinand E. Marcos fell after the "people power" uprising in 1986, the system of media controls that he had established was dismantled overnight. The result was a flowering of the media. Many newspapers representing a plurality of views and ownership were established, new radio and TV stations were set up, and most of the media agencies once controlled by the deposed president and his kin or cronies either folded up or were taken over by the new government.

Today, in the second half of the 1990s, there are some 30 newspapers publishing out of Metro Manila alone; over 200 more are being put out in the provinces. There are some 250 AM stations and over 150 local and national television stations.[1] The Philippine media love controversy. Except for government-owned broadcast agencies and one government-run newspaper chain, they are bold, hard-hitting and generally critical of government.

The tendency toward sensationalism and hyperbole has been criticized. Tabloids serve a daily diet of crime and sex. Newspapers regularly print exposés on official corruption and abuse; their commentaries, especially on official wrongdoing, are often strident and unrestrained. And while the broadsheets are more sober, their criticisms can sometimes get out of hand. In television, where the competition can be ruthless, news and public affairs programs feature an amalgam of gore, celebrity and scandal that is designed to titillate and entertain rather than inform or enlighten.

Post-1986 critiques of the press have therefore focused largely on the media's superficiality, irresponsibility and tendency toward sensationalism.[2] While the Marcos-era newspapers were castigated for being lapdogs of the dictator, today's media have come under a barrage of criticism for taking advantage of their new freedoms in order to outdo rivals in the race to peddle newspapers or radio and TV programs. "Newspapers play up to a public taste for hype, for front pages that scream for attention in the streets," wrote journalist Melinda de Jesus, who heads a private organization that monitors the press.[3]

In addition, the ownership structure of the media has been attacked: Newspaper proprietors, most of whom run business conglomerates, have been accused of

using their dailies to advance their corporate or political interests. During martial law, the major dailies were owned by Marcos's relatives or allies, and were used to promote his rule. After Marcos fell, the ownership of the media changed hands as the government sequestered shares in the Marcos-controlled press and new papers were set up. Although most of the new dailies were not allied to any political party or faction, they have been accused of partisan coverage that directly benefited their proprietors.[4]

This paper will examine how the structure of media ownership has an impact on the media's responsibility to inform and act as a check on the excesses both of the state and of business. A free and independent press is crucial to democracy. But media owners have sometimes intervened in editorial policy-making, thereby curtailing the capacity of journalists and editors to report without fear or favor. The media can, and have, acted both as a forum for intelligent discussion and debate as well as a catalyst for reforms. But their potential to perform these functions may be hampered by irresponsible owners.

In a democracy, the media can be extremely powerful. Filipino officials and politicians, including President Fidel V. Ramos, breakfast on a diet of news and opinion. Newspaper exposés can push for policy reforms and abort political careers. Ramos writes angry memos to his officials on the margins of newspaper clippings. Journalistic inquisition makes politicians quake, and a bad press can mean almost certain death to a political career. The media's power to shape public opinion — and to prompt action from officials sensitive to such opinion — has been demonstrated. Cabinet officials have resigned as a result of negative press reporting; congressional investigations, police arrests and policy reversals have also taken place largely because of journalistic exposés.

The Philippine media's capacity to act as watchdog of government, intelligent forum for debate and catalyst for change, however, is limited by several factors. One of these is ruthless competition, which drives newspapers and broadcast stations to pander to the lowest common denominator of public taste. Another factor is the level of skills. There is a lack of trained journalists and editors who can raise the quality of reportage and analysis. The corruption of journalists by politicians or businessmen who want reporting twisted in their favor is another factor. A fourth is media ownership, which is the subject of this paper.

A Fighting Tradition

The Philippine media have a very strong populist bent. Much to the consternation of government officials, many Filipino journalists believe in the adversarial role of the press. The tradition of a free and critical press has deeper roots in the Philippines than in many other countries in the region. The Philippine press, as summed up by one editor, is "anti-establishment, pro-people, pro-underdog."

For one, the media played an important part in the democratic restoration. Although Marcos muzzled the press, many journalists strained at the leash. Even in the dark days of martial rule, small newspapers, some of them published underground, managed to operate in the fringes of repression. After the assassination of Benigno Aquino in 1983, new newspapers — critical of Marcos and refusing to

submit to Malacañang censorship — began to be published openly and became so successful, they challenged the dominance of the big, well-established and well-financed dailies.

This so-called "mosquito press" reported on the anti-Marcos protests. It printed articles which stirred up popular dissatisfaction with the Marcos regime and helped mobilize public support for Corazon C. Aquino, who became president after the three-day uprising in February 1986. Heady with freedom, the unleashed media reported critically and with unrestrained energy on the new government.

Such exuberance cannot be attributed solely to the headiness of the times; it was also anchored in the history of Philippine journalism. The first newspapers in the Philippines were published in the 19th century mainly for the Manila-based colonial elite. The anticolonial Propaganda Movement, however, also began proselytizing against Spanish abuses by publishing its own newspaper *La Solidaridad,* which was printed in Madrid but clandestinely distributed in the Philippines.

The American colonizers introduced a press system much like their own — commercially oriented, but also freewheeling and muckraking within the bounds of a colonial system of law. After independence, this US tradition of a muckraking press continued. And very much like in the American publishing scene, Philippine press barons were not shy about employing this tradition to promote their interests or lash out against their enemies. The legendary publishers of the immediate postwar era — Eugenio Lopez Sr., Vicente Madrigal, Andres Soriano and Joaquin Elizalde — were business magnates who used their newspapers to defend and advance their proprietary interests.

"Media ownership may have given the proprietors a powerful weapon to defend their interests from official harassment and competition by business rivals, and a lever to promote the growth of their interests with the government," wrote journalist Amando Doronila. "In this situation, journalists enjoyed considerable leeway so long as they did not advocate political and social doctrines that would bring down the system. The checks and balances worked well to the mutual benefit of the liberal bourgeois journalist and their capitalist employers."[6]

The New Press Proprietors

With the restoration of democracy in 1986, the media situation soon resembled that of pre-martial law times as described by Doronila. On one hand, most of the newspapers published in Manila today prove the existence of a robust and free press, critical of government and suspicious of all forms of authority. There is virtually no government control of publishing and no official censorship exists. The media operate under one of the laxest systems of government supervision in Asia, restrained only by laws on libel and sedition. But at the same time, the major dailies ended up being owned by the giants of Philippine business who operate a wide range of interlocking corporate concerns, including banking, manufacturing, telecommunications and real estate. While most owners rarely intervene in day-to-day editorial decision-making, they also put up real constraints both on the freedom of the press as well as its ability to report fairly and responsibly.

Since 1986, newspapers have been used (some to a greater degree than others) to ax enemies in corporate battles, defend their owners' political allies or otherwise

advance their proprietors' business concerns. In many cases, they have tended not to rock the boat on issues involving government officials and agencies regulating business. As the neophyte publisher of a Manila daily said: "I never realized the power of a newspaper until after we had bought one. The power is not exaggerated. When you are mad at someone, you feel so good when you can attack him." [7]

It is a sentiment that could have been expressed in the 1960s by Eugenio Lopez Sr., whose family owned the *Manila Chronicle* and ABS-CBN in the glory days of their business empire. "When I was with the *Chronicle*," recalled journalist Maximo Soliven, now columnist and publisher of the *Philippine Star*, "it was controlled by the sugar bloc and Iñing (Eugenio) Lopez strongly influenced the paper. Everyone understood that when the big boss wanted something, it had to be done. There were times when Iñing was fighting for his life, he would intervene in the paper when his interests were threatened." [8]

Thirty years later, the likes of Eugenio Lopez Sr. live on in the new press proprietors. There are reasons why this is so. One of them is the economics of newspapering. The high cost of printing a newspaper and then selling it in a small[9] and crowded market means that only four of the dozen national dailies published in Manila make profits. These big papers suck up most of the advertising revenue while the rest operate at a loss or barely break even, so they have to be subsidized by their owners' other companies.

Nonetheless, businessmen continue to publish more newspapers than the advertising and readership market can sustain. "Buying a newspaper is not a financial deal," explained Prudencio Somera, former president of the *Chronicle*. "A newspaper is a mouthpiece." Rodolfo Reyes, former press secretary of President Ramos, put it more succinctly. A newspaper, he said, is like "a gun in the holster," to be pulled out when the owner needs to use it. In the Philippines, where there is intense competition among rival elites for business opportunities subject to arbitrary and not always impartial state regulation, businessmen use every weapon in their arsenals to influence those who run the state machinery. One of these weapons is the newspaper.

A newspaper, however, is an expensive gun, especially given the soaring costs of newsprint in the 1990s. A fair-sized newspaper can mean operating costs of P10 million a month. It is a luxury few can afford. Thus, the face of publishing is changing, with, increasingly now, wealthy Chinese-Filipino businessmen acquiring ownership of newspapers.

The trend began in 1984, when banker and shipping line owner Emilio Yap took over the *Bulletin Today* in a series of controversial corporate maneuvers that followed the death of its publisher Hans Menzi. In July 1986, Betty Go-Belmonte, who came from a Filipino-Chinese publishing family, broke away from the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* to set up the *Philippine Star*, initially with the help of a P2-million investment from controversial Chinese-Filipino businessman William Gatchalian.

In 1988, tycoon John Gokongwei Jr. purchased the *Manila Times* from the Roces family. In 1991, the Yuchengcos, a Chinese-Filipino family whose diverse interests include banking, manufacturing and agribusiness, bought into the *Manila Standard*, which was set up by the Elizalde family in 1987, but later sold to the Sorianos in 1989. (The Yuchengcos, however, sold their shares to the Spanish mestizo Razon family in 1996.)

In 1992, Eugenio Lopez Jr., whose family owns broadcast giant ABS-CBN, divested himself of his interests in the *Manila Chronicle*, and halved his shares between Chinese-Filipino stockbroker Robert Coyiuto and telephone king Antonio Cojuangco of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

In addition, controversial tycoon Lucio Tan is believed to be bankrolling *Today* and providing a steady stream of advertising revenues to the cash-strapped *Ang Pahayagang Malaya*. Both newspapers have defended Tan's position in his tax evasion charges and his acquisition of Philippine Airlines.

The ascendancy of Chinese-Filipino businessmen to the heights of publishing parallels their growing control of important sectors of the Philippine economy. Their control of publishing is not fortuitous: For some of these tycoons, owning a newspaper means having legitimacy and political clout. As they compete with other sections of the business elite, ethnic-Chinese entrepreneurs have begun to wield the weapons — the media included — which have long been in the hands of Spanish mestizo and native elites.

In the past, these businessmen were wary about calling attention to themselves. Such caution stemmed from a history of persecution and shakedowns by a succession of governments. Insecurity about their citizenship status and nationalization laws prevented the community from taking an active and overt political role. But with the repeal of restrictive nationalization laws and the large-scale granting of Filipino citizenship in the 1970s, ethnic-Chinese businessmen began to be more confident both about their business involvements and also their engagement with mainstream Philippine society.

The Power of the Press

The increasing power and influence of the press, especially in the media-sensitive Ramos presidency, has made it a tempting arena for waging political and business battles. The post-1986 proprietors, like their pre-martial law counterparts, are aware of their clout — and they use it. In two recent instances, newspaper owners used the editorial pages of their dailies to persuade Malacañang to set aside the outcomes of public biddings which were unfavorable to them. These cases illustrate the potency of the newspaper as weapon in a setup where business competition is regulated by a state machinery that is vulnerable to political influence.

In the second half of October 1995, the *Manila Bulletin* ran daily front-page stories criticizing the awarding of the purchase of the Manila Hotel to a Malaysian consortium. Publisher Emilio Yap had lost the bidding and, arguing that the historic building was part of the "national patrimony," used the paper to generate support in Malacañang and in the Supreme Court to reconsider the bid. The President did in fact intervene, by asking his aides to ensure a deal that would not leave out Yap. The Supreme Court also ruled in Yap's favor in February 1997, when it declared that the hotel was indeed part of the national patrimony and that the contract to manage it should be awarded to Yap's firm.

In August to September 1996, the *Manila Standard* ran editorials and news stories questioning the awarding by the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority of the contract for port services to the Hong Kong company Hutchison Ports Philippines Inc. Although a lower price was offered, the bid was lost by the International

Container Terminal Services Inc., owned by the Razon family who are also part-owners of the *Standard.* The paper campaigned for a reconsideration of the bid, and other papers followed with news reports on the controversy. In the end, as a result in part of the media brouhaha led by the *Standard,* President Ramos ordered the bidding rescinded.

These two cases demonstrate the extreme to which press proprietors have abused their powers, setting aside the canons of good journalism and social responsibility by using the opinion and news pages of their papers to campaign for their business interests. In both these instances, publishers have put the profitability of their business enterprises over that of their duty to report without fear or favor.

Journalists and most media owners proclaim adherence to the liberal notions of the newspaper as a public trust and of the press acting as the Fourth Estate, guarding against government abuse. However, such beliefs are sometimes compromised in the daily grind of journalism, as editors and publishers make judgments not based solely on journalistic ethics or standards, or by a social responsibility to inform and uphold the truth, but by more pecuniary business and political considerations.

On the surface, journalists and media proprietors recognize the need for responsibility and see that the civic duty of the journalist is to report the truth wholly and fairly, no matter who gets hurt. The prescriptive norms for journalism are very clearly spelled out in codes of journalistic conduct formulated by the biggest media organizations in the country — the Philippine Press Institute (PPI), which represents newspaper publishers, and the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkasters ng Pilipinas (KBP), the self-regulating body that oversees the broadcast industry. The PPI Code of Ethics says in no uncertain terms: "The ethical journalist does not bend facts to suit his biases or to please benefactors." It also exhorts journalists to "scrupulously report and interpret the news, taking care not to suppress essential facts nor distort the truth by improper omission or emphasis."[10]

Similarly, the KBP's Television Code makes a pitch for social responsibility when it encourages broadcast stations to air public affairs programs "geared toward building an enlightened citizenry through the discussion and clarification of issues of national and international significance."[11]

At the same time, it would be simplistic to say that newspapers are merely mouthpieces of their owners, that they are nothing better than company bulletins. The reality is more complex. Proprietors intervene in editorial decision-making in varying degrees and in different ways. Some give their editors wide latitude to decide on a spectrum of stories; they may even refuse to intercede on behalf of their business interests, intervening only when they are under severe pressure from powerful officials to slow down on critical reporting. Others take a middle road: They meddle only when their business interests are directly at stake. On the other extreme, the owner takes the place of editors as gatekeeper of news and information, deciding what readers will find in their morning paper.[12]

The rest of this paper will deal with case studies of the two extremes: the liberal proprietor represented by the Gokongweis of the *Manila Times* and the interventionist owner represented by Emilio Yap, publisher of the *Manila Bulletin.*

Pushing the Limits at the *Times*

The eldest daughter of John Gokongwei Jr. became publisher of the *Manila Times* in December 1988 at the age of 28, when her father bought the historic paper from the Roceses, a Spanish mestizo family which had been involved in publishing since the early part of the 20th century. Robina Gokongwei studied journalism, first at the University of the Philippines (UP) and later at New York University. She was briefly a staffmember of the activist *Philippine Collegian,* the UP student paper. Her younger sister Lisa, who is being groomed to take over the paper, also took up journalism courses in the United States.

The changing character of the *Manila Times* since 1989, when the Gokongwei family took over, reflects the family's learning process about journalism and demonstrates the role played by independent-minded editors in pushing the limits of critical reporting in a paper owned by traditionally cautious proprietors.

One of the Philippines' savviest businessmen, John Gokongwei built an empire that includes nearly 40 companies involved in food manufacturing, banking, telecommunications, shopping malls and most recently, an airline. Low-key and unpretentious, he shuns publicity, even in his own paper. He also does not like to be embroiled in controversy if he can help it. Thus, at first, the *Times* was an insipid paper. "Our policy was, don't be mean if you don't have to," said a company executive. "We avoided politics. We didn't want to make enemies."[13]

Gokongwei, however, seldom intervened in editorial decision-making. His role was largely limited to reviewing the editorials, faxed to his office everyday. Mostly, he approved the pieces, sometimes directing only that they be toned down. The editors and staff, however, were aware of his cautious bent. As a former senior editor of the paper said: "They didn't tell you exactly what the rules were. They just reacted after a story had come out. As long as you show both sides, they said, it's okay. They never killed a story. If at all, they wanted some stories to be less prominent, to avoid offending certain advertisers."[14]

To the paper's reporters, the pressures came from just knowing who the owners were. "Although there were no instructions, we would play down stories if these were about Gokongwei companies involved in something controversial," the editor said. This distaste for controversy made for a boring paper in a market that was crowded with sensational news. Chief editor Frederick Agcaoili, who once edited a paper in the Marcos-era Journal group of publications, went along with what he sensed the Gokongweis wanted.

Lisa Gokongwei looks back at those initial years with some regret: "Ricky [Agcaoili] was cautious, although to be honest, those were the signals sent by management: Don't offend anyone. Instead of being offensive, we were very careful not to hurt anyone, including our enemies, because they might think we were using the paper. Ricky was a loyal employee and his tendency was, these are my employers, I'll do what they want."[15]

After a few years, the Gokongweis realized that they were losing heavily on a paper that very few people read and which had a minimal impact on the national consciousness. Lisa and Robina Gokongwei say their father bought the paper thinking it would make money, but company insiders say that the family also wanted the prestige — and the protection — that owning a newspaper brings. Clearly, a bland, lackluster paper would not bring much of either.

Beset by financial worries (the paper was being subsidized by infusions of capital, as well as advertising, from other Gokongwei firms) and the continuous defection of its best staffmembers, the family saw that a change was necessary. "We realized that the paper would go nowhere given the old line," said Lisa Gokongwei, and so they scouted for a new editor. "We wanted someone who could help us come out with a newspaper that would sell in the market, a real newspaper involving the community to participate in government and society." Their choice was Malou Mangahas, a former reporter and desk editor of the *Manila Times*, and once the activist editor of the *Philippine Collegian* and president of the UP Student Council.

Mangahas' appointment in 1995 signaled a fresh start for the moribund paper. She brought in new editors, most of them like herself — in their thirties, with activist backgrounds, and with more passion and enthusiasm for journalism than their predecessors. The result was a livelier paper which was not afraid of controversy and occasionally ran exposés on high officials.

John Gokongwei still reviews the editorials daily, and still orders changes, mainly to tone down strident language, changes which the editors believe do not compromise their independence. Over the months, the family and their editors have arrived at a workable arrangement and a consensus on what the paper should be. The staff enjoys considerable freedom, but is cautious on articles involving Gokongwei's business interests. They have also been allowed to negotiate on sensitive political stories on which the family was being pressured.

In 1995, the paper prepared to run a special report on questionable expenses incurred by the Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives. When Speaker Jose de Venecia got wind of the article, he called John Gokongwei, his wife and several of his children to ask that the article not be published. Meeting with the paper's editors and one columnist, de Venecia made the same appeal. The family was divided. John Gokongwei himself did not want to displease the Speaker, who had begun hinting about past favors. But his daughters put up a fight. The editors were also adamant: Mangahas, for one, feared that if the paper gave in to this request, it would open the floodgates to similar demands, so she held her ground, threatening to leave the paper if de Venecia got his way.[16] In the end, John Gokongwei gave in to his daughters' position. The paper printed the offending article side-by-side with an interview with the Speaker.

It was, by all accounts, a "baptism of fire" for everyone at the paper. Through incidents like these, the Gokongweis and the *Times* editors have worked out an understanding of their respective roles. "It is important to determine what the publisher's role is," said Mangahas. "It was clear to me that they got the paper as an investment, and also for protection. When I became editor, we had several meetings. I tried to draw out Lisa and Robina and the editors to agree on what the paper should be... I told Lisa, to you the paper is a self-respect project. The Gokongwei children are firm supporters of the paper. It's bringing them a face and a name and a sense of power that they never had. Now politicians call them. But they have never really used the paper. John Gokongwei usually goes with what the staff decides should go into the front page."

To be sure, there are other difficulties. The family, for one, did not send clear signals as to how their corporate interests were to be treated in the paper. When they were ignored or given only minor play, some family members were offended.

Apparently, there is no consensus among them as to how these things should be handled. The family is also wary about being seen as using the paper against its rivals, so the staff has been cautious about running negative stories not just about Gokongwei firms, but also their competitors.

The important thing, however, is that there is mutual respect between the editors and the Gokongweis. In tight situations, a compromise is ironed out, no matter how difficult. The editors are sensitive to the Gokongweis' vulnerabilities, that is why Mangahas has asked the family to refer all requests from politicians to her, to shield them from pressure. On the other hand, the Gokongweis are sophisticated businesspeople who realize that the best protection they can get is a credible paper with a fighting staff feared and respected by politicians. They realize that the paper's credibility would be eroded if they brazenly use it to promote their business interests.

"Even if the paper is small, it has a credibility and integrity that gives us a certain influence," said someone close to the family. "If you lose credibility, you won't sell the paper and you won't have influence either. If we want to use the paper for protection, then the best thing for us is to get people like Malou."

The Gokongweis believe that both society and family interests are served by having a credible paper. The younger generation, especially, partly due to their youth and U.S. education, has rather liberal notions of the press and enough sophistication to know that a livelier paper will sell better. At the same time, they have realized since 1989 that publishing is not like other businesses, and that there has to be a give-and-take between editors and publishers. "The role of the newspaper is changing," said Lisa Gokongwei, "but the watchdog role will never change. It's been a learning process for us since 1989."

Mangahas, on the other hand, is in touch daily with the Gokongweis and tries to probe them on their views on current issues. She realizes that the newspaper editorial should reflect the owners' views, which she thinks the family has not sufficiently articulated. "The only marching orders we got was that we must study the issues first before we attack and that we should have the public welfare at heart," she said. Within this broad framework, *Times* editors can run hard-hitting exposés and advocate social reforms, as long as they don't directly affect Gokongwei business interests. This way, they do not feel that they have compromised their standards or ideals or abdicated their responsibility as journalists. It is a modus vivendi that they, and the owners, are comfortable with.

Since 1994, there have been only rare instances when John or Robina Gokongwei asked that the wording of an editorial be toned down. There were also times when certain stories had to be played down because they concerned the Gokongweis' business rivals. What if a scandal breaks out in one of the family companies? "We would never break the story," said Lisa Gokongwei. "The editors would have to clear with us first. Unless some other paper broke the story, we'd never run it on our own."

The *Bulletin's* Tradition of Obedience

The *Manila Bulletin* represents the opposite extreme of proprietarial intervention. The character and editorial policy of the paper revolves around its

owner, Emilio Yap, a first-generation Chinese immigrant who started out as a scrap-metal dealer before World War II. After the war, he set up a business repairing surplus U.S. Army jeeps and later, also founded Philippine President Lines, a medium-sized shipping line, and the Philippine Trust Co. (Philtrust), a fair-sized bank. Yap's entry into publishing was fortuitous. He was invited by Hans Menzi, the *Bulletin's* German-Swiss owner, to invest in the paper in 1961.

For the next 25 years, Yap was a low-key presence in the paper. But when Menzi died in 1984, he seized the opportunity to acquire the former's shares. When the *Bulletin* was sequestered by the Aquino government in 1986, on the basis of evidence that Marcos nominees owned most of the paper, Yap maneuvered to get a Supreme Court ruling that would allow him to purchase the Marcos shares. Before anyone knew it, the little-known businessman had become the majority owner of the country's biggest newspaper.

Yap runs the paper in a manner that some *Bulletin* editors describe as authoritarian. While Menzi was concerned largely with the company's business affairs and intervened in editorial matters only when Marcos himself objected to what the paper contained, Yap approves the daily line-up of stories for the next day's paper. From his penthouse at the Philippine President Lines building on United Nations Avenue in downtown Manila, he instructs editors at the *Bulletin* building in Intramuros on which stories to kill and which should be prominently displayed. Sometimes, editors said, Yap even writes the headlines himself. He also occasionally chooses which government figure should be featured on the cover of *Panorama*, the paper's Sunday magazine. "Yap runs the family businesses with an iron hand," an editor said. "No dissension is allowed. It's always a monologue when he talks at board meetings, no one dares disagree with him."[17]

Yap's daily interventions at the *Bulletin* seem to have two objectives: to use the paper as a jump-off point to social prominence and as a springboard for protecting and advancing his business interests. On the front pages of the paper, which until the early 1990s was the largest in the country, he has projected himself as the leader of the Chinese-Filipino community, even if he is not as wealthy, nor his business holdings as diversified, as the other "taipans." The *Bulletin* regularly features the company chairman's philanthropic activities, including his donations to various charities and concerns.

More than for self-promotion, however, the *Bulletin* has been wielded against Yap's business rivals and used to promote his friends and allies. For example, in the late 1980s, the paper took on then Central Bank governor Jose ("Jobo") Fernandez, who turned down an application from Yap's Philippine Trust Co. to set up a bank branch in a commercial district in Metro Manila. "Yap really got mad, so we bannered all the bad reports about Jobo, while the positive stories were never printed," said an editor. Similarly, the paper has not been kind to Richard Gordon, chief of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority. Yap ordered his editors to make sure that Gordon's name does not appear in the paper, although he never explained why. The editors believe that it was because Gordon rebuffed Yap's plan to set up a Philtrust branch at Subic. The *Bulletin* also took a strong position against proposed legislation that would allow the entry of foreign banks, a development which would hurt Philtrust's interests.

On the other hand, the *Bulletin* treats the courts, particularly the Supreme Court, with kid gloves. It is the only paper that regularly prints prominent front-

page stories, with accompanying photographs, on every appointment to or retirement from the Supreme Court. and Court of Appeals. In late 1993, when the high tribunal was being linked to corruption charges, the *Bulletin* was the only paper which ran lengthy defenses of the justices who were accused of wrongdoing. There appear to be self-serving reasons for this. "Yap is most careful about the courts, because of his many lawsuits," said an editor. "He's still uncertain about the future of his companies and he believes that in the end, the courts will determine his fate." Part of the uncertainty stems from the still unsettled claims of Eduardo Cojuangco on a significant chunk of *Bulletin* shares, as well as Imelda Marcos's claims that the Menzi shares purchased by Yap actually belonged to her son.

Such an uncertain hold over the *Bulletin* ensures that Yap will toe the government line. "Whoever comes into office in Malacañang is assured the *Bulletin* won't be a problem," said an editor. Indeed, the paper quickly and effortlessly made a shift from supporting Marcos to endorsing Aquino in 1986. Although Yap supported Miriam Defensor-Santiago in the 1992 election campaign, and used the paper to run daily stories favorable to her and unflattering to the other candidates, the *Bulletin* quickly shifted over to supporting Ramos when he became president.

Thus, except when Yap is lashing out at his enemies, as in the Manila Hotel bidding case cited earlier and the other cases described above, the *Bulletin* is a profoundly conservative paper, much like Yap himself. "He is more conservative than General Menzi," said Ben Rodriguez, chief editor of the *Bulletin*. "Remember that Mr. Yap has been a banker all his life. But like Menzi, he prefers to support whoever is in power as president, for the simple reason that the *Bulletin* is the biggest paper. They didn't want the paper to rock the boat. They didn't want the *Bulletin* to join the voices of dissent or else, there might be trouble."

Compared to the Gokongweis, Yap appears to have a less liberal notion of the role of the press. "We don't close our eyes to things that are happening," said Rodriguez, "but we do things more conservatively. We don't want to scream, we don't shout, we just report."[18] While the Gokongweis and their editors talk of the press as watchdog, there is little of that tradition in the *Bulletin*.

In its reporting, the *Bulletin* highlights the positive aspects of government and the national situation. This is partly a carry-over from the martial law years. Unlike the *Times*, which stopped publication during martial rule, the *Bulletin's* top editors have remained in their posts for over 25 years and still have martial-law reflexes. Rodriguez, for one, has been with the paper since his graduation from college in 1950 and stuck to it, except for a brief period in the early 1980s when he was fired by Menzi to appease Marcos about a report run by the paper on communist gains in Abra province. His deputy, C. Icban Jr., has also been with the paper for decades.

Both men, other editors and journalists at the paper said, do not bother to thresh things out with Yap, or to demand more freedom than he currently allows. Such complacency is partly rooted in the fact that the *Bulletin*, despite being a bland paper and Yap's editorial intervention, is still the highest revenue-earner in the industry. Although it has lost out to the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* in terms of circulation, the *Bulletin* continues to make money from advertising. Thus, there is no impetus, profit-wise, for any kind of drastic change in editorial policy.

Secondly, the *Bulletin's* top people belong to the Marcos-era crop of editors who learned years ago not to question orders. In the early martial law years, recalled Rodriguez, a military censor was stationed at the paper's office and he cut up stories

as he pleased. When the censor left, the editors were regularly summoned to meetings with the military and told what line to take. There was also a Print Media Council directed by a Marcos man who gave guidelines for papers to follow, and the Malacañang-based Information Ministry regularly dished out press releases which the *Bulletin* dutifully ran.

Rodriguez himself seems to have been traumatized by his firing in 1983. As he remembered it, he was fired not so much because he pushed the limits, but because he was not aware that an article that he allowed to be printed would displease Marcos so much. That is why he presides over the *Bulletin* with extreme caution and with a great sensitivity to what Yap wants. On the Manila Hotel case, for example, Rodriguez explained: "We did it on our own. We didn't get signals or orders. I'm pretty sure that the other papers would do the same, that the *Manila Times* would play up such a story, too, if Gokongwei were involved."

Unlike the editors of the *Times*, however, Rodriguez seems to have imbibed the rules of proprietarial meddling unquestioningly, learning to anticipate what would please the owner rather than struggling things out. It can be argued that this is the only path available to those who work for Yap, who provides the third reason for the paper's timidity. The *Bulletin's* owner has been described by his editors and those of other papers who know him as single-minded, stubborn and unwilling to comprehend notions of journalistic standards and the paper as a public trust. Said Maximo Soliven, who has seen a range of owner intervention in newspapers: "Yap is an extreme case. For him, the *Bulletin* is an ego trip."[19]

Some Conclusions on Media Ownership and Responsibility

The cases of the *Bulletin* and the *Times* show the range of proprietarial intervention in Philippine newspapers. The two newspapers are a study in contrast: the more or less *laissez-faire* approach of the Gokongweis at the *Times* and the heavy hand wielded by Yap at the *Bulletin*.

This paper tries to explain the factors that account for such differences. The most important factors, it appears, are subjective: They have to do with the nature of the proprietors and that of their editors. There does not seem to be a deterministic relationship between the ownership of a paper and that paper automatically mirroring its publishers' corporate interests. Owners intervene in their newspapers in various ways, such intervention being a function of the push and pull between the following factors:

The Nature of the Proprietor

The more liberal approach of the Gokongweis is partly explained by the fact that the younger, liberal-educated generation has taken over the day-to-day running of the paper. Moreover, compared to Yap, John Gokongwei is a savvy enough a businessman to realize that a small newspaper can increase its clout if it is daring and credible. A small-circulation daily that merely kowtows to its owners would probably be ignored by politicians and would not wield much influence. *The Manila Times* is much more influential now. It is read by Manila's political class, and is therefore a more potent tool if the family decides to wield it. The Gokongweis know

this, and they realize that their money is better spent on a good paper that on a bland, insipid one that most everyone ignores.

In contrast, Yap could not care less. *The Bulletin* remains the second biggest paper in the country, and its size alone guarantees it a great deal of influence. Moreover, Yap, who is in his seventies, and who remains a conservative and sheltered businessman, does not like exposés unless they are against his business rivals. Editors say that he also does not have any appreciation of the newspaper as a public trust. Instead, he considers the *Bulletin* a personal fiefdom.

Unlike Gokongwei, whose business interests are wide and varied, Yap's main revenue earner is the *Bulletin*. He therefore has the tendency to use the paper to promote his business interests. In contrast, the *Manila Times* is the only losing company in the Gokongwei business empire, which will flourish even without the influence wielded by a newspaper. More confident about the future of their conglomerate, the Gokongweis have less motivation to use the *Times* to advance their corporate causes.

The Nature of the Editors

The generational, career and political backgrounds of editors determine to a large extent how much they will bargain with their proprietors. The contrasting backgrounds of the editors of the *Times* and the *Bulletin* attest to this. Those at the *Times* are in their thirties, entered journalism during the twilight years of the Marcos regime or the early years of the Aquino government. They also have activist experiences, usually with crusading college newspapers.

In comparison, the *Bulletin's* editors are a generation older — Rodriguez, for example, is in his seventies. They also bore the brunt of martial-law censorship and control of the press. They therefore tend to be more cautious and wary, less daring and less energetic about negotiating compromises or winning more elbow room.

That editors deliver what owners demand is by no means a set pattern. Over the years, even under martial law, there has always been space to negotiate and freedom to probe the limits. The contrasting experiences of the *Times* editors — Agcaoili and Mangahas — show how a feisty editor can win greater editorial freedom. Similarly, there was room to maneuver in the *Bulletin*, despite martial law, when Menzi was publisher, as he was more liberal in his views. All it took were some daring women columnists and editors.

Exogenous Factors

The negotiations between owners and editors do not take place in a vacuum. While internal, subjective factors are important, exogenous factors could also have a role to play. One of these is readership. Before 1986, newspaper owners were so closely identified with Marcos that they became the natural targets of protest. After the Aquino assassination in 1983 and again, shortly before the February 1986 uprising, the anti-Marcos opposition called for a boycott of the "crony press." The boycott hurt sales and prompted some serious thinking in Manila newsrooms. Today it is harder for readers to compel newspaper owners to be more circumspect about using the press for their own ends because the State is no longer involved and the targets are diffused.

Individual letters to the editor or phone calls protesting distorted coverage, however, can give editors ammunition in their battles to win more freedoms from their proprietors. Certainly, readers' protests have prompted some newspapers to be more careful about using nude or gory photographs on the front page. Similarly, non-government organizations have had an impact in forcing reporters to be more careful in their coverage of sensational crimes, especially those involving women and children.

Within the media themselves, there are organizations with some power to check on journalistic excesses. These include the Philippine Press Institute (PPI), the national organization of newspaper publishers, which can, in theory, compel compliance with the Journalists' Code of Ethics. The PPI, however, is a publishers' club and is understandably wary about policing its own. Its activities so far have centered on upgrading skills and on winning concessions from government for publishers, such as tax exemptions and the like.

There is also the National Press Club, but it is largely a social club without much power. Its activism on press issues depends on the membership of its board, which is elected every year. In the last few years, many journalists have lost interest in the NPC because of the infighting and wrangling within its ranks. The Club has also become the bastion of *Bulletin* journalists whose election campaigns are said to be funded by Emilio Yap. Not surprisingly, the NPC has ignored the issue of owner intervention in newspapers.

A third organization is a small NGO called the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility, which was formed in 1989 to monitor the media. It publishes a quarterly review of the press, which looks at, among others, ethical lapses. It also conducts seminars and workshops on media issues and brings journalists together for consensus-building meetings. The Center deals with a wide range of media problems and has taken up with ownership issues in its quarterly. While it is widely read by journalists, the quarterly can only discuss issues and recommend courses of action.[20]

Implications for Civil Society

Public awareness of the extent of owner intervention in newspapers is crucial. Most readers do not know the proprietarial interests and agenda behind their newspapers and can therefore not be expected to be critical of intervening owners. Past experience has shown that both journalists and newspaper owners are sensitive to public pressure and criticism. This is where civil society can play a role.

A vigilant public that protests the proprietors' blatant use of the newspapers for their own ends can demand greater accountability and transparency from publishers and editors. The boycott of Marcos-controlled newspapers after the Aquino assassination in 1983 is instructive. It resulted in real nervousness in the newsrooms and a great deal of soul-searching among journalists. It also encouraged the growth of the anti-Marcos press, which thrived in the years of protest following the Aquino assassination. Reader reaction is the most important check against excesses. It compels editors and publishers to rethink their policies and to act immediately, for fear of losing their following.

NGOs involved in women and children's issues have had some success in forcing newpapers to be more responsible in their coverage of stories related to these concerns. Letters to the editor sent by infuriated NGOs have pushed editors to examine their coverage, to admit their mistakes, and even to write apologies. Several Manila newspapers have formulated clear guidelines on the editorial treatment of violent crimes committed against women and children. There are also rules about the use of photographs, especially of children involved in crimes, either as victims or offenders. Reacting to widespread perception that the media had gone overboard in its coverage of violence, especially against women and children, a group of journalists got together in December 1993 under the auspices of the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility to draft guidelines for the coverage of such crimes.[21]

A strong demonstration of public concern by NGOs, people's organizations, the churches and affected communities, will force journalists and editors to take heed. Most of the time, newspapers are extremely jealous of their freedoms, resisting any attempts by politicians, businesspeople or other vested-interest groups, to intervene in the way they report or comment on the news. However, they can be sensitive to the reaction of a broad reading public, as well as to groups representing marginalized sectors of Philippine society. The efficacy of letters to the editor has been demonstrated. More concrete action — such as newspaper boycotts or rallies in front of press offices — could shake the complacency of journalists and make them rethink their biases, if not to undertake immediate reforms. If owners and journalists sense that the newspaper-reading public is reacting to excessive owner intervention, they will make amends.

It is a universally recognized precept that a free and independent press is crucial to democracy. While the Philippine media are generally free, there are constraints to their liberty and independence. The structure of newspaper ownership is one of these constraints, but as this paper has shown, it is by no means an insurmountable one. Proprietarial intervention has resulted in bland newspapers which cannot act credibly as watchdogs of government abuse. Newspapers too closely identified with the interests of their owners cannot be effective fora for intelligent discussion and debate or catalysts for social reforms.

Ownership by big business, however, does not always have to be an impediment to a free press. As long as publishers are conscious of their civic duty, editors insist on their independence, and the public demands compliance with the standards of responsible journalism, the press can be a stable pillar of democracy. Ultimately, a noisy and vigilant public is the best deterrent to press abuses. For in the end, the press bows to the only power it recognizes as higher than itself: the public.

ENDNOTES

1 These figures are from the Philippine Information Agency, *Media Statistics*, 1993.
2 See, for example, Melinda Quintos de Jesus, "The Media: High on Verve, Low on Substance," in *Edsa: Looking Back, Looking Forward*, Vol. II (Manila: Foundation for Worldwide People Power, Inc., 1996) and the chapter on the Philippines in Jon Vanden Heuvel and Everette E. Dennis, *The Unfolding Lotus: East Asia's Changing Media* (New York: The Freedom Forum Media Studies Center, no date).
3 De Jesus, ibid., p.193.
4 See De Jesus, ibid. or Rigoberto Tiglao, "The Press Phoenix Rises from the Ashes," in the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, February 28, 1991.
5 Quoted in De Jesus, op. cit., p. 202.
6 See Amando Doronila, "The Media," in Alfred McCoy (ed.), *The Philippines after Marcos*, Australia, 1985 and Rosalinda Pineda-Ofreneo, *The Manipulated Press: A History of Philippine Journalism since 1945*, 2ND edition (Manila: 1986).
7 Interview with a newspaper publisher who requested anonymity, February 26, 1994.
8 Interview with Maximo Soliven, October 29, 1996.
9 Although the Philippine population continues to grow, the newspaper market has remained stagnant since the late 1970s. The combined circulation of newspapers hover at around 1.5 million, which is the circulation of a fair-sized newspaper in Japan.
10 Philippine Press Institute, *Journalists' Code of Ethics*.
11 Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas, *Television Code*.
12 This rough typology of newspaper proprietors is based on interviews conducted by the author for a separate study on media ownership undertaken by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism.
13 Interview with a *Times* executive, February 1994.
14 Interview with a senior *Times* editor who asked not to be named, February 1994.
15 Interview with Lisa Gokongwei, August 29, 1996.
16 This account is based on separate interviews with Malou Mangahas, August 25, 1996 and Lisa Gokongwei, August 29, 1996.
17 Interviews with two senior editors at the *Bulletin* who asked not to be named; these took place in March 1994 and September1996.
18 Interview with Ben Rodriguez, September 11, 1996.
19 Interview with Maximo Soliven, October 29, 1996.
20 This discussion of media organizations is taken from Sheila S. Coronel, "Monitoring a Free Press: The Case of the Philippines," paper presented at a seminar on "Media Monitors in Asia," sponsored by the Asian Mass Communications Research and Information Center, in Bangkok, Thailand, June 18 to July 1, 1994.
21 See *Philippine Journalism Review*, January–March 1994.

Grooming the Wards
Dynamics Between a Political Party and Community Groups

Concern over the inability of Filipino voters to express their dissatisfaction and distress by voting out public officials during elections is a relatively recent development among democratic theorists and practitioners. Although many political thinkers and constitutionalists zealously advance the doctrine that "sovereignty resides in the people," it is popularly believed that the people's will or choice is subverted in every electoral exercise. The Philippine experience indeed points to the use of "guns, goons and gold," party-switching, dominance of affluent candidates, etc., as serious obstructions to the workings of real democracy. Thus, the people attach a derogatory meaning to partisan politics, viewing it as dirty, corrupt and disreputable.

On the local level, political parties are visible and active only during election season. It is commonly accepted that their primary concern is to get and keep power rather than to advance great principles.[1] Moreover, the perception is that re-electionists and the governing elite can win power only by maintaining armies of "professional vote-getters" or wards ("lider"), and financing these through the spoils of office. Wards are responsible for the success of mediocre, incompetent and "trapo" (traditional politician) candidates in Philippine politics.

This paper therefore describes the process and practices in recruiting and grooming the wards, the relationships developed between politicians and wards, and analyzes the role and influence of community leaders in the process. Furthermore, there will be an attempt to show possible conflict areas and management in grooming the wards.

The paper is exploratory and preliminary. It is based on interviews with political personalities in the first legislative district of Leyte, popular and scholarly publications, and the researcher's observations during the 1995 and the 1996 Sangguniang Kabataan (SK, or youth councils) elections. Time constraints and the unavailability of data limited the presentation of a more detailed account of power-getting strategies, as well as actionable recommendations on how political parties can contribute to the consolidation of democracy in the Philippines.

Political Description of the Area

The first legislative district of Leyte comprises the city of Tacloban, and the municipalities of Alang-alang, Babatngon, Palo, San Miguel, Sta. Fe, Tanauan and Tolosa. It is situated in the northwest part of Leyte province. Except for Tacloban City which enjoys a first-class income classification, all the others are classified as either 5TH- or 6TH-class municipalities.

The 1ST district has 360 barangays, 138 of which are in Tacloban City (the largest number); the municipality of Tolosa has the least, with 15. A total of 875 precincts served 174,653 registered voters in the last elections.

After the fall of the Romualdez/Marcos clans in 1986, the first district was served for two successive terms by Cirilo "Roy" Montejo, who earned praise from the Institute for Strategic and Development Studies (ISDS) as an outstanding congressman. In 1995, however, the former First Lady, Imelda R. Marcos, defeated him in an election that Montejo refused to concede. His claim that she is disqualified (for lack of residency) to run is still awaiting action from the Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Marcos has been sworn in as member of the House of Representatives. Leyteños still look up to her as their patroness. Political elites in the area continue to solicit her "blessings" when seeking public office. And while the incumbent provincial leaders are not members of her political party, the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL), they have maintained very comfortable relations with her.

Choosing the Wards

Since the start, politics in the Philippines, whether national or local, has been a battle fought between those who have the means or resources for getting and holding on to power. Among these resources are the wards or subleaders. They are widely believed to be crucially important in determining if a politician will win or lose an election. Candidates rely on their support to get votes.

In the 1ST legislative district of Leyte, local party bosses hardly recall the existence of any party guidelines or policy document on ward recruitment and selection. They maintain that spotting and training wardleaders is the job of the local party chief or the standard-bearer in an election. Guest candidates or "imports" bring in their own people. The elders of the political party simply suggest additional techniques and guide the candidates. It is because the party has a minimal hold on its leaders and members.[2]

Unlike in fraternities and sororities, the choice and recruitment of political wards do not entail a series of tests. Initiation rites are absent and most of the "liders" scarcely know about party goals, objectives and vision. As wards their sole concern is to put their candidates in the city or municipal halls.

Targets for recruitment as "lider", according to local politicians, are those individuals with the following characteristics:

They belong to large families. Politicians need votes and this means quantity, not quality. Specific areas or barangays are each dominated by a family or clan.

At this level, large families usually commit solid support to a candidate or party. Seldom are they divided, unlike on the national stage where politics causes family feuds.

Chairwoman Atillo of Brgy. X has been serving a town mayor for a long time now. She has held her position for two terms. Her clan has resided (tuminongnong) in the barangay for 20 years. Fifteen families (most members are of voting age) constitute the clan and she can count on them to rally behind her. Another ward from Tanauan, Leyte thinks she was recruited because she comes from the big and influential Moreto-Espina and Cornejo-Tolibas families.

The preference for wards coming from big families can best be explained by the fact that clans are actually the foundation of the leader-centered electoral parties.

They possess power and authority in the barangay. Political bosses, especially those whose experience dates back to the Marcos years, seek out the barangay captains or kagawads to be their ward leaders. These are influential persons in the locality, after all. Barangay officials need less training, having been exposed already to the intricacies of electoral politics, particularly in reaching out to opponents and handling political supporters. More importantly, they have a political base which can easily be tapped for votes. The Filipino cultural value of respect and obedience towards authority figures also explains the choice. These were the reasons given by businessman-turned-politician Mayor Roque Tiu of Tanauan for tapping barangay officials as his wards.

They are relatives, padrinos and trusted friends of the candidate. Being closely related, they tend to spend less, demand less money, and work round the clock to ensure the victory of the candidate. It is they who think up, implement and monitor the execution of campaign strategies, especially when it comes to generating and engaging in illegal activities. These wards are the ones who take care of tampering with the election results, coercing opponents and their supporters, etc.

When Mrs. M. of Brgy. 27 ran for Barangay Chairman against the incumbent who was also president of the Association of Barangay Councils, she was threatened by the latter's supporters. These were said to be goons from the market area, led by a cousin of Mrs. M.'s rival. In Brgy. 26, meanwhile, the same cousin filled local boarding houses with "boarders" and registered them as new voters. This was learned by the researcher from a ward.

As the votes were being counted in Brgy. 87, the lights went off more than five times during the night, although there was no power interruption or brownout in the area at the time. Trusted friends of the winning candidate were said to be responsible; it was said that every time the lights went off his opponent's winning margin gradually decreased, until finally the other candidate won by a small number of votes. The losing candidate (from the Liberal Party) could not even file a protest, after being threatened that to do so would cause his family and close supporters to be wiped out. He had to build a very thick and high wall around his house, and has stayed away from local politics since then.

Their loyalty has been proven. Those who have served the political party and stayed through thick and thin are good ward material. Most of them have worked very hard for the party boss and are committed to him emotionally. Aside from carrying out party chores, they run errands for the boss and eventually integrate into his family.

According to a former municipal mayor of Tolosa, Leyte who had been residing in Manila after the downfall of the Marcoses, he was asked by the former First Lady to return home and run in the May 1995 elections. To his surprise, Mrs. Marcos "anointed" another candidate, a fellow KBL member, to seek the same position. He was left with a small number of KBL loyalists in his municipality, but despite having been absent for quite a time, he lost by only six votes. (He is seeking a recount.) This man considers the few men who stuck it out with him as assets in his quest to return to power. Ties of loyalty bind them, he says ("may pinagsamahan").

Wards possess resources. Due to the rising cost of maintaining a political machine, the party or the local boss welcome wards who are able to contribute materially to the campaign. The would-be ward must not depend on the politician-candidate to sustain the loyalty of local supporters and voters. He/she must be able to give a luncheon or dinner party when the boss comes to visit, provide cigars and liquor to the electorate and generously respond to fund solicitations. In addition, the political boss would prefer a ward who can provide additional vehicles, communication equipment and security men. Usually, such a prospective ward would be a businessman.

Grooming the Wards

Wards believe that they are crucial in ensuring the success of their candidate. Not only do they round up support for him, they also guard the party against the maneuvers of their opponents. They are the "eyes and ears" of the candidate and for his sake are ready to pay with their blood and their life, even to the point of sacrificing their own families. Wards, therefore, take on a complicated, enormous and hazardous job. But politicians make the undertaking attractive, in order to establish enduring ties that can be counted on at a later time.

To nurture the special relationship with the wards, most political bosses use techniques such as (a) demonstrating closeness on the personal level, (b) extending material assistance and (c) inviting them to special family gatherings.

The "personal touch." According to local politicians in Tacloban and Tolosa, Leyte, one of the best ways to keep the "lider" on their side is to cultivate the human touch (which cannot be quantified in monetary terms). It won't do to pay attention to them only at election time. Politicians visit the wards in their homes regularly, take meals with them and interact/socialize with family members. They have to acknowledge the wards whenever they meet in public, or offer them a ride. Another personality behavior that politicians have to exhibit or project is to be approachable and helpful. Since most of the wards are not well off, they ask the

bosses to stand as sponsors at family ceremonies such as baptisms or weddings.[3] Politicians agree as a way of reciprocating the wards' services.

Inviting the wards to special family gatherings. Political leaders declared to the researcher that ties with the wards should not be broken off after the polls. Since most of them do not intend to retire after two candidacies, maintaining the relationship with their wards is a wise move. The latter should be made to feel that their bosses are committed to them as well. Political leaders have to demonstrate personal concern and sincerity in wishing to keep their friendship.

To show goodwill, the boss calls on them and their families to attend celebrations such as birthdays, anniversaries and other feasts given in the politician's home. The wards are allowed and encouraged to mingle with the other guests. They may also be introduced to party bigwigs especially those of national stature.

Personal problems are also attended to, and even solved through the intervention of the boss. One wardleader in Sagkahan district confessed that his son, a college student, got a village girl pregnant. He decided to ignore the plea of the girl's family for the couple to get married. When the boss heard about it, he called the ward to his house, advised him go ahead with the wedding, and promised to shoulder the cost.

Providing material assistance. Politicians readily admit that many of their wards are poor, looking up to them as their savior who can help change or improve their fortunes.

A tricycle diver in Barangay 5 left his job and worked as a ward for the mayor in the last two elections. When his candidate won, he was given a job in the City Hall as a casual employee, first as an electrician and later as a mechanic. Since there are many casual employees in the mayor's office, he actually works as an errand boy of the mayor's family. When he was hospitalized recently, the mayor paid for all his expenses. His home is filled with appliances in spite of his meager pay and his being the sole breadwinner of the family. The mayor's family gives him a food allowance.

A ward from Barangay 50-A attests that as a trusted lider of the local mayor, her relatives were able to find jobs. The mayor also gave them capital to put up a food-processing business.

Another ward stated that every month he goes to the mayor's house to receive an allowance. Those who are closest to him get theirs inside an airmail envelope while ordinary envelopes are for the other, newer wards. He is made to sign a sort of payroll every time. Asked where he thinks the money comes from, he said that although the mayor himself is not rich he has plenty of sources like the local businessmen and the infrastructure projects that are approved by his office.

Gutierrez has noted that voters and political actors down to the grassroots level usually align or identify themselves with political leaders who are best able to dispense patronage.[4]

Party bosses interviewed affirmed that their organizations do not consider it important to give formal political training to their wards. Considering that the lat-

ter have had little formal education, they said, making them undergo seminars and such may not be very effective or at least, the impact is not readily apparent. Instead, they believe that a better option is to provide allowances, food support, or scholarships for the children. They observed that the "liders" work very hard, exhibit initiative ("lumalabas ang dunong at talino") and perform assigned tasks, given the material incentives.

During electoral campaigns, the wards are given a "mobility fund" or allowance, to use as they see fit. No auditing takes place. In addition, the wards are given money to ensure adequate support in their area. After the election, they get a cash bonus, the amount of which depends on individual performance.

On the other hand, some municipal leaders revealed that a meeting is held at least three months before the elections where the wards discuss their problems and agree on strategies to increase and consolidate supporters. Voters are usually identified as belonging to any one of four categories: (a) "intelligent voters", (b) supporters, (c) "contras" and d) uncommitted voters. The wards concentrate on the last two categories, using various strategies.

The existing practices related to grooming the wards have dual significance. On one hand, they could provide or augment incomes, ensure the survival of the politician or party, open access to powerful individuals and strengthen the family as an institution. On the other hand, these practices make elections expensive, limit opportunities for public office to the moneyed individuals and families, and they create an overstaffed, demoralized, mediocre and inefficient bureaucracy.

Augmenting income. To the impoverished people of the first district of Leyte, the prospects of remunerated employment and patronage ("may nasasandalang pader") are very desirable. In a situation where education and skills are insufficient to qualify them for good jobs, and no matter how risky and time-consuming are the services rendered to the boss, particularist ties are strengthened and function as a channel for material support.[5] This may also mean social mobility.

Culturally, this reinforces two attitudes. One is fatalism ("bahala na") which emboldens an individual to take risks in the face of danger or the possibility of defeat. The other is personalism: the benefits or rewards obtained from the patron which can enhance one's life, with guarantees of intimacy, warmth and secure friendships.[6]

Political survival. Wards constitute an important asset of the candidate-politician or political party. Without them, the patron has no one to rely upon during the campaign (e.g. to distribute money, act as bodyguards and confidants). The wards express gratitude by their commitment and shrewdness in making the candidate viable and strong among the undecided and apathetic constituents.[7]

Access to the powerful. The ward and his relatives are guaranteed a sympathetic response to their needs at every office in the local government unit or in the locality where his patron is in command. Access means being able to advance and get protection for oneself and one's wife and children and parents, grandparents, in-laws and even friends and associates.

Culturally, this shows the Filipino value of "magaling", "malakas" or "mayabang." An expression of self-confidence, "yabang" is the refusal to be intimidated by clearly formidable odds.[8] "Galing" may be manifested in acting as the "people's" intercessor to the politician for various particularistic and personalistic needs (e.g. sports equipment, trophies, etc.).

Strengthening the family as a basic social unit. As long as people continue to prefer "personalized" political dealings and try to guarantee their maintenance, the family will remain the base for organizing political activities in the subnational level. Laquian stressed that where political support is personal, kinship ties are a great help to the leader. The more relatives a political leader has, the more likely he is to be powerful. This makes the family the main form of political organization or political base for aspirants.[9]

Expensive and elitist elections. Financial resources are a major weapon in a politician's arsenal. Candidates must be ready to spend on the daily maintenance of the wards and their families, medical assistance and ceremonial functions. This discourages competent persons from seeking public office if they have scant resources, and allows only the affluent to contest elections. Vatikiosis noted that democracy in the Philippines is dominated and manipulated by the rich and powerful.[10]

Appointment of supporters to government positions. As a consequence of patronage ties, civil service regulations on merit and competence are violated and innumerable undesirables, misfits and incompetents are employed. Local bureaucracies become overstaffed with a large number of contractual and casual employees with no definite assignments.[11] In addition, promotion becomes a reward for personal loyalty, obedient service and submission to the patron. Protégés do not exert much effort in their work because of the padrino system.

This is a manifestation of the spoils system ("palakasan") where opportunities and privileges are distributed among members, allies and friends of the clique in power.[12]

Relationship with the Communities

In the first legislative district of Leyte, barangay-based organizations are few and citizen membership is poor. Typically, they are active only on occasions such as the Santacruzan or the Flores de Mayo, fiestas, or distribution of relief goods after a natural disaster. Many of these organizations are church-based, young cooperatives, or creations of various government agencies. However, they may be drawn into partisan politics if their leaders do so, with the expectation of material rewards either as individuals or organizations.

In the Leyte municipalities that were observed for this paper, political leaders claimed that their respective organizations had established close ties with the different barangay groups, describing the relationship as a "give and take" one. The

barangay-based organizations and their leaders, for their part, admitted having supported individual candidates in the last two elections. Support is given to a candidate without necessarily meaning that goals are shared; it only means that the organization is guaranteed assistance from the candidate for its projects.[13] They justified their support or endorsement by saying that group resources are difficult to secure, while politicians would hardly turn down any subsequent request for assistance.

Some politicians may be reluctant donors (especially those who lost in the elections) but they still manage to extend help when asked. A closer look at the barangay setup shows that few people are well-off and these are the same persons who are close to the community power elite. The party leaders on the other hand, revealed that community leaders assist them in various ways during electoral campaigns. The latter discreetly evaluate the performance and loyalty of their wards, and countercheck the loyalty of the party/candidate's supporters. But the partymen stressed that officials of the barangay-based groups are not formally affiliated with a political party. Instead, a number of them owe personal loyalty to one or more of the candidates.

Community Leaders and Party Decision-making

In a real democracy, civic groups cannot afford to ignore the internal operations of political parties. While they have a common declared intention to serve the public good, it is the political parties that field most candidates for public office and determine who shall occupy formal positions of governmental power. Responsible and active citizen organizations are therefore needed and they should try to infiltrate political parties and their machinery to provide voter-constituents with a satisfying range of choices during legitimate exercises of changing or electing leaders. Such partnership would counteract the image of political parties as being motivated by self-interest rather than the collective good.

In the first district of Leyte, barangay-based organizations (BBOs) are reluctant and effectively powerless to bargain, negotiate or influence party decisions in terms of choosing wardleaders and candidates.

BBO leaders believe that matters of this nature are none of their business. It is the responsibility of the elected barangay leaders, they assert, to express the demands of the constituency to the party leaders. They further claim that their rank-and-file prefer to leave that responsibility to those whose who are interested and willing to be involved in periodic partisan activities.

The attitude allows members of an organization to endorse as many political aspirants as they want and explains why most citizens support individual candidates, and not parties, during elections. Sometimes, however, this results in internal conflict, from backbiting among members to disaffection and even temporary organizational dissolution. Organizations like the Barangay 74 Talipapa Association and An Bahandi are examples of BBOs which collapsed after individual members campaigned for their own candidates rather than working as a group. They were criticized by some of their leaders for being "individualistic and cliquish."

BBO leaders do not play any significant role in ward selection. They observed that anyway the political organizations would not formally open the job for nego-

tiation or bargaining. In their experience, politicians prefer wards who are willing to take great personal risks. Providing financial and material support throughout the year to these wards entails resources that BBOs cannot offer. Besides, they said, political parties have not encouraged them to be involved in the selection of wards, nor in the promotion of the public good for that matter.

In fact, BBOs such as SANEA, Sagkahan Social and Cultural Organization and SAGUPA (an NGO) are afraid to be identified with politicians and political parties. They argue that since political parties are motivated by selfish interests, being involved with them means risking their goals and credibility. One BBO officer noted that political parties and their candidates are condescending and not genuinely accessible. Generally, they ignore barangay-based groups and take time to socialize only when a relative or close friend is a member. Thus, BBO members and leaders must gain access to politicians by first showing proof of their commitment, that is, by working for their election.

On the other hand, party leaders reason out that barangay organizations often become active only during election time. Political parties and politicians are seen as sources of funds and the election period is the most appropriate time to demand. Tapping these groups which are not so well-established would entail formidable costs and perhaps more election worries. This is so because the stability of the organization is undermined by its lack of funds. Furthermore, disputes exist between leaders and members. Another political leader claimed that it is not practical to have formal ties with BBOs because they differ in priorities and understanding of political events. Partisan political practice as he described it is indeed frowned at by BBOs: "I need somebody who is clever, determined to assist me in attaining my objectives. I would do anything, even if it is financially burdensome or personally risky and awfully foul, provided the outcome is favorable to me."

Partymen and politicians expressed no difficulty in recruiting ward leaders. Being residents of the place, they claim to know not only who the influential individuals are, but also every voter and his or her preferences. This is not surprising since party leaders and would-be candidates are drinking buddies ("magkainuman") with community leaders. It is during these drinking sessions ("happy time") that the local leaders unconsciously and indirectly provide feedback to the politicians.

NGOs and the 1995 Elections

In the last elections, BULIG-SIKAP worker Mannix Marta was a candidate for the Sangguniang Panlungsod of Tacloban City. His encounter with partisan politics started when he represented Region 8 in the Social Reform Agenda Conference in Manila. There, top LAKAS politicians urged him to run for public office as their candidate. He declined, however, due to his conflict with the incumbent City Mayor who was the local party chairman and standard-bearer. (The Mayor is perceived by the Tacloban-based developmental NGOs to be "unfriendly" to them, being partial instead to such groups as the Rotary Club, Delta Epsilon Foundation, Knights of Columbus and Kapisanan ng mga Peñalosa ha Tacloban. Because of his attitude, in fact, some NGOs have transferred their operational centers to Palo, Leyte.)

Actually, Marta said, other parties were inviting him to join them but he decided to commit to the Liberal Party with whose orientations and philosophy he felt

comfortable. The NGO community was aware of his intentions. He got the impression, Marta said, that his colleagues regarded his candidacy as another "trial balloon". (They were disappointed earlier when another NGO worker did the same and was eventually devoured by the politics espoused and practiced by the incumbent Mayor.)

To his dismay, Marta found that the developmental NGOs did not purposely organize support to ensure his victory. Although the NGO workers did vote for him, he said they did not attempt to mobilize their clients/constituents to do so. In the pre-election surveys he was rated no. 3, but on election day landed in 15TH place among the 35 candidates. He attributed his defeat to an organized effort by LAKAS to dislodge him in order to have a majority of seats in the local legislature. The scheme, known as "dagdag-bawas" (add and subtract), favored candidates backed by a top city politician who is very close to the Romualdezes/Marcoses. (The LAKAS party in Tacloban is made up of old KBL-NP diehards who switched affiliation.)

His experience led Marta to conclude that the NGO community in the city/province has a poor support base. He mentioned that this is aggravated by the fact that these groups rarely gather and discuss concerns of their own but have become busy with the business of survival via commercial activities (profit-making).

His observations were confirmed by the researcher. In an interview with some developmental NGO workers, three out of five said they actively campaigned for candidates in the last elections, but these were running for national positions. Only SUARA, a youth group, expressed the desire to openly oppose traditional politics in Tacloban City. Another NGO worker believed that it is not politically sound to declare support for any candidate, whether on the local or national level. If NGOs stay neutral during the elections, they are free to ask for favors from the winning candidates, he said. A VICTO representative on the other hand claimed that local NGOs in the area will find it difficult to put up their own candidate because the right person from the NGO ranks has yet to emerge and be recognized by the public. Another restraining factor mentioned was vote-buying which makes the NGO constituency overlook their dissatisfaction with traditional leaders. In addition, an NGO worker volunteered, jealousy exists among NGOs.

Another experience was related by Nestor de Veyra, Sangguniang Bayan member in Palo, Leyte, and a member of An Bahandi. De Veyra informed the researcher that his election to the municipal council was not an NGO decision. Rather, he was recruited by friends to complete their slate. Unlike in Marta's case in Tacloban, the NGOs in Palo, Leyte openly campaigned for de Veyra. Besides, the major contenders in the elections were sympathetic to NGO work.

As to NGO involvement in the Sanggunian Bayan, however, he expressed disappointment over the weak articulation and construction of the people's agenda vis-à-vis the municipal government. He opined that the NGO sector has to improve its visibility in governmental affairs, be proactive and not wait for government to call their attention. In many cases, he said, he had to go around himself to inform the NGOs about opportunities to access power or influence decisions made by the governing elite. Most NGO leaders, he observed, seem hesitant to take the initiative or assume responsibility for political matters. De Veyra would like the NGOs to put up a concerted front and take advantage of his presence in the Sanggunian Bayan especially since he sits in all committees.

Both Marta and de Veyra concluded that the NGOs in the first legislative district of Leyte have yet to demonstrate their competence and effectiveness, not only in undertaking development-related activities or confronting social problems, but also in consolidating public interest in the formulation of just and acceptable policies. If the NGOs can assist local bureaucrats in enacting responsive policies, this would set the stage for more positive and enduring identification with them.

Summary and Conclusion

This paper has shown that political parties have a nominal role in choosing and grooming the wards. Community groups on the other hand are too weak to initiate and assert collective political responsibility on this matter. They reflect the common view that electoral politics is evil and destructive. However, they have done little or nothing to improve the system. Their inability to overcome the bias against partisan politics has resulted in the failure to influence public policy. The low level of political education and poor civic consciousness of groups in the rural areas result in the absence of real countervailing forces to the political elite.

Perhaps a positive and constructive attitude on the part of political and community groups can pave the way for an effective partnership between both sides. The prevailing mutual suspicion can be dispelled through regular dialogues, consultations and exchanges.

Recruitment, selection and management of the wards is the sole responsibility of the politician. He bears the material, emotional and social costs of maintaining them before, during and after elections. When properly cared for, the wards mobilize votes (through coercion and fraud) to ensure their patron's victory; thereafter, they become an "institution" for elite maintenance and perpetuation of the ruling party.

Wards are groomed through patronage. The politician's assistance comes in various forms, ranging from giving a free ride, acting as wedding or baptismal sponsor, sending the wards' children to school and footing hospital bills, to providing business capital and giving them government jobs.

Varela argues that political patronage is a Filipino attribute, an expression of indigenous cultural traits like familism, social acceptance, and particularism, and of the values of "pakikisama," "utang na loob," "awa" and "pagkamatulungin." To go against the culture of patronage is a violation of values and norms and the violator could be ostracized by friends, family and community.[14]

Politically, patronage ties help mobilize for the registration of voters, and the exercise of the right of suffrage. They also help shape public opinion. Wards of the ruling elite defend the actions of their patron while those identified with the opposition serve as fiscalizers. But this kind of relationship fails to promote genuine mass participation beyond particularistic patron-client relations.

Civil society actors can still improve the situation. Instead of abstaining from political involvement at the local level, the academe, church, genuine NGOs and media should instead launch an all-out effort to warn, alert and advise the people against exercising their right of suffrage on the basis of particularism. The need to educate, propagate and popularize "pagkabayani," a Filipino attitude that has been forgotten, is a necessary ingredient towards competitive democratic elections and governance.

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CARMELA ABAO

Dynamics among Political Blocs in the Formation of a Political Party

Introduction

On September 14–15, 1996, around a hundred individuals coming from different regions and belonging to various political blocs, non-government organizations (NGOs) and people's organizations (POs) convened in Manila to formalize their resolve to establish a new political party. Temporarily called Aksyon (Citizens' Action Party), it was to be launched in July 1997.*

This paper aims to examine the role and location of political blocs in civil society as well as the dynamics that characterize their relations when they embark on a common project such as Aksyon.

All four blocs involved in the party-building project — Bukluran Para sa Ikauunlad ng Sosyalistang Isip at Gawa (Bisig), Pandayan Para sa Sosyalistang Pilipinas (Pandayan), Movement for Popular Democracy (MPD) and Siglo ng Paglaya (Siglaya) — were studied. The nature and beginnings of these blocs are briefly described in the first part of the paper to serve as the context for the more basic subject matter of dynamics and relations. Following is a section about the objective and subjective conditions that led them to work collectively on a political project — the starting points to which the roots of Aksyon can be traced.

Processes pertinent to party-building and dynamics (i.e. tension points, problem areas) among the blocs are discussed in the third and fourth sections of the paper, respectively. Since the party-building project is not limited to political bloc participation, the entry and influence of "independent" individuals and formations are also presented. How "independents" and "pol-bloc individuals" relate to each other has been included to show a broader picture of how the new political party is being shaped.

The final section discusses the limits and possibilities of the party-building project. It touches on the various factors that may determine the project's success.

* In late 1997, Aksyon was registered as the political party, AKBAYAN, for Aksyon ng Sambayan. Senator Raul Roco had registered his political party Aksyon earlier.

The Nature and Beginnings of Political Blocs

Although the term "political bloc" is a generic designation for any group engaged in political action in the Philippine setting, it is popularly used in reference to organizations which embrace ideological belief systems that are seen as alternatives to the paradigms of those who hold state power. They are often called "revolutionary groups," "ideological forces," "groups belonging to the Philippine Left," and are customarily classified according to the ideological framework they subscribe to: communism, national democracy, socialism, democratic socialism, and social democracy.[1]

An ideological framework generally entails a philosophy that molds a group's interpretation and analysis of existing situations and its vision of a more desirable and appropriate construct of society. Such philosophy, vision and analysis (the *ideological line),* in turn, guides the formulation of strategies and processes for interventions *(the political line).* These strategies are then translated into concepts and plans of organization *(the organizational line)* — how to draw people to believe in the ideology and how to move them into action.

Central to the ideological framework of any political bloc is its notion of "democracy". Despite differences in vision and strategies, all political blocs are concerned with democracy, with the distribution of power to various areas of societal life. They are called "Left" precisely because they uphold a concept of democracy that spans the political and socio-economic spheres. They all have visions of the ideal democratic society and how social and property relations are to be organized within such a society.

Not surprisingly, most of the political blocs were conceived and/or established during the repressive years of the Marcos regime. These blocs were all against dictatorship and pro-democracy.

Siglaya, for one, traces its roots to the national democratic movement (under the auspices of the National Democratic Front [NDF] and the Communist Party of the Philippines [CPP]) which was the biggest and most consolidated anti-dictatorship movement in the 1970s and early 1980s. With the New People's Army (NPA) for an armed wing, it was also the most militant and belligerent formation.

The CPP was established in 1968 after its predecessor, the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP) was wrecked by internal divisions. In 1992, the CPP experienced its share of fragmentation and was split into two major factions: the so-called Reaffirmists and the Rejectionists. The Reaffirmists affirmed the Marxist-Leninist-Mao-Tse-Tung or MLMTT line as articulated by CPP head Jose Maria Sison — a.k.a. Armando Liwanag — in his article "Reaffirm our Basic Principles and Rectify Errors".[2] At first, the Rejectionists were united on the basis of an anti-Armando Liwanag sentiment. They were again divided, however, over ideological, political and organizational redefinitions. They have since split into several groups, the two major ones being the Manila Region (MR) and Siglaya. As Etta Rosales of Siglaya puts it, they (Siglaya) call themselves the "democratic bloc" because they have "this imagination that they are slightly more democratic than the reaffirm and the MR groups". They are quite nebulous, however, and are still in the process of finding out what democracy is all about.[3]

The Movement for Popular Democracy (MPD) also ascribes its origins to the national-democratic movement. Ed de la Torre, a founding member of the move-

ment, says that the term "popular democracy" or "popdem" was first coined by the Volunteers of Popular Democracy (VPD), once an organization closely linked with the "natdems" (NDs). When the NDF-CPP cracked down on "factionalist" tendencies, the popdems left the movement and started establishing a separate bloc. This bloc would later claim "popular democracy," a term, de la Torre fondly recalls, that emerged simply because all other "democracies" — national democracy, social democracy, etc. — were already held by other political formations. Ever since making this arbitrary choice for an ideological line, however, de la Torre says, the MPD has developed its line as the "new opposition", more precisely, as anti-"elite" democracy. In most Marxist leftist literature, de la Torre adds, "populae" means "basic masses plus people" which includes the petty-bourgeois, national bourgeois, or middle forces. With these classifications, the MPD has conceptualized a paradigm that has both a class bias (i.e. for the basic masses) and an advocacy for a united front (i.e. with the "popular" sections of society).[4]

Pandayan, on the other hand, traces its tradition to the social-democratic movement which began in the 1960s. The movement's forerunners were initially activist reformists who worked in organizations such as the Federation of Free Farmers, Federation of Free Workers, the Christian Social Movement, Hasik Kalayaan, Kilusan ng mga Anak ng Kalayaan and Lakas-Diwa. Realizing the apparent futility of reforming efforts after the imposition of martial law in 1972, these groups defined a new form of struggle that was to be socialist and revolutionary. At least two major formations were organized around such thinking: the Partido Demokratiko Sosyalista ng Pilipinas (PDSP) and the Kapulungan ng mga Sandigan ng Pilipino (Kasapi). These groups vigorously launched political activities using the parliamentary and extra-parliamentary modes of intervention as well as armed struggles, albeit on a very limited scale.[5]

The social democrats, unlike the NDs, were never able to unify under one umbrella organization during the Marcos years. Pandayan was conceived, in fact, as a response to the looseness of social democratic groups in the country. In 1986, its founders decided to establish a "consolidated political structure" (CPS) to prepare for the likely event that Marcos would cheat in the polls and massive protest and crackdown would follow. The CPS was to be a tighter network of socdem cadres (who were not part of Kasapi or PDSP) committed to continuing the social democratic struggle even under extremely repressive conditions.

The expected crackdown never came. Immediately after the February 1986 EDSA Revolution, the CPS met again and decided to continue as a tight non-party social democratic/democratic socialist (SD/DS) organization for the purpose of setting directions for the SD/DS movement and developing the ideology. Such tasks were deemed important particularly because at the time, social democrats were often accused by other Left groups of not believing in socialism and defending instead the welfare state arrangement. CPS founders then recruited more socdem cadres and formally established Pandayan on March 15, 1987.[6]

BISIG's predecessor, the Independent Caucus, was established at around the same time as the CPS. The purpose of this caucus was to bring together former elements of the CPP, PKP, PDSP (ex-natdems and ex-socdems) and some "non-aligned" activists to collectively discuss and reflect on the politico-economic situation confronting the Left movement at that particular conjuncture. Discussants included former party members and underground activists, trade unionists, community organizers and members of the academe. The caucus became a vehicle for these

activists to critique the analyses and practices of then-existing political formations and exchange ideas on how to pursue the socialist project. It also served as an opportunity for Marxists (i.e. former CPP and PKP members) and Christian Socialists (i.e. former socdems who set themselves up as a separate group, the Kristyanong Katipunan) to engage in a genuine dialogue and discover points of consensus.

In May 1986, the Independent Caucus was transformed into a political movement — Bisig — after adherents of different tendencies agreed to unite on a single focus: socialism. Socialism, they believed, was not promoted enough by the Left, but was made a mere ingredient of either the social-democratic or national-democratic tendencies. Bisig also agreed to refrain from defining a political line as a safeguard against ND dogmatism. Members agreed, instead, to formulate an operational line which identified multiple forms of struggle the group could employ to achieve its socialist vision.[7]

Clearly, these four blocs differ in tradition and purposes. Their organizational expressions, however, are quite similar as all of them have evolved into non-party political formations. In fact, it can be clearly deduced from their histories that experiences with rigid (centralist) political parties, whether socdem or natdem, led them to decide on becoming "non-party" formations.

The choice to build non-party formations is also rooted in the mass movement bias of the blocs. Over the years, Pandayan, Bisig, and MPD have directed their energies mainly at the extra-parliamentary arena, particularly in pressure politics (e.g. strikes, demonstrations). Parliamentary work, like lobbying for a legislative agenda, was undertaken primarily to strengthen and gain more concessions for the mass movement.

The mass movement bias of the political blocs is also revealed in their choice of organizational bases. All have consciously politicized people's organizations or POs (i.e. sector- or community-based grassroots organizations) around their particular ideology thereby influencing the way such groups analyze and respond to political issues. The blocs also recruit members from these POs to strengthen the mass character of their individual organizations. Among political blocs, having no mass base is tantamount to being a "hollow" bloc.[8] To be considered an ideological force, a bloc has to have an ideology. To be considered a serious contender of state power, it has to have the backing of a significant mass base.

Starting Points for a Common Political Project

The task awaiting political blocs during the early post-EDSA years was not simply the restoration of democracy, but more importantly, its "deepening." Save for the Marcos loyalists, almost every Filipino at that time, euphoric over the success of "people power," wanted to be a part of, or at the very least, favored the rebuilding program of the Aquino administration. Even the elite favored "democracy." The task of looking into issues of social justice and equity was left largely in the hands of the Left.

Advocating redistribution within a newly-installed elite democracy proved to be a difficult task for the Left. Agrarian reform, originally a centerpiece program of the Aquino administration, was soon watered down through the maneuverings of the restored elite who held seats in both Houses of Congress. Government insisted

on debt service, ignoring the Left's call to reorient public spending toward the basic needs of the people.[9] In all the six years of the Aquino government, the Left hardly made any dent on existent property relations. Neither was it able to significantly influence any of Aquino's policies, except perhaps for the termination of the Philippines-U.S. Military Bases Agreement in 1991.

At about this time, the Left started to experience a sharp decline in membership. Democracy, somehow, had a "demobilizing" effect and it became harder for the Left to consolidate its cadres or recruit new members into its fold.

The collapse of the socialist experiment in the Eastern Bloc and the ascendance of neoliberalism on a global scale also presented grave problems for the Left. It meant not just the collapse of a certain type of socialism (the statist type practiced by the Eastern Bloc) but the negation of all strands and variants of socialism as well. All over the world, socialism (of any kind) was increasingly losing its appeal as an alternative paradigm.

Aggravating this already deplorable state of the Left was the split of the CPP in 1992–93. The rest of the political blocs, Bisig, Pandayan and MPD, also experienced a major political defeat when their presidential candidate, Jovito Salonga, lost to Fidel V. Ramos, Aquino's anointed successor, in the 1992 national elections.

Such defeats, however, brought lessons and opportunities that led the political blocs to collectively undertake a process of reconceptualizing a new Left project. Bisig, Pandayan and MPD, already a troika in the 1992 Salonga campaign, continued to forge relations as "three little pigs" — small Left non-party formations searching for new directions and energies. Immediately after the 1992 polls, these blocs, together with some breakaway groups of the CPP, held joint political activities particularly around Philippines 2000, Ramos's politico-economic project. Although unable to formulate a comprehensive alternative to Philippines 2000, these groups, together, were able to position themselves as a critical voice in national politics.[10]

The new political party (Aksyon) can be considered a byproduct of the reconceptualization process now being undertaken by the political blocs.[11] Within Aksyon, the political blocs have started rethinking the Left project on at least two levels: strategy and organization.

On the level of strategy, the political blocs are now coming to terms with the importance of intervening in the electoral and parliamentary arenas. As mentioned earlier, political blocs have always had a bias for mass movement-building and pressure politics. With Aksyon, they are now explicitly moving toward the state and acknowledging the relevance and necessity of struggling within the state, not just challenging it from the outside.

In the concept paper "Working Toward the Formation of a Progressive Political Party," Aksyon's rationale is presented as "a response to the need (felt by the progressive movement) for a political vehicle that will carry a progressive reform agenda into the heart of the national electoral arena." Its objective, the paper explains, is to "expand and transform access to the political process into the redistribution of social and economic opportunities among all sectors and peoples, between sexes, and across generations."[12]

The concept is a total break from the traditional (extreme) Left understanding that formal structures are mere instruments of the ruling class and the aim of participating in electoral exercises is solely to expose the weaknesses of the state and

the futility of such contests. In the old concept, propagating the ideological line was more important than winning elections. In the Aksyon concept, winning is crucial not only for advocating a progressive agenda but also for utilizing formal governance structures to institute that agenda. Instead of the traditional "seizure of state power" strategy, the new concept proposes that the state be strengthened, particularly in terms of orientation and capability necessary to implement redistributive measures.

On the level of organization, the political blocs are now more cognizant of the need for a political party. Non-party political formations (with mass movement biases), hitherto perceived as overarching instruments for all forms of struggle, are no longer seen as appropriate vehicles for electoral and parliamentary work. The blocs now acknowledge that they need a machinery to engage effectively in electoral struggles. This means building not just a mass base but also an electoral base — the largest possible constituency within and beyond the progressive circle. Though Aksyon is generally seen as a venue for maximizing the accumulated strength of the progressive movement, political blocs agree that it should also seek out "new forces" — those who may not classify themselves as "progressives" but are nevertheless strategically positioned and similarly motivated (e.g. some members of media, business, LGUs, the church, etc.).[13]

Still another major shift in the concept of organization is the idea of "a national project anchored on local realities." Coming from the bitter experience of working with commandist organizations (such as the CPP), many of the Aksyon organizers, particularly those from the political blocs, are agreed that the new party should recognize the significance of autonomous local initiatives and engagements. Central planning is still acceptable but has to be complemented with decentralized operations. Through Aksyon, the previous practice of "centralism" is slowly and consciously being replaced with new thinking on internal democracy.

The Aksyon project also signals the realignment of ideological forces toward post-bloc formation. Coming from weakened positions (ideologically and organizationally), it was not difficult for the political blocs to see that what they needed was a common political project. In the past, they had ventured on coalition projects, where the "reproduction process" was limited to bloc membership and failed to make a significant impact. Joel Rocamora believes that the blocs have done good work but have not succeeded in expanding their numbers. The new party, he says, is a chance for political blocs to extend way beyond the confines of their own organizations. Post-bloc formations, he adds, provide the opportunity of broadening the scope of a political bloc's organizing and the potential of building political power.[14]

Political blocs, though somewhat battle-fatigued, bring with them a wealth of experiences and lessons crucial to party-building.

Former natdems now belonging to the Siglaya group, for instance, have had vast experiences in the electoral arena because of their participation in the Partido ng Bayan (PnB). A CPP-initiated political party, PnB first fielded candidates in the 1987 elections. Etta Rosales, a former chairperson, reveals that at the time "they were babes in the woods (and) thought that they could run PnB the way they did the mass movement."[15] They relied on the votes of the mass movement and their candidates were mostly personalities of the NDF (e.g. Crispin Beltran, Nelia Sancho) — all national figures in their own way. These candidates, however, stood no chance

against the traditional politicians. In some assumed bailiwicks, PnB even got zero votes. Evidently, the national democratic movement was unable to translate its mass base into votes. It was also unequipped to counter massive fraud and cheating.

The PnB experience was traumatic for the natdems but the CPP leadership hastily justified such defeat by saying that they were not interested in winning seats, anyway, but merely in propagating the program. The likes of Rosales, however, believed otherwise and knew that winning was just as important. They proceeded to reassess and readjust strategies, one of which was to shift from the national to local elections. True enough, PnB fared better in the 1992 local elections and was able to campaign successfully for around 633 local officials (from municipal councilors to congresspersons).

The "three little pigs" — Bisig, Pandayan and MPD — have their own experience to contribute to the party-building project. In 1992, these blocs formed Akbayan as the "mass movement" wing of the Liberal Party-Partido Demokratiko ng Pilipinas (LP-PDP) campaign for national candidates Jovito Salonga and Aquilino Pimentel. This was the first time they took elections seriously. Like the natdems, however, they failed to deliver the necessary numbers for an electoral victory.[16] They also failed to anticipate the problems of working within seemingly progressive political parties such as the LP-PDP. Ronald Llamas, chairperson of Bisig, recalls that Akbayan merely served as a fallback for the LP-PDP — as a mobilizable force for the parties' campaign rallies, and never treated as an equal partner. Akbayan groups ended up campaigning with very limited resources and support from the LP-PDP. Through this experience, the blocs realized that even the most progressive mainstream political parties were bastions of traditional politics.[17]

Other elements within Aksyon, including its current interim chairperson Reynaldo Teves, had also worked with the PDP. Teves was one of the many Mindanaoans who founded the PDP in 1982 with Aquilino Pimentel at the helm. PDP was basically a Mindanaoan initiative which found its way to Manila in the form of consultations.

The PDP was established as an alternative party to both Marcos' KBL and the CPP. Teves recalls that at the time, the traditional political parties had been completely immobilized and made irrelevant by Marcos. Organized around the values of "new politics", PDP operated as the only genuine opposition party during the Marcos regime. It was also the only party that allowed the basic sectors to participate in its leadership structures and the only party which required its members to undergo a two-day political education course.

Soon, however, PDP lost its character as a non-traditional political party when it merged with LABAN in 1983. The Laban component maneuvered decision-making processes within the merged political party and "worked to amend the Constitution and decapitate the very soul of new politics in the party structure and precepts." After wreaking havoc within the PDP ranks, Laban established itself as the Laban ng Demokratiko Pilipino (LDP) in 1988.[18] To this day, PDP has not quite recovered from the Laban takeover. LDP, on the other hand, has strengthened itself as a traditional political party and has become a major player in national and local electoral politics.

In Aksyon, the Mindanaoan spirit has been resurrected not only through former PDP members but through former CPP members as well. Benjamin de Vera, who is

a Siglaya member and one of the first Aksyon convenors, says he is joining the new party primarily as a Mindanaoan. His main objective, he reveals, is to utilize the party to unite Mindanaoans. Mindanao, he says, has a specific context which the Mindanaoan bloc hopes to bring into the party-building project. This bloc, composed of elements from varied traditions — former natdems in Central Mindanao, former socdems in Southern and Northern Mindanao, and some "independents" from the NGO and peace movements — are united in their intent to pursue a Mindanaoan agenda through electoral politics.[19]

Members of Aksyon who belong to women's groups (e.g. Pilipina and Kalayaan) also carry with them a specific agenda. Although these women share in the objective of building Aksyon to challenge traditional political parties, their primary aim is to mainstream women's issues into the party-building project and to enjoin women to actively participate in electoral politics.[20]

Practitioners of development work have also found their way into the project. Many Aksyon members are NGO workers or PO leaders. Almost all the organizers (mostly pol-bloc leaders), in fact, are full-time NGO workers. Over the years, political blocs have intersected with NGOs and POs in the areas of organizing, advocacy and agenda-building with the latter concentrating more on servicing and mobilizing local communities and the former providing the national advocacy for such local initiatives. Recently, however, NGOs and POs have started building coalitions which have enabled them to participate in political discourse and activity as distinct blocs. They have even experimented on coalescing for the purpose of electoral intervention. In 1992, Project 2001 was established by these NGOs and POs as their electoral vehicle. Although this project failed to sustain an NGO/PO electoral movement (i.e. some NGOs and POs were ambivalent about partisan politics), it nevertheless signaled the initiation of NGOs and POs into the electoral arena.[21]

The Party-building Process

The remote beginnings of the party-building process can be traced as far back as 1987 when individuals from political blocs formed the Socialist Caucus to discuss possibilities of building a socialist political party. Bisig, then a relatively new political formation, took the initiative and invited elements from Pandayan and MPD and some natdems (Fidel Agcaoili, Dante Buscayno), socdems (PDSP leaders), and progressive politicians (Bonifacio Gillego) to draw up a common electoral program. Despite organizational differences, it was hoped that the blocs could forge unities in developing a party platform.

The natdems, however, refused to join the other blocs in this effort because PnB was already in the making. PDSP also pulled out declaring that they were already a political party and felt no need to build another. Consequently, the project never took off and even Bisig lost interest in pursuing the idea of bringing "professed" socialists together for a common political project.[22]

For the next two years, the blocs went their separate ways. The natdems focused on building PnB, Pandayan established the Demokratiko Sosyalistang Koalisyon (DSK) with PDSP and Kasapi while the MPD and Bisig had their own mass movement and electoral initiatives.

In 1991, Bisig, Pandayan and MPD resumed talks, this time for the purpose of developing a consolidated action plan and expression for the 1992 national elections. Not having much experience or capacity in electoral work, however, forming a political party was out of the question. And with no candidates to field, their only option was to resort to "brokering" — using issues to negotiate with and select candidates. Eventually, the blocs chose LP-PDP bets Salonga and Pimentel. They also agreed to campaign collectively for Florencio Abad, then an LP senatorial candidate.[23]

Akbayan was the organizational instrument of the "three little pigs" for the Salonga-Pimentel campaign. It was to be a junior partner of the LP-PDP coalition. Through Akbayan, the blocs established closer working and interpersonal relations and collectively learned valuable lessons in electoral strategies and tactics. After having been made a convenient appendage to the LP-PDP, they also learned the limits of dealing with mainstream political parties.

The outcome of the 1992 electoral experiment was pathetic. There were no fruits of victory to distribute, so to speak, as none of the Akbayan candidates won. Frustrated and weary, political bloc cadres went back to their mass movement and advocacy work. Some of them eventually left the movement to seek less stressful and more rewarding environs.

In 1993, the CPP split into several factions. Breakaway groups — the "rejectionists" — immediately forged relations with the "three little pigs" and one "old pig" (the PKP) for ideological discussions. Six months and two joint mobilizations later, relations broke down as the "rejectionists" started drawing lines between and among each other. The three little pigs ended up relating with only one group, another "little pig" which later became Siglaya.

A year later, the "four little pigs," alongside personalities such as Aquilino Pimentel, Florencio Abad and some leaders from NGOs (such as PHILDHRRA) and the women's movement (such as Remedios Rikken and Karen Tañada) established the Institute of Politics and Governance (IPG) as a vehicle for further coordination in electoral work. Developed around three themes — electoral participation, electoral reform, and local politics and governance — the IPG organized several projects on political advocacy, education, research, and publications.

One IPG project which helped facilitate the party-building process was the *Electoral Conference Series*. In early 1994, a first conference was held in Tagaytay. Electoral experiences were assessed and plans for the May local elections discussed. In this conference, the participants, most of whom represented the political blocs, also agreed to study the possibility of building a new party.[24] Mandated by the Tagaytay conference, leaders of the four blocs proceeded to discuss the party-building trajectory in more detail. There was no debate over the necessity of a new party. Even Pandayan and MPD, who had some members operating in the Liberal Party, conceded that not much could be expected from mainstream political parties. The more intense points of discussion were of an operational nature: was it time? what kind of party? how?

Several discussions revolved around "proper timing." Some blocs were concerned that they were not so well prepared because they had yet to rebuild their own organizations. Siglaya was still unifying its ranks. Pandayan, likewise, was midway through a rebuild/consolidation program. There was also some doubt whether it was correct to consolidate as a political party first before consolidating

as ideological groups. In the end, the blocs agreed that they had to take a qualitative leap from a dormant stage to the imperative of a political project. They realized that although the party-building project would require energies from them, it could also be the source of new energies.

Four other points of agreement were reached: (1) that the party should be a progressive reform party and not an ideological/Left one; (2) that the process of party-building should be done through consultations; (3) that membership in the party should be individual and not by blocs; and (4) that "parentage" of the new party should not be left solely to the blocs and should include individuals from NGOs and other social-movement groups. The blocs further agreed to draft concept papers.[25]

The first national consultation for the party-building project was held on July 31–August 1, 1995, at the Sulo Hotel in Quezon City. Leaders of the political blocs facilitated this conference and presented two concept papers — on the nature and purposes of the party and the organizing strategy — to a group of around a hundred cadres and NGO/PO workers.

The Sulo Conference formally introduced the party-building project. For the first time, individuals other than the bloc leaders learned of the project and accepted it. In the workshops and plenary discussions, they threshed out issues earlier raised by the blocs and formulated plans for the continuance of the consultation process. A 14-member convenors group, most of whom represented the political blocs was organized and tasked to oversee consultations for a term of six months. Ronald Llamas of Bisig was also chosen national coordinator by the conference body.[26]

In 1995, three consultations — mainly on platform-building — were held: two in Mindanao (August and December) and one in Cebu (October). The following year, consultations were conducted in Bicol (February), Central Mindanao (March), Southern Mindanao (May), and Northern Mindanao (September).[27]

Clearly, the Mindanaoan group had the most number of consultations. The enthusiasm and industry of this group eventually led to the formation of the United Mindanaoan Party (UMP) as the regional wing of the new party.

As for sectoral groupings, only the youth sector went through party consultations, particularly in line with the Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) elections. They were able to launch a campaign called T.A.S.K. ("Towards an Alternative Sangguniang Kabataan") and later, develop an adjunct network of SK officials the campaign had supported.[28] The women's bloc, on the other hand, conducted several small-group caucuses in place of party consultations.

Throughout this consultation phase, meetings of the convenors' group were few and far between. Further, only a few convenors were integrated into the party-building process. After more than the agreed term of six months, not much was happening on the "national level"; movement was taking place only at the local level upon the initiative of local leaders. Also, party convenors had not come up with a name: "Citizens' Alternative Party" was merely the convenient tag used in the various consultations.

Consequently, the convenors' meeting on June 5, 1996 turned out to be an exercise in self-criticism, the major point raised being that there was something erroneous with the setup of having convenors at the national level who had very

little to do with the organizing that was taking place on the local level. To rectify the error, it was resolved to expand the group to include key people from the locals, particularly those from Mindanao.[29]

Soon after, a second draft of the organizing strategy was developed by the secretariat (all of whom were volunteers except for the national coordinator). In this paper, issues raised during the June 5 convenors' meeting were put in writing and the urgency of convening "true believers" was surfaced. It also laid out fundamental requirements of the envisioned party.

To expedite the party-building process, the convenors' group called for a pre-congress on September 14–15. During this activity, party documents were ratified, organizational issues raised and resolved, and, an interim national council and executive committee established. The pre-congress also finalized the name of the party — Aksyon (Citizens' Action Party) — and formulated a program of action to guide the group until the founding congress in July 1997. After 13 months of repeated and grueling consultations, the "introductory" phase was over. The envisioned political party was finally and officially a party-in-the-making.

Tension Points and Problem Areas

Fragile Unity of the Political Blocs

Formal discussions among the political blocs somehow ended when the official process of party-building started during the Sulo Conference of 1995. While some cadres from the different regions were able to develop closer relations through party-building, formal coordination among the leaders of these blocs have weakened. As a consequence, unities among the blocs, *as blocs,* have become fewer and more nebulous.

The fragile unity of the blocs is most threatened when conflicts arise in other arenas where they are present. This happened, for instance, in the recent Anti-Poverty Coalition where political blocs tangled over tactical issues. Somehow, the party-building project seems to be disrupted when "fights" in coalitions are carried over into it.[29]

Moreover, some of the unities that the blocs initially brought to the party-building process were safe compromises, not solid points of consensus. The issue of whether the party should be ideological, for instance, was resolved formally among the blocs but leaders continue to harbor different sentiments on the matter. Francisco Nemenzo of Bisig believes that the new party should make itself distinguishable from traditional parties by ensuring that socialist ideals are embodied in its program and practices, otherwise, there is no point in building it.[30] Pandayan chairperson Fernando Aldaba, on the other hand, is wary that projecting Left-identified programs and personalities may lessen the possibility of drawing in non-ideological forces.[31]

The resolution that party membership should be on an individual basis is another hazy agreement, and although it is said to be entirely acceptable to the blocs, complaints of "undercutting" and "bypassing" are still raised every now and then. Party secretariat members, for example, always have to be extra-careful over

seemingly standard procedures such as selection of participants or allocation of seats during conferences — in deference to the political blocs.[32]

At the heart of these "vague agreements" is the confusion over the role and future of political blocs vis-à-vis the new party. The blocs have always presented themselves to their constituencies as "the alternative." With the new party in place, the question arises as to which is now the alternative — the political bloc or the party?[33]

Albert Yuson of Pandayan admits that the party could result in the demise of political blocs as it will compete for their energies and resources. Taking the party seriously, he thinks, could even mean handing over pol-bloc cadres and constituencies to a new political center. Though this is not such a farfetched decision for the blocs to make, Yuson admits it could be a painful one. He himself is willing to make this move only if the other blocs agree to do the same.[34]

For the popdems, the concern of whether political blocs should dissolve their organizations to make way for the new party is a nonissue. Edicio de la Torre speaks of the MPD as a sort of fraternity, a stepping-stone for cadres who are free to choose the arena where to wage the popdem struggle.[35] Joel Rocamora, another popdem, likens the blocs to San Miguel Beer: *may pinagsamahan* — they have common histories and emotional bonding. Rocamora believes that there is no reason for the blocs to dissolve if they are able to sustain their own activities.[36]

Heckling and Male Bonding

In one of his columns in the *Manila Times*, De la Torre wrote about the conduct of the Aksyon pre-congress. He observed: "Many of the hundred or so delegates were veteran activists, but the 'grim and determined' culture of previous party-building efforts was notably absent.... Pinoy/Pinay culture was most felt in the good-natured heckling that was the dominant mode of communicating criticism. Mainly *biro and lambing* and an occasional *tampo*".[37]

Not all of Aksyon's members, however, are comfortable with this mode of communication. De la Torre failed to mention in his column that during the pre-congress it was the men who did most of the heckling, sometimes even making use of sexist language. Not a few women, in fact, raised their eyebrows over sexist jokes which the men were quick to justify as simply "*biro*" or "*lambing*."

Karen Tañada of Pilipina has long observed that heckling has another side to it. This mode of communication, she says, could be a product of male bonding that is taking place within Aksyon. While male bonding is not a negative occurrence per se, Tañada says, it could lead the party-building process becoming "exclusive" instead of "inclusive."[38]

To ensure inclusiveness and women's participation, Tañada and others (e.g. Princess Nemenzo of Kalayaan) proposed that 30 percent of all decision-making bodies of Aksyon be reserved for women. The proposal elicited intense discussion from the pre-congress participants. The Visayas bloc argued that leaders should be selected on the basis of skill and not of gender. A male member of Siglaya tried to present a compromise: that the percentage of women leaders be proportionate to the number of women members.

The women of Aksyon were resolute. In a gentle yet firm manner, Tañada explained that women constitute a large portion of the electorate and that the quota system is necessary to encourage the active involvement of women in electoral politics. Tonette Raquiza of Sarilaya further explained that the 30% quota was in fact a concession. The women of Aksyon, she said, were not happy with it but agreed that it was a reasonable beginning for instituting affirmative action within the new party.

Mike Sueno of Cotabato called the women's proposal "fascinating." In all his 15 years in politics, he admitted, it was the first time he heard any proposal on affirmative action. For this reason, he enjoined the pre-congress body to accept it. Ronald Llamas of Bisig also shared with the group that during his recent exposure to the Socialist Internationale, he discovered that many progressive parties have quota systems and that these have worked favorably for them. Likewise, Albert Yuson of Pandayan supported the women's proposal saying that it was necessary for Aksyon to signify that it fully recognizes the importance of women in party-building and is keeping an open door for them.

After more than an hour of such emotionally-charged exchanges, the pre-congress body agreed to accept the proposal and review it during the founding congress. The Visayas bloc withdrew its opposing proposal (not to have any quota) and the proponent for proportional quota conceded to the 30% allocation.[39]

Manila Imperialism and Regional Dynamics

Aksyon organizers did not expect the women's proposal to be the most controversial issue of the pre-congress. They had anticipated that dynamics between the regions and "imperialist Manila" would take center stage.

A few months earlier, they had been disconcerted by the news that the Mindanao bloc had established the United Mindanaoan Party (UMP). Evidently, the UMP's challenge to the national center was that the Mindanaoans could not and would not wait for the "Manila people" to get their act together and that they were concerned more with the Mindanao agenda than with the project of a national party.

Reactions against the dominance of Manila-based initiatives are not rare episodes in progressive circles. Even in mainstream politics, the "national vs. local" divide is glaring. Metro Manila, being the seat of the national government, is supposed to be the center of "everything" (politics, economic activity, culture) and activities happening elsewhere are treated as peripheral and provincial.[40]

Fortunately for Aksyon, the Manileños and Mindanaoans agreed to a compromise: that the Mindanao bloc continue with UMP-building while merging with the new party at the national level. This means Manila will not interfere or compete with UMP organizing. The Mindanao bloc, in turn, will ensure that UMP members join Aksyon, integrate themselves into its structures, and adhere to directions set and agreed upon by Aksyon.

In addition to national-regional dynamics, the Mindanao bloc has its own dynamics to deal with. During an island-wide pre-congress on September 4, Mindanao convenors engaged in a not-so-mild confrontation over the conduct of a conference on the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD) held two days earlier. Like the Manila-based pol-bloc leaders, they also suspected each other's intentions. Unlike the former, however, Mindanao convenors did not leave the issue

unsaid. Questions about "hidden agendas" were brought into the open. Though quick to anger, these Mindanaoans, clearly, were also quick to forgiveness as explanations and apologies were readily given and accepted.[41]

Aside from Mindanao, Aksyon has also started party-building work in Visayas and Luzon: Negros/Panay, Central Visayas, Tacloban/Leyte, Central Luzon and the Bicol region. In the National Capital Region (NCR), however, there is no regional party structure to speak of. NCR-based Aksyon members have been convened only as caucuses for regional workshops during party consultations. The NCR, rightly or wrongly, is being treated as synonymous to the national center.

Practical Concerns

The party-building process has relied heavily on volunteerism. Though volunteerism is commendable, it can also prove to be a liability. It can be used, for instance, as a justification for non-performance; technically, nothing is expected of volunteers save for whatever they promise to deliver. It can also lead to complacency as accountabilities cannot be strictly exacted from volunteers.

Aside from full-time workers, the new party is badly in need of funds. Some political institutions have pledged to shoulder a portion of its expenses. Such donations, however, are clearly not enough to sustain party-building efforts.

Acknowledging the need to build the party's financial capacity, pre-congress participants agreed to institute a dues system within Aksyon: P5.00 per month for those living below the poverty line and P1.00 per day for those above it. The body further agreed to review the system during the founding congress.

Party convenors are also worried that Aksyon will become a party of campaigners. Not one of these convenors — and not too many among the initial crop of party members — has plans to run for public office. Moreover, very few have the knowledge or skills to manage electoral campaigns.[42]

To fill the vacuum, Aksyon hopes to draw in "new forces" and deliberately identify and develop potential candidates. Party adherents also intend to nurture a "less Left culture" to attract individuals outside the progressive circle.[43]

Limits and Possibilities

Aksyon's beginnings and present dynamics reveal that it is, fundamentally, a Left project. It is clearly an attempt by some Left groups at another organized struggle for societal transformation and democratization. Paradoxically, it is being pursued at a time when the Left is at its weakest — ideologically, organizationally and in an arena most unfamiliar to the Left — electoral politics. Aksyon is as much a leap of faith as it is a definitive trajectory.

The new party's future, therefore, depends largely on the Left's capacity to rise above weaknesses and collectively conjure up new ideas and strategies. In this light, it is imperative that the Left resumes the reconceptualization process it started a few years back. The role of political blocs vis-à-vis a new progressive reform party, for instance, has to be collectively problematized and resolved. How to deal with mass movement dynamics that get in the way of the party-building process is

another point for serious discussion. Without common interpretations and shared goals, political blocs could slide back to the previous practice of "out-Lefting" each other instead of unifying as Left groups. Unresolved differences could swing these blocs to the old natdem-socialist-socdem bickering as to who was "more Left" among the Left.

Political blocs will also have to clarify their motivations for sustaining the party-building project. Though Aksyon is likely to dynamize the Left, it would not be a wise move to limit its *raison d'etre* to that of salvaging the Left. The new party, after all, is envisioned to be an expansive project. This cannot be so if it limits itself to the needs, resources and dynamics of political blocs.

How to draw "new forces" into its fold is, perhaps, Aksyon's greatest challenge in its formation stage. The entry of such forces could facilitate the development of new dynamics necessary to the building of "a new organization, a new form of organization, and a new set of relationships".[44] In this connection, dynamics other than those of political blocs (e.g. regional dynamics, women bonding, sectoral groupings) should be allowed to flourish within.

It is not altogether inconceivable for progressives and new forces to come up with a basis of unity that could enable Aksyon to become the broad-based progressive reform party it aspires to be. Though diverse in tradition, interests and priorities, these groups can define themselves further within the party and still coexist as adherents of anti-traditional politics. With minimum agreements on political vision (e.g. an agenda for economic and political reform) and organizational clarity (e.g. inclusive processes, defined decision-making and operational structures), Aksyon could become a broad-based party with multiple "tendencies" or "poles" within and among its ranks.

The issue of how to manage diverse forces within the party was initially addressed during the September pre-congress. Members have agreed that "friendly competition" is acceptable and healthy to the extent that it will foster a sense of urgency directed towards Aksyon's consolidation. Within this framework, groups can now hold caucuses without fear of being suspected that they are designing moves inimical to other formations involved in party-building.

If Aksyon is able to develop itself as an "outward-looking" organization, it will also have better chances to effectively confront external challenges. The barangay elections in May 1997, for instance, could be the acid-test of the party-building project. Aksyon can maximize that exercise to expand its ranks, acquire much-needed knowledge on managing electoral campaigns, and make its presence felt in as many local governments as possible.

For its survival, the new party has to struggle for the democratization of the electoral system that is currently loaded in favor of traditional politicians. If this system remains, there will no future for progressive parties like Aksyon. Electoral struggle should go hand in hand with electoral reform.

The reality also has to be considered that the majority of Filipino voters are now much younger and better educated. Comprising more than 60% of the population, the youth constitute a major and significant political base. Tapping their energies and idealism could prove advantageous to progressive politics in general and the new party in particular.[45]

Indeed, many tasks await Aksyon. If these tasks are shared and performed well, it could be on its way to becoming a full-fledged political party in the very near future. To match the power of traditional political parties, however, and to become a significant player in the country's political landscape, it will have to muster considerable strength and resources. As one "philosopher" said: "There is no heavier burden than a great potential."[46]

ENDNOTES

1 In "Looking Back to the Present," Karina Constantino-David discusses the nature of the country's civil society groups. This paper's description of political blocs is taken largely from her article. This author, however, decided to forego David's inclusion of "liberal democracy" as an ideological framework because traditionally the "libdems" have not been considered members of the Philippine Left.
2 For the complete text of Sison's article, see pp. 83–133 of *Kasarinlan*'s special issue on the Philippine Left, Vol. 8 No. 1 (3rd Quarter 1992).
3 Interview with Etta Rosales, Aug. 19, 1996.
4 Valencia and Rivera's interview with Edicio de la Torre, in *Conjuncture*, August 1996, Vol.7 No. 6.
5 Karaos, "The Viability of Social Democracy as a Political Ideology in the Philippines", *Pulso*, Vol. 2 No. 1 1987.
6 This section on Pandayan's history was taken largely from the article "Filipino Democratic Socialism and PANDAYAN: A Historical Sketch and Evaluation," in *Batayang Kurso ng Kahanay* I, May 1994.
7 Interview with Joshua Mata, Oct. 28, 1996.
8 "Hollow Bloc": a common joke among the political blocs.
9 Randolf David, "The Political and Economic Terrain: Situating our Initiatives in the Current Situation," a paper presented before the Institute of Politics and Governance (IPG) National Conference on Popular Participation in Politics (Imus, Cavite, 1995) and published in *Transforming the Struggle: Bisig and its Unfolding Narrative.*
10 Interview with Ronald Llamas, Aug. 9, 1996.
11 Interview with Joel Rocamora, Aug. 13, 1996.
12 "Working Toward the Formation of a Progressive Political Party" (concept paper).
13 "New Party: Our Strategy" (discussion paper).
14 Interview with Rocamora.
15 Interview with Rosales.
16 Interview with Edicio de la Torre, July 3, 1996.
17 Interview with Llamas.
18 This section on PDP was taken from "The Mindanao Factor in New Politics: The PDP Experience," a paper presented by Reynaldo Teves during the IPG Conference Sharing and Daring II, Sept. 13–15, 1996.
19 Interview with Benjamin de Vera, July 5, 1996.
20 Interview with Karen Tañada, Aug. 20, 1996.
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22 Interview with Francisco Nemenzo, Aug. 11, 1996.
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27 Matrix: Participants to EPG Conferences. IPG Secretariat, 1996.
28 Interview with Elaine Teope, Oct. 28, 1996.
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29 Interview with Albert Yuson, Aug. 13, 1996.
30 Interview with Nemenzo.
31 Interview with Fernando Aldaba, July 10, 1996.
32 Interview with Llamas.
33 Interview with De Vera.
34 Interview with Yuson.
35 Interview with De la Torre.
36 Interview with Rocamora.

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38 Interview with Tañada.
39 Process Observation, New Party National Pre-Congress, Sept. 14–15, 1996, Innotech, Quezon City.
40 Joel Rocamora mentions the central-local divide in "Classes, Bosses, Goons and Guns: Re-imagining Philippine Political Culture," in *Boss: Five Case Studies of Local Politics in the Philippines* (Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism and Institute for Popular Democracy, 1995).
41 Process Observation, Mindanao Conference on the SPCPD, Sept. 2–3, 1995 and Mindanao New Party Pre-Congress, Sept. 4, 1995, Cagayan de Oro City.
42 Interview with Nemenzo.
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44 "New Party: Our Organizing Strategy" (discussion paper).
45 "Toward an Alternative Political Party" (concept paper).
46 The philosopher referred to is Charlie Brown, a cartoon character. This quote was shared by T. Raquiza with the author in a conversation about the prospects of the party-building project.

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Inter-Ethnic Relations in a Multi-Ethnic Society: The Manobo and Ilonggo in Arakan

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The paper examined how the indigenous Manobo of the Arakan municipality in Cotabato, Mindanao, interact with the Bisaya settler population. Arakan is a hilly, agricultural community where the Bisaya, mostly Ilonggo, and the Manobo make up 54% and 30–38% of the population, respectively.

By the late 1950s, the Manobo were driven further into the forest by the onslaught of migration. A violent land conflict in the 1960s involving land owned by a Bisayan politician led to the killing of tribal leaders. The Muslim and communist insurgencies that followed likewise affected the Manobo. The Manobo avoided violent encounters by simply leaving the land under contention. This resulted in Manobo landlessness.

The inroad of the cash economy made the Manobo increasingly dependent on the Bisaya. Indebtedness was paid off with land or free labor. The municipality's economy is dominated by a few Bisayan families while the poorest people are the Manobo. The Bisaya, on the other hand, feel that they have earned their right to the land for having worked on it.

Politics is also in the hands of the Bisaya. A common perception is that the Manobo are ignorant and backward. Thus, they are not inclined to be involved in nor perceived capable of the function of local governance.

With the help of a Roman Catholic order, the PIME, they put up the Manobo Lumadnong Panaghiusa sa Arakan Inc. (MALUPA, or Lumad Manobo Unity in Arakan). MALUPA has been organizing village-based work and production cooperatives, enabling the Manobo to increase their income and lessen their economic dependency on the Bisaya. MALUPA also represents the Manobo in government consultative councils and members have become active in barangay politics. MALUPA education has sharpened Manobo's political awareness.

In 1991, a timber license agreement (TLA) awarded to a Davao-based clan was opposed by the Manobo and Bisaya settlers alike. Task Force Sinakan composed of Manobo, church people, teachers, NGO and local government leaders, was organized. They successfully put up an 18-day barricade to prevent the transport of logs. The threat to environment and cultural heritage mobilized the Manobo while the Bisaya were angered by the entry of an outsider exploiting the resources of the community.

The anti-logging struggle was the fist time the two ethnic groups collaborated on a campaign. They became united on the issues of environment although the two have historically competed over land and resources. The church and other organized groups served as facilitator and mediator in empowering both communities and forging unity in environmental protection.

Media and NGO/PO Rebel Group Relations and Tensions in the Peace Process: A Case Study

RUFA CAGOCO-GUIAM

The media in Cotabato are generally conservative. Because of real threats from local warlords, influential politicians and wealthy migrant capitalists, local media practitioners tend to stay within the limits set by a conservative world view. They generally accede to being pragmatic and realistic. Very few have professional or academic training in the field of journalism. They also straddle between print and broadcast media, or between local and national papers.

This paper reviewed the role played by the Cotabato media in the series of negotiations leading to the negotiated settlement between the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines (GRP). While not a direct party, the media's intermediary role as a vehicle for information was crucial.

Generally, Cotabato City-based non-government organizations (NGOs) and people's organizations (POs) think that the media coverage of the peace process was not sufficient, missing out largely on the historical roots of the Mindanao conflict. They think that the media has not fairly reported on their issues, and that the media is biased against them. For several reasons, NGO/PO activities were rarely covered by the media. NGOs and POs do not have enough resources to invest in public relations in order to address this imbalance.

For their part, the media did not view the NGOs and POs as sources of information. The latter were also perceived as leftist. Some media organizations actually discouraged linking with local NGO networks. A number agreed that media coverage of NGO/PO activities on the peace process was insufficient due to lack of understanding of the role of these organizations. One opinion writer thought that local journalists lacked creativity to package a story because they are oriented to the conventional idea of what makes for newsworthiness. Others pointed to the secrecy of the negotiation process itself as the deterrent to good reportage; or to the government's lack of transparency; or the media owners' capitalist orientation.

Most media persons interviewed believed that their coverage of the peace process was sufficient and fair since both negotiating parties were allowed to air their stand. Almost all of them thought that their respective media organizations were supportive of the peace process. They believed that management had the editorial prerogative to set what were aired and written, having in mind everybody's good. Thus, rather than direct influence from management, self-censorship appeared to be at work among journalists.

A review of media coverage of the peace process from June to December 1996 found that many perceived that the relationship between government and media practitioners had been adversarial. Media and NGOs/POs believed that the government failed to conduct enough consultation and information campaigns and confidence-building measures on the peace agreement, the proposed Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development, and the historical roots of the conflict. There were also perceptions that some selfish interest groups were out to sabotage the peace process.

The media may need to rethink its adversarial relations with government to promote sincere and long lasting peace while maintaining their financial and managerial autonomy. Communication lines must be kept open to build transparency. To be truly facilitative, the media must seek out NGOs/POs and other low profile interest groups in civil society. NGOs and POs should likewise build friendly relations with media practitioners. The peace process being a delicate matter, media persons must be sensitive to the various ramifications of their news coverage.

The La Bugal Tribal Association, Inc. and Land Tenurial Rights Issues in Colombio, Sultan Kudarat

NESTOR T. HORFILLA WITH JOEY RB LOZANO

Diminishing control over their lands and the fast vanishing cultures and traditions which define their identity as a people brought forth the formation of a people's organizations among the B'laan tribe members of Colombio, Sultan Kudarat Province. Colombio's landscape changed beginning in the 1950s with the conversion of land tracts to rice and corn production, the issuance of timber license and pasture lease agreements, the inflow of migrants from other parts of the country, and in the 1970s, the war between the government and Muslim rebel forces. The B'laans evacuated to nearby areas or went deeper into the hinterlands.

The B'laan organized the La Bugal Tribal Association in December 1984. Adapting the model of the Basic Christian Community, they organized the Gagmay'ng Lumad Katalingban (GLK or Basic Lumad Community) among clans, and at the sitio and barangay levels. While maintaining their traditional leadership structure, they also borrowed from the skills, tactics and strategies of the church and other support groups. For instance, they learned to undertake petition-signing, dialogues with local officials, and other means to revoke the timber license agreement of a logging firm. La Bugal also successfully waged a campaign to cancel one pasture lease agreement, including sending petitions to the Philippine president, and resolutions to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR).

La Bugal also demanded from the DENR and the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) the recognition of their ancestral domain. After a long process of consultation among elders and other leaders, the B'laan agreed to apply for tenurial security as farmer-beneficiaries under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program. However, they demanded that DAR recognize their ancestral claims to several lands in the area and that collective land certificates be issued to them. DAR conducted perimeter and subdivision surveys and eventually awarded the lands to the B'laan.

Several problems cropped up: some parcels of land were not included in the land transfer; names of settlers unknown to the B'laan were included in the lists of beneficiaries; and evacuees were being resettled in some areas like Bukay

Eel. Division in the La Bugal leadership also emerged due to the influence of other groups who rejected the land transfer scheme. One datu was stripped of his position as head of La Bugal after he allowed the Western Mining Corporation to undertake exploration activities inside the domain.

Solutions were arrived at through negotiations with the proper authorities and among the La Bugal members themselves. Bukay Eel was awarded entirely to the B'laan and, except for 20 settlers, the other evacuees were resettled in another place. The old datu was called on to assist La Bugal in keeping unity among the elders, since the young leader who replaced him did not have the same prestige and respect enjoyed by the older one. This showed that culture and tradition continue to play crucial roles in community processes.

The Women's Voice in the Bodong: The Guilayon Women's Story

MARIE VICTA-LABAJO

How the women's agenda is infused into the male-dominated community structures and processes is examined in this case study of the Guilayon tribal women in Kalinga, Northern Luzon. The study reflects on the tribal women's struggle to find their rightful place within the *bodong*, a domain traditionally held by their men. The *bodong* is the Northern Kalingan's term for "peace pact," the mechanism whereby warring tribes settle their conflicts peacefully through a negotiated agreement, or *pagta*.

In a *bodong* celebration, the women fix up the place, prepare the food, and clean up while the male elders perform the ceremony. A peace pact holder or *pangat* has customarily been male. In the event of death, his eldest son succeeds him. Only when there is no male heir or when the first born son refuses to hold more than one peace pact can a female daughter be a *pangat*.

In the 1980s, the Kalinga-Apayao region was a known hotbed of the New People's Army and consequently, heavily militarized. Guilayon itself was the site of heavy fighting and bombings that disrupted the people's lives, restricted their livelihood activities and subjected males to various forms of harassment from both warring parties on suspicion of complicity with the other. As a result, the women had to take on more work in the fields and risk the task of marketing, traveling on foot or horseback on mountainous terrain. At the same time, they raised and fed their children, many of whom were traumatized by the fighting and fear pervading the community.

The Guilayon tribal women took the initiative of mediating between the two parties for a cease-fire and end of hostilities. The traditional bodong became the mechanism to eventually pull together all peace initiatives. In 1990, the Guilayon Bodong Tribal Federation was founded. Though attended by male and female community members, only males were allowed to vote and were eligible for elective posts.

In 1992; the tribal women formed their own organization, the Guilayon Women's Peace Federation, on the initiative of the Nambucayan Organization of Women (NOW). The NOW was formed by the barangay women of Nambucayan with the aid of a non-government organization, the Social Development Index. Their first project was a child care center.

While a separate women's peace federation is an expression of women's autonomy, the situation appears to have further compartmentalized roles between the sexes and continues to marginalize females in crucial decision-making on matters affecting the community. Women's awareness and assertiveness have also threatened the males in the domestic setting. Fears were eased only because women have increasingly contributed to family incomes while remaining faithful to their traditional tasks at home.

Findings from the participatory research conducted show that women feel discontented and excessively constrained by domestic work. The women have found relief in sharing common experiences in their organization where they have also redefined leadership, seeing it as shared. There, they learned the need to be more active and assertive, unlike in the mixed-sex organizations where their roles were largely subordinate and supportive.

In Nambucayan, women have campaigned and won posts in barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections, and have pushed the barangay to assume equal responsibility in maintaining the child care center. NOW has submitted a barangay resolution to include women in the *bodong* process and has effectively highlighted the women's concerns regarding peace and development in the 1996 Guilayon Tribe Convention. The community folk have a high regard for the women's contribution to peacebuilding in their communities. On the whole, the role and status of Guilayon women have modestly improved.

Agrarian Reform Cooperatives: Relating with Former Land/Corporate Owners and the Business Sector

XENIA RUIZ

The study examined the difficulties faced by agrarian reform beneficiaries in two rubber plantations in Basilan, in transforming the former private landholdings into self-managed workers' cooperatives. It documents the judicial, physical and material obstacles hurdled by the Tumahubong Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Integrated Development Cooperative (TARBIC) before the group was finally awarded a Certificate of Land Acquisition and Ownership (CLOA) in December 1991. The CLOA covered almost 2,000 hectares of land previously operated by Sime Darby Pilipinas, Inc. (SDPI). For comparison, the study also reviewed how the 1,027 hectare land owned by the Menzi Agricultural Company (MAGRICO) was finally transferred to the United Workers Agrarian Reform Beneficiaries Multi-purpose Cooperative (UWARBMPC). Unlike in the former case, the MAGRICO acted as partners in the transfer scheme. However, the two-year process entailed intensive latex harvesting and a rollback in wages compensated by a crop-sharing scheme which disadvantaged the workers in the latter months.

The problems faced by the cooperatives as plantation owners were three-fold: members' attitudes, lack of financing, and poor management capability. Expectations on increased benefits were high and conflicts between management and member-owner roles emerged. Members had to be convinced to forego some of their dividends for reinvestment. Lack of able management staff and insufficient analytical and leadership skills of the Board of Directors resulted in low-quality decision making. Financing sources to ensure sustainability, considering past exploitative harvesting practices and dependence on external loans, were uncertain. Since the cooperative did not own the processing facilities, they leased these from the former landowners.

Lobbying by the cooperatives, the National Federation of Labor, and the Department of Agrarian Reform enabled them to access a favorable financing program provided by the Land Bank of the Philippines. To bring down overhead costs, the TARBIC allowed women in the nearby community to plant upland rice in newly replanted areas in return for clearing the weeds. The UWARBMPC, on the other hand, arranged with the Department of Education to put up an elementary school inside the plantation.

The implementation of agrarian reform has restructured the rubber industry. Traditionally controlled by corporations, rubber planting and tapping have been transferred to more and smaller autonomous units. Recognizing their inherent weakness, plantation cooperatives in Basilan and Zamboanga joined other rubber producers, traders and end-users in a Rubber Summit held in October 1995. A Rubber Industry Development Committee was formed with two out of nine members from cooperatives. Its first major achievement was to secure a P100 million rubber development fund from government.

Through joint ventures among themselves and by undertaking secondary business activities directed at servicing their members, plantation cooperatives can move toward profitability and sustainability. In addition, they can act as development catalysts in the larger community, and as key actors in the rubber industry.

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