



# ASIAN STUDIES

Journal of Critical Perspectives on Asia

## (Post)Colonial Philippines: Local Politics, Global Mobilities

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Ruby ABSUELO and Peter HANCOCK

Pentecostalism and *Pulitika*: A Case Study in Tanauan, Batangas, Philippines  
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# Introduction

## (Post)Colonial Philippines: Local Politics, Global Mobilities

IT ALMOST GOES WITHOUT SAYING: colonialism and its legacies have indelibly affected the Philippines in a myriad of ways. And while this impact has already been the subject of much scholarship, this issue of *Asian Studies: Journal of Critical Perspectives on Asia* gathers four new articles on the subject, exploring the effects of (post)colonialism on both local politics and the global mobilities of Filipinos.

On the one hand, colonialism has undoubtedly shaped Philippine local politics, with “local” having a two-fold meaning here: local as the opposite of the global, and local as a synonym of the rural. The former refers to domestic Philippine politics during the American colonial period, while the latter pertains to politics in the greater part of the country.

On the other hand, colonialism has irrevocably added a global dimension, as it were, to Philippine society. Today, thanks to globalization and migration, we study Philippine society as a space not just bound by the geography of the Philippine nation-state but also as a locus that incorporates and transcends national boundaries. Philippine Studies today has cast an eye on Filipinos all over the world, putting particular emphasis on migration and its various implications.

The articles in this issue capture the local/global dynamic of (post)colonialism. The first two capture the “global” dimension of contemporary Philippine society. In the lead article, John Lambino presents a new framework in analyzing Filipino migration to Japan between 1980 and 2010. Departing from the limitations of push-pull theories, Lambino presents an alternative framework—covering political and socioeconomic processes—to explain how and why Filipino migrants in Japan began as entertainers but eventually moved into the manufacturing sector.

Ruby Absuelo and Peter Hancock make the case for Weak Ties as the strongest determinant of employability of Filipinos in the United States.

Their study offers a valuable contribution to the ever-growing field not just of Filipino migration studies but also of Asian-American Studies. Their findings offer a wealth of implications, especially for policy makers in the Philippines, a nation known for its state-backed labor export program.

The third article takes us back to the Philippines, where an American import – Pentecostal Christianity – has figured significantly in rural politics. In his article, Chuan Yean Soon charts how Pentecostal Christians contrast the nonelitist, nonhierarchical, and participatory nature of their religion with the chaos and factionalism of what they call *pulitika*. Soon's article examines Christian Church Music and religious practices, among other things, to probe a field that traditional political science studies overlooks, and to look at political change, not from a national vantage point, but from a local perspective.

The last article on the Cabinet Crisis by Vicente Ybiernas explains that the conflict between Governor-General Leonard Wood and the Filipino politicians is better framed as a clash between the executive and legislative branches of the American colonial government. In so doing, Ybiernas gives us a way to analyze colonial politics beyond a colonizer-colonized framework. And though his work pertains to the Cabinet Crisis, the implications of his framework may be extended to other aspects of politics during the American colonial period.

The local-global dynamic captured in these articles remind us of what might be called the dialectic of globalization: that a global or regional perspective need not precluded the local or domestic, that processes such as imperialism and colonial have global as well as local implications; and, more importantly, that the local is deeply implicated in the global, and vice versa.

Janus Isaac V. NOLASCO  
Managing Editor

# Filipino Workers in Japan between 1980 and 2010: A Study of Political and Socioeconomic Mechanisms of International Migration

John X. LAMBINO

## **Abstract**

The paper offers a methodological alternative to the push-pull approach in examining migration. It argues the need to recognize the historicity and structure of the interaction between people and society (or societies) in examining and analyzing spatial movements. While pre-existing structures constrain individuals' decisions to migrate, these structures can be modified by individual or collective decisions and actions, and are thus change or are open to change.

Using this perspective, the paper examines the shifts in the occupational structure of Filipino workers in Japan between 1980 and 2010. It probes the political and socioeconomic circumstances—the historicity—of their movement from the Philippines to Japan. The paper initially looks at the heavy inflow of Filipino “entertainers” to Japan in the 1980s, which were driven by the political and socioeconomic dynamics in both countries in the 1970s. These include the Philippine government’s labor export policy and promotion of the country’s tourist industry, and the increase of Japanese tourists in the Philippines and their sudden decline in the early 1980s. Lastly, the paper examines the decrease in the number of Filipino “entertainers” in Japan and explores factors behind the corresponding occupational shift of Filipinos in Japan to the manufacturing sector by the mid-2000s.

Keywords: Migration, Historico-Structural Approach, Overseas Filipino Workers in Japan

MIGRATION—I.E. THE SPATIAL MOVEMENT across borders—has taken place throughout the ages. Traders, soldiers, and missionaries have traveled great distances to expand their trading routes, imperial boundaries, and the number of religious converts (Appiah 1998). Historically, the physical movement of peoples influenced the material and intellectual culture of destination societies, as did the physical movements of goods, capital, and information. The importance of migration research cannot be devalued especially under intensifying globalization where more and more people live and work outside, and influence the character and dynamics of their birth countries, as well as their destination societies.

The objective of this paper is to offer and use a historico-structural approach as an alternative framework in analyzing international migration. The paper focuses on the political and socioeconomic mechanisms that determine the migration of Filipino workers to Japan between 1980 and 2010.

The push-pull approach—which is rooted in and heavily influenced by neoclassical economics and methodological individualism—is considered as the core of migration theory (International Organization for Migration 2008,103). It assumes that an individual's decision to migrate is based on a cost-benefit analysis that compares his place of origin and destination. Individuals decide to migrate only if by doing so yields a positive net return (Sjaastad 1962; Todaro 1969, 1976, 1989). George Borjas (1990) extends this notion and argues that individuals decide to migrate to a place where the expected discounted net returns are maximized over a referenced period. This implies that a high number of migrants are expected to come from low-income and high-poverty regions. However, various pieces of empirical evidence counter the expectation that low income is a key push factor for the spatial movement of workers (Massey 1988; Hatton and Williamson 1998). To illustrate this wealth of evidence, Massey (1988) introduced and developed the theory of poverty constraint to migration. The theory contends that migration costs—such as recruitment fees and processing fees for the issuance of passports and visas—constrain individuals from migrating, and that individuals need to acquire a certain minimum amount of money to migrate. In effect, the theory argues that migrants are expected not to come from low-



income and high-poverty areas; it also asserts that migration follows a paradoxical cycle or an inverted U shape (Massey 1988; Hatton and Williamson 1998), wherein migration increases as economic conditions at the origin improves, and decreases as the economic incentives to migrate decline because of better economic opportunities. Under the push-pull approach, the individual—as the unit of analysis—is seen as a utility maximizer (Greenwood 1975). It assumes that their decisions are based on a rational behavior deemed universal and therefore uninfluenced by their experiences and circumstances.

Despite the modifications found in the genealogy of theories within the push-pull approach to migration, the author finds serious limitations rooted in its individual-centered and broadly ahistorical nature. Such theories assume that individuals and their understanding of cost-benefit are mostly detached from political and socioeconomic dynamics. Under methodological individualism, societal dynamics are agglomerations of individual decisions. The understanding of social phenomena is limited to the information generated by synthesizing individual decisions to the level of the social phenomenon (Arnsperger and Varoufakis 2006). The framework has a commitment to explain macrophenomena as microfoundations at the individual level. This understanding is severely limiting. While the physical manifestation of the society is the collection of individuals, the society is driven not only by individual decisions but also by pre-existing institutions.

The paper presents an alternative framework in understanding migration—a historico-structural approach that shows how structural mechanisms underlie individual decisions driving migration flows.

### **Historico-Structural Approach**

Lydia Yu-Jose's (2007) "Why are Most Filipino Workers in Japan Entertainers" can be categorized under the structuralist framework. She pointed out that Filipinos' talent in music underlies the development of their occupation in Japan from musicians to "entertainers."

This approach is in line with Emile Durkheim's (1951 [1897], 38) argument that he made in "Suicide: A Study of Sociology." He wrote "the

individual is dominated by a moral reality greater than himself: namely, collective reality.” Under this framework, individuals are restrained by the existence of social rules and prohibitions as well as social obligations. He reasoned that any individual is always born into a society with certain sets of rules and obligations, which in turn influence how individuals—including their characters and ways of thinking—are formed.

While the paper utilizes this facet of Durkheimian structuralism, it appears limiting because political and socioeconomic environments do change. Furthermore, society is composed of a plurality of structures—each with its own emergent, but temporary characteristics; and their reproduction or transformation is actualized by appropriate actions of individuals or groups (Bhaskar 1989, 2011). Because political and socioeconomic structures change, the paper argues the need to recognize the historicity of the interaction between people and society (or the societies)—meaning that each moment in time does not correspond to an unchanging diagram but to a specific point in the flow of history (Archer 1995). What this means is that people’s decisions can be constrained by preexisting structures, which can, at the same time, be modified by individual or collective decisions and actions. These decisions, the paper recognizes, can have both intentional and unintentional outcomes.

In essence, the paper argues that political and socioeconomic structures continuously alter and that the agglomeration of individual decisions reflect these changes. The paper specifically relates the shifts in the occupational characteristics of Filipinos in Japan, and the decisions and actions made by individuals and groups that influence the shift, to the transformations in the political and socioeconomic structures in Japan and the Philippines. And because the paper is looking at the historicity of Filipino migration to Japan, it focuses on the period from 1980—when the number of Filipinos in the country increased rapidly—up to 2010, the year of the latest available census.

This study conceptualizes international migration as a movement between countries that have independent but sometimes intersecting

political and socioeconomic processes, which effect the movement between and within both the country of origin and the destination-country. On the one hand, this paper sees migration outflow as individual responses to the political and socioeconomic processes in the country of origin (Philippines). On the other hand, the inflow is the outcome of individual responses to the political and socioeconomic processes in the destination-country (Japan).

### **Research Contributions on OFWs in Japan**

Studies on Filipino migrants to America such as Barbara Posadas's (1999) indicate that the American occupation—including the inherent movement of Americans to the Philippines in the first half of the 20th century—fueled the opposite movement of people from the Philippines to America. Similarly, this paper hypothesizes that the movement of Japanese tourists to the Philippines have an effect on the migration of Filipinos to Japan. It further hypothesizes that the political and socioeconomic requirements of the destination country—in this case, Japan—largely determine the occupational type of incoming workers.

There have been a considerable number of previous studies on Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) in Japan. However, many of these are premised on the notion that the OFWs are mostly entertainers (Suzuki 2000; Yu-Jose 2007; Nagano 2008, 101–2; Parreñas 2010). In contrast, Satake and Da-anoy (2006, 46–56) show—using a questionnaire on 60 respondents—that Filipino women married to Japanese men tend to leave entertainment work in order to prioritize their families. Meanwhile, Kentaro Azuma (2010) examines the interrelationship between the reality and the image of OFWs in Japan. He points to the formation of a more realistic image of OFWs as wives and mothers. He interprets it as the change in the image of Filipino entertainers in Japan from that of a worker in the production process to a participant in the community. However, his paper does not elucidate the actual change in the occupation of OFWs in Japan in the production process that shaped the change in image.

Many other research on Filipinos in Japan focus on their being careworkers (Ogawa 2012; Ohno 2012; Lopez 2012). While the socioeconomic structure of an ageing Japan is an emergent mechanism influencing the occupational structure of Filipinos in Japan for the period being studied (between 1980 and 2010), care work never became a significant occupation of Filipinos in Japan during the period of study (to be discussed in a succeeding section).

Other studies report and analyze the manufacturing work of *nikkeijin*<sup>1</sup> (Tsuda 1999; Sharpe 2001). However, as of the paper's writing, no research and reports has focused on Filipino workers in the Japanese manufacturing sector, even though—to be mentioned in the succeeding discussions—they are mostly concentrated into the manufacturing sector.

Therefore, this paper contributes to existing research on Filipino workers in Japan by elaborating and analysing their presence in Japanese manufacturing. However, this remains peripheral to the paper's objective of providing an alternative methodology to the push-pull approach, an alternative that finds expression in the changes in the occupational structure of Filipino workers in Japan from entertainment to manufacturing.

The paper initially looks at the underlying political and socioeconomic determinants of Filipino outflows from the Philippines. It then examines the underlying circumstances and requirements of Filipino worker inflows into Japan. Finally, the paper explores the shift in the occupational structure of Filipino workers in Japan between 1980 and 2010.

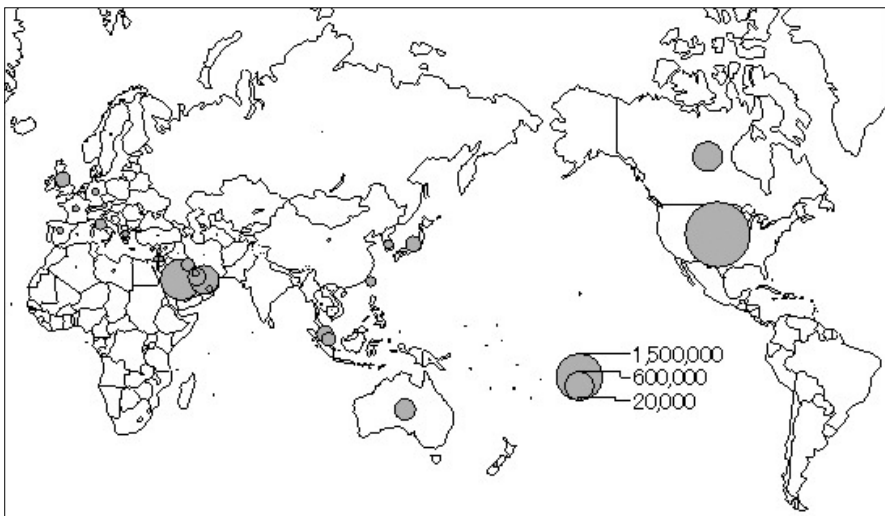
### **Situating the Filipino Outflow from the Philippines**

The Philippines is one of the largest labor exporting countries in the world. As of December 2009, there were more than 8.5 million overseas Filipinos, accounting for 10 percent of the Philippine population (Commission on Filipino Overseas 2009). Receiving US\$21 billion or 11 percent of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2010, the Philippines was the fourth largest recipient of overseas worker remittances after India, China, and Mexico (World Bank 2011).

Overseas Filipinos are scattered around the world. Out of the 8.5 million overseas Filipinos, 42 percent are in the U.S., 28 percent in West Asia, 13 percent in South and East Asia, 8 percent in Europe, 5 percent in Oceania, 4 percent are sea-based, and 1 percent in Africa. By country, the top five destinations for Filipinos are the United States (2.9 million), Saudi Arabia (1.2 million), Canada (640,000), United Arab Emirates (610,000), and Australia (336,000).

An assumption in migration research is that migration is a transnational interaction that wanes with distance (such as Mouritzen and Wivel 2005). This is too simplistic as it mistakenly assumes that migration is simply a movement across a physical space; it does not realize that those spaces are embedded alongside socioeconomic, political, and cultural particularities. The case of Filipino international migration cannot be understood using this reductionist understanding. In contrast to the movement of peoples between neighboring countries such as in the case of Singapore-Johor-Riau or Mexico-United States, the movement of

FIGURE 1  
Overseas Filipinos (Stock as of December 2009)



Note: Figure created by author based on Commission on Filipino Overseas (2009).

Filipinos is global in character. Filipinos are found as far north as Northern Europe and as far south as New Zealand.

The global character of Filipino migration became possible because of the Philippine government's labor export policy in the 1970s. Prior to this, overseas work mostly depended on either private recruitment agencies or personal connections—e.g. family members, friends, and people from the same community.

### **Filipino Worker Outflows from the Philippines**

Right after independence in 1946, the Philippines experienced a current account deficit because of the massive inflow of American commodities. As a response, the government in the mid-1950s implemented the import-substitution-industrialization policy to reduce Philippine dependency on the American economy, and improve its current accounts situation.

However, the domestic market was limited. In the 1960s, the industrial sector started to decline and was not able to absorb surplus workforce. As a result, unemployment and underemployment became serious problems. And the import-substitution-industrialization policy did not accomplish the government's intention of reducing importation. The trade deficit was both serious and chronic. For instance, in 1946, the exports were at US\$64 million while imports were at US\$296 million; in 1972, exports grew to US\$1.1 billion, and imports to US\$1.2 billion. It is in this context that the 1970s saw a major shift in government policy from reducing foreign currency requirements to increasing foreign currency incomes. One of these policies concerned labor export, which, the government reckoned, would address unemployment and underemployment.

The Philippine government created various government agencies—such as the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency (POEA), the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO), and the Commission on Filipino Overseas (CFO)—to facilitate the outflow of Filipinos from the Philippines as migrant workers or permanent migrants.

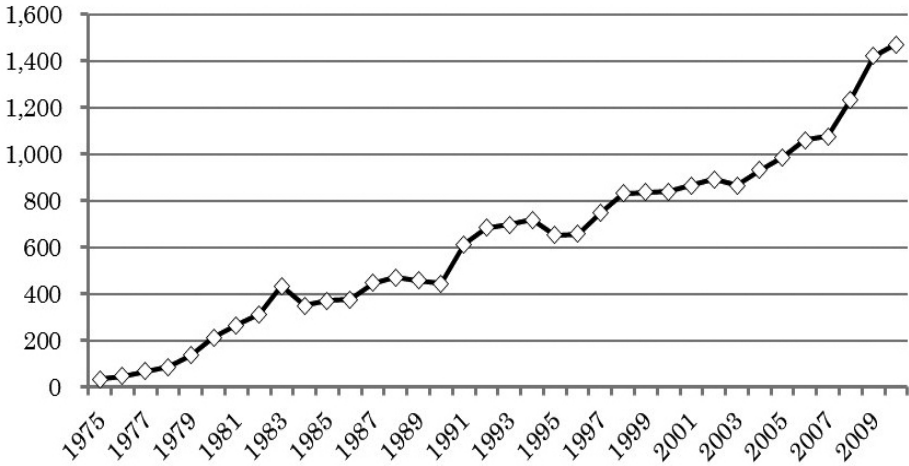
The government policy to promote overseas work started with the 1974 Overseas Employment Program (OEP). In order to administer the program, the government promulgated the 1975 Labor Code of the Philippines to create the Overseas Employment Development Board, National Seamen's Board, and Bureau of Employment Services. Through Presidential Order No. 797, these agencies were unified—establishing the POEA in 1982.

The POEA has three major responsibilities. These are 1) to develop the overseas labor market for Filipinos, 2) to supervise and approve participants to the OEP, and 3) to provide social security to Filipino workers overseas. It has various departments assigned with specific tasks, namely, 1) to make plans promoting overseas employment; 2) to assist Filipino workers in obtaining overseas employment; 3) to provide social assistance to Filipino workers overseas and to their families in the Philippines; 4) to issue government licenses to legitimate private recruitment agencies; and 5) to supervise licensed private recruitment agencies and to give a ruling on possible violations by recruitment agencies.

In short, the POEA's responsibility lies in the creation and actualization of the labor export program. Furthermore, the POEA creates guidelines—both formal and informal—to secure overseas work for Filipinos. Through government supervision of private recruitment agencies by the POEA, Filipinos who seek to work overseas are provided a form of protection. Consequently, Filipino confidence towards overseas work grew, and employment abroad increasingly became an option.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) is the overseas office of the Department of Labor. The government agency provides various services to OFWs to secure their rights and ensure their well-being. As of 2014, POLO has 34 offices around the world. Its responsibilities include assistance for the legal protection of Filipinos overseas, as well as prison visits; provision of consultation desks on Philippine repatriation; legal assistance; counseling; and information-gathering on overseas labor markets. Other responsibilities involve the creation of a network of Philippine organizations and the dissemination of information.

FIGURE 2  
POEA deployment of Overseas Filipino Workers (in thousands)



Source: Iyotani and Kajita 1992 for the data between 1975 and 1983; Philippine Overseas and Employment Agency data for 1984 and onwards.

Lastly, the Commission on Filipino Overseas (CFO) is the government agency that orients Filipino migrants and dependents of foreign nationals prior to their departure. Responsible for the administrative matters concerning migration, as well as the welfare of Filipino residents overseas, the CFO promotes the networking of Filipinos overseas and foreign nationals of Filipino descent.

The establishment and frequent reorganization of government agencies involved in labor export indicate that the state had high expectations for overseas work to become a means to acquire foreign currency and dispose of excess labor in the country. Indeed, after the establishment of the POEA, the number of OFWs deployed under the government program increased from 36,000 in 1975 to 1.5 million in 2010—an increase of 42 times during the last 35 years (Figure 2).

As an outcome of the government's labor export policy, millions of Filipinos have been working all over the world as nurses and caregivers in



the United States; construction workers and engineers in West Asia; domestic helpers and babysitters in Hong Kong and Singapore; and sailors and crewmembers of oil tankers and cargo ships.

### **Situating the Inflows of Filipino Workers to Japan**

While the labor export policy can account for the outflow of Filipino workers from the Philippines, it cannot sufficiently explain the inflow of Filipino workers in each of the countries. This section examines the mechanisms that started the entry of Filipino workers into Japan.

As of 2010, Filipinos were the fourth largest migrant group in Japan following the Chinese, the Koreans, and the Brazilians. In the same year, there were 210,181 Filipino migrants, accounting for 10 percent of all the foreigners in Japan (Figure 3). If we look at the inflow of Filipinos to Japan, we can see that the number of Filipinos there increased substantially beginning in the 1980s (Figure 3). Most of these were women. In general, there is almost one female foreigner for every male foreigner in Japan, but there are three Filipino women for one Filipino man. And until 2005, most Filipinos came to Japan as Overseas Performing Artists (OPA)—singers and dancers in the entertainment industry. For instance, out of 38,772 Filipino workers deployed to Japan in 2005, 38,483 were OPAs. And much earlier, between 1993 and 2004, 99.5 percent of Filipino workers deployed to Japan under POEA were OPA, 95.9 percent of whom were women (POEA website). The data begs the question, “Why were there so many OPAs in Japan?”

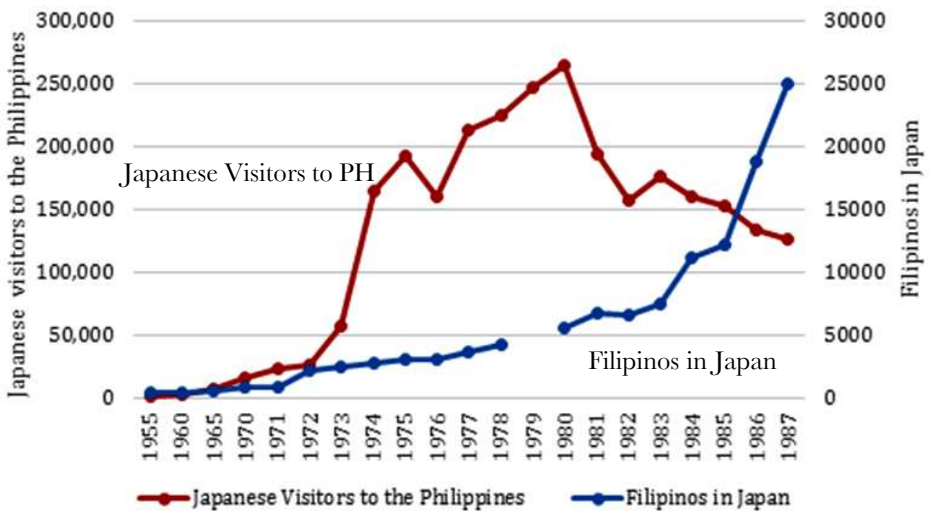
From the historical perspective, this section examines the mechanism that drove Filipino entertainment workers to go to Japan, the entertainment and sex industry in the Philippines, and its eventual shift to Japan.

Historically, the 1960s saw the escalation of the war in Vietnam, resulting in the rapid increase of American soldiers stationed in American military facilities in, among other countries, the Philippines. This led to an upsurge of entertainment establishments, particularly in the sex industry. However, as the social costs of the death and injuries of American soldiers as well as anti-War protests in the United States increased, the U.S.

government adopted the “Vietnamization policy”—the withdrawal of American soldiers from East Asia in the early 1970s. With the end of the Vietnam War in 1973, the number of American soldiers stationed in the military facilities in the Philippines decreased drastically. The red light industry, which caters to American soldiers, now shifted its focus to foreign tourists. And, with key physical infrastructure such as hotels and a major international airport, Metro Manila became the vital location of the Philippine sex industry. The number of foreigners increased from 51,000 in 1960 to 84,000 in 1965.

The shift in focus of the red light industry to foreign tourists was in line with the Philippine government’s policy to promote tourism in the country. As mentioned, socioeconomic problems of unemployment and trade deficits had pushed the government to adopt policies that sought to increase foreign

FIGURE 3  
Number of Japanese visitors to the Philippines and number  
of Registered Filipinos in Japan



Sources: Statistics Bureau of Japan (various editions) and National Statistical Coordination Board (Philippines, various editions).

currency income. Aside from labor export, the government also created the Ministry of Tourism in 1973, and ratified the Friendship, Commerce, and Navigation Treaty between the Philippines and Japan, among others. This tourism promotion policy was successful. For example, the number of foreign visitors sharply increased to 144,000 in 1970 or around 1.7 times the level in 1965. This number continued to increase such that in 1980, the number reached 1 million for the first time. Looking at the country of origin of the visitors, one sees the sharp increase of Japanese visitors both in number and proportion. They grew from 16,000 in 1970 to 24,000 in 1973 and to 265,000 in 1980. In 1970, Japanese visitors only accounted for 11 percent of the total. But in 1980, they comprised 26 percent of the overall number of tourists. Furthermore, between January and June 1981, visitors in the Philippines totaled 470,000. Of this, Japanese numbered 110,000 (Figure 4)—the most among all the countries—or 23 percent of the total visitors in the Philippines.

Most of the 110,000 Japanese visitors in the Philippines were male. The ratio of male and female Japanese tourists was 5:1, whereas all other countries had a 2:1 ratio. As shown in Figure 4, the number of Japanese tourists increased sharply in the 1970s. During this period, Japanese men in the Philippines purchased the “entertainment services” of Filipino women. This activity formed a demand for such services in Japan. Figure 3 also shows the number of Japanese visitors to the Philippines and the number of Filipinos in Japan from 1955 to the 1980s. Note that while the number of Japanese visitors to the Philippines sharply decreased starting in 1980, the number of Filipinos in Japan increased.

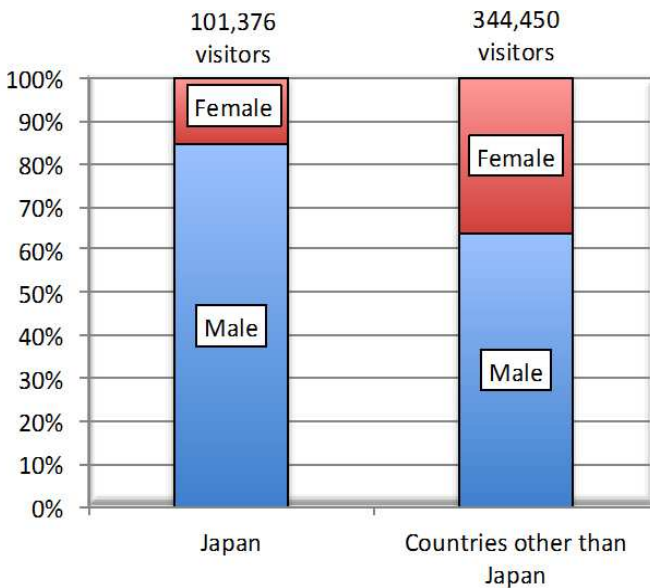
The steep decline of Japanese visitors to the Philippines is attributed to the growing concerns and views over the sex tours of Japanese men in the country. For instance, there was a concern in Japan that these actions would bring about international criticism and condemnation. On 22 October 1980, Takako Doi—a member of the Japanese Diet—brought up the issue at the session of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs. She voiced her concern that this issue might damage Japan’s diplomatic relationships based on mutual trust. During the October 29 session of the

Standing Committee, she questioned Manabu Kenmatsu—chairperson of Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA)—on the association’s attitude towards the matter and demanded that improvements be made. As a form of initial response, Chairperson Kenmatsu expressed that actions such as the expulsion of an association member engaged in sex tours is not a straightforward matter—that difficulties arise as the association has to open an extraordinary general meeting in order to expel a member from the association, etc.<sup>2</sup>

However, the opposition to the sex tours was relentless. For instance, during the state visit of then Japan Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki to the Philippines, Philippine and Japanese feminist organizations held a demonstration in Metro Manila in protest of sex tourism. The

FIGURE 4

Visitors to the Philippines from Japan and from other countries between January and June 1981



Source: National Census and Statistics (1981).

demonstration was covered by local and international media organizations.<sup>3</sup> Under this prevailing condition, the Ministry of Transport of Japan cautioned the travel agency, *Nihon Ea Tsuristo Sha* (Japan Air Tourist Company), which was organizing sex tours. By 2 February 1981, the agency was removed from the roster of JATA (Asahi Shimbun 1981a). This illustrates the severity of the posture that both the Japanese government and Japan's travel industry adopted towards travel agencies that facilitated sex tours in the Philippines. For this reason, the Japanese travel industry refrained from sending its citizens to the Philippines; as a result, the number of Japanese visitors to the Philippines sharply dropped starting in 1981.

These and other factors stimulated the movement of Filipino women as retailers of “entertainment commodities” from the Philippines to Japan. Backed by the Philippine government's labor export policy and enabled by the activities of private recruitment agencies, Filipino women came to Japan to work in the entertainment industry beginning in the 1980s. By importing the “entertainment commodities” of Filipino women, the issue of sex tourism would no longer become a basis of international criticism of Japan. Furthermore, since the entertainment commodity provided by Filipino women can be purchased cheaply and sold expensively, the importation would increase the profits of Japanese businesses in the “entertainment industry” (Ito 1992, 319).

### **Occupational Diversification of Filipino Workers in Japan**

As discussed, many Filipino women initially came to Japan as “entertainers.” It is therefore not surprising that a considerable number of studies on OFWs in Japan assume that migrants are mostly “entertainers.”

The diverse occupational structure of “Japan

As early as 2005, statistical data from the Japanese government indicate that the top occupation for OFWs in Japan lay not in the “eating and drinking places; accommodations” sector which handles “entertainment

commodities,” but rather in the manufacturing industry. In 2005, 36 percent of all Filipinos in Japan were employed in the manufacturing sector; this would increase to 44 percent in 2010. Table 1 shows that in that year, the second most prominent occupation among Filipinos was in the “eating and drinking places, accommodations” sector (13 percent), followed by “industries that cannot be classified” (12 percent). Additionally, the proportion of Filipino workers in Japanese manufacturing (44 percent) is around three times more than the proportion of manufacturing workers in the entire country (16 percent) in 2010.

In terms of geographical distribution, the concentration of Filipino manufacturing workers in and around Aichi is particularly conspicuous. Aichi accounts for only 9 percent of manufacturing workers in Japan, but it accounts for more than 14 percent of all Filipino manufacturing employees. Furthermore, Filipinos in manufacturing are also concentrated in the prefectures around Aichi such as in Shizuoka, Gifu, and Mie, and in prefectures around Tokyo like Saitama, Chiba, and Ibaraki.

### Filipino Concentration in the Manufacturing Sector

After the 1985 Plaza Accord that led to a substantial appreciation of the Japanese yen, many Japanese companies transferred their manufacturing operations to countries where workers received lower wages. As international competition further intensified with the advancement of economic globalization in the 1990s and 2000s, more Japanese companies transferred their operations overseas to stay competitive (Lambino 2009). This brought about a general decline in the manufacturing industry in Japan. On the other hand, as small- and medium-scale enterprises that stayed in Japan shored up their competitiveness in part by reducing production costs, work conditions in the manufacturing sector deteriorated (*ibid.*). These small and medium-scale enterprises experienced labor shortage as Japanese workers avoided them because of poor working conditions. Under this circumstance, Filipinos and other foreigners filled up this labor gap.

OFWs in the Japanese manufacturing sector are concentrated in Kanto and Chubu (Figure 5) where small- and medium-scale companies agglomerate. This means that as international competition intensified under globalization, in which these companies faced pressure to reduce their costs, demand for low-wage labor in these regions rose as well. In other words, then, the shift in occupation of many OFWs in Japan to work in the manufacturing sector reflects the broader changes in the regional economic structure of the country.

### **Social and legal mechanisms on the inflow of low-skilled workers**

Filipinos as low-skilled workers—especially in the manufacturing sector—continued to increase, even if the fundamental guidelines of the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act (Immigration Act) does not generally recognize the inflow of such workers. At any rate, because of this legal restriction, it is therefore important to explicate several mechanisms that allowed Filipinos to work as low-skilled workers

TABLE 1: Filipino workers in Japan (2010)

	<b>Total Employees in Japan and Industry Share</b>	<b>Total Filipino Employees in Japan</b>
Total Workers	58,754,208	71,041
Total Percentage	100%	100%
Manufacturing sector	16%	44%
Eating and drinking places, accomodations sector	6%	13%
Wholesale and Retail sector	17%	7%
Other sectors	55%	24%
Sectors that cannot be classified	6%	12%

Source: Statistics Bureau of Japan. “2010 Population and Housing Census.”

TABLE 2: Filipino Workers and Total Workers in the Manufacturing Sector in Japan (2010)

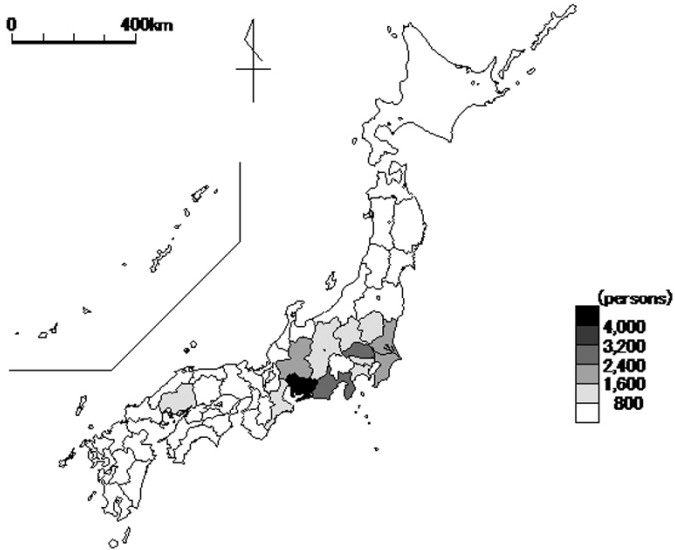
Prefecture	Filipino Workers	Total Workers	Prefecture	Filipino Workers	Total Workers
Hokkaido	76	204,265	Shiga	470	178,658
Aomori	63	65,613	Kyoto	230	194,038
Iwate	195	97,743	Osaka	532	606,922
Miyagi	161	139,236	Hyogo	553	451,031
Akita	112	75,201	Nara	66	100,191
Yamagata	165	115,586	Wakayama	54	63,357
Fukushima	363	187,920	Tottori	93	40,509
Ibaraki	1,646	292,486	Shimane	118	47,228
Tochigi	830	229,258	Okayama	204	168,541
Gunma	1,171	225,747	Hiroshima	1,360	236,340
Saitama	2,509	557,368	Yamaguchi	191	113,231
Chiba	1,721	340,961	Tokushima	95	52,888
Tokyo	1,553	587,973	Kagawa	473	77,700
Kanagawa	1,466	601,622	Ehime	254	99,099
Niigata	388	211,403	Kochi	43	28,989
Toyama	549	131,878	Fukuoka	291	263,231
Ishikawa	121	110,016	Saga	67	61,803
Fukui	244	87,108	Nagasaki	106	72,675
Yamanashi	477	84,665	Kumamoto	173	105,570
Nagano	855	226,458	Oita	216	79,979
Gifu	2,030	246,810	Miyazaki	78	64,926
Shizuoka	3,059	475,963	Kagoshima	242	82,267
Aichi	4,486	900,869	Okinawa	22	27,806
Mic	1,391	212,856			

in the Japanese manufacturing sector, if not other industries. This section identifies two causes.

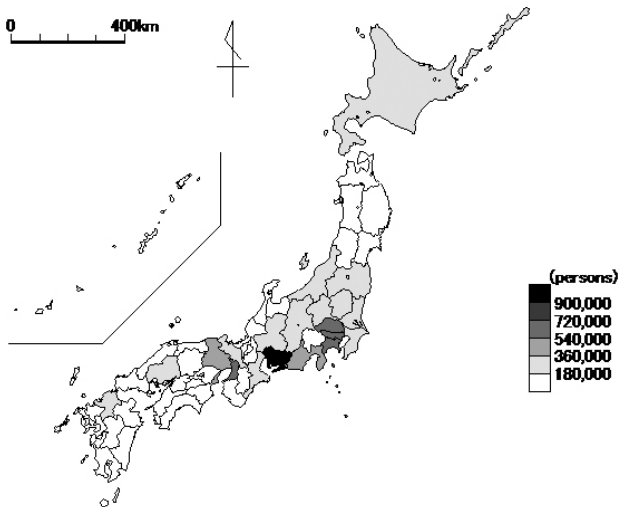
The first pertains to the 1990 revision of the Immigration Act. After the Plaza Accord, the 1986 Mackawa report assessed that a monetary easing policy be adopted to promote the shift of dependence from foreign demand



**FIGURE 5**  
Filipino Workers in the Manufacturing Sector in Japan (2010)



**FIGURE 6**  
Total Workers in the Manufacturing Sector in Japan (2010)



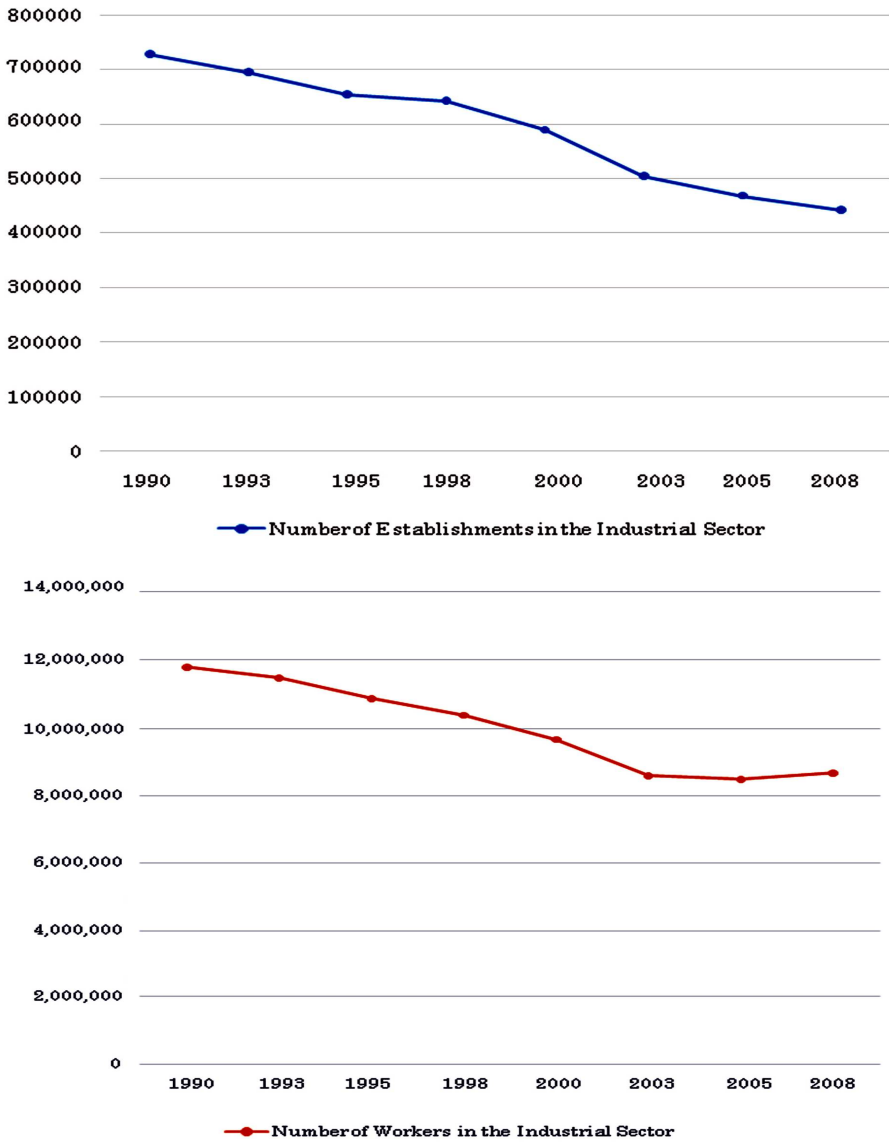
Note: Figures created by author based on Statistics Bureau of Japan (2010).

to domestic demand. Unexpectedly, monetary easing caused two kinds of economic bubble: the asset bubble and the labor bubble. The labor bubble prompted the government to adopt deregulation measures—such as the foreign trainee program and the entry and employment of *nikkeijin*—in the labor market by revising the Immigration Act in 1990 (Iguchi 2001, 23, 43). However, even after the labor bubble burst, the inflow of foreign trainees and *nikkeijin* workers continued to rise. The demand for labor in the general labor market declined, but that in specific sectors like small-medium scale enterprises increased. In other words, the rise in the number of foreign trainees and *nikkeijin* workers corresponded with the labor shortage in small- and medium-scale enterprises. For them to survive, foreign trainees and *nikkeijin* workers became indispensable. And the revision of the Immigration Act became their gateway to come to Japan and work as low-skilled workers in the manufacturing sector, if not other industries.

The second reason for Filipino presence in Japan involves the acquisition of the right of permanent residence. Filipinos who married Japanese nationals and descendants of Japanese nationals who migrated overseas in the past are given the residence status of a “spouse or child of Japanese national” or a “long-term resident.” The residence status of “spouse or child of Japanese National” refers to the actual and the adopted children of Japanese nationals, as well as their spouses. Many Filipino *nikkeijin* have the residence status of “long-term resident.” In 1992, they numbered 2,617 and increased to 37,870 in 2010 (Immigration Bureau of Japan, various editions). Figure 8 also shows that Filipinos with the resident status of “spouse or child of Japanese national” rose sharply from 2,967 in 1984 to 41,255 in 2010. Meanwhile, Filipinos with “permanent resident” status increased from 192 in 1984 to 92,754 in 2010. In contrast, the number of Filipinos who hold “entertainer visas” increased until the mid-2000s from 3,835 in 1984 to 50,691 in 2004; and sharply decreased in the latter half of 2000 to 6,319 in 2010.

In this sense, the legal residency status of some Filipinos in Japan shifted from “entertainer” to “long-term resident,” “spouse or child of

FIGURE 7  
Declining manufacturing sector in Japan



Source: Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (Japan) (2011).

Japanese national” or “permanent resident.” This means that their legal status became a more permanent one. And acquiring permanent residence, many had the tendency to leave entertainment work.

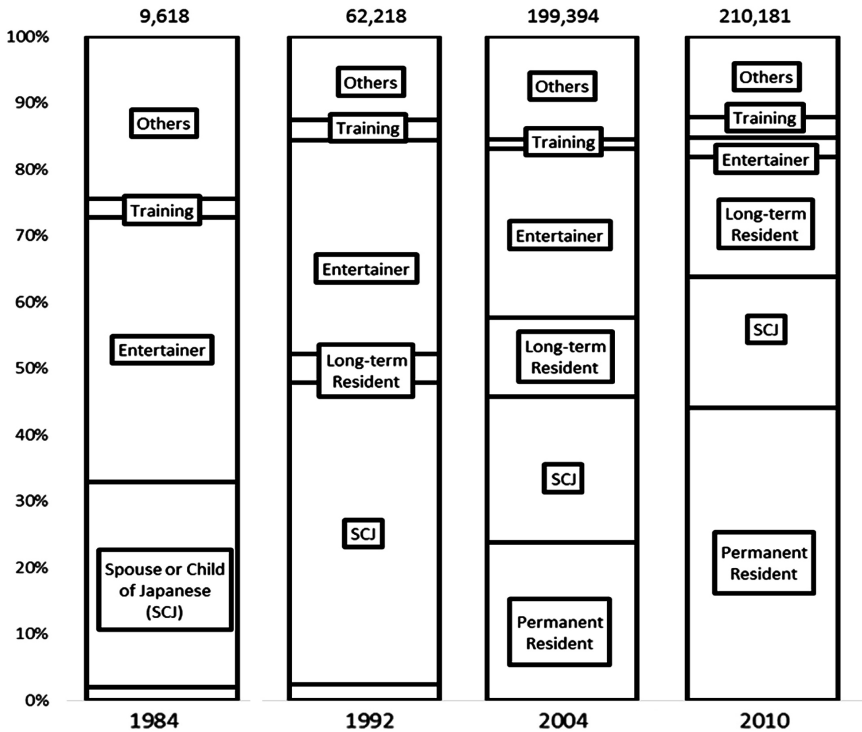
Another factor in the shift away from entertainment industry lies increased rigor of the screening for the residency status of “entertainer,” which led to a sharp decrease in the number of OPA deployed under POEA from 39,000 in 2005 to 7,000 in 2006. The stringency of the screening process had to do with release of Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP) by the U.S. State Department in 2001, in which Japan was classified as a major transit point for human smuggling and as a destination country of women from Thailand, the Philippines, and the Newly Independent States who are trafficked for sexual exploitation. Furthermore, in the 2002 report, Japan is the only developed country among 52 countries classified under tier two.<sup>5</sup> These circumstances contributed to the Japanese government’s signing of the “Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons” in December 2002, which was eventually approved by the Japanese Diet in June 2005. Similarly, a measure against human trafficking—an ordinance of the Ministry of Justice—was revised to add more rigor to screening process for the residency status of “entertainer.” In 2010, 6,319 (3 percent) out of the total 210,181 Filipinos in Japan have a legal status of “entertainers” (Immigration Control 2011).

### **Japan’s Ageing Society and Filipino Care Workers**

Right after the stricter screening of “entertainers” was implemented in 2006, the Philippines and Japan entered a new era in their socioeconomic relationship vis-a-vis migration. In 2006, the governments of both countries signed the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA), Filipino nurses and caregivers would enter Japan because of changing demographics in the country. In the 1990s, there already were widespread concerns over the low birthrate and the impact of the ageing population: that it would reduce social vitality and increase the social costs of caring for the elderly.<sup>6</sup>

The Japanese government acknowledged the need to adopt a policy to help counter population decrease and the other effects of an ageing population. It recognized that improvements in childbirth and childcare—allowing Japanese women to have children while continuing to work—would lead to an increase in birthrate and productivity. It was also aware that enhancing health care would minimize the social costs of an ageing society. However, the childcare and healthcare sectors were suffering from a labor shortage because of poor working conditions. For this reason, many in Japan turned to employing foreign workers in childcare and healthcare. Indeed, long-term Filipino residents in Japan are seen as alternative care workers (Lopez 2012). And

FIGURE 8  
Residency status of Filipinos in Japan



Source: Immigration Bureau of Japan (various editions).

the perception and expectation led many researchers and scholars (Asato 2012; Lopez 2012; Ohno 2012) to focus on Filipinos in healthcare.

However, under the period of study (1980–2010), there is no evidence of a significant influence of the ageing population on the occupational structure of Filipino workers in Japan. According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census in Japan, only 3.7 percent (2,593 out of 71,041) of the Filipinos in the country work in the “Medical, Health care and Welfare” sector as against 10.4 percent (6,103,345 out of 58,754,208) of the total working population in Japan. Therefore, the representation of Filipinos as care workers has a weak basis on macroempirical data at least until 2010. Thus, the most we can say is that as of 2010, the ageing population of Japan is only an emergent structural mechanism that may influence the occupational structure of Filipino workers in the country in the future.

### **Concluding remarks**

To understand the movement of peoples across national borders under globalization, this paper offered an alternative approach—i.e. historico-structural approach—in analyzing the international mobility of labor power. In particular, it explored the changing political and socioeconomic dynamics in both the Philippines and Japan, factors that helped determine the outflow of Filipinos from the Philippines, and their inflow into Japan between 1980 and 2010. Also, the paper examined the shift in the occupations of OFWs in the country. And the analyses yielded the following points and contributions to existing research:

In contrast to a static or an unchanging understanding of occupational structure, the paper historicizes the structure of Filipino worker migration to Japan and shows the dynamism of occupational structure in the country.

At the onset in the early 1980s, most OFWs in Japan began working in the entertainment industry. The paper elucidated a historico-structural approach to explain this phenomenon, which emerged from several

interlocking factors: the socioeconomic circumstances in the Philippines (promotion of tourism and labor export policy); the geopolitical situation in the region (e.g. Vietnamization and the end of Vietnam War); and the increase of Japanese tourists in the Philippines in the 1970s, an inflow that was choked by Japan's diplomatic concerns over its international affairs.

The paper has also shown that Filipino migration to Japan and elsewhere was greatly affected by the policies of the Philippine government, which themselves grew out of socioeconomic political dynamics within the country. Massive chronic trade deficits and serious problems of unemployment and underemployment—because of the failure of the import-substitution-industrialization policies in the 1950s and 1960s—compelled the government to adopt a labor export policy and promote tourism.

The American defeat in the Vietnam War also laid the groundwork for the inflow of Japanese tourists to the Philippines in the 1970s, who purchased “entertainment commodities” and engaged in sex tours. This was an activity that would influence the creation of a niche and market for Filipino women as entertainers in Japan. In 1980, however, the Japanese government was criticized by Filipino and Japanese activists for engaging in sex trafficking. The Japanese government and its travel industry thus began to take a strict posture against sex tours, which then drastically reduced the flow of Japanese tourists to the Philippines.

This in turn proved another factor that induced the migration of Filipino women to Japan as entertainers. In this sense, then, Filipino migration to Japan was also an outcome of changing geopolitical circumstances as well as diplomatic objectives and requirements.

As mentioned, the Filipino inflow of mostly entertainment workers to Japan in the 1980s was an unintentional outcome of the sudden increase of Japanese tourists in the Philippines in the 1970s and their sudden decrease in the 1980s. In other words, the inflow of Japan OFWs is a reflexive response to and a result of the inflow of people from Japan to the Philippines.

The paper illustrated that OFWs came to Japan to supply labor requirements in certain occupational sectors there. This was evident from the OFWs' occupational structure and from the change in their jobs when the Japanese economy restructured. This occupational shift of OFWs in Japan is largely a result of changes in the socioeconomic context in the country, particularly its demand for labor. The Plaza Agreement and the adoption of a monetary easing policy, and the consequent and subsequent intensifications of economic globalization, altered Japan's economic landscape and precipitated the inflow of low-skilled Filipino workers especially in the manufacturing industry.

However, it must be said that labor requirements in foreign states per se do not automatically draw migrant workers from labor-exporting countries. For instance, although Europe has been a major destination for migrant workers, OFWs there are relatively few. This is partially because the type of work that a migrant can provide helps determine his/her country of destination. Thus, in the case of OFWs in Japan, certain factors—especially the entry of Japanese tourists to the Philippines—were essential to Japan's becoming a destination for Filipino migrant workers.

Many studies on OFWs in Japan are based on the prevailing notion that they are mostly entertainers. In contrast, the paper has shown that the preconception of Filipinos being “entertainers” no longer has a factual basis. Furthermore, while there is much research on Filipinos as care workers in Japan, the paper has shown that as of 2010, only few Filipinos (3.7 percent) work in this sector. Instead of being entertainers or caregivers, majority of them have worked in the manufacturing sector since 2005.

All in all, the paper has shown that Filipino worker migration to Japan is an outcome of interweaving and dynamic socioeconomic political circumstances and requirements within and outside the Philippines and Japan, suggesting that migration research requires an interdisciplinary approach and that migration mechanisms are co-evolving with the dynamics of other structures.



## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> *Nikkeijin* is a term that refers to Japanese emigrants to other countries and their descendants.
- <sup>2</sup> The information was derived from the minutes of the meeting held on October 22 and 29 of 1980 of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs of the Japanese parliament.
- <sup>3</sup> Refer to Mainichi Shimbun (1981) and Asahi Shimbun (1981b).
- <sup>4</sup> The information was retrieved from the POEA website. Using the data of the Philippine government, the paper shows the drastic decrease of inflow of Filipinos to Japan from 2005 to 2006.
- <sup>5</sup> Countries under tier two are those “making significant efforts to bring themselves into compliance.”
- <sup>6</sup> The total fertility rate in Japan in 1995 is 1.42, which at the time became the lowest ever. As a result, “low fertility” became a social concern in Japan beginning in the 1990s. At the Ninth Meeting of Administrative Reform Panel in 1997, Committee Member Akito Arima pointed out that Japan is burdened with intensifying international competition because of the advance of globalization and diminished social vitality due to an aging society that is coupled with low birthrate. Furthermore, the total fertility rate in Japan further decreased to 1.26, which became the lowest rate ever.

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# Social Networks and the Employability of Filipinos in the United States<sup>1</sup>

Ruby ABSUELO and Peter HANCOCK

## **Abstract**

This paper examines Filipino graduates' social networks, educational attainment, degree field, English language proficiency, immigration status, age and gender—factors that influence and determine their employability in the U.S. labor market. While each of these factors does have an effect on employability, the paper argues that the use of Weak Ties was the strongest and most beneficial in improving employability, that is, in securing their first job in the United States after migration and in obtaining more advantageous employment opportunities. These include higher pay, a more secure job status, and a higher percentage working in occupations commensurate with their educational qualifications. The strength of Weak Ties in affecting employability was established through statistical analysis of demographical data collected from Filipino graduates.

**Keywords:** Foreign-born Graduates, Asian American, Philippine Immigrants, Filipino-American, Social Network, Weak Ties, Strong Ties

## Introduction

IT IS SAID THAT FILIPINOS face limited economic opportunities, overwhelming underemployment, and low salaries and benefits, all of which are primary reasons why they migrate(d) to the United States, among other countries. Prior to migration to the U.S., most educated Filipinos worked in higher-level occupations (management) in professional, technical and/or related fields (Commission on Filipinos Overseas 2013). But even though they have a higher level of education, once they enter the U.S. labor market, many are underemployed or work in fields unrelated to their education and experience.

After migrating to the U.S., a substantial percentage of Filipinos were demoted to entry-level positions (Almirol 1985), as is the case of Filipino accountants. Despite sufficient educational qualifications and experience, they end up in menial, low-paying clerical jobs (Valle 2005). The disparity between education and employment is particularly pronounced among Filipinos with bachelors or advanced degrees. Madamba's (1998) findings indicate that almost 50 percent of Filipinos with advanced degrees and more than 35 percent with a bachelor's degree acquired jobs below their educational qualifications. This was true of approximately 60 percent of Filipino graduates with a bachelor's degree, 48 percent with an unfinished master's degree, 23 percent with a master's degree, and 27 percent with professional/doctoral degrees. Running parallel to this trend are the findings of Batalova (2006), Karas (2002), Painter (2010), and Sanders, Nee and Sernau (2002).

## Research Gap

Many explanations on the disparity between educational qualifications and actual employment largely focus on educational attainment, degrees, inadequate English language skills, immigration status, age discrimination, gender issues, strict professional U.S. licensing requirements, and, less frequently, a lack of full recognition of their academic qualifications.

Indeed, previous research on labor market outcomes of foreign-born immigrants suggests that such factors affect employability. However, much of this research focuses on a single variable (e.g. English language proficiency); many studies fail to consider other intervening reasons that contribute to poor and unsuccessful employment among immigrants (i.e. acquiring jobs incommensurate with their educational qualifications). But recent theoretical developments in social networking (Weak Ties versus Strong Ties) helped provide new insight into its important role in facilitating immigrants' employability: that regardless of educational attainment, English proficiency, immigration status, and other factors, the use of Weak Ties is the strongest determinant of employability.

Social networks are not only beneficial for migrants' entry to the U.S.<sup>2</sup>—they also play a crucial role in facilitating their integration into American society. Moreover, social networks help immigrants attain economic well-being during their initial settlement in the country. And for Filipinos, if not other immigrants, one critical element of this “well-being” is their participation in the labor market.

The use of social networks is believed to be associated with employment mobility (Granovetter 1973, 1995) and economic success (Waldinger 2000). Similarly, Weak Ties Theory has been used as the conceptual basis of other studies that examine the connection of social networks to employment status, type of employment, and earnings. Other studies concentrate on establishing and measuring the effects of Weak Ties on wages (Bridges and Villemez 1986; Marsden and Hurlbert 1988; Wegener 1991) and on employment prospects (see Brown and Konrad 2001; Granovetter 1973). Others like Bagchi (2001) examine the role of Weak Ties in the immigration process of professionals in the U.S. Greenwell, Valdez and Da Vanzo (1997) investigate how social ties affect immigrants' employment status and wages. In contrast, studies tackling the effect of weak ties on the employability of Filipino migrants in the United States are almost nonexistent.

## **Charting the Employability of Filipinos in the United States**

This paper develops an overview of the employability<sup>3</sup> in the U.S. labor market of Filipinos who graduated from Philippine universities.<sup>4</sup> It aims to (1) determine if there is a statistically significant relationship between the respondents' employability and the following variables: a) educational attainment, b) degree field; c) English language proficiency; d) immigration status; e) age; f) gender; and g) social networks. Each variable affects the employability of Filipino immigrants in different ways, creating (dis)parities between their educational qualifications and initial employment upon entry to the United States. Each variable also contributes to the improvement or stagnation of later employment prospects. However, while each variable does contribute to employability, the paper shows—through statistical analysis of demographical data collected from Filipino immigrants—how and why weak ties is the strongest and most beneficial factor in determining employment outcomes.

### **Theoretical Perspective: Social Networks and Weak Ties Theory**

Weak Ties and Strong Ties are operationally defined by Granovetter (1973; 1983) and other sociologists. Weak ties are nonpersonal and nonfamilial relationships, i.e. acquaintances. Strong ties, on the other hand, involve relationships for which there are emotional bonds generally involving family or friends (Wasserman and Faust 1994).

Weak Ties and Strong Ties are part of the study of social networking, which has been a common and broad topic of discussion in various disciplines including economics, business, and sociology. On the subject of immigration alone, a plethora of studies on social networking exists—covering its pivotal role in the immigration process, assimilation of immigrants, the lives of the immigrants, their participation in the labor market, including its impact on job search, earnings, and employment and occupational outcomes. (Aguilera and Massey 2003; Amuedo-Dorantes and Mundra 2007; Greenwell, Valdez and Da Vanzo 1997; Livingston 2006; Pfeffer and Parra 2009; Sanders, Nee and Sernau 2002; Waldinger 1997).



In general, when pertaining to helping job seekers, proponents of Weak Ties Theory and Strong Ties Theory argue that their type of social network provides a better alternative and is more effective than the other. For some, Weak Ties offers more novel or valuable information that is more likely to lead to employment than relying on close friends and family ties (Strong Ties). The case for Weak Ties was Granovetter's (1973) argument in his seminal work in the early 1970s. He argued that "those to whom we are weakly tied are more likely to move in circles different from our own and will thus have access to information different from that which we receive" (1371). Granovetter (1983) later discussed some of the empirical studies that tested his theory. Most of the findings mirrored his, suggesting that Weak Tie connections tend to be the best source for new jobs, though the trend differed by occupation (*ibid.*). But while other studies are not completely supportive of the Weak Ties theory, Granovetter (1983) indicated that the results of the studies clarified the advantages of Weak Ties. He concluded that "Weak Ties provided people with access to information and resources beyond those available in their own social circle" (209).

There was also a relationship between the use of Weak Ties in finding employment and having a higher occupational status (Lin, Ensel, and Vaughn 1981). Bridges and Villemez (1986) and Marsden and Hurlbert (1988) found a statistically significant relationship between the strength of Weak Ties and labor outcomes (e.g. earnings). However, after control variables were introduced, the results were not as significant, rendering the original relationship spurious. In contrast, later studies do affirm the advantage of Weak Ties in obtaining desirable jobs (Bagchi 2001; Brown and Konrad 2001). Williams and Durrance (2008) searched the ProQuest database for dissertations testing Granovetter's theory. Their findings indicated that of the 60 dissertation abstracts, 45 percent confirmed/supported the theory, 37 percent found that Strong and Weak Ties were equally influential, and 17 percent said Strong Ties were more effective than Weak Ties. Furthermore, in seeking information about employment in higher skilled jobs, job seekers are more likely to employ Weak Ties. On the other, lower status or lower-skilled jobs more likely to have been obtained by Strong Ties.

### Other Determinants of Employability

Before establishing the primacy of weak ties, it is still necessary to take a closer look at other factors that contribute to or influence immigrants' employability, namely: educational attainment, degree field, English language proficiency, immigration status, age, and gender.

Education plays a vital role in preparation for entry in the labor market. Data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2014) consistently show favorable economic returns, as well as lower unemployment rates, among those with higher levels of educational attainment. Graduate and postgraduate degree holders are better positioned in the U.S. labor market than bachelor's degree holders. The former have higher earnings and occupational status (Borjas 1987; Chiswick 1978; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics 2014). However, some immigrants do not fully succeed in the labor market solely because of their education. Chiswick and Miller (2009) and Friedberg (2000) indicate that education and previous employment history acquired abroad tend to be less valued than those obtained in the host country. The absence or lack of recognition of academic and educational credentials by some U.S. employers in some professions hinders immigrants' access to employment. Batalova and Fix (2008) and Zeng and Xie (2004) suggest that this "devaluation" is one of the barriers immigrants face. Friedberg (2000) shows that immigrants from Asia and Africa are more likely to experience labor market disadvantage (e.g., lower earning) because their foreign education is less valued in the destination country.

Furthermore, certain degree fields are less valuable in the U.S. economy, which puts some migrants at a further disadvantage (Painter 2010). However, for other Asian countries—particularly China, India, and the Philippines—this may not be entirely true. Most of the recipients of the H-1B Visa program have been from these nations (US Citizenship and Immigration Service 2012).<sup>5</sup> For instance, many Filipino professionals have come to the U.S. after the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. This has been particularly true in the medical field when the

U.S. faced a shortage of medical professionals (Choy 2003). Accordingly, emigrating nursing professionals have dominated health-related professions. In demand, Filipino nurses succeeded in the U.S. labor market because their degrees, though acquired in the Philippines, were generally recognized by American employers. And most Filipinos whose expertise is in demand (e.g. nursing, education, and computer-related fields) are employed in the U.S. through pre-arranged, secured jobs; and they work in occupations commensurate with their educational attainment.

The success of some Filipino immigrants may not be similar in all labor markets. Although the Philippine education system is patterned after that of the U.S., professionals in certain industries have failed to experience the same opportunities as those in Nursing, Education, and Computer Science. Filipinos with degrees in Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Engineering face employment barriers (Alba and Nee 2003; Vallangca 1987) often due to professional licensing issues; rigorous state licensing requirements; and the lack of recognition of Filipinos' education and work experiences. As a result, many Filipino professional immigrants do not practice their professions, are underemployed, or suffer employment delays. For instance, Filipino Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) were demoted to entry-level positions at their initial employment, working as bookkeepers and accounting clerks even though they had considerable work experience prior to migration (Valle 2005). Others have resorted to acquiring lower-level or unskilled jobs (Alba and Nee 2003).

Another human capital investment that has determined the success of an immigrant's participation in the labor market is the ability to communicate in English, particularly for those who wish to land a professional job (Cooney and Ortiz 1983; Kim 1999) or to secure an occupation comparable to what they held prior to immigration. In the mainstream labor market, greater fluency and accent-free English has been a requirement for the majority of the higher (managerial) positions (Portes and Rumbaut 2006). Das (2010) revealed the positive significant effect of education and English proficiency on the outcomes of female immigrants'

occupational attainment. At the same time, immigrants who graduated from foreign colleges and universities but whose English proficiency is limited may not be considered qualified for certain positions. This is the case even though their education and experience make them overqualified (De Jong and Madamba 2001). Batalova and Fix (2008) show that highly skilled immigrants with inadequate English proficiency have been twice as likely to be significantly underemployed.

English proficiency not only affects employability but also earning potential, providing immigrants with higher wages in the U.S. (Chiswick 2005; Chiswick and Miller 2002; Chiswick and Taengnoi 2007; Stone et al. 2006) and in other countries (Dustmann and Fabbri 2003; Posel and Casale 2011; Shields and Price 2002). These results have confirmed that language skills complement other acquired human capital (e.g. educational attainment, experience, etc.).

In terms of gender, studies show patterns of female disadvantage in the labor market. They earn less and occupy positions lower than their male counterparts (US Government Accountability Office 2011). In Batalova's (2006) study on skilled immigrants and U.S.-born workers in the United States, she found out that skilled female workers, whether US-born or foreign-born, earned less than their male counterparts regardless of equal investment in human capital (e.g. education) and demographic profile (e.g. age, race). There are ironies to this gender pay gap, which continues to be one of the major inequalities women face in the labor market (Padavic and Reskin 2002). More Filipino women completed their bachelor's degree than their male counterparts (36 percent compared to 13 percent) (Allard 2011). Furthermore, more Filipino female immigrants are more likely to retain their professional status in the U.S. than their male counterparts. This transferability of credentials especially holds true in the case of registered nurses. Because of their profession, they can migrate more easily to and find the same job (nursing). This indicates that females are not fundamentally disadvantaged because their education is accepted in their chosen career fields (e.g. nurses). However, these facts do

not determine whether Filipino women immigrants as a whole fare better than Filipino males.

In terms of labor market outcomes, it appears that immigrants who enter the U.S. via employment-based programs have a greater advantage, at least initially, than those admitted through family-based programs. Filipinos admitted via the latter perform tasks for which they were educationally trained, thus retaining the professional status they held prior to migration. However, because of the concern over the influx of immigrants from the so called “Third World,” as well as employment competition between those who are foreign-born and U.S.-born, the U.S. Congress passed several laws deterring the emigration of certain occupational groups who were negatively affecting employment opportunities of US-born Americans. The first was the Health Professions Educational Assistance Act of 1972, which limited foreign medical graduates from entering the U.S. and practicing in the field. The legislation naturally decreased the number of foreign medical doctors immigrating to the U.S. Therefore, medical doctors and other health professionals who did not qualify for employment-based admittance turned to family ties and used family-based policies to immigrate. However, upon entry to the U.S., the rigorous licensing requirements (such as that of the National Board of Medical Examiners) impacted the immigrants and hindered medical doctors from practicing their specializations. This situation has also been true for Filipinos and all immigrants. Thus, many were left with limited options, one of which was to seek various low-income jobs that were not in line with their educational attainment (Alba and Nee 2003).

### **Data and Methodology<sup>6</sup>**

The research was conducted from March 2011 to February 2012. There were a total of 325 respondents who constituted the sample size, 305 of whom participated in the survey and 20 in the interview component. The primary criteria for the selection of the participants were as follows: (1) Respondents must be Filipino-born immigrants and must have obtained their baccalaureate degree in the Philippines; (2) Respondents must either be permanent, or temporary U.S. residents, or naturalized U.S. citizens;<sup>7</sup> (3) Respondents must have worked, are currently working, or are searching for employment. Respondents may have attended and attained degrees from colleges and universities in the U.S. in addition to the undergraduate degree they obtained in the Philippines.

The study comprised two sets of respondents. One group participated in the survey and the other group took part in the interview component. A snowball sampling technique was employed to select the participants.<sup>8</sup> Web-based and paper based survey methods were used to administer the survey. The initial sampling was done by selecting 500 respondents (400 via webmail, 100 via traditional mail) prior to the use of the snowball sampling technique. However, only 305 constituted the sample size. The 20 interview participants were chosen using the purposive sampling technique. The interviews were conducted through synchronous (Yahoo instant messaging) and asynchronous (e-mail) computer communications, and face-to-face and telephone interviews.

The following data about the immigrants when they first arrived in the United States were collected: social networks used, immigration status,<sup>9</sup> educational attainment, degree field, English proficiency, age, and gender. All these factors determine employability, which was measured according to three indicators: salary on first job, employment status (professional or nonprofessional), and length of time in finding employability.<sup>10</sup> Employability was also analyzed in terms of differences in salary and employment status between their first job and current occupation.

All the factors affecting employability were treated as independent variables, or predictor variables. The social network was categorized as Strong Ties, Weak Ties, or No Ties. Respondents were asked whether they received assistance in obtaining their initial employment (first job). Those who obtained help had to identify the source of such assistance (i.e. Strong Ties, Weak Ties). Immigration status was either immigrant or nonimmigrant.<sup>11</sup> Immigrants enter the United States to reside permanently, while nonimmigrants reside in the country on a temporary basis; these include those on temporary work, business, study, or tourism. However, as it was noted, only individuals with work authorization visas were included in the study. Other predictor variables such as immigration status, educational attainment, degree field, English proficiency, age, and gender were treated as categorical.<sup>12</sup> A mixed methods design was employed to provide a more comprehensive analysis and understanding of the subject matter.

Many factors affect employability, and thus at first glance, it is difficult to isolate, let alone establish, the primacy of Weak Ties in enhancing employment prospects. To do this, standard but complex statistical procedures were all conducted to determine why Weak Ties is the strongest determinant of employability.

Basic and complex quantitative data analyses were treated in-depth using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 21. One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), *t* test, and two-way ANOVA between subjects were performed. The one-way ANOVA and *t* test are essentially the same. The *t*-test was performed to measure the difference between the mean scores of two groups (e.g. Gender – Male, Female). On the other hand, the one-way ANOVA test measure the difference between the mean scores of more than two groups (e.g. Education: Bachelor, Master, Professional/Doctoral). This determined whether the groups differ. However, it does not provide *where the significant difference lies*. Thus, post hoc multiple comparison tests, Bonferroni and Tukey tests were used to identify where the groups significantly diverged. Bonferroni was performed for groups of fewer than four and the Tukey was performed for groups over four.

A two-way ANOVA between subjects tested the impact of two independent variables (factors affecting employability) on the dependent variable (employability). The variables contrasted with employability were examined in terms of their capability to moderate the relationship between employability and the type of social network. Moderation occurs when the relationship between social network and employability depends on a third independent variable, also known as the moderator variable (e.g. degree field, English language proficiency). The effect of the third variable is characterized as an interaction effect, which means that the effect of an independent variable is influenced by another independent variable. The hypotheses were stated in the null form.<sup>13</sup> All statistical tests were performed at the standard 0.05 level of significance ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ).<sup>14</sup> An alpha level of 0.05 was assumed to provide an acceptable level of type I error rate.<sup>15</sup> Any value less than .05 will result in significant effects and any value greater than .05 will result in nonsignificant effects.

The qualitative data were collected through interviews, and were initially analyzed using the *a priori* coding method. Seven *a priori* codes were developed for the initial analysis: (1) Social networks; (2) educational attainment; (3) degree field; (4) English proficiency; (5) immigration status; (6) age; and (7) gender. A systematic grounded theory data analysis technique was used (Strauss and Corbin 1998; Charmaz 2006) to emphasize the use of data analysis steps of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding.<sup>16</sup> It must be said, at any rate, that there are limitations to the quantitative and qualitative methods.

### **Profile of Philippine Graduates Upon Arrival to the United States**

Table one provides a snapshot of the demographic characteristics of respondents upon their first arrival in the United States: age, field, educational attainment, employment classification, English proficiency, gender, immigration status, place of residence, receipt of assistance in finding employment, type of school, and work experience.



### Age

Most respondents were in their early to late twenties, which may suggest that younger Filipinos tend to migrate from their homeland in greater numbers than older Filipinos. But they were second only to those aged 35 and over.

### Gender

Majority of our respondents (61.3 percent) were females. More than half were in the 20–24 and 25–29 age range categories.

### Degree

Majority of respondents held a bachelor's degree in Education, and most graduated from a private college or university.

### Educational Attainment

Less than half of the respondents have advanced degrees. But most have at least a bachelor's degree.

### Work Experience

A vast majority of respondents had work experience or had worked in their chosen fields prior to immigration.

### English proficiency

More than half of the respondents self-assessed their English speaking capacities as “very well.”

### Employment Classification<sup>17</sup>

More than half of the respondents (51.8 percent) initially acquired low-level, unskilled jobs while 48.2 percent obtained occupations commensurate with their educational qualifications.

TABLE 1: Demographic Characteristics of Philippine Graduates Upon Entry to the US

		<b>n</b>	<b>Percent*</b>
Age	20-24	82	26.9
	25-29	91	29.8
	30-34	43	14.1
	35-over	89	29.2
Degree Field	Business/Related	43	14.1
	Computer/Engineering	54	17.7
	Education	72	23.6
	Liberal Arts/Other	47	15.4
	Medical Technology	34	11.1
	Nursing	55	18
Educational	Bachelor's	198	64.9
	Incomplete Master's	54	17.7
	Master's	31	10.2
	Professional/Doctorate	22	7.2
Employment Classification	Professional	147	48.2
	Non-Professional	158	51.8
English Proficiency	Speak English Well	108	35.4
	Speak English Very Well	197	64.6
Gender	Female	187	61.3
	Male	118	38.7
Immigration Status	Immigrant	202	66.2
	Non-immigrant	103	33.8
Place of Residence	Region I	63	20.7
	Region II	24	7.9
	Region III	96	31.5
	Region IV	122	40
Received Assistance in Finding Employment	Yes	180	59
	No	125	41
Type of School	Private	203	66.6
	Public	102	33.4
Work Experience	With Experience	217	71.1
	Without Experience	88	28.9
	Total	N=305	100

\* Total percentage per category.

### Immigration status

More than two-thirds of the respondents entered the United States with an immigrant status (Green Card holders).

### Assistance in Finding Employment

Table 1 shows that more than half of the respondents received assistance from relatives, friends, employment agencies, organizations, or professional affiliations (social networks) while searching for their initial employment.

Table 2 indicates that the respondents' use of the types of social networks at their initial employment varied depending on their gender, age, educational attainment, degree field, English proficiency, and immigration status. It also illustrates the relationship of these variables with their employment status (professional or nonprofessional).

In terms of age, respondents in the "35 years and over" age category were more reliant on Weak Ties than respondents aged 20–24, who counted more on Strong Ties. It also shows that master's and professional or doctorate degree holders had the highest percentage among professionals. Majority (90.7 percent) of respondents with business-related degrees were employed in nonprofessional positions. Fewer than 9 percent worked in professional occupations.

Respondents with Bachelor of Science degrees in Nursing, Education and Computer/Engineering composed more than half of those employed in professional positions, about 60 percent, 59.7 percent and 59.3 percent, respectively.

Females relied more on both Weak Ties and Strong Ties than their male counterparts. Bachelor's degree holders relied more on Strong Ties than those with advanced degrees. Business-related degree holders also counted on Strong Ties more.

Table 2 shows that respondents who utilized their social networks in securing their initial employment also varied. More than 87 percent of

**TABLE 2: Use of Social Networks Vis-a-Vis Determinants of Employability and Employment Classification at Initial Employment**

Note: Data in the left column (Social Network) should be read row to row. On the right side, read column to column (Employment Classification).

Philippine Graduates	Social Network			Employment Classification	
	Strong % *	Weak %	No Ties %	Prof %	Non-Prof %
<b>Age</b>					
20-24	35.7	25.8	24	39	61
25-29	23.2	25	37.6	45.1	54.9
30-34	12.5	15.3	13.6	55.8	44.2
35-over	28.6	33.9	24.8	56.2	43.8
<b>Degree Field</b>					
Business-Related	28.6	2.4	19.2	9.3	90.7
Computer/Engineering	10.7	19.4	19.2	59.3	40.7
Education	26.8	31.5	14.4	59.7	40.3
Liberal Arts/Other	8.9	10.5	23.2	38.3	61.7
Medical Technology	16.1	12.9	7.2	50	50
Nursing	8.9	23.4	16.8	60	40
<b>Educational Attainment</b>					
Bachelor's	85.7	54	66.4	39.9	60.1
Incomplete Master's	8.9	18.5	20.8	51.9	48.1
Master's	3.6	16.9	6.4	77.4	22.6
Professional/Doctorate	1.8	10.5	6.4	72.7	27.3
<b>English Proficiency</b>					
Speak English Well	41.1	28.2	40	35.2	64.8
Speak English Very Well	58.9	71.8	60	55.3	44.7
<b>Gender</b>					
Female	53.6	59.7	66.4	48.7	51.3
Male	46.4	40.3	33.6	47.5	52.5
<b>Immigration Status</b>					
Immigrant	92.9	22.6	97.6	30.2	69.8
Non-immigrant	7.1	77.4	2.4	83.5	16.5
<b>Social Networks</b>					
Strong	-	-	-	7.1	92.9
Weak	-	-	-	87.9	12.1
No Ties	-	-	-	27.9	72.8

\*Total percentage per category

Source: 2011-2012 Survey

respondents who utilized Weak Ties secured professional jobs, while only 12.1 percent obtained nonprofessional jobs. Those who relied on Weak Ties also earned more than those who used Strong Ties.

The left column of Table 3 shows the employability scores of the respondents vis-a-vis several determinants of employability, which in turn is measured by the differences in the duration of time in finding their initial employment (LTFE, length of time finding employment); employment classification (EC, professional or nonprofessional); and beginning salary (BS, salary received at their first job).

Table 3 indicates the employability score of a nurse, educator, a person who uses a particular type of social network, a male, a female, and so on. To compute for the employability/level or score, we collected the following data: (1) length of time finding employment/wait time (LTFE); (2) beginning salary (BS);<sup>18</sup> and (3) employment classification (EC). In order to have a more precise measurement of employability, the three indicators were combined to form a composite index for employability during initial employment.<sup>19</sup> The employability level/score at initial employment and the outcome or the result was designated as the dependent variable.

As shown in Table 3, those who have a masters degree, nursing degree, are very proficient in English language, hold non-immigrant/non-green card holders, and most importantly those who utilized weak ties social networking, received the highest employability levels/scores ( $M = 5.26$ ,  $M = 4.87$ ,  $M = 4.68$ ,  $M = 5.41$ , and  $M = 5.39$ , respectively).

The right column features the trends that respondents revealed in the interviews, where they explained the reasons of their employability (or the lack thereof) and their experiences. The interview narratives in the qualitative component provided insight into the employability of respondents.

This matrix also displayed and allowed for the examination of the congruency of results to achieve a broader understanding of Filipino graduates' employability. All data sets corroborated each other. As noted, the hypotheses were stated in the null form, i.e. employability is not associated with the following factors: educational attainment, degree field, English

TABLE 3: Employability Scores Vis-a-vis Various Determinants Thereof At Initial Employment

Employability levels/scores	Employability Emerging themes (EC, BS, LTFE)*
<p><b>Educational Attainment: Significant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master's (<math>M = 5.26, SD = 1.064</math>)</li> <li>• Prof/Doctorate (<math>M = 5.00, SD = 1.024</math>)</li> <li>• Inc. Master's (<math>M = 4.56, SD = 1.127</math>)</li> <li>• Bachelor's (<math>M = 4.39, SD = 1.078</math>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC - Licensing issues delayed in securing jobs commensurate with education for all levels</li> <li>• BS - Advanced degrees (i.e. Master's) were well-compensated vis-a-vis their educational attainment; provided better employment opportunities</li> <li>• LTFE - Shorter wait time but secured "odd" jobs (e.g. caregiving, babysitting); mostly for BA degree</li> </ul>
<p><b>Degree Field: Significant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nursing degree (<math>M = 4.87, SD = .963</math>)</li> <li>• Education (<math>M = 4.81, SD = 1.274</math>)</li> <li>• Computer/Eng (<math>M = 4.69, SD = 1.043</math>)</li> <li>• Medical Technology (<math>M = 4.41, SD = .158</math>)</li> <li>• Liberal Arts/Others (<math>M = 4.38, SD = .968</math>)</li> <li>• Business/related (<math>M = 3.84, SD = .871</math>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC - Licensing issues delayed in securing jobs commensurate with degree fields; failing to secure licenses regardless of degree fields resorted to securing low-level jobs</li> <li>• BS - Higher-demand degrees; higher salaries</li> <li>• LTFE - Higher-demand degrees (education and nursing) entailed faster access to intended jobs</li> </ul>
<p><b>English Language Proficiency: Significant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak English Very Well: (<math>M = 4.68, SD = 1.086</math>)</li> <li>• Speak English Well: (<math>M = 4.33, SD = 1.134</math>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC - English fluency contributed to success in securing job commensurate with education; lack of proficiency contributed to respondent's lacked of self-confidence, hence resorting to low-level job</li> <li>• BS/LTFE - Faster access to low-level jobs; lower salary</li> </ul>

\*EC-Employment Classification; BS -Beginning Salary; LTFE-Length of Time Finding Employment

Employability levels/scores	Employability Emerging themes (EC, BS, LTFE)*
<p><b>Immigration Status: Significant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immigrant: (<math>M = 5.41, SD = .933</math>)</li> <li>• Non-immigrant: (<math>M = 4.11, SD = .931</math>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC - Immigrant holders experience delayed in their employment process due to licensing/certification requirements; resorted to securing low-level jobs while complying with the requirements</li> </ul>
<p><b>Age: Not Significant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20-24 (<math>M = 4.40, SD = 1.076</math>)</li> <li>• 25-29 (<math>M = 4.47, SD = .993</math>)</li> <li>• 30-34 (<math>M = 4.74, SD = 1.115</math>)</li> <li>• 35-over (<math>M = 4.67, SD = 1.250</math>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BS/LTFE - Faster access to low-level jobs; lower salary</li> <li>• EC/BS/LTFE - Respondents secured job regardless of age; stressed “Knowledge-based” and “meeting job requirements” indicated U.S.-enforced “equal employment opportunity”</li> </ul>
<p><b>Gender: Not Significant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female (<math>M = 4.53, SD = 1.113</math>)</li> <li>• Male (<math>M = 4.58, SD = 1.120</math>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC/BS/LTFE - Respondents secured jobs regardless of gender; “Knowledge-based” qualification rather than gender was more important; compensation was based on established rates but increased for respondents with advanced degrees</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social Network: Significant</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak Ties- (<math>M = 5.39, SD = .824</math>)</li> <li>• No Ties/Individual (<math>M = 4.08, SD = .947</math>)</li> <li>• Strong Ties (<math>M = 3.75, SD = .769</math>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EC/BS - Weak Ties secured professional jobs; Strong Ties secured lower level occupational status</li> <li>• BS – WT earned higher salary comparable with the US-born Americans (advantage)</li> <li>• LTFE - ST faster access to job but beneath education qualifications (disadvantage);</li> <li>• No Ties/Individual – self-reliance on securing jobs</li> </ul>

\*EC-Employment Classification; BS -Beginning Salary; LTFE-Length of Time Finding Employment

language proficiency, immigration status, age, and gender. The results rejected the null hypotheses exclusive of age and gender in relation to employability; suggesting that age and gender do not have bearing upon employability. However, educational attainment, degree field, English language, and immigration status were significantly associated with employability.

### **Statistical Analysis of Employability and Various Factors Thereof**

In the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test, the  $F$ -statistic determines if the variances between the means of two populations are significantly different. However, the importance of the interpretation for the significant effects lies in the  $p$  values (or significant value) which will determine the significance of the results. As indicated previously, all statistical tests were performed at the standard .05 level of significance ( $\alpha = .05$ ). Any value greater than .05 will result in nonsignificant effects.

#### **Educational Attainment**

A significant relationship of  $F(3, 301) = 7.15, p = .001$  existed between respondents' educational attainment and employability. While the respondents secured jobs at their initial employment, their level of employability varied across groups, suggesting that those with master's degrees received the greatest advantage from their education. Respondents with a bachelor's degree obtained the lowest employability score. The common themes in the interview narratives indicated that the lower employability score for the respondents—especially for bachelor's degree holders—resulted from accepting unskilled jobs because of urgent income needs for themselves and their family.

#### **Degree Field**

Results revealed a significant relationship of  $F(5, 299) = 6.15, p = .001$  between degree field and employability, suggesting that the levels of employability among the respondents varied across degrees. Respondents



with nursing degrees were found to be the most employable. Conversely, business-related degree holders were the least employable ( $M = 3.84$ ,  $SD = .871$ ). The common themes in the interview narratives indicated that the licensing or certification process for their professions was the most prevailing, time-consuming, negative barrier to employment. Stringent licensing requirements hindered respondents from securing initial professional jobs in a timely manner. For example, Respondent 5 stated that

“I tried looking for a job as a foreign graduate with no local experience; no employer would hire me because of lack of local experience. Way back [in] 1976 as a foreign graduate [with] no local training, you can’t work as a laboratory technician or technologist. First, you must pass the (omitted) state licensing examination, if not you can’t practice your profession. As a beginner, it feels like there’s no “room” for you to start, even as a phlebotomist or lab asst.[laboratory assistant].”

Respondents in other professions that require certifications/licenses faced the same barrier in entering their intended occupation; their access to employment was delayed; even getting a job interview was a challenge.

### English Language

An independent sample *t* test was conducted to compare employability scores vis-a-vis English language proficiency. The results revealed that there was a statistically significant difference in levels/scores for the categories, “Speak English Well” ( $M=4.32$ ,  $SD = 1.13$ ) and “Speak English Very Well” ( $M=4.68$ ,  $SD=1.08$ ;  $t(303) = -2.65$ ,  $p = .008$ , two-tailed). The qualitative findings provided pertinent information to support the findings in the quantitative study. Nineteen out of the 20 interviewees emphasized the importance of English proficiency and the role it played in the employment process. Findings further indicated that those comfortable with their verbal communication skills were better prepared to participate and compete in the U.S. labor market. In contrast, the lack of English proficiency contributed to the respondents’ inability to secure employment in line with their profession and affected the respondents’ self-confidence.

### Immigration Status

There was a statistically significant difference in employability scores for respondents with immigrant status/Green Card holder ( $M=4.11$ ,  $SD=.93$ ) and non-immigrant/non-Green Card holder ( $M= 5.41$ ,  $SD=.933$ ;  $t(303) = -11.46$ ,  $p = .001$ , two-tailed). Nonimmigrants had higher employability scores than respondents with immigrant status. These results also demonstrated that nonimmigrants were at an advantage-because of faster access to their intended occupation, higher beginning salary, and a job that meets their educational qualifications. Based on the themes emerging from the interviews, respondents indicated that their immigration status played a role in finding employment, particularly in jobs commensurate with their education. The demand for nurses in the U.S. in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s provided opportunities for respondents to come to the U.S. using the H-1B Visa, while others came under the Exchange Visitor Nurse Program (EVP). The shortage of teachers and demand for computer technology degrees also provided respondents with better labor outcomes.

### Age

Results revealed that the relationship of  $F(3, 301) = 1.43$ ,  $p = .23$  between age and respondents' employability was not significant. In the qualitative component of the study, respondents who currently worked or had worked specified that their ages varied (21 to 49 years old) when they secured their initial employment in the U.S. None of the respondents reported experiencing age as a disadvantage in securing jobs. Respondents mentioned that employment success was "knowledge-based" and about "meeting job requirements," as opposed to age in securing jobs.

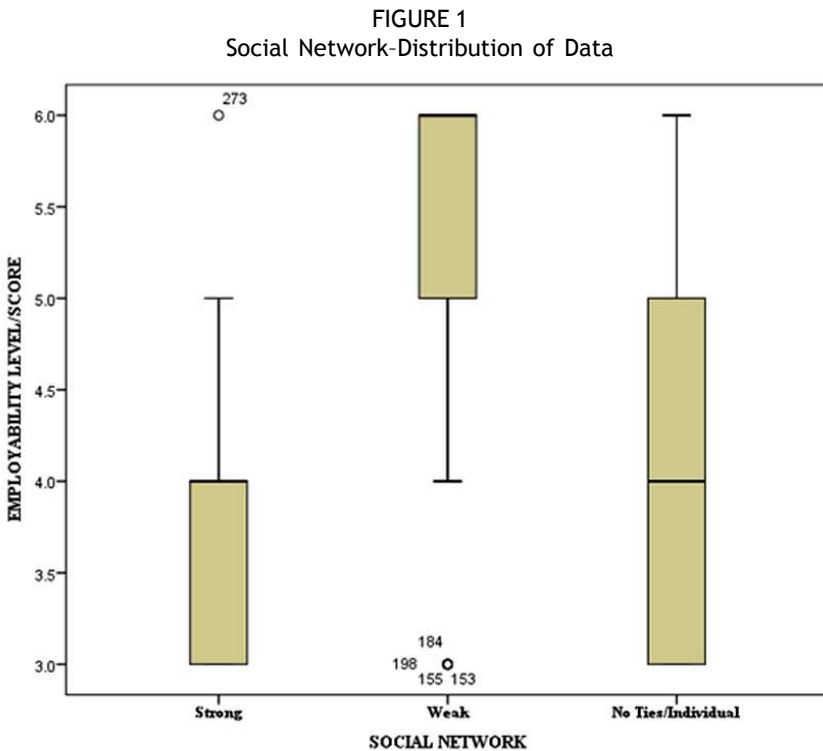
### Gender

Results revealed that there was no significant difference in scores for females ( $M=4.53$ ,  $SD= 1.113$ ) and males ( $M= 4.58$ ,  $SD= 1.120$ ;  $t(303) = -.32$ ,  $p = .75$ , two-tailed). Males and females approximately had the

same employability scores. Respondents in the qualitative component said that skills required for the job mattered more than their gender. They emphasized “knowledge-based” qualifications rather than gender differences in securing employment.

Social Networks

Results revealed a statistically significant difference of  $F(2, 302) = 99.9, p = .001$  between groups. An overview of the distribution of data is presented in Figure 1. These results suggest that there was a significant difference in terms of respondents’ employability and the type of



Note: Outliers in the data were retained in the analysis. All trimmed mean and mean values were similar.

connection they used in finding their initial job and that higher levels/scores of employability depend on the kind of social network they utilized. In this case, a Weak Ties approach was beneficial. Respondents utilizing Strong Ties were at a disadvantage as they received the lowest employability scores. Interview narratives indicated that Strong Ties networks provided jobs that were easy to find but were not commensurate with their educational attainment. Respondents who reportedly acquired employment through the use of friends and relatives (Strong Ties) were mostly in caregiving, babysitting and lower-level job positions. One example, Respondent 17 stated that

“I could not teach right away, I don’t have a license. My friend assisted me in finding my [first] employment. I didn’t spend a lot of time finding a job. I was able to get a job as a store bagger.”

While respondents pointed to the importance of social networking, they emphasized social networking, especially having the “right connection.” Respondents who utilized a more formal, Weak Ties method—which respondents referred to as the “right connection”—secured professional jobs as engineers, teachers, and registered nurses. They indicated they acquired jobs similar to what they held prior to immigration and received earnings comparable to those of American workers.

### **Determinants of Employability and Improvement of Employment Prospects: Current Profile**

So far, each variable (exclusive of age and gender) has been linked to employability. This was, just to reiterate, measured by three factors: length of time in finding employment, employment classification, and beginning salary. The study then collected current employment data: salary and employment classification in order to determine the relationship of the determinants with current employment status.

It should be noted that majority (65.6 percent) of the respondents acquired U.S. citizenship, 22.6 percent held immigrant status, and 11.8 percent had nonimmigrant status. Their average length of residence was 17 years.

More than half (53.8 percent) of the respondents reported that they enrolled and received additional school/educational credits or complied with licensing/certification requirements from the U.S. in order to be employed in their respective career fields. However, 46.2 percent did not. The number of immigrants who took additional credits or furthered their education to comply with the U.S. standards were education degree holders (Figure 2).

Figure 3 illustrates that the number of respondents who had earned their master’s degree since they arrived in the United States were in

**FIGURE 2**  
Additional U.S. School Credits

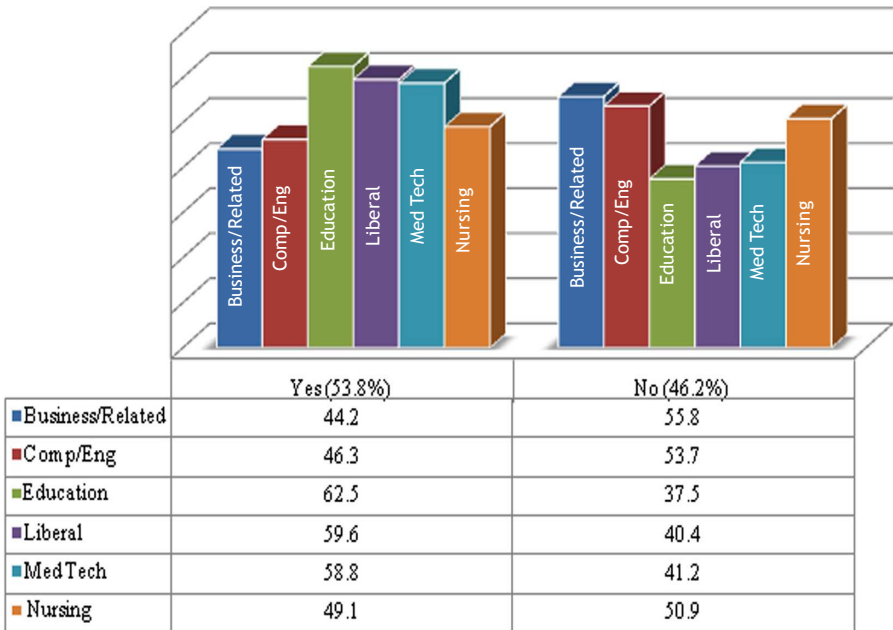
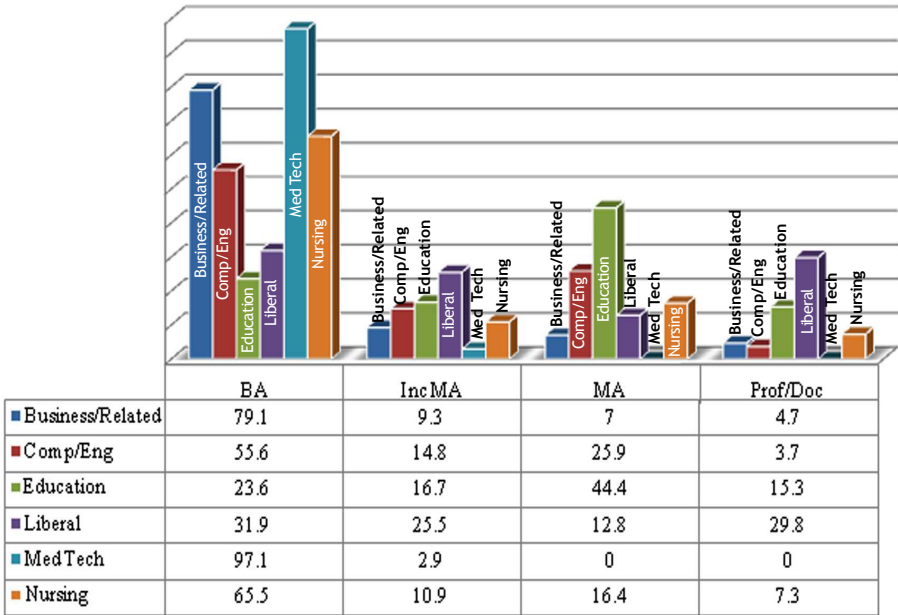


FIGURE 3  
Degree Field and Education Level at the Time of the Study



education. On the other hand, holders of liberal arts or other degrees had the highest proportions among those who are completing or have completed their professional/doctorate degrees.

There were overall substantial improvements in levels of education, job/employment classification and annual salary (Table 4). The average beginning salary was US\$37,000.<sup>20</sup> Gender differences at the beginning salary were noticeable, with females earning less than what their male counterparts did. Males and females approximately showed the same percentages in acquiring professional and nonprofessional jobs in their initial and current employment. Beginning salaries also varied depending on respondents' educational attainment and degree fields. Respondents with a bachelor's degree earned less than those with a master's degree (approximately difference

TABLE 4: Comparative Employment Status: Salary and Employment Classification

	Current			Initial		
	Salary (US\$)	Employment Classifications		Salary	Employment Classifications	
		Professional (%)	Non Professional (%)		Professional (%)	Non Professional (%)
	\$72,067.18 (Mean)	85	15	\$37,121.31	48.2	51.8
<b>Educational Attainment</b>						
Bachelor's	\$64,618.48	78.9	21.1	\$33,893.94	39.9	60.1
Inc. Master's	\$70,041.86	81.4	18.6	\$35,962.96	51.9	48.1
Master's	\$74,676.53	98.4	1.6	\$50,516.13	77.4	22.6
Prof./Doctorate	\$108,633.33	93.9	6.1	\$49,863.64	22.6	27.3
<b>Degree Field</b>						
Business-related	\$52,082.50	68.3	31.7	\$25,488.37	9.3	90.7
Comp/Eng	\$83,022.12	94.4	5.6	\$42,888.89	59.3	40.7
Education	\$55,115.39	83.3	16.7	\$40,652.78	59.7	40.3
Liberal Arts/Other	\$89,422.33	76.1	23.9	\$35,319.15	38.3	61.7
Medical Tech	\$81,879.41	100	0	\$36,000.00	50	50
Nursing	\$78,925.93	88.9	11.1	\$38,054.55	60	40
<b>English</b>						
Well	\$54,180.80	73.3	26.7	\$33,287.04	35.2	64.8
Very Well	\$81,951.76	91.3	8.7	\$39,192.89	55.3	44.7
<b>Gender</b>						
Female	\$66,620.38	84.7	15.3	\$35,967.91	48.7	51.3
Male	\$80,592.61	85.6	14.4	\$38,949.15	47.5	52.5
<b>Social Network</b>						
Strong	\$49,671.27	63.6	36.4	\$25,017.86	7.1	92.9
Weak	\$85,850.40	100	0	\$48,120.97	87.9	12.1
No Ties	\$68,691.74	79.5	20.5	\$31,584.00	27.2	72.8

Source: 2011-2012 survey

of US\$17,000). Respondents with business/related degrees pulled down the lowest average annual salary, while respondents with computer and engineering degrees earned the highest incomes.

In contrast, the average annual salary at the time of study was approximately US\$72,000, much higher than the US\$37,000 they received at their initial employment. This increase can be attributed to, among other things, the fact that those who obtained advanced degrees reaped the benefits of their human capital investment (i.e., taking additional U.S. school/educational credits). Respondents with professional/doctorate degrees received the highest earnings, but it must be noted that there are substantial differences between the earnings and occupational status of those who have advanced degrees. It is clear, however, that those who invested in education benefited from it. The annual earnings of respondents differed across the field as well. Liberal arts/other degree category earned the highest annual salary while business-related degree fields had the lowest.

There has been great improvement in occupational status as well. Table 4 shows that more than half of the respondents initially acquired low-level, nonprofessional jobs, but at the time of the study, only a fraction of respondents remained in that category. Eighty-five percent of respondents, for example, now occupied jobs in line with their career professions. Only a small fraction (15 percent) of respondents remained employed in nonprofessional jobs that were incommensurate with their educational qualifications. One of our respondents, Respondent 18 shared that

“I agree that in the U.S., many Filipinos who graduated from the Philippines are employed in jobs below their educational qualification—especially with their initial employments. However, I also believe that a great number of Filipino professionals will advance their academic and professional qualifications by pursuing advanced degrees, obtaining licensure and going through on the job training that will put themselves at par or better than their American counterparts.”



Despite the overall improvement, note that the degree fields that earned higher annual salaries at their initial employment were unable to maintain that advantage. For instance, an education degree holder at initial employment received the second highest salary, but received only the fifth largest compensation at the time of the research. Furthermore, amidst the advancement of employability, males earned more than their female counterparts (US\$81,000 compared to US\$67,000).

Other factors reveal their consistency in improving employability. Those who reported having greater English proficiency at their initial employment maintained an advantage both in earnings and employment classification. Thus, Filipino graduates who utilized Weak Ties at their initial employment continued to have the advantage in terms of higher earnings and acquisition of professional jobs.

In terms of their current (at the time of the research) occupational category, Table 4 shows that more respondents eventually acquired professional jobs related to their educational attainment. Of the respondents working in their degree fields, 71 percent indicated they acquired employment in their field, and 13.7 percent worked as professionals outside their field. Only a small fraction (15 percent) worked in a position that does not match their expertise and remained in lower-level job classifications. Respondents with a degree in Medical Technology (Figure 4) acquired the highest number of professional jobs. On the other hand, business-related degree fields lagged behind other degree fields. It had the lowest number of respondents working in their respective fields.

### **Why Weak Ties is the best and strongest indicator**

It is clear from the preceding discussion, statistical analyses, and discussions that employability is affected by many variables. Educational attainment, degree field, immigration status, and English language proficiency of the respondents were significant predictors of employability.

But the study aims to find out whether the use of Weak Ties is the strongest factor that determines employability. The impact of Weak Ties needed to be isolated, and that of other variables needed to be suspended. To do this, we conducted a two-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) between groups by examining the impact and joint effect of other independent variables that were significantly associated with employability to further explore its relationship with social networks. The reason for using a two-way design was to introduce a third variable, test the main effect and explore the possibility of an interaction effect for each independent variable and to determine primarily whether or not social networks (Weak Ties) is a significant predictor of employability regardless of educational attainment, degree field, immigration status, English proficiency, age, and gender. Although age and gender were not significantly related to employability, they were included in the analysis because the relationship between social networks and employability might have surfaced when segregated by age or gender.

In the analysis, after examining the main effect for educational attainment, degree field, immigration status, English language proficiency, age, and gender, all the *p*-values for social networks were significant. These results suggest that regardless of the aforementioned variables, the type of social network used was the strongest and the most significant predictor of employability. Moreover, there was an interaction effect between social networks and degree field, English language proficiency, and immigration status. This means that the effect of social networks on employability differed among respondents, thus establishing, as it were, their primacy.

That Weak Ties was the strongest indicator of employability can be foregrounded further by the fact that a vast majority (92.9 percent) of the respondents—as shown in Table 2—who utilized Strong Ties acquired jobs that do not match their educational qualifications compared to 12.1 percent for respondents who utilized Weak Ties. Respondents who did not rely on social networks and acquired their initial employment solely through their own initiative were not as successful as those who utilized

Weak Ties. However, their employment outcomes were much better compared to those utilizing the Strong Ties. The interview component of our research (e.g. Respondent 17) provided an explanation and extension of the quantitative findings—arriving at a more complete understanding of the lower employability of those who utilized Strong Ties. For example, respondents who reportedly acquired employment through Strong Ties mostly found jobs as store baggers, caregivers, babysitters, etc. Such jobs are generally more available and easily acquired, but offer lower pay and are incommensurate with higher qualifications. Based on the respondents' accounts, the accessibility and abundance of these types of jobs in the U.S. made them enticing. They were willing to take these types of jobs because of an immediate financial need and delays in licensing requirements. While these intervening factors affected employment prospects, these results demonstrate that beyond other potentially important factors, respondents who received assistance through Strong Ties acquired “inferior jobs”/unskilled occupations.

The case for Weak Ties as the strongest indicator of employability is also evident by examining the relationship between its use and the following: kind of degree, level of English proficiency, gender, and immigration status. The use of Weak Ties was prevalent among respondents with fields where demand for labor is high (e.g. education, nursing, computer, and engineering), among nonimmigrants, and among those with higher levels of English proficiency. For example, respondents in business-related degree fields who utilized or received assistance from Weak Ties networking had higher employability scores than those who utilized/received assistance from Strong Ties. Furthermore, computer/engineering, education, and nursing degree holders were heavily reliant on Weak Ties (see Table 2) which helped account for their higher employability levels. In contrast, respondents in business-related degrees were less reliant (2.4 percent) on Weak Ties; most utilized or received assistance from Strong Ties (28.6 percent). Considering the lower demand for business-related degree holders in the sample, their disadvantage was magnified because of their use of Strong Ties over Weak Ties. Respondents with

nonimmigrant status were heavily reliant on Weak Ties and had better employment outcomes than those with immigrant status.

Respondents who were very proficient in English relied more on Weak Ties than those who were less proficient. And those with less proficiency in English who utilized Weak Ties also had higher employability scores.

More females utilized Weak Ties networks in gaining employment. But it is worth recognizing that even though the relationship between gender and employability was not significant, data revealed that Filipino female workers earned less than their male counterparts. Looking at the means and female employability levels/scores of  $M = 4.53$  compared to  $M = 4.58$  for males, we are inclined to conclude that gender affects respondents' employability. However, statistical testing does not support such a conclusion. This rather contradictory result may be due to the following: 1) a greater number of females acquired employment classifications related to their educational attainment; 2) the fact that nursing is a female-dominated profession contributed to the high employability of females; 3) there were more females than males holding a master's degree. Master's degree recipients in this research had the highest employability levels/scores; 4) more females entered the United States with an H-1B Visa particularly for nursing and education degrees; 5) most importantly, females were more reliant on Weak Ties than males. These factors may explain the relatively better outcomes for females. While these findings suggest that gender is not a determining factor and has no bearing upon the employability of Filipino graduates at their initial employment, readers should be cautious of the interpretation and generalization of the research findings.

Furthermore, respondents who obtained professional/doctorate advanced degrees seemed to refrain from utilizing Strong Ties. This accounts for their higher employability compared to those relying on Strong ties, as the finding indicates.

## Verification of Weak Ties

Previous studies have established that those who utilized Weak Ties social networks in their U.S. labor market have had better employment outcomes (e.g. jobs commensurate with educational attainment or higher salary). Based on the evidence and data analysis presented in this research, the findings verify the Weak Ties Theory in the case of Filipino migrants in the United States. Weak Ties Theory argues that its use provides better employment outcomes for individuals because the information provided is nonredundant and more likely novel. It facilitates and leads to successful job placements. In the data analyses, the type of social network utilized was significantly associated with employability (see Table 3). Respondents who utilized and/or received assistance from Weak Ties networks had greater advantage at their initial employment, an advantage that was maintained in their current occupation. Respondents who utilized Weak Ties acquired jobs related to their education and had earnings that compensated them well. Furthermore, respondents indicated that the most important and beneficial assistance they received came from Weak Ties, namely: processing of their employment requirements by employment agencies. It helped and made their entry into the U.S. labor market less difficult. Therefore, the findings of this study support Granovetter's Weak Ties Theory (1973; 1995) and other related research (Bagchi 2001; Gao 2005; Yakubovich 2005), for which Weak Ties leads to more successful employment opportunities than Strong Ties.

## Conclusion

Studies on immigrants' use of social networking vis-à-vis employment—specifically Weak Ties among highly educated Filipino migrants—have not been extensively investigated. To fill the gap, our research examined the pivotal role of the use of social networking on the employability of Filipinos in the United States, and established that Weak Ties is the strongest determining factor affecting employability. Utilizing and/or receiving assistance from Weak Ties made a significant impact in

terms of higher, better employability, and satisfaction with their first jobs. It also increased respondents' opportunities for adequate employment and afforded a continuing advantage in finding better-paying occupations. Although utilizing Strong Ties assisted respondents in acquiring their first jobs in the United States, the occupations were less rewarding and entailed lower-level positions that were not commensurate with their educational qualifications. And the data indicate that the reliance on personal initiative—no use of social networks—when seeking employment is a better alternative than Strong Ties networking. Considering the limitations of this research,<sup>21</sup> we argue that our findings should be viewed as indicative of Filipino graduates' experiences and their social and economic status. Their experiences will inform future immigrants about the difficulties they may encounter as they join the U.S. labor force.

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> The information contained in this article was extracted from a doctoral thesis and has been revised for this journal.
- <sup>2</sup> United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (2012) estimated that 2,031,233 Filipinos were admitted to the U.S. via family based sponsorship from 1960 to 2011 and 82,011 via employment based sponsorship from 2003 to 2011.
- <sup>3</sup> The definition of employability used in this study is adapted from the definition by Knight and Yorke (2003) as “a set of achievements—skills, understandings and personal attributes—that makes graduates more likely to gain employment and successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy.”
- <sup>4</sup> Philippines (country) and Philippine used in this research should not be confused. Philippine is used as an adjective, i.e. to describe something of, or from the Philippines (country) (e.g. Philippine government, Philippine Immigration Act).
- <sup>5</sup> The H1B visa is an employment-based, non-immigrant visa category for foreign temporary workers. U.S. employers utilize this visa program to employ foreign workers with specialized occupational knowledge and/or shortage of labor (e.g. scientists, health and related specialty, engineers, IT professionals) with a bachelor's or advanced degree.
- <sup>6</sup> Data collection did not occur until an ethics clearance was received from Edith Cowan University's Ethics Committee. The ethics approval was received in January 2011 and was valid until August 2012. We conducted the research between March 2011 and February 2012. All procedures required by the policy of Edith Cowan University, including the protection and maintenance of all confidential research data, were carefully followed.

- <sup>7</sup> Only individuals with work authorization visas in the U.S. were included in the study.
- <sup>8</sup> In the snowball sampling process, the researchers identified potential respondents who meet the criteria so that they could be included in the study. These respondents then helped recruit other respondent/s with similar traits until sufficient numbers of respondents were obtained.
- <sup>9</sup> We initially thought immigration status was important. However, when we carefully studied the legal provisions, employability tended to be loaded towards one category—being the recipient of an H1-B Visa—which provided a distinct advantage. Therefore, extra caution should be taken in interpreting the findings.
- <sup>10</sup> The dependent variable employability had three indicators—Length of Time Finding Employment/Wait Time, Beginning Salary and Employment Classification. They were combined to form a composite index. A score from a variety of individual items (three indicators) was assumed to produce a result that is not equal to any single item. The use of a composite index is a generally accepted method used by research practitioners particularly in controlling Type I error (Song et. al. 2013). The composite index resulted in *facts sui generis*.
- <sup>11</sup> Immigrant status or Green Card holders and Non-immigrant or Non-Green Card holders are used interchangeably.
- <sup>12</sup> Categories involving a limited number of respondents/cases (e.g. educational attainment, degree field, age) were combined. Collapsing data files in any research study is a common practice.
- <sup>13</sup> The hypothesis will be in the null form until enough evidence indicates otherwise. The null is what the researchers test with statistics and determine whether or not to accept or reject the null hypothesis.
- <sup>14</sup> The alpha (symbol  $\alpha$ ) is the probability of rejecting the null hypothesis when the null hypothesis is true. The alpha .05 is the level of statistical significance (a risk that the researcher is inclined to accept in rejecting the null hypothesis. This also means the researcher is 95% sure to reject the null hypothesis).
- <sup>15</sup> Type 1 error occurs when a researcher rejects a null hypothesis that is actually true (Gravetter and Wallnau 2009, 242).
- <sup>16</sup> During the open coding process, we grouped the data together to create categories and subcategories. In the open coding process, initial categories of information were created by segmenting the information. The next step was axial coding, a technique for consolidating and integrating the data into coherent categories (Strauss and Corbin 1998). The relationships between data categories and subcategories were evaluated against the data (Charmaz 2006). The last phase in data coding was selective coding where the main or “core” category was selected (Charmaz 2006; Strauss and Corbin 1998). These logical procedures allowed us to analyze and use the data in a more manageable way.
- <sup>17</sup> Initial employment classifications are derived from respondents’ job title/description. There are currently 23 major job classifications under the U.S. governmental agencies’ Standard Occupational Classifications. However, the variations and limited numbers of cases subsequently collapsed respondents’ employment classifications into professional and nonprofessional categories. Professional classifications are those who held jobs at

the appropriate level of their profession, education, and training (e.g. doctors, teachers, nurses, engineers). On the other hand, nonprofessionals are those who held jobs that do not require tertiary education, experience or training (e.g. clerical/support staff, paraprofessional).

<sup>18</sup> The annual salary of the respondents who immigrated to the U.S. prior to 2006 was adjusted. Earnings prior to 2006 were converted into 2011 dollar value using the U.S. Bureau of Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI) calculator.

<sup>19</sup> While all three cases supported the idea behind the composite index scheme, there will be instances where the scheme is insufficient in terms of reflecting Filipinos' relative employability. There will be cases where data such as Beginning Salary and Length of Time will lose their ranking order because of binary coding. Therefore, handling of data to retain their ranking order is recommended. Nevertheless, examining the totality of the group rather than individual cases, produced results which are consistent with the expected outcomes.

<sup>20</sup> All values were rounded up and down to the nearest thousand.

<sup>21</sup> Although essential features of the samples were carefully selected (e.g. gender, age, degree field, location), it is impossible to estimate the representation of the sample due to the following limitations: 1) data analysis on the immigrants' initial geographical settlement locations upon arrival was lacking. Regional economic structures within the U.S. are different particularly in terms of salary, demand for specific skills, compensation for those skills and the overall job market. These factors may affect immigrants' employability. U.S. economic conditions such as recessions at the time of entry also need to be considered as this may affect the length of time immigrants are searching for employment. The availability of the type of employment being sought may also be affected by the seasonal or cyclical nature of certain industries during an upturn or downturn in overall economic conditions; 2) we initially thought immigration status was important. However, when we carefully studied the legal provisions, employability tended to be loaded towards one category—being the recipient of an H1-B Visa—which provided a distinct advantage. It should be noted that the data presented in this paper cannot be generalized when applied to the Filipino population in the United States. We acknowledge that geographic and regional economic structures within the U.S. vary, particularly when comparing large population centers within the federally designated regions of the United States. However, our sample size was large enough to draw “indicative findings.” When used in conjunction with other key literatures, these allow us to make statements about the participants' economic and social status that are useful in the debate on employment and migration of Filipino graduates to the U.S. For example, our research verified the claims of the key literatures regarding the low employability of Filipino graduates who have degrees in Law, Medicine, Pharmacy and Engineering (Alba and Nee 2003; Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Takaki 1998; Vallangca 1987). We also found that Filipinos who have difficulty securing professional licenses resorted to acquiring more low-income jobs unrelated to their educational attainment (Alba and Nee 2003). These are some of the challenges Filipino immigrants faced in their initial participation to the U.S. labor market, as found in our data and literature. We claim that these findings are useful to academics, policy-makers and key stakeholders.

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# Pentecostalism and *Pulitika*: A Case Study in Tanauan, Batangas Province, Philippines<sup>1</sup>

Chuan Yean SOON

## Abstract

This is a study about Pentecostals in a lowland village of Tanauan City, Batangas province, Philippines. It examines how Pentecostalism—from narratives of conversion and the structure of the church’s organization to worship songs—addresses what devotees’ call *pulitika* (political factionalism, corruption, and traditional politics that only serves the elite). It was found that Pentecostalism allows devotees to participate in a nonelitist, participatory, and nonhierarchical organization; to cope with the hardships of life; and present unity as an alternative political vision for Philippine society. This paper begins with a brief outlook on the rise of Pentecostalism in the Philippines. The second part deals with scholarly works and studies in the field of religion and politics both in and out of the Philippines, identifies research gaps therein, and sets out the framework of analysis used in the study. The third part explores—through interviews with devotees, analysis of church songs, and observations from the field—how the practices and rituals of Pentecostal worship are responses to the perceived difficulties—from poverty and disunity of Philippine society—that arise from *pulitika*.

Keywords: Bottom-up politics, Pentecostalism, *pulitika*, Tanauan City

## Introduction

THIS PAPER AIMS TO DEMONSTRATE the significance of Pentecostalism as a critical discourse in relation to contemporary Philippine politics. Conducting research among Pentecostal Christians in Barangay (village) Angeles, in the City of Tanauan, Batangas province, Philippines, I examine how Pentecostalism helps devotees engage and cope with secular realities that they call *pulitika*, which to them is responsible for the chaos, disunity, poverty, hardship, and underdevelopment of Philippine society. The paper illustrates how Pentecostalism—from narratives of conversion, and organizational structure to worship songs and church operations—has helped devotees take part in a nonelitist, nonhierarchical, and participatory organization; cope with the hardships of daily life; and posit unity as a political alternative to the factionalist character of Philippine politics.

### Pentecostalism in the Philippines: A Brief Overview

Pentecostalism derives its name from the biblical feast of Pentecost, an event during which the early Christian apostles were “filled with the Holy Spirit” and could “speak in other tongues” (The Pew Forum 2006, iv). Another feature of Pentecostalism is the practice of renewing gifts of the Holy Spirit such as speaking in tongues, prophesying, and performing divine healing and miraculous signs of the Spirit. The Pew Forum defines Pentecostals as “Christians who belong to Pentecostal denominations and churches, such as Assemblies of God, the Church of God in Christ or the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God” (1). On the other hand, Charismatics are Christians—including Catholics and mainline Protestants. They either describe themselves as “Charismatic Christians” or “Pentecostal Christians” (though not belonging to Pentecostal denominations) or they speak in tongues at least several times a year. The Renewalists is an umbrella term that refers to both Pentecostals and Charismatics as a group (ibid.).

According to Christl Kessler and Jürgen Rüländ (2008), the establishment of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches in 1965 led to the formation of major evangelical denominations such as the Assemblies of God, the Church of the Foursquare Gospel, and the Church of God. Between the 1970s and the 1980s, neo-Pentecostal and charismatic movements grew in scope. These include *Jesus is Lord*, which was founded by Brother Eddie Villanueva in 1978; and Bread of Life, established Cesar “Butch” Conde in 1982. Other Catholic charismatic groups such as the El Shaddai began as a radio program in 1981, the same year the Couples for Christ was founded. (The Pew Forum 2006). At that time, the Renewalists then (Pentecostals and Charismatics) comprised 44 percent of the Filipino population (2).

Born-Again Christians are classified as Evangelicals and Pentecostals on the basis of their practice of their belief in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. This is a clear departure from those of Roman Catholics, though it must be said that the practices of the former resemble those of the latter, including the call to sacrifice and serve the society. Thus, regardless of differences in practices and beliefs, this mandate to service and sacrifice provides an effective mechanism in generating ideas about and creating demands for political consciousness and a moral society. Unlike Catholicism, the revival of Pentecostal movements in the Philippines took the form of populism (Kessler and Rüländ 2008, 14–20, 152–79). The resurgence of religious movements in the Philippines was a response to the challenges of modernity that the secular state had undergone. The process was hastened by the decline of the role of Catholic traditions in fulfilling the changing spiritual needs of Filipinos, by the waning of reform activism of civil society, and by the inability of leftist ideologies to articulate contemporary aspirations (Wiegele 2007, 10; Abinales and Amoroso 2005, 267–68).

The social and political role of Pentecostal and Charismatic movements was evident during the Marcos regime when the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches became involved in the 1986 uprising (The Pew Forum 2006). Joseph Suico (2005) argues that “Pentecostal



churches are more likely to become active in social movements” because of the intensity of their commitment to rebuild family structures. An example is Couples for Christ.

Religious ideals call for the equal distribution of wealth by empowering the poor and laity. Grace Gorospe-Jamon (1999) and Katharine L. Wiegeler (2007) examine the political socialization of El Shaddai as a response to global challenges and as an attempt to address the occurrence of poverty, suffering, and oppression. A solution to existing social inequalities is the continuous adherence to the value of voluntary sharing. The El Shaddai endorsed Fidel Ramos as President in 1992 and Joseph Estrada in 2001 as “divine” candidates who would save the poor. Under the Philippine sociopolitical context, such engagements transform religion into a “space” where devotees—most of whom are poor—gain social leverage.

All foregoing studies converge on a single understanding of Philippine social change: that the revival of Charismatic Christianity is a response to the nation’s struggle against corruption, an unjust system, and a backward economy. Religious revivalism such as that of Pentecostalism serves as an avenue to (re) visit political change in the Philippines, where politics and religion have always had intimate linkages. Of course, the examination of this aspect of Philippine society and political change is not new. But in this study, I examine the connection not from a national or institutional level but from a local vantage point.

If we focus on religious revivalism in the Philippines merely at the national level, we might presume that changes and developments in Philippine politics derive simply from large-scale, national religious institutions and movements. But this disregards local and subnational initiatives about politics, and the link between religion and politics is seen mainly as top-driven. In contrast, this paper examines the dynamics of politics and religion in a local (rural) setting.

### **Interrogating politics and religion in the Philippines**

The study of Philippine politics has relatively little to say on religion as a significant area of political change. Most studies in the field predominantly look at the pursuit for political order, and has been implicated primarily in patron-client models, weak state, and democratization. Its emphasis lies on bureaucratic public culture, the structure of patronage system, violence, “patrimonial” conditions, and the proliferation of oligarchs, all of which portray the Philippine political system (and henceforth the change that takes place) as a *cacique* democracy plundering the nation.<sup>2</sup> This approach to the study of political development is confined within statist and institutional approaches similar to Samuel Huntington’s (1996) discussion of political order. Order here often refers to the creation of a just society focusing on good governance, efficient bureaucracy, viable (liberal) economy, and the separation of church and state. Such a political vision runs parallel to a liberal democratic political culture, which fits the modernity project in post-independence Southeast Asia. Political institutions (and democratic values) become the primary point of analysis in the study of Philippine politics. Religious ideas and practices are treated less prominently, if at all, except during elections and rare circumstances like the 1986 EDSA Revolution.

However, scholars outside the field of political science examine Philippine society through the lens of religion. While their works are not entirely focused on the study of political change and development, they do touch on or stress the significance of the link between politics and religion in comprehending social change. Indeed, these studies show that the connections between politics and religion sparked revolutionary movements and influenced everyday life during the colonial and postcolonial period.<sup>3</sup> During the Spanish colonization in the 19th century, peasants conceptualized a utopian society through an articulation of *liwanag*—a sort of independence—or *kalayaan*, a concept akin to the religious salvation of Christ (Ileto 1998). Historian John Schumacher (1998) identifies the role of Catholic priests in the nationalist movements against

the Spanish. During the Marcos regime, Robert Youngblood (1993) illustrated the important role of the church in the 1986 EDSA movement that toppled President Marcos from power.<sup>4</sup>

Some anthropological and historical studies also discuss social change in the Philippines from the perspective of culture and religion. Myrna J. Alejo and colleagues (1996) analyzed the concepts of *loob* (inner being) and *taong-labas* (outsider) and explore how these are constructed through religious practices. They describe the rationale and worldview of ordinary people in selecting their popular leaders. Politicians from these perspectives are seen as mediators (similar to the shaman who mediates between spirits and the faithful) who understand the needs of the local people. Hence, they are considered to be someone from the *loob* (circle of people). The concept of *loob* not just connotes the geographical proximity of community but also connects people with each other through compassion and sympathy, enabling both parties to reach a level of equilibrium in their *loob*. Fenella Cannell's (1999) anthropological study of the village of San Ignacio in the Bicol region describes how the poor or *kaming mayong-mayo* ("we who have nothing at all") perceive power through the everyday idioms of emotions such as pity, oppression, and love. And from a sociological and ethnographic standpoint, Raul Pertierra (1988) looks at religion (as a system of ideology) as a mechanism that helps peasants understand and grapple with the challenges of modernization in their everyday lives. This way, religious practices and beliefs are "rational" responses to economic and political structures (194). In brief, the peasants understand their actions and consequences; and theirs are "rational" responses based on choices that are negotiated through access to information on technical knowledge, political constraints and opportunities, and so on. Robert Love (2004) showcases how peasants' perceptions of the spiritual medium, *Papa Samahan*, are generated during debates and discussions that help in interpreting coercion, unity, and oppression. Reynaldo C. Iletto (1998) looks into *loob* (inner being), *damay* (empathy), and *liwanag* (light) in the *Pasyon* texts to give meaning to the participation of Tagalog peasants in anticolonial movements against the Spanish. Maria Lourdes Genato-Rebullida (1992) revisits the concept of

“development” from the perspective of Catholic and Protestant churches. And though a political scientist, Gorospe-Jamon (1999) uses an anthropological approach to study the structural organization and ideologies of the El Shaddai movement to understand changes and political socialization in Philippine society. Wiegele (2007) deals with the Charismatic Christian movements, focusing on religious revivalism and the shifts in the religio-political structures of Philippine society. Kessler and Rüländ (2008) blend anthropology, sociology, and political science to comprehend the political repercussions of the Pentecostalization of Philippine churches on the democratic culture and attitudes towards theocracy.

These preceding studies share Rhys H. William’s (1996) acknowledgment of the role of religion in understanding the existence of other political resources, which aid in negotiating and resisting the dominant narratives of hegemonic institutions. Furthermore, the foregoing studies portray the politics of ordinary people—the peasants and the poor—by excavating their languages and emotions and by highlighting religious values and concepts as units of analysis. Also, they deal with what Robert Hefner (2010) has called the “micro-and meso-passions of self, family, and everyday life” (1033).<sup>5</sup> For Hefner (2010), these seemingly micro oriented issues involve the emotional and spiritual encounters of the devotees and have, more importantly, a significant social and political dimension.

### ***Pulitika and Pentecostalism***

Through ethnographic analysis of the devotees’ life experiences, I investigate the everyday religious life of Pentecostal devotees in a village in Tanauan, Batangas province, Philippines. I utilized an approach similar to that of the foregoing research, especially on Hefner’s emphasis on the significance of “micro-and meso-passions” of religious components. In this study, “micro- and meso-passions” refer to reasons for conversions, reception of Christian music, and participation in worship practices and in a nonelitist, nonhierarchical religious organization.

Positing these practices as alternative political spaces often overlooked by conventional political science models<sup>6</sup> (Willford and George 2005), I look at these religious ideas as a form of politics from below that addresses *pulitika*, the failure of formal institutions—elections, political offices, political movements—to satisfy people’s aspirations for liberation or a secure society. Examining the practices that encode different ways of exercising politics and shape an alternative political ideal, this study shows that the Christian movement in Tanauan showcases the way in which devotees are inclined to exert their views and exercise their ‘rights’ at the realm of religion, not in formal political institutions.

The political dimensions of Pentecostalism in Barangay Angeles, Tanauan City, Batangas province arises from its engagement with what devotees call “pulitika.” *Pulitika* mainly refers to the “disorderliness” and “disunity” that devotees perceive in Philippine society because of frustration over poverty, vote buying and selling, and the political factionalism that they constantly encounter. *Pulitika* connotes a nuance that does not involve the conventional scope of politics, i.e. consensual democracy, civic life, and so on. Iletto’s (1999a, 160) definition of *pulitika* refers to “the perception of politics as a process of bargaining with implicit personal or factional interests involved. At another level, it refers to the practices where leaders cultivate ties of personal loyalty and indebtedness to them, or simply attract votes.” For Resil Mojares (2002, 338), *pulitika* “...is imaged in terms of elite factional competition (“inilungay sa katungdanan”), manipulation (*maneobra*), spectacle, and dissimulation.”

*Pulitika* is an elitist game. It is implicated in the hierarchical nature of Philippine politics that marginalizes the poor at the expense of self-centered politicians and their families in the offices who amass ill-gotten wealth and contribute to socioeconomic problems. Worse is the widening divide between the “mayaman” (the rich) and “mahirap” (poor). This much is felt by a devotee.

*Pero kami kahit kami ay may tatlong jeep eh mahirap pa rin kami!  
Dahil kami... Syempre yung gobyerno natin ay talagang mahirap, yung*

*yumayaman ay kapwa mayaman, pero yung katulad naming mahirap eh mahirap pa rin.*<sup>7</sup>

[Even though we have three jeepneys, we are still poor. The government is having a hard time alleviating poverty. The gap between the rich and the poor is getting bigger. The poor are getting poorer while the wealthy are becoming wealthier.]

This inequality is compounded by the rising costs of living, medical expenses, security problems, rampant drug addiction, marital issues, the loss of loved ones through death or separation in the workplace, rural-to-urban migration, unemployment, market competition, and so on.

Because of their negative view of *pulitika*, many devotees are upset with traditional politicians and traditional politics; indeed, they did not approve of the presidential candidacy of a Christian leader, Brother Eddie Villanueva, during the 2010 elections. To most of them, politics and religion should be separated. To them, running for presidency, participating in the elections, or working for politicians are equal to corruption, power relations, and boastful and selfish interests that do not have anything to do with people's welfare. Politicians vie for positions for personal interests (fame, money, power), and contestations revolve around different personal interests rather than public ones. One devotee, Kuya Daquila, opines that Brother Eddie Villanueva's 2010 presidential candidacy was boastful and politically motivated. He mentioned that, "Hindi sila maglilingkod sa tao" (they will not serve the people), and that they engage in vote-buying.<sup>8</sup>

### **Engaging with *Pulitika***

In this paper, I analyze how Pentecostal religious practices and beliefs help devotees address and provide a solution to *pulitika* and its damaging effects. Through religion, Pentecostals articulate their personal dissatisfaction in varying degrees and express their desires and voices that contest the world of *pulitika*. Their sentiments and experiences encode and reflect a frustration against the chaotic, melodramatic political environment,

especially during election season, that does not really benefit them. In this context, Pentecostal religious practices become a site for containment, resistance and contestation, and address and serve as an alternative to *pulitika*.

Aside from a claim for a sacred moral setting in a secular world, believers see Pentecostalism as a cure for a social sickness. Through religion, devotees cope with the hardships of life; take part in a participatory, nonelitist and nonhierarchical organization that caters to some of their needs; and present an alternative political vision based on unity, all of which run contrary to the factionalism and chaos of *pulitika* of traditional politicians.

#### Nonhierarchical and Non-Elitist

This paper explores the practices of God's Highest Church (GHC) in Barangay Angeles, Tanauan City, Batangas province, Philippines. Under the umbrella of its mother church, the Tanauan Bible Church (TBC), GHC was established in 1984 during a Christian gathering that has since been held every Wednesday in Barangay Angeles.<sup>9</sup> In 1985, what would be known as GHC members met to discuss the building of a larger place of worship to accommodate an increase in membership. The church grew and was named "Angeles Christian Ministries Inc." in 1996. Three years later, it changed its name to "Harvester Christian Church Inc." and became "The God Highest Church" in 1999.<sup>10</sup>

As a local, daughter church, GHC has a relatively small membership, around 200, including those working abroad, those who married outside of the village, Bicolanos, and native inhabitants. The first resident pastor was Pastor Gomez (1996–2010) who left the church when he left to work in Canada.<sup>11</sup> For a year, GHC had no pastor. The leaders took charge of the church's operations, inviting pastors to give Sunday sermons, conducting Bible Studies on Wednesdays, and so on.

The organization (the establishment) of a Pentecostal church at the local level in Barangay Angeles is nonhierarchical. It is comprised of a

network of family and church members that does not form an institutionalized hierarchy akin to that of the Roman Catholic church. This nonhierarchical nature is evident in the relationship between “mother” church and “daughter” church.

The TBC has no exclusive authority over its daughter churches. As the mother church, TBC acts as a “network-like” center among the devotees where they can expand their practices. Conditions for financial assistance from parent to daughter church potentially create rules and regulations that may hinder self-organization. Instead, daughter churches—like the GHC—are funded through devotees’ efforts and without financial aid from the parent church: a bottom-up scheme of organization. This independence from outside aid suits local members, who are free to perform their own practices.

Second, and more importantly, in the absence of a resident pastor, the devotees themselves run the church and conduct its activities. These practices foster a horizontal, nonhierarchical, non-elitist social bond and promote a sense of bonding and community. At the time of my research, Kuya Julio Alcazar and his wife, together with other church leaders from other villages, oversee the church’s daily affairs—a trend that reflects a rather simple pattern of ‘doing’ things at the local level. Because there is no resident pastor or clergy like that of, say, the Catholic Church, Pentecostal practice is and has been more conducive for nonelitist organization.

This non-elite character is also represented by the predominant role of the Alcazar family—a family of non-elites—in GHC. And while the Alcazars do take a prominent role in the church, their leadership, if it could be called that, is a form of service and self-sacrifice for the community.

Kuya Julio converted to Born-Again Christianity when he was introduced to a missionary of World Vision. According to Ana Gomez—a World Vision beneficiary during her youth—World Vision started its partnership with TBC under the Alliance of Bible Christian Communities of the Philippines (ABCCOP) in 1974. It sponsored 150 to 400 children in 1979, with Kuya Julio as one of its beneficiaries.<sup>12</sup> Kuya Julio currently



teaches at a private school in the village that is primarily sponsored by Kakang Odeng, Kuya Julio's sister who was once an Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) and who married an American and became a teacher like her brother.

For Ate Paj, the fact that the Alcazars are well-off but still continue to serve their fellow GHC members embodies their humility and faith, which also accounts for the improvement of their social status.

*Magpapagawa sila ng [private] iskul do'n eh... [Ang] mga anak niya nasa Amerika. Alam mo, sila mahirap dati. Kasi asawa niyan... pulis, nabaril, tinapon sa tulay. Ngayon, nagsikap siya. Ang trabaho niya, manguha ng kamyas.... Kinukuha nila 'yan tapos binebenta nila sa bayan. Do'n niya pinag-aral ang mga anak niya. Ngayon nasa Amerika na [silang] lahat. / Kasi sila, mahirap lang din sila no'n. Ang bahay nila ganito rin. 'Yong anak niya pumapasok sa fisheries, naglalakad [lang]. Lahat naglalakad. Oo, malayo, talagang tiis. Pero 'yong pagsisikap nila, ayan na. Kaya sila tumutulong din sa tao, kaya mabait ang swerte.<sup>13</sup>*

[They (the Alcazars) will build a private school there. All of her (Kuya Julio's mother) children are in America. You know what? They used to be poor. Her husband (Kuya Julio's father) was a policeman. He was shot and thrown over a bridge. Because of it, she worked hard. Her source of income was harvesting *kamyas* (a certain fruit) and selling them in town. That's how she managed to send her children to school. Now they're all in America. They were also poor then... When her child was studying in the fisheries school, he/she walked. They all walked. But their hard work paid off. That's why they also help the people here. Because of it, they have good luck].

The contrast with traditional politicians is clear: it was faith and *pagsisikap* (hard work and perseverance) rather than political influences and financial strength, that led the Alcazars to prosper. Moreover, the Alcazars do not practice *pulitika* and enrich themselves at the expense of others; they rather selflessly serve and sacrifice their time and effort for the church and their fellow believers. This, unsurprisingly, appeals to the Pentecostals.

Hefner (2010, 1031) has written that Christian charismatic practices appear to be more “popular, voluntary, and laity based.” This holds true in the case of this study. By running church affairs by themselves, the Pentecostals impart an egalitarian character to their organization where everybody contributes to the day-to-day operations of the church.

### Participatory Worship

The egalitarian nature of Pentecostal worship has to do with the communal, participatory character of their activities and practices. Not only do they interpret religious texts based on their personal experiences; they also involve a two-way process of interaction between the facilitator of the Bible study group (usually senior devotees) and the audience (the junior devotees). This provides an avenue for discussion, dialogue, analysis, debates and questions that help devotees understand social (secular) conditions, such as their hardships, and receive religious guidance from the Bible.

Every Wednesday at 7 p.m., the young members and leaders of the church organize a Bible Study at different houses. Each member has a chance to host the event wherein topics differ every week, and to provide an equal amount of contribution (in terms of provision of services to the church members during the Bible Study). The leaders facilitate the sessions while the younger members serve as the “students,” who are then asked to read verses from the Bible and reflect upon their experiences. This exercise deepens their familiarity with the Bible and enhance their faith vis-à-vis the realities of everyday life.

The devotees freely express their feelings and share their experiences in public without any rules or regulations. Their sentiments are heard, recognized, shared, and accepted with an audience.

*‘Yun laang eh dito nung ako’y naging Born-Again nababasa ko ‘yung bible oh na-iaapply ko sasarili ko na gay-on pala ang ibig sabihin ng Panginoon. Tularan natin Siya. Ipamahagi natin ‘yung nalalaman natin, ipamahagi natin sa kapwa, ‘wag sa sarilinin. Ah, sabi nga ng Panginoon*

*si Hesus ang daan at ang katotohanan, at ang buhay walang makapagligitas, kundi ang Ama na nasa langit. 'Yun ang aking natutunan dito sa Born-Again. Nung ako'y Katoliko, hindi ko natutunan 'yun. Basta lang ako nasimba, basta lang ako nasimba nakikinig ng kanilang mensahe 'yun lang. 'Di katulad dito sa Born Again na talagang halos eh, halos nadadama mo 'yung espiritu na siyang umaano sa atin.<sup>14</sup>*

[Only then when I became a Born-Again that I was able to read the Bible and able to make sense of my life. I realized that God wants us to do what he did; that we have to be selfless and share our knowledge to others. Ah... Just like what God said, "Jesus is the way, the truth and the life and that He is the only one who will save us", that is what I learned when I became a Born-Again. When I was a Catholic, I just attended the service and listened to the homily. However, here in Born-Again Christianity, I feel the presence of the spirit.]

Similarly, in one of the Sunday worship services I attended, one devotee was asked to share her experiences after joining the church. The devotee—Kakang Bebung Onsen—is a housewife from Barangay Angeles. I observed her children roaming around the village half-naked and not bathed. Her house was made of *nipah* leaves and bamboo gathered from the forest. Before going to the sermon, I had a conversation with her about the reasons why she converted from Catholicism to Born-Again Christianity. According to her, she was physically ill for a long time, but after joining the church, she felt better—at least spiritually—if not physically. On stage in the church, the sharing of her experiences cut across classes. Her fellow devotees sympathized with and prayed for her.

Faith allows them to make sense of and cope with hardship

Religion has a lot of “individuality” among Born-Again Christians, i.e., they interpret everyday hardships and the social problems in light of their personal experiences. Religion offers a space in making sense of the mishaps and struggles they encounter. Indeed, many devotees who convert to Born-Again Christianity recover from hardships—such as illness, family problems, loss of love ones, and tragic social encounters.

For Kuya Julio, Born-Again Christianity instills discipline. The death of his father devastated his childhood. But by being a Born-Again Christian, he eventually developed an attitude of diligence and discipline that helped him overcome his personal struggles and succeed in school. More importantly, he continues to engage in religious work and in spreading the “faith” among his fellow villagers.

Ate Consulo, a former canteen owner and saleslady, converted to Born-Again Christianity in 1983. Her reason for doing so was her youngest daughter’s illness (leukemia), along with other family problems. Kuya Danny, a former drug addict and academic delinquent during college, is now a dedicated church leader in charge of youth affairs. He is together with his wife, Ate Charmaine, a teacher from Barangay Santana. Like Kuya Danny, she is actively involved in youth activities, especially in taking charge of the choir. The strength of Ate Charmaine’s religious belief relates to her father’s sickness. Her prayers were answered when her father recovered from hypertension. Kuya Daquila, a worker and a leader of the church, was introduced to Christianity when he was 11, but did not immediately convert because he was still a child. He was baptized as a Born-Again Christian in 1984. For him, the Catholic mass did not provide him a better grasp of personal problems and the social world.

Other reasons for conversion pertain to caring and providing for family members. In a Sunday worship service I attended in May 2010, one devotee prayed for her mother’s welfare and family’s well-being. Lastly, Kakang Loneta, another devotee, prayed hard so that she could sell all the goods (eggplants, fishes) she peddles every morning despite the competition from other younger and stronger vendors. To most of the devotees, their religious practices are one of the ways through which they cope with the hardships of everyday life.

### Christians Church Music

The act of addressing *pulitika* is also highlighted in the songs of the churches—Christians Church Music (CCM). This section entails how lyrics

and music offer a sense of liberation to the devotees and explains how *pulitika* can be resolved. Even though most of the songs predominantly refer to the love of the Lord and establish the Lord's presence as a guide, they also inculcate values and establish themes.<sup>15</sup> These include connecting to the divine; liberation; support and comfort from everyday hardships; and the need for unity.

Christians Church Music (CCM) began in the 1970s in the United States (Gormily 2003). Coopting rock and folk music to become a catalyst for evangelization, CCM was a reaction to American pop culture, which was perceived immoral. Evangelists engaged in a moral battle against such immorality, and the cure for such "evils" is to realign a worldview akin to the Evangelists' religious beliefs (2003, 259). CCM "resonates strongly with the listeners...considering the influence that music has on the attitudes, behaviors, and thoughts of the subculture that embraces it" (255).

In a textual study of Pentecostal prayers and songs, Shoaps (2002) identifies the production of "earnestness" and a development of "a specific relationship between language use and the speaking subject that is prerequisite to true 'communication' with God" (42). And among the Pentecostals in Batangas, such songs please and praise God.

*Aba! Ganire, ang sabi ng Panginoon, magsayaw, magsaya ka, sumayaw ka para mo maipakita na yung kaluguran ng Panginoon na gusto mong gawin, iyong maipamuhay mo sa sarili mo. Maibigay mo 'yung pagpupuri sa pamamagitan ng sayaw. Sa pamamagitan ng kanta maibibigay mo yung papuri sa Panginoon.*<sup>16</sup>

[Ah! God said we must sing, laugh, and dance in order for us to show our delight for Him! You can praise Him through singing and dancing.]

The songs are not just of praise and worship, however. To the devotees, singing and dancing help them reach out to the Holy Spirit. Songs produce a connection between the devotees and the "divine," turning "sacred" texts and messages into a discourse that guides devotees in facing

everyday hardships. This is evident in the song, “Here We Are” by Don Moen, particularly in the following lines:<sup>17</sup>

For every answered prayer  
 For always being there  
 For love that hear us when we call  
 In arms that lift us when we fall  
 You have always been  
 Right beside us, leading us all along the way  
 And made it through

In other cases, the songs bring out the feeling of emancipation and liberation. “Free to Dance” by Hillsong goes, “Your spirit brings me liberty/ Your breath of life has set me free.”<sup>18</sup>

But the significance of the songs lies not simply in the lyrics; the music itself plays a vital role. It brings out the devotees’ emotions, especially when the application of the texts and experiences are connected. “You feel it,” Kuya Julio asserts. For him, singing the Christian songs was essential because music—the melody, the emotion, and the presence of the Holy Spirit—all combine to generate an immediate presence of the divine. The peak of emotions is reached at the end of the service, where the songs are sung in the highest tune so as to symbolize and reflect closeness to the Lord.

### Resolving *pulitika*: Pentecostalism and Unity

*Pulitika* involves corruption and dishonesty. Therefore, come election time, judging the intention of the candidate is essential. To the devotees, the expression “relationship to the Lord” serves as a criteria to evaluate candidates and counter the practices of *pulitika* such as vote buying and selling.

*Ganito ‘yon... ‘Yung, ah... Ano ba ito? ‘Yung lumang politics kasi,  
 unang history noon kasi nauso ‘yung bayaran; babayaran ka iboto mo*

*lang ako, 'no! So, ikaw bilang Kristiyano, bilang Born-Again, bilang mayroong tamang relasyon sa Diyos, hindi lamang—hindi ka doon titingin sa mga bagay na ibinibigay sa'yo. Unang-una, susuriin mo kung ano ba ang pagkatao niya, ano ba 'yung nais niyang gawin, ano ba 'yung desire niya, ano ba 'yung... Aalamin mo kung ano ba talaga 'yung kalagayan ng kanyang motive. Ano ba 'yung motibo niya kung bakit siya tumakbo, bakit siya gusto niyang tumakbo or mag-run bilang isang ganung posisyon?*

*Oo nagbabayad sila, nagbibigay sila sa mga tao, kaya nga sabi ko nga, kung ikaw ay may tamang relasyon sa Diyos, hindi mo ipagbibili 'yung boto mo. 'Yon ang prinsipyo at ang pananaw ng isang Born-Again o ng isang tao na may tamang relasyon sa Diyos. Kasi kung titingnan mo, kung tatanggapin 'yon, wala siyang pagkakaiba. Ibig sabihin noon, sarili lamang nila 'yung kanilang pinahahalagahan, hindi 'yung taong bayan. So, mayroon kang concern. Mayroon kang pag-ibig na pipili ako hindi para sa akin kundi para sa bayan 'yon.<sup>19</sup>*

[It goes like this: traditional politics entails vote buying. A politician will pay you so you will vote for him/her. However, as a Born-Again Christian or even as a person who has an intimate relationship with the Lord, you will not consider voting for that politician just because of his/her money. You always have to look into his/her desire and motives. What motivated him/her to run? Why did he/she run for public office?]

[Yes, they really do pay. Therefore, as I have said, as a person with an intimate relationship with the Lord, you will not be engaging on this. That is the principle held by a true Born-Again Christian, or any other person who fears the Lord. If you're going to accept the money, you're no different than the others. You recognize that you should not just decide for your welfare, but for the welfare of the country as well.]

And in contrast to *pulitika* and its factionalism, Pentecostalism emphasizes the need for unity and the blessings it entails. This is seen in the song, “Hi Love” by Malayang Filipino.<sup>20</sup>

“Sa Tuwing Tayo’y Nagkakaisa  
Bumubuhos ang pagpapala Niya”  
(Everytime we unite,  
His blessings shower us)

Unity (getting together) is stressed in another song, “Awesome in this Place” by Hillsong United.<sup>21</sup> The song also highlights the Church as a shelter that protects and unites the devotees.<sup>22</sup>

Much of this unity is embodied on how the devotees themselves collaborate and contribute to the organization of church’s activities, as has been discussed above. Indeed, this has a sociopolitical correlate; as believers feel that in the presence of the Lord, Filipinos must reach out to and help one another, cooperate, and share each other’s burden regardless of social status and class differences. All of which are vital to the unity and progress of the entire Filipino nation. Unity, along with the grace of the Lord, is a guide towards an orderly nation.

*You have that \_\_\_ (mis-recording) you’re not... ‘di ka magagalitin, na -kokontrol mo sarili mo na hindi ka magalit dahil ‘yun ang kailangan mo, maging ka-ugali... ugali bilang Kristiyano. ‘Di ba maganda? Kaysa, purong nasa isip mo violence; “papatay ako, gusto ko laging away,” ‘di ba? ‘Di ‘yun ang tinuturo ng Bible, ‘di ‘yan ang tinuturo ng Bible. Kapag ‘yan ang sinunod mo, pagbasa ng bibliya, this nation will... walang away. ‘Di katulad sa Mindanao, walang peaceful ang ano. Kaya ‘yan ang pinapanalagin naming mga Kristiyano, ng bawat isa, bawat Pilipino ay makarinig, sumunod, makaunawa ng salita ng Diyos para ang bayang ito ay pagpapalain. Is that a family? Di ba kapag magulo ang pamilya, ‘di natutuwa ang ating magulang, ‘di happy. Sa halip na i-rereward mo, natuwa ka, bigyan mo lahat ng gusto mo ng kaya mong ibigay, dahil sila ay magugulo di mo sila bibigyan but when they’re*



*peaceful mababait sila 'di ba. The father, the mother \_\_\_\_ (mis-recording) just like that when you think as a nation, if the people has a relationship with God, believe in God...then I believe that this nation will rise...so if every Filipino like us, this will be a good nation.*<sup>23</sup>

[You have that... you're not short tempered. You're able to control your anger because that is the right attitude of a Christian. Isn't it better than always resorting to trouble and violence? This is what the Bible tells us. If you follow the Bible, there will be no more violence in this country; unlike in Mindanao where there is no peace and order. We Christians pray that every Filipino will listen, follow and understand the words of God in order for this country to be blessed. Isn't that similar to a family? If the family is chaotic, the parents are unhappy. They remain unrewarded for their disorderliness. But when they're at peace, they are good. This also applies to the nation: if the people have an intimate relationship with and believe in God, I believe that this nation will rise.]

### Concluding remarks

In this paper, I have argued that by excavating informal political realms (religious discourse and practices of Pentecostal), we can see that the discourse on political change need not necessarily be limited to and conducted within institutional frameworks such as elections, social movements, and government offices. Through a closer look at the practices of Pentecostalism—its organizational structure, rituals, and practices—the paper attempted to show that the religious practices of Pentecostals function as a political response and counterdiscourse to *pulitika* that evokes a nonelitist, nonhierarchical organization, and emphasizes unity in contrast to the chaos of *pulitika*.

Religious practices should not be seen as “irrational” acts and minor responses of the devotees about society. My observation on a Christian group in Tanauan City indicates that they are not simply passive readers or uncritical receptors of a certain canonical text (religion, songs, etc).

Through their awareness of *pulitika*, the devotees are cognizant of the divergence between a desired order (a place of unity, among others) and the secular world (filled with *pulitika*). Their religion, Pentecostalism, allows them, to a certain extent, to engage with the secular world of daily life and *pulitika*. For instance, the nonelitist, nonhierarchical and participatory nature of Pentecostal worship can be read as a popular desire for an egalitarian society; and the desire for unity, as encoded in Christian church music, is their riposte to a dysfunctional and chaotic political system. Theirs is a religious and sociopolitical discourse vis-à-vis *pulitika*, political cronyism, and disorderliness.

### Notes

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- <sup>2</sup> On the role of oligarchs and “cacique” democracy, see Amado Doronilla (1985), “The Transformation of Patron-Client Relations and its Political Consequences in Post-war Philippines,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 16 (1): 99–116, and Benedict Anderson (1988), “Cacique Democracy in the Philippines: Origins and Dreams,” *New Left Review* 169: 3–31. On the role of the state in plundering the nation, see Paul D. Hutchcroft (2000), *Booty Capitalism: The Politics of Banking in the Philippines* (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press). On “new men,” see Kit G. Machado (1971), “Changing Aspects of Factionalism in Philippine Local Politics,” *Asian Survey* 11 (12): 1182–99; Kit G. Machado, “Changing Patterns of Leadership Recruitment and the Emergence of the Professional Politician in Philippine Local Politics,” in *Political Change in the Philippines: Studies of Local Politics preceding Martial Law* edited by Benedict J. Tria Kerkvliet, 77–129, (Honolulu: University Press of Hawaii); and Kit G. Machado (1974), “From Traditional Faction to Machine: Changing Patterns of Political Leadership and Organization in the Rural Philippines,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 33 (4): 523–47.
- <sup>3</sup> For a comprehensive study of religious millennial movements during the late 19th century Southeast Asia against European rulers, see Reynaldo C. Ileto, “Religion and Anti-Colonial Movements,” 193–244 and Paul Stange, “Religious Change in Contemporary Southeast Asia,” 201–256 for contemporary religious movements in the region, see both

in *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia*, Volume Two, Part Two, edited by Nicholas Tarling (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1999). For a specific Southeast Asian case study, see Sartono Kartodirdjo (1966), *The Peasants' Revolt of Banten in 1888: Its Conditions, Course and Sequel. A Case Study of Social Movements in Indonesia* ('S-Gravenhage-Martinus Nijhoff); Hue-Tam Ho Tai (1983), *Millenarianism and Peasant Politics in Vietnam* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press); Reynaldo C. Ileto (1998), *Pasyon and Revolution: Popular Movements in the Philippines, 1840-1910*. Fifth Printing (Quezon City: Ateneo University Press); and Vicente L. Rafael (2000), *Contracting Colonialism*, Second Edition. (Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press).

- <sup>4</sup> However, the main focus lies on the institutional change that churches are capable of in collaboration with civil society via a large-scale social movement.
- <sup>5</sup> He continues to state that the “micro-and meso-horizons” of religious revivalism are not the “triumphant reassertion of the local, but of the fact that everyday life-ways have now more than ever been drawn into transnational networks of information, commoditization, and power” (1034). See Robert W. Hefner (2010), “Religious Resurgence in Contemporary Asia: Southeast Asian Perspectives on Capitalism, the State, and the New Piety,” *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 69 (4): 1031–47.
- <sup>6</sup> For an analysis of the “public” space vis-à-vis religion in Southeast Asian politics, see *Spirited Politics: Religion and Public Life in Contemporary Southeast Asia* edited by Andrew C. Willford and Kenneth M. George, (New York: Southeast Asia Program Publication, 2005). Other works that subscribe to a similar argument on the role of religion in politics and nationalism, see Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann, “Introduction” and Talal Asad, “Religion, Nation-State, Secularism,” in *Nation and Religion: Perspectives on Europe and Asia* edited by Peter van der Veer and Hartmut Lehmann (1999), 3–14 and 178–96 (New Jersey: Princeton University Press); and Peter Berger, “The Desecularization of the World: A Global Overview,” in *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* edited by Peter Berger (1999), 1–18 (Washington, D.C: Ethics and Public Policy Center) among others.
- <sup>7</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>8</sup> Kuya Daquila. 2010. Interview by the author, Barangay Angeles, Tanauan City, 14 May.
- <sup>9</sup> Based on the 2003 census, the Born-Again Christians comprise 3.8 percent of the population of Tanauan City, while 93 percent are Roman Catholic therein. The names of the barangay, churches, and individuals are converted to pseudonyms to protect the privacy of the church members. The data were obtained from *Comprehensive Land Use Plan & Tax Mapping for the City of Tanauan, Batangas* (Final Report), prepared and submitted by MADECOR Environment Management Systems, Inc., December 2004.
- <sup>10</sup> Before God’s Highest Church (GHC) was established, evangelization by the Tanauan Bible Church (TBC) took place in Barangay Santana. TBC was under the auspices of Pastor Maling Santor in 1964 (or 1965) when he was invited to become a visitor pastor of Santana. When World Vision worked with TBC in the 1970s and expanded its mission

to Santana in 1985, the churches there and in what would become that of Angeles developed a relationship through bible study between the two barangays. At present, Angeles has become the main site for activities such as Sunday services, meetings, and Bible study. The Angeles church was made of a *nipa* hut situated beside Taal Lake. In November 1989, Typhoon “Unsing” destroyed the church, and they were forced to move to an inner location in *Purok* (precinct) IV in Barangay Angeles. The 600-plus square feet land was sold to Kakang Odeng A. Jacinto (Kakang Odeng) for PhP 50,000. The cost was lower than the market price at that time.

- <sup>11</sup> Pastor Gomez is a “part-time” pastor. Originally born in Cavite, Pastor Gomez traveled to Angeles to provide his service in 1989 as a layman and a teacher (of the church).
- <sup>12</sup> World Vision is a Christian organization mainly working in uplifting the welfare of children around the world, especially by providing education to the poor. It started its mission in 1950 by Reverend Bob Pierce. For further details on World Vision, see <http://wvi.org> or <http://www.worldvision.org.ph>.
- <sup>13</sup> Ate Paj, Interview with author, Barangay Angeles, Tanauan City, 16 November 2005.
- <sup>14</sup> Ate Consulo, Interview with the author, Barangay Angeles, Tanauan City, 12 May 2010.
- <sup>15</sup> The songs that I collected were from Ate Charmaine, a member of the singing group in the church. The songs, either in Tagalog or English, are presented largely via PowerPoint, the slides for which she uses during sermons. They are arranged in a way that only Ate Charmaine knows well. The slides only have the title of the songs and the lyrics. I attempted to locate other details but not all the information could be traced. These songs come in Tagalog and English. The English ones are predominantly from Canadian, Australian, and American singers such as Martin J. Nystrom and Don Harris, Paul Baloche and Ed Kerr, and Bob Baker and Don Moen, respectively. Some of the Australian songs are from Hillsong, while the Tagalog ones are composed by local pastors from various churches such as Ernie Palacio and the Big Leap (I Care Fellowship Music Team).
- <sup>16</sup> *ibid.*
- <sup>17</sup> For full song lyrics, please refer to the Appendix.
- <sup>18</sup> For full song lyrics, please refer to the Appendix.
- <sup>19</sup> Kuya Danny, Interview by the author, Barangay Angeles, Tanauan City, 14 May 2010.
- <sup>20</sup> For full song lyrics, please refer to the Appendix.
- <sup>21</sup> For full song lyrics, please refer to the Appendix.
- <sup>22</sup> For full song lyrics, please refer to the Appendix.
- <sup>23</sup> Unidentified Born-Again devotee. Interviewed by author during bible study session, Barangay Angeles, Tanauan City, 12 May.

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## Appendix

### **Here We are** (by Don Moen)

Here we are,  
Lifting our hands to you  
Here we are, giving you thanks  
For all you do  
As we praise and worship your holy name  
You are here dwelling  
Within our praise

Chorus:  
For every answered prayer  
For always being there  
For love that hear us when we call  
In arms that lift us when we fall  
You have always been  
Right beside us, leading us all along the way  
And made it through  
Because of you



**Free to Dance**  
(by Hillsong United)

This song in my heart  
This song in my soul  
This song I was born to sing  
It's your song of freedom  
Now I'm free to dance again  
I'll sing in the darkness  
I'll laugh in the rain  
Rejoice your love again  
It's your song of freedom  
Now I'm free to dance again

Pre-chorus:

Your spirit brings me liberty  
Your breath of life has set me free

Chorus:

Jesus, your love it lifts me high  
Give me reason to run this race with joy  
This song within me Lord  
We'll bless your holy name  
Jesus I'll dance before your throne  
Bring this heavenly sound to you alone  
We'll bless your holy name

**Hi Love**

(by Malayang Filipino from Ikaw Ang Maghari Album)

Hi Love, kumusta Ka  
Ako'y nagagalak (joy, cheer) na makita Ka  
Hi Love, kumusta Ka  
Ako'y natutuwana makasama Ka

Koro I:

Sa pagpupuri (praise) sa Dios Ama  
At pagdiriwang sa kabutihan Niya  
Ako ay masaya 'pag present Ka

Koro II:

Sa tuwing tayo'y nagkakaisa  
Bumubuhos (pouring) ang pagpapala (grace) Niya  
Tuwang-tuwa (very cheerful) sa'tin  
Ang Dios Ama

**Awesome In This Place**  
(by Hillsong United)

Here in this house of the Great King  
We've come together now to worship Him  
This house is built on Christ our rock  
Cannot be shaken  
Cannot be shaken

Chorus:

God is awesome in this place  
We sense his presence as we sing his praise  
There is power here for miracles  
To set the captives free and make the broken whole  
God is awesome  
He's so awesome  
God is awesome in this place (x2)  
I've found where I belong  
I'm a living stone  
In this house  
I will grow  
There is power here for miracles  
Set the captives free and the broken whole  
God is awesome  
He's so awesome (x3)  
God is awesome in this place

# Contested National Development: Executive-Legislative Relations in American Colonial Philippines and the Cabinet Crisis of 1923

Vicente Angel YBIERNAS

## **Abstract**

Development and self-government in the context of American colonial rule in the Philippines are intimately related but contested issues. For the Americans, the question of Filipino self-government was informed by the rhetoric of Philippine development through a *laissez-faire* framework. The Filipinos, on the other hand, held that self-government was a key ingredient of national development; it was the state's responsibility to initiate development for the entire country. This paper argues that the Cabinet Crisis of 1923 between Governor Leonard Wood and the Filipino legislature was as much a problem of executive-legislative relations as it was of colonial dynamics. This adversarial relationship was conditioned by, and revolved around, their differentiated views of the role of the colonial state in the pursuit of national development: between a *laissez-faire* perspective on the one hand, and a state-led development path on the other.

Keywords: State-led development; *laissez-faire*; Cabinet Crisis; self-government; executive-legislative relations

## Introduction

IN THE WAKE OF THE SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR and the Filipino-American War, President William McKinley justified the United States' annexation of the Philippines in 1898 amidst vigorous opposition from anti-imperialist groups in the U.S. For him, it was an act of benevolence; and the American mission in the Philippines, according to Governor General Francis B. Harrison (1922, 36), was not of exploitation but of development, civilization, education, and self-government.

Of particular interest in this paper are the questions of development and self-government, which, in the context of American colonial rule in the Philippines, are intimately related issues. For the Americans, the question of Filipino self-government was informed by the rhetoric of Philippine development. It is illuminating to note, for instance, that the preamble of the Jones Law of 1916 predicated the granting of Philippine independence on the existence of a stable government in the archipelago.<sup>1</sup> In 1921, United States President Warren Harding partly operationalized the definition of a stable government as “the financial condition of the Philippine Government and of the Filipino people” (Report of the Special Mission on Investigation to the Philippine Islands to the Secretary of War 1921, 7).<sup>2</sup>

### **The Cabinet Crisis: Conflicting Interpretations of National Development**

The American position contrasted with that of the Filipinos, who held the opposite relationship to be true: self-government was a key ingredient of national development. During the so-called “Cabinet Crisis of 1923” (hereinafter referred to as “Cabinet Crisis” or “Crisis”), which Michael Onorato (1972) describes as “the single most dramatic political event of the whole American period” (69), a group of high-ranking Filipino government officials led by Senate President Manuel L. Quezon and House Speaker Manuel A. Roxas, together with the Filipino members of the cabinet, accused Governor-General Leonard Wood of undermining

Filipino autonomy by “interven(ing) in, and control(ling), even in the smallest detail, the affairs of our government, both national and local, in utter disregard of the authority and responsibility of the (Filipino) Department heads and other officials concerned” (Zaide 1990, Volume 11, 207–08).

Wood’s actions were objectionable because Filipino self-government was crucial in order to chart the development path of the Philippines in preparation for eventual independence from the United States (Castillo 1936), which was promised by the Jones Law of 1916. The fulcrum of this *new* development framework in pursuit of independence, according to Quezon (1946, 130), was the acquisition or creation of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) after 1916. As Ybiernas (2012) has shown, the different perspectives on development policy between Wood and the Filipino legislative leaders eventually resulted in the Crisis.

### **Arguments for Executive and Legislative Relations as a Framework**

While this article builds on and uses material summarized or quoted in three previous studies (Ybiernas 2007, 2012, 2014),<sup>3</sup> its main objective here is less to describe the Cabinet Crisis of 1923 as such than to argue that it was as much a problem and consequence of executive-legislative relations as it was of colonial dynamics. This argument is cognizant of, but departs from, existing works (Paredes 1989) that highlight patron-client relations between the Americans and Filipinos, which burgeoned under a colonial democratic system and stretched all the way from “the provinces through Malacañang Palace to Washington D.C.” (6). To be sure, Filipino politicians were caught in a web of patron-client relations; however, as elected officials, they were, first and foremost, slaves to the independence aspirations of the electorate.

The insistence by writers such as Renato Constantino (1975), who compartmentalize Filipino politicians during the American colonial era as members of the landed elite who cooperated with the colonizers to boost

their class interests, does not capture the full complexity of the situation and circumstances. It must be understood that while many a Filipino politician's rise to power may have been facilitated by the patronage of American colonial officials (as imputed by Paredes and others), or that they had deep personal ambitions or class-based motives for public office (as imputed by Constantino), as an elected member of the legislature, the Filipino politician shared with his peers a common unassailable agenda that the electorate thrust upon them: to utilize the resources and power of the legislature to advance Filipino autonomy, and after 1916, to accelerate the granting of Philippine independence by crafting a development policy that would satisfy the stable-government requirement of the Jones Law. Otherwise, the Filipino politicians would suffer electoral defeat. Personal or class motives were rendered secondary to the independence, therefore national development, agenda. This was the bitter lesson learned by the pro-assimilationist Federalistas<sup>4</sup> when they were overtaken by the Nacionalistas as the dominant political party after the elections for the National Assembly in 1907. Whether the Nacionalistas really desired independence—which Paredes (1989) doubts—is not as relevant as the accomplishments of the party—which controlled the legislature—towards this end. At any rate, what Constantino and his like-minded commentators miss is that the continuation of the colonial set-up of indefinite U.S. rule—with secure markets for Philippine agricultural exports and palpable colonial American bias in favor of the conservative landed elite versus the emerging progressive nationalists (few they may be)—was *most favorable* for these landed elite politicians. Even so, these politicians had no choice: if they did not push for independence (through the national development agenda in the legislature), the Filipino voters would kick them out of office.

Another argument in support for an executive-legislative relations framework towards understanding the Cabinet Crisis stems partly from American policies toward the Philippines. Wood, as the appointed governor general, was a colonial agent of the United States. However, by the time he assumed office in 1921, the central United States government was no longer as hands-on regarding Philippine affairs as it had been during the

earlier years of colonial rule.<sup>5</sup> This hands-off policy probably began during Wilson's term as president (1912–1920) when he allowed Harrison to become a quasi-president of the Philippines rather than a mere proconsul.<sup>6</sup> Of course, Harrison claimed in his inaugural speech (Zaide 1990, Vol. 11, 162–64) that he was acting under the instructions of President Wilson.

At any rate, very rarely did Washington interfere in the Philippines after 1913, except when legal issues were elevated to the U.S. Supreme Court in accordance with Section 27 of the Jones Law of 1916 (Zaide 1990, Vol. 11, 188). Washington left the governance of the Philippine Islands largely in the hands of the governor-general. Indeed, when Speaker Roxas went to the United States to air the Filipino side on the Cabinet Crisis of 1923, President Coolidge's response sustaining Wood's actions reflected Washington's attitude towards Manila (223).

“The Government of the United States has full confidence in the ability, good intentions, fairness and sincerity of the present Governor-General. It is convinced that he has intended to act and has acted within the scope of *his proper and constitutional authority* [emphasis added].”

Coolidge referred to the Jones Law, which was often called the “Organic Act of 1916” as the source of the governor's “proper and constitutional authority” as quasi-president of the Philippines.

The delegation of authority to the governor-general by the U.S. president also reflects the absence of a concrete and sustained development policy framework from Washington with respect to Manila at the onset of colonial rule (May 1984, 129). This opened up the matter of development policy to the beliefs and preferences of the incumbent civil/governor general, together with his Philippine Commission colleagues before the Jones Law was passed in 1916. And what the Coolidge-Roxas exchange shows, I argue, is that the Crisis and its underpinning issues of development and self-government, as with other important issues from 1916 onwards (at least), can also be explained by seeing it specifically as a matter of executive-



legislative dynamics: between the American governor-general and the Filipino legislature. Non-interference from Washington and the discretionary powers of the American governor general meant that the Filipino legislature, as the warehouse of Philippine independence aspirations, interacted more directly with the decisions from Malacañang rather than responding to a clear directive from the White House or the War Department.

Focusing on the history of executive-legislative dynamics during American colonial rule and after 1916, especially the question of development policy as it impacted on the Cabinet Crisis of 1923, this paper is not interested in investigating the role of individuals or their complex relationships as patrons and/or clients in the web of Philippine colonial democratic politics. This paper picks up Quezon's assertion that the conflict was about (developmental) principles: "When all these (events) can be written down calmly, it will be shown that in the fight with General Wood I defended not only our political autonomy *but also* our economic heritage [emphasis added]." What constituted for Quezon the country's economic heritage? It was the SOEs that "General Wood wanted to hand over to American capitalists..." (Quirino 1971, 166). Parenthetically, it must also be understood that Wood's agenda against the SOEs, which is consistent with the substance of his recommendations to President Harding as co-chairman of the Wood-Forbes Mission (Wood-Forbes Report 1921, 46) and was reiterated in his inaugural speech in October 1921 (Zaide, 1990, Volume 11, 195–98), would have indefinitely delayed the American grant of independence to the Philippines. This clearly put the chief executive on a collision course with the legislature.

Onorato (1967), however, insists that the Crisis is best understood by locating the personal political interests of the key players in the conflict.<sup>7</sup> He claims that the conflict was "engendered by political exigencies of the moment" (66). To be sure, Quezon used the Crisis to bolster the sagging chances of Colectivista Party candidate Ramon J. Fernandez in the special senatorial elections meant to replace Pedro Guevarra, who had become the country's Resident Commissioner to

Washington. Fernandez's victory was meant to strengthen Quezon's control over the party, and consequently, the party's hold on the legislature vis-à-vis the Osmeña-led Nacionalista Party (where Quezon and his followers had earlier broken away from) and the Wood-backed Democrata Party upstarts. This is a perspective echoed by Samuel K. Tan (1993) when he wrote a short history of the 1920s. This essay's response to these perspectives is simple: there is nothing to prevent a historical actor from pursuing multiple objectives at the same time. Quezon may have had personal interests in the Crisis, but this does not discount the fact that there was a conflict between the legislature and the American governor-general on account of their divergent development policies.

Additional arguments to see the Crisis as result of executive-legislative dynamics in relation to development policy are based on several points. Glenn May (1984, 129), for instance, claimed that at the time of American annexation of the Philippines in 1898, the United States had no established economic development policy towards the archipelago. Consequently, the Commission government under the influential leadership of William H. Taft took the initiative and formulated a *laissez-faire* framework for the economic development of the Philippines from the ground up (*ibid.*). Even when Filipinos began to assert themselves, seeking to steer the course of development policy, they did so primarily in their capacity as members of the legislature vis-à-vis the executive branch. This will be seen more clearly when economic development policy was changed through a series of measures that the legislature enacted after the Commission was abolished in 1916.

Even Washington D.C. helped frame the Crisis in terms of executive-legislative dynamics. In his reply to the memorial sent by the Philippine Senate and House of Representatives concerning Wood and the Cabinet Crisis, President Calvin Coolidge chastised the Filipino politicians for their "inability, or unwillingness, to recognize... the complete separation of the legislative, executive and judicial functions" under a "democratic-republican government" that existed in the archipelago (Zaide 1990, Volume 11, 222–23).

By problematizing executive-legislative relations through an episode during the American colonial era, this paper hopes to accomplish more than just a straightforward historical account of the empowerment of the Filipino legislature through the disaggregation of the Commission's parliamentarist or "congressional" (Malcolm 1916, 222) power, first with the inauguration of the Assembly in 1907 and finally, with the true separation of executive and legislative functions after the abolition of the Commission and the creation of the Philippine Senate in 1916.

This paper also asserts that the legislative process was the arena of conflict between Governor-General Wood and the Filipino legislature after 1921. Thus, this essay is not just about the Cabinet Crisis per se, but rather what made it possible and how it was fought. The adversarial relationship between Governor Wood and the Filipino legislature revolved around their different views of the role of the colonial government in pursuit of national development: between a *laissez-faire* approach and a government-led and -financed development path. The executive and the legislative departments during the term of Governor Wood frequently clashed over the national budget, specifically on appropriations financing the SOEs, which the Filipino legislature considered vital to policy under the state-led development framework (Ybiernas 2012). The executive and legislative branches also battled over the question of congressional oversight of the operations of these corporations (Castañeda 2001, 161–63). Lastly, the governor-general and legislative leaders quarreled over the future of these corporations within the framework of the Council of State and the Board of Control, entities which were created (during the Harrison regime) to facilitate executive-legislative cooperation (Ybiernas 2012).

### **Authority and Power in the Early American Colonial Period**

According to Lewis Gleeck, Jr. (1986), the United States emerged from the Spanish-American War an imperialist “without either tradition or instrumentalities for administering (its) annexed territories” including the Philippines (1). What was its mandate in the Philippines? After much thought, President McKinley, with the help of Secretary of War Elihu Root, identified development, civilization, education, and self-government. However, McKinley and Root left it to the state structure that they created in the Philippines to substantiate their vague mandate.

As the Philippines was annexed due to the Spanish-American War, the initial government structure in the archipelago was under military control. Beginning 1 September 1900, in accordance with President McKinley’s instructions dated 7 April 1900, the Second Philippine Commission under the chairmanship of Judge Taft of Ohio was given legislative power, with the military still exercising executive functions (Zaide 1990, Vol. 10, 273). Subsequently, under the Spooner Amendment of 2 March 1901, the military establishment completely surrendered executive functions over pacified parts of the Philippines to the Taft Commission, although the formal inauguration of the civilian government happened on 4 July 1901, coinciding with the celebration of the United States independence from Britain (Zaide 1990, Volume 10, 330; Gleeck 1986, 22).

After the passage of the Spooner Amendment, the Commission exercised joint executive-legislative functions in the archipelago, akin to that of a parliamentary system, albeit the members of the Commission were appointed by the President of the United States rather than elected by the Filipino people. Many scholars (Golay 1997; Gleeck 1986; May 1984) attribute the initial success of the Commission in executing its *laissez-faire* objectives in the Philippines to their complete control of the executive and legislative departments of the government.

However, the Philippine Bill of 1902 started the disaggregation of the Commission’s parliamentary functions with the inauguration of the Philippine Assembly in 1907. According to Section 7 of the Philippine

Bill of 1902, the Assembly members were to be voted by their district/provincial/regional constituents based on population, with their number totaling between 50 and 100. The establishment of the Assembly created a system that was a cross between a parliamentary (as represented by the Commission) and a presidential system (with the governor general as the chief executive).

The Assembly's relationship with the Commission complicated the legislative process, particularly in the preparation of the budget and other appropriation measures. In 1909, Delegate Teodoro M. Kalaw of Batangas, Chairman of the Assembly's Committee on Privileges, contended that just like the U.S. House of Representatives, the Assembly had the sole authority to initiate tax measures and budget bills. The Commission had previously handled this task, but demurred this time around (Pacis 1971, 144). The Philippine Bill of 1902, which created the Assembly in the first place, was silent on the matter, opening the issue to debate and subjecting the budgetary process to deadlock after the Commission refused to relinquish its "right" to initiate tax measures and budget bills.

The deadlock was only broken when President Wilson made new appointments to the Commission, including the position of governor-general (as a *primus inter pares* in the body), in 1913. These new appointments drastically altered the composition and the position of the Commission vis-à-vis the desire of the Assembly to seize control of the budget.<sup>8</sup> The Commission itself eventually ceased to exist when the Jones Law of 1916 created the Senate. By then, American authority in the Philippines was entirely invested in the governor-general who was a tremendously powerful chief executive vis-à-vis the Filipino legislature composed of the House of Representatives (formerly the Assembly; hereinafter referred to as "House") and the Senate.<sup>9</sup>

The appointed governor-general's (Francis B. Harrison) cooperative stance towards the Filipino legislature and his implementation of the Filipinization policy (i.e., the promotion of Filipino bureaucrats to the highest positions in the executive branch of government; American officials

who resigned, retired from the service, or joined the U.S. war effort) led to the peak of Filipino self-government, which lasted until the establishment of the Philippine Commonwealth in 1935 as a prelude to political independence. The abolition of the Commission and the creation of the Senate in 1916 made the legislative branch the most powerful warehouse of Filipino aspirations for self-government. As mentioned, Filipinos utilized their full control of the legislature in 1916 to alter the development policy that the Commission had implemented earlier.

### **Development before the Crisis: Laissez-Faire<sup>10</sup>**

As the country's first civil governor and head of the Commission, Taft was crucial in providing substance to the American development rhetoric in the Philippines. The Taft Commission's administrative and development agenda in the Philippines included the following:

- Getting the island economy moving after a half-decade of revolution against Spain and war against the United States;
- Transforming Manila into a modern American city;
- Extending and upgrading the range of government services; and
- Blanketing the Philippines with "public improvements" intended to facilitate the tasks of government and support economic development (Golay 1997, 112).

This mandate, according to Gleeck (1986, 75), did not change until 1907 when the Assembly was inaugurated. According to Glenn May (1984, 141), the Commission was guided by the principle of laissez-faire in drafting the initial development policy for the archipelago; it meant that development was going to be spearheaded by the private sector<sup>11</sup> with little intervention from the government. It also implied a narrow conception of government functions or "services" in the economic life of the country; they were concentrated mainly in the areas of public instruction, public

health, administration of justice, and public works. This limited scope of government function will be reiterated in 1921 by Governor Leonard Wood in his inauguration speech.

As Frank Golay (1997, 112) has shown, the United States government precluded itself from providing *direct* financial support for the Philippines. United States Vice-President John Nance Garner, in his address to the joint session of the Philippine Senate and National Assembly in 1935, declared: “(United States Senator Harry Hawes) advises me that in 35 years of American sovereignty, with the exception of \$3,000,000 provided for the recuperation after the war, the entire cost of all civil administration has been provided by the revenues secured from the taxation of your people” (ARGGPI 1935, 1937).<sup>12</sup> Thus, funds necessary for the finance of the American administrative program in the Philippines were drawn from domestic revenue sources (Luton 1971). To help ease the Commission’s burden, the U.S. Congress passed the Payne-Aldrich Act of 1909 and the Underwood-Simmons Act of 1913, which, in conjunction with the Philippine counterpart tariff act, effectively constituted a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between the United States and the Philippines. Free trade with the U.S. gradually created a level of economic growth in the Philippines (subject to taxation) sufficient to support the American administrative program (Ybiernas 2007, 349–52).

World War I deepened trade relations between the United States and the Philippines as the latter lost her European markets. By 1917, as a result of the British naval blockade of Europe and the United States entry into the war, American share of total Philippine trade jumped from about 51 percent to 63 percent; total Philippine trade also grew by 40 percent from PhP 230,867,040.00 to PhP 322,802,674.00 (ARGGPI 1917, 1918, 112). The rise in trade volume coincided with the passage of the Emergency Tax Law of 1915 as a war-time measure that increased the sales tax from 0.5 percent to 1.5 percent of the gross peso value of “commodities, goods, wares, and merchandise sold, bartered, exchanged, or consigned abroad” (Elliott 1968, 155). Internal revenue collections grew from PhP 17.85

million in 1914—before the passage of the new tax law—to Php 22.63 million after the law took effect the following year (RPC 1915, 1916, 21–23). Revenue collections in 1918, one year after the United States joined World War I, were pegged at Php 40.8 million, nearly double from three years earlier (Golay 1984, 257).<sup>13</sup>

### **The Filipino Legislature and Development in the American Colonial Period in the Philippines**

The emphasis during the early years of the Commission lay on the role of the private sector as the driver of economic growth, and the government as providers of public services and initiating public improvements. Under the Philippine Commission, before Harrison became governor-general in 1913, the stimulation of private investment emerged as the foundation of Philippine economic development policy (May 1984, 133). Economic developments during World War I, outlined in the preceding section, conspired, however, to alter the development policy for the Philippines. The shift coincided with the growing power of the Filipino legislature vis-à-vis the Commission (1913–1916) and the sympathetic disposition of Governor Harrison towards Filipino aspirations for independence after 1916.

However, as Ybiernas (2007) and Nagano (2015, 141-164) have shown, aside from Harrison's support of Filipino aspirations for self-government during his administration, the World War I-induced export-led economic boom was crucial in encouraging a shift in development policy. To be sure, the new thrust beginning in 1916 focused on the enlargement of public enterprise through the creation of various “national companies” (SOEs) to spearhead Philippine industrialization (Castillo 1936, 157–77). State-owned Philippine National Bank (PNB, established in 1916 at the onset of the war-time boom), in particular, became the financier and centerpiece of the Filipinization of the insular economy (Nagano 1993, 220). Other SOEs were established after 1916 to kick-start Philippine economic development and justify the country's independence from the United States in accordance with the preamble of the Jones Law of 1916.



Among the national companies constituted during this crucial period was the National Coal Company, which was created on 10 May 1917 by virtue of Act No. 2705 (ARGGPI 1917, 1918, 8);<sup>14</sup> Act No. 2814 created the National Petroleum Company; Act No. 2849 established the National Development Company; Act No. 2862 created the National Iron Company; and Act No. 2865 creating the National Cement Company. The laws establishing the Petroleum, Iron and Cement companies, together with the National Development Company, were passed during the Third Session of the Fourth Philippine Legislature in 1918 (ARGGPI 1918, 1919, 8–9).

However, the crown jewel of government-led development framework was the PNB, which was established in 1916 to provide financial assistance to the agricultural sector (Willis 1917, 415–16; cf. Nagano 1993, 217–31; Ybiernas 2007, 358). The bank had an initial authorized capitalization of PhP 20 million, divided into 200,000 shares at PhP 100 per share. The national government was mandated to purchase 101,000 shares while the remaining 99,000 were open to the public. Although the PNB's initial asset was only PhP 12 million, it was boosted by a requirement that obligated the national, provincial, and municipal governments to deposit their funds at the bank. Consequently, the bank's assets soared to PhP 249 million by the end of 1918 (ARGGPI 1918, 1919, 7). The government also acquired full ownership of the Manila Railroad Company and Philippine Railway Company lines in Iloilo and Cebu during this “boom” period.

The creation/acquisition of these companies was financed through budgetary allocations resulting in an increase in the consolidated budget from PhP 41 million in 1916 to PhP 70 million in 1917, and finally to PhP 92 million in 1918. Despite the increasing expenses, the national government still managed to gain a budget surplus of PhP 5 million in 1916, PhP 9 million pesos in 1917, and PhP 6 million pesos in 1918 (ARGGPI 1916, 1917, 6–7; ARGGPI 1917, 1918, 9–10; ARGGPI 1918, 1919, 10–11).

Writing in the context of the inauguration of the Philippine Commonwealth government in 1935, Andres V. Castillo (1936) explained that the shift to a government-led and financed development policy post-

Jones Law 1916 was meant to allow the Filipinos to protect the country's "dormant wealth" from foreign (American) exploitation. Castillo argued that since foreign investors had the advantage of "greater capital, vision and industry" over their Filipino counterparts, they would have been the main beneficiary of the previous *laissez-faire* developmental policy (157–59; see also Ybiernas 2012, 65). Moreover, Filipino political leaders were particularly wary of a burgeoning American capitalist interest in the country, especially during financial crisis of 1919–1922 (cf. Nagano 2015) as it could potentially constitute a strong lobby group against Philippine independence.<sup>15</sup>

### **Policy Reversal: From State-Led Development Back to Laissez-Faire<sup>16</sup>**

In 1921, Governor Wood promised in his inauguration speech to undo what he thought was an ill-advised development plan (implemented beginning in 1916) and revert to the original *laissez-faire* framework; this provided Quezon one of several justifications for the Crisis (Quirino 1971, 166). At any rate, the inherent flaw of the state-led and financed development policy lay in its heavy reliance on public finances, which had received an artificial boost from American involvement in World War I (Ybiernas 2007). However, when the war ended and the United States reverted to "economic normalcy," Governor Harrison began to note in 1919 its initial adverse effects on the Philippines.

The sudden stoppage of war demands was a dangerous blow to the markets of the Philippines, with a consequent strain upon public and private finance. Prices of hemp and oil broke sharply, and freight rates were reduced as against staples shipped at prearmistice freight rates. Stocks of the commodities were forced on the market at a heavy loss by those interested in maintaining stability of credit institutions. (ARGGPI 1919, 1920, 5)

The full impact of normalcy was eventually felt in the Philippines in 1921 when demand and prices for the country's key cash crops plummeted in the United States.<sup>17</sup> Even as Philippine exports suffered a set-back due to falling prices for the country's key cash crops in 1921, imports continued to be at a high level, resulting in a foreign currency deficit worth PhP 55,446,503 (ARGGPI 1922/1923, 109). In light of the fact that the country's foreign currency reserves were lowered from 100 percent to 60 percent of the total currency in circulation by Act No. 2776, which was enacted on 16 August 1918 (ARGGPI 1919, 128; Ybiernas 2012, 67), the treasury's foreign currency reserves in New York City were completely exhausted by June 1921 (Nagano 2015; Ybiernas 2007, 361–64).<sup>18</sup>

Simultaneously, internal revenues in 1921 nosedived as early as the first quarter and did not improve the rest of the year. For the whole year, internal revenue collections suffered a year-to-year drop of more than PhP 10 million in 1921 (The Manila Times 1922). The revenue shortfall's effect on public finance was worsened by the burden imposed on the government by the massive losses incurred by the SOEs (Wood-Forbes Report 1921, 38–40, 42).

Thus, when Wood was inaugurated as governor-general on 15 October 1921, his priority was initiating fiscal and financial policy reforms to address the said problems. The financial issues proved the least contentious and were acted on with haste before the end of 1921. A law was passed (Act No. 2999) appropriating funds to stabilize foreign exchange. Two laws released the capital city of Manila (Act No. 3000), and the insular, provincial, and municipal governments (Act No. 3005) from having to deposit their moneys with the PNB; and a final law (Act No. 3033) restored the foreign currency reserves to a full 100 percent of currency in circulation (Ybiernas 2007, 364, 367).

The question of fiscal reforms, by contrast, was very controversial especially since it impacted on the existing state-led development policy. Governor Wood was a firm believer in *laissez-faire* public economics and pushed for either the sale or the dismantling of the SOEs accumulated during the Harrison administration after 1916. This from Wood's inaugural speech on 15 October 1921.

The government must encourage, not discourage, private enterprise. As a general policy, I believe that the government should keep out of business. (Zaide, 1990, Vol. 11, 198)

Wood strenuously objected to the huge appropriations incurred by the insular government for the (continued) support of these SOEs. According to the Department of Finance, the insular government expended the following for the SOEs in 1921 (ARGGPI 1922, 1923, 114):

- PhP 22,915,960.00 for the purchase of PNB stock;
- PhP 2,000,000.00 for Manila Railroad Company (MRC) stock;
- PhP 2,050,000.00 for National Development Company stock;
- PhP 178,351.05 for the Manila Railroad Company purchase bonds sinking funds;
- PhP 365,237.60 for interest and exchange on Manila Railroad Company purchase bonds;

Governor Wood wanted to liquidate the government's stake in the SOEs not just to raise revenues (from the proceeds of the sale) at a time of great difficulty, but also to discontinue the funds being appropriated for the enterprises, and to free up a large chunk of the insular budget for essential government functions such as public education, health, infrastructure, and agricultural development. In the same inaugural speech, the chief executive said that

It is my purpose, so far as lies in my power, so to conduct the government that it will be characterized by economy, efficiency, and true progress...

Your enthusiasm and thirst for education and your accomplishments in building up a sound system of education is beyond praise. We must keep it up. Indeed, we must extend and improve it...

We must push forward our public works, especially roads and irrigation. We must give far more attention to public health and sanitation...

We must do all we can to build up a fuller appreciation of the dignity of labor; to increase our agriculture and push forward the development of our natural resources, and so organize and conduct the government that funds adequate to the needs of progress and development will be available. We must live within our income... (in Zaide 1990, Volume 11, 195–98)

As mentioned, the largest and most important of these SOEs was the PNB. The PNB suffered from illiquidity in 1921 as a result of a series of financial (i.e., currency and banking) decisions made in Washington and Manila (Nagano 2015; see also Ybiernas 2007, 361–64); only the fresh infusion of public funds after 1921 kept it afloat. Governor Wood moved quickly to attract (American) buyers of the sugar centrals owned by the PNB in receivership (cf: Ybiernas 2012, 68) in order to remove from the insular budget the huge sums of public funds that had to be spent for the bank's resuscitation. Wood's insistence on selling off the centrals at a loss despite bright prospects for recovery undermined the public's trust in the PNB and pushed bank president E.W. Wilson to tender his resignation in 1923 (Gleeck 1998, 282; Ybiernas 2012, 68–69). Wood's moves also antagonized the legislature because the PNB was central to what Nagano (1993, 220) refers to as "the Filipinization of the insular (agricultural export) economy" and because the sugar centrals had become "elite nationalist symbols" (Aguilar 1998, 201). Questions about Governor Wood's motives in selling the sugar centrals further surfaced when in 1923 he pushed for its sale to Hayden, Stone and Company, and E. Atkins Company of Cuba over the allegedly superior bid by a group of hacenderos led by Bacolod-Murcia Central's Rafael Alunan (Ybiernas 2012, 74). Wood explained in a very haughty fashion that he had greater faith in the technical and management expertise of the Americans (ARGGPI 1923, 1924, 20).

Unlike the PNB, the Manila Railroad Company (hereinafter referred to as “Railroad” or MRR), another big government-owned corporation, was not bankrupt or illiquid. Yet, partly because of Wood’s *laissez-faire* mindset, the MRR was likewise being shopped around for buyers. The Railroad was bought by the government from its British owners in 1916 for PhP 8 million pesos. Governor Harrison made it appear at the time that the government got a bargain, as the Railroad had, on paper, PhP 11.6 million worth of capital stock. However, according to Charles Burke Elliott (1968, 310–11), the company was “practically insolvent.” The company had, up to the time of its sale, debts totaling PhP 45.4 million from previous bonds sales, including PhP 6 million to the government before the sale, and which was written off after. Upon purchase, the government assumed PhP 21.15 million worth of debts. Thus, in the final analysis, the company actually cost the government more than PhP 35 million and not just PhP 8 million, as earlier reported by Harrison.

Nevertheless, in the initial years under government control, the Railroad earned profits of PhP 817,000 in 1917; PhP 621,000 in 1918; and PhP 328,000 in 1919. These combined earnings were enough to offset the 1.5-million-peso deficit accumulated during the last two years of operation before coming under government management. In 1920, the MRR failed to collect on revenues amounting to at least PhP 2.5 million, further swamping it in debt (ARGGPI 1917, 1918, 7–8; ARGGPI 1918, 1919, 7–8; ARGGPI 1919, 1920, 14; ARGGPI 1920, 1921, 11). To make the Railroad more profitable, the insular government, through a special legislation, invested an additional PhP 10.1 million in stocks in 1919 (ARGGPI 1919/1920, 15). Of that amount, PhP 7.1 million pesos was raised from proceeds derived from the relaxation of the currency reserve fund, earlier identified as the source of the peso depreciation in 1921. Part of this additional investment went to paying a portion of the MRR’s debts.

The Railroad’s operating expenses grew year after year beginning 1916 as new management “embarked on an ambitious expansion program” (Ybiernas 2012, 72). Between 1916 and 1920, “Harrison announced the extension of existing lines or the opening of new ones....

some of which proved to be quite unprofitable later on (72). A year later, “in 1921, the railroad stations at San Felipe Nery (in Cavite), San Pedro Makati, Fort McKinley (now Fort Bonifacio), Rosario (in Pasig), Marikina, Bayanbayanan (in Marikina), San Mateo, the entire Noveleta-San Roque line were ordered closed as the actual cost of maintaining them were higher than the returns” (72).

In 1918, the Railroad management increased the wages of unskilled laborers by an average of 25 percent. Employees receiving a salary of 1,200 pesos or less per annum were gifted a raise of 44.87 percent. Employees receiving a salary of more than PhP 1,200 per annum, on the other, hand had their wages increased by 27.64 percent (ARGGPI 1918, 1919, 7-8; cf: Ybiernas 2012, 80, n11). Thus, it came as no surprise that the firm’s General Manager, E.J. Westerhouse, reported on 18 January 1921 that the “high wages paid to subordinate employees, together with the high cost of commodities, are causing the company a loss each month of 1 million pesos.” In private, Westerhouse told Executive Secretary C.W. Franks that political interference was partly responsible for the Railroad’s problems (Onorato 1964, 140–41). As president of the company from 1917 to 1921, Senator Quezon “became the principal target of” (Ybiernas 2012, 72) accusations of corruption and patronage with respect to the Railroad. American journalist Katherine Mayo (1924, 121–22; cf. Ybiernas 2012, 72) alleged that during the last two years of his presidency, Quezon “issued 150,000 free passes, with each pass valid for travel anywhere throughout the railroad and honored for the recipient, his family and dependents.” No documentation, however, was presented to support this claim. Furthermore, Ybiernas has written that Senator Sergio Osmeña “insinuated to Dr. Graham Taylor, a visiting Chicago sociologist, that Quezon had illegally used the Railroad’s funds for political patronage” (*The Manila Times*, 5 May 1922; cf: Ybiernas 2012, 72). Ybiernas adds that “Commentator Daniel R. Williams, in a series of articles published by the *Manila Times*...similarly accused Quezon of using the Railroad as “a clearing house for political favorites and as an adjunct of the Nacionalista Party.” Despite the accusations, Quezon was never charged of any offense in relation to his stint as president of the Manila Railroad Company.<sup>19</sup>

### Legislative Opposition

The legislature, via its Council of State and Board of Control members (Ybiernas 2012, 64),<sup>20</sup> expressed dismay at, and vehemently opposed, Wood's plan to turn over the Railroad to the J.G. White Company under an "operating contract" in 1922. Legislators labeled this move by the chief executive a "denationalization" of the public corporations (ARGGPI 1922,1923, 36). Skeptical of the governor's intentions for the country's economic heritage, they noted the chief executive's preference for American businessmen in the "fire sale" of SOEs, and opposed the enlargement of American capitalist interest in the country in order to prevent them from maturing into a strong lobby against Philippine independence (Oulahan 1924). In 1922, for instance, Wood was supposed to lease out the National Coal Company's coal mines in Cebu to C.F. Massey, owner of the Cebu Portland Cement Company. The deal collapsed because of opposition from Senate President Quezon and Speaker Manuel Roxas. Eventually, it was Massey who sold his company to the government in March 1923 (ARGGPI 1924, 1925, 129).

The legislative leaders who were members of the Council of State and Board of Control had several strong arguments against selling any of the SOEs. During the crisis years of 1921–1923, Governor Wood was advised not to sell at a loss; during the recovery years of 1923–1924 and onwards, the chief executive was urged not to sell because the companies were already profitable. Wood's efforts to sell had always been stymied because he operated within the framework of the Council of State until the Crisis of July 1923, and within the Board of Control until November 1926 when he signed Executive Order No. 37 abolishing the latter. Wood's initiatives to sell the SOEs were blocked by legislative leaders who also sat as fellow members in Council of State and the Board of Control (Ybiernas 2012, 73–77).

It was too late. Wood spent the rest of 1926 and the early part of 1927 in a legal battle against the Board of Control and the respective Board of Directors of the government-owned and controlled corporations when



he tried to replace the latter who were appointed by the former (Castañeda 2001, 161–63). In 1927, Wood returned to the United States for the first time since his appointment as governor-general in October 1921 to undergo brain surgery. Wood died shortly thereafter, leaving his mission of reverting the Philippines' development policy to *laissez-faire* unfinished.

The death of Governor Wood saved the SOEs from being sold to American capitalists. However, it also slowed down the Philippine campaign for independence and resulted in a “hardening” of the U.S. Republican administration's Philippine policy, whereby the office of the governor-general would be strengthened further *vis-à-vis* the legislature (Golay 1997, 274). Among the initiatives in the U.S. Congress towards this end were providing the governor-general with civilian advisers (apart from the cabinet secretaries); permitting the governor-general to appoint the governors of the non-Christian provinces without the concurrence of the Senate; and creating a U.S. congressional Board of Visitors to periodically check on the Philippines (*ibid.*).

The new governor-general, Henry L. Stimson, had a reputation as a “troubleshooter” and was unofficially tasked by President Coolidge to smoothen executive-legislative relations in the Philippines following Wood's divisive term. Secretary of War Dwight Davis gave Stimson blanket authority to formulate his Philippine agenda without interference from Washington, continuing the trend that started with Harrison's appointment. Stimson insisted on retaining the executive's great powers but allowed the Council of State to continue (Gleeck 1986, 223). As mentioned, none of the SOEs were sold, but overall the state-led development agenda lost steam temporarily until it was revived during the Commonwealth period (Castillo 1936).

## Conclusion

This paper has argued that the Cabinet Crisis of 1923 be examined in light of executive-legislative relations. In the time leading up to the fateful day of the Crisis in July 1923, the executive and the legislature had been at odds with one another on the crucial question

of the SOEs as an integral part of the country's development policy. Governor Wood wanted to sell them; the legislature wanted to keep them as the foundations of the country's development policy in preparation for independence.

Beyond the Cabinet Crisis, executive and legislative dynamics can be used as a framework to understand the political history of the American colonial regime in the Philippines. As a framework, it breaks away from the tendency of American-trained historians and Philippine Studies scholars to focus on American colonial policies in the Philippines primarily, typified with some innovations by Go and Forster's (2005) book. Go and Foster's innovation lies in its focus on a broader, globalized perspective to the American colonial agenda; nevertheless, the book still treats the Filipinos as mere bystanders to what was happening in the archipelago.

It also seeks to improve on Bonifacio Salamanca's (1984) focus on Filipino reaction to American rule. It must be conceded that conservative elements of Philippine society at the start of U.S. colonialism were primarily responding to American rule. However, especially after the basic structures of government were established by the Philippine Bill of 1902, particularly with the opening of the National Assembly in 1907, the Filipinos were busily asserting their own agenda in Philippine state-formation, and no longer simply reacting to American initiatives. As shown in this article, the legislature became the warehouse of aspirations for Filipino independence, and of shaping Filipinos' own development policy in pursuit of eventual self-rule.

This paper hopes to encourage historians to build on what has been done here in terms of properly situating the role of Filipinos in the formation of the Philippine (colonial) state. Development policy is one key area in which Filipino politicians asserted their voices. Then and now, politicians can never be confused with saints, and politics is frequently "dirty;" that is why there is a need to go beyond the existing frameworks of patron-client, caciqueism, bossism, etc. It is more fruitful, I argue, to

investigate how the Filipinos used political and economic resources available to them during the American colonial period to facilitate the formation of the Philippine state *in their own terms*. Such an investigation can be undertaken in other aspects of state-formation such as security (i.e., armed forces, the police, etc.) and the state's social services (i.e., education, health, etc.), among others. Given that the legislature was the warehouse of Filipino aspirations, and the executive served as the guardian of the American agenda, the framework of executive-legislative dynamics is an appropriate tool of analysis for developments in this regard during the colonial era.

### Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Part of the preamble reads, "...WHEREAS it is, as it has always been, the purpose of the people of the United States to withdraw their sovereignty over the Philippine Islands and to recognize their independence as soon as a stable government can be established therein..." (Zaide 1990, Volume 11, 170).
- <sup>2</sup> Hereinafter, the *Report of the Special Mission on Investigation to the Philippine Islands to the Secretary of War* and the "Special Mission on Investigation to the Philippine Islands" shall be referred to as "Wood-Forbes Report" and "Wood-Forbes Mission," respectively.
- <sup>3</sup> The earlier studies of Ybiernas (2007, 2012, 2014) contain material that appears in the present work, but also have additional information and discussions that are not provided in this present article. In essence, the present article relies on the three previous works and references therein in order to provide details about the Cabinet Crisis and its historical context, which comprise the latter half of this paper. These overlaps and elaborations have been indicated throughout this article, though care was also taken to reduce cluttering the text with references by using endnotes.
- <sup>4</sup> The Federal Party was formed at a house on Villalobos Street on 23 December 1900 by conservative Filipinos with the support of the Americans. According to the party's inaugural president, Trinidad H. Pardo de Tavera (*Report of the United States Philippine Commission to the Secretary of War for the period from December 1, 1900, to October 15, 1901, 1901*), the Federalista platform were as follows: a steadily increasing autonomy; the separation of church and state; representation of the Philippines in the Federal Congress; and the adoption of the American constitution, culminating at last in the admission of the islands as one of the States of the Union (164). Shortly thereafter, the Federal Party became the largest political organization in the Philippines, recruiting a total of 150,000 members as of 17 May 1901 (165). The party membership ballooned as its leaders brandished their close ties to their chief American patron, Governor William

H. Taft. Pardo de Tavera, in particular, maintained a high profile as an influential national politician (which contributed to the Federal Party's recruitment of members) when he accompanied the Commission members on its numerous provincial trips (*Report of the United States Philippine Commission to the Secretary of War for the period from December 1, 1900, to October 15, 1901* 1901, 16). He was appointed, together with Benito Legarda and Jose Luzuriaga as members of the Commission government in September 1901, a couple of months after Taft became civil governor of the archipelago. Other founding members such as Florentino Torres and Cayetano S. Arellano were appointed to the Supreme Court, with the latter becoming its first chief justice in 1901. Another founding member, Tomas G. del Rosario, became the first governor of Bataan in 1903. The Federal Party's openly pro-American stance proved to be its undoing as well. The party's platform (cf. above) was published in *La Union* and was subsequently "bitterly assailed" by prominent nationalist and revolutionary Apolinario Mabini in *El Grito del Pueblo* (Molina 1960, Volume 2, 250).

- <sup>5</sup> Nagano (2015), nevertheless, points out that the Washington-based Bureau of Insular Affairs (BIA) still handled foreign currency and exchange matters.
- <sup>6</sup> The lack of supervision may have come about as a result of Wilson's preoccupation with the European War (i.e., World War I, from 1914 to 1918), and his subsequent involvement in the bitter (and failed) campaign to have the U.S. Senate approve American participation in the formation of the League of Nations, which was his brainchild.
- <sup>7</sup> To recap, the Cabinet Crisis of 17 July 1923 erupted after Governor Wood reinstated Detective Ray Conley, an American police officer assigned to the anti-gambling squad, to the Manila Police Department contrary to the recommendations of Manila Mayor Ramon J. Fernandez and Interior Secretary Jose P. Laurel (Onorato 1967, chapter five). Consequently, the Filipino members of the cabinet resigned *en masse*, accusing Wood of undermining Filipino self-government. This is also discussed in Ybiernas 2012.
- <sup>8</sup> Wilson replaced Governor W. Cameron Forbes with former New York Congressman Francis B. Harrison in 1913. Wilson also appointed new members to the Philippine Commission, putting in place a Filipino majority in the chamber for the first time. A few days after Harrison's appointment, Filipinos Victorino Mapa, Jaime de Veyra, Vicente Ilustre and Vicente Singson Encarnacion were sworn in as members of the Philippine Commission on 30 October 1913. Henderson Martin and Clinton Riggs were appointed on 1 December 1913; and Winfred Denison on 27 January 1914. Rafael Palma was the lone holdover (*Report of the Philippine Commission to the Secretary of War* 1915, 11). Hereinafter, *Report of the Philippine Commission to the Secretary of War* shall be referred to as "RPC."
- <sup>9</sup> In effect, the system was changed fully from parliamentary to presidential, mirroring the presidential system of the United States. In fact, the senatorial districts created in Section 16 of the Jones Law, with provisions for the election of two senators per district, mirrored the United States Senate and its representation of two senators per state (Zaide 1990, Volume 11, 178). Clearly, the main difference between a typical presidential system

and the one in place in the archipelago during the colonial period is that the Philippine chief executive, the governor-general, was appointed by the President of the United States of America, and not voted by his constituents.

- <sup>10</sup> The discussions here borrow from a previous work (Ybiernas 2007, 2012).
- <sup>11</sup> As Filipinos did not have adequate capital to engage in large-scale business activities in the Philippines under the laissez-faire framework, this would mean that development in the archipelago was going to be spearheaded by American capitalists.
- <sup>12</sup> Hereinafter, *Annual Report of the Governor General of the Philippine Islands* shall be referred to as “ARGGPI.”
- <sup>13</sup> Ybiernas (2012, 353–355) provides additional detail on this section.
- <sup>14</sup> Ybiernas (2007, 359) provides a brief overview of the National Coal Company
- <sup>15</sup> American capitalists were interested, most notably, in purchasing agricultural assets held by the PNB in receivership such that it merited space in Wood’s report to the Secretary of War for 1923 (ARGGPI 1923, 1924, 20).
- <sup>16</sup> Additional details of Governor Wood’s policies are discussed in Ybiernas (2012, 66–69).
- <sup>17</sup> Price per capita of sugar fell by 50 percent from 9.19 pesos in 1920 to 4.62 pesos in 1921; abaca price per capita also fell by 65 percent from 6.64 pesos in 1920 to 2.35 pesos in 1921; coconut oil prices also dropped 32 percent from 4.31 pesos in 1920 to 2.91 pesos in 1920; and tobacco prices dropped by 60 percent from 3.69 pesos in 1920 to 1.50 pesos in 1921 (ARGGPI 1922, 1923, 131-133) Ybiernas (2007, 360) also gives an overview of the recession’s impact on wages and industries.
- <sup>18</sup> Nagano (2015) traces the origins of the financial crisis to a series of policy decisions (concerning currency reserves in the gold/silver standards and banking practices) initiated primarily by the Washington-based Bureau of Insular Affairs. As a result of these series of policy changes, state finances became vulnerable to exogenous shocks such as the post-World War I trade depression, triggering a massive financial crisis felt from 1919 to 1922.
- <sup>19</sup> Additional details of this corruption angle are covered in Ybiernas (2012, 70–71).
- <sup>20</sup> “The Council of State was an advisory committee to the governor-general composed of the senate president, the speaker of the House of Representatives, and the members of the Cabinet...The Board of Control...was created by the Legislature in a resolution...to perform oversight functions on the operations of public corporations” (Ybiernas 2012, 64).

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## Commentaries

# Indonesia 1965: Rehabilitating Victims, Rehabilitating Revolution<sup>1</sup>

Max LANE

IT IS VERY HEARTENING TO SEE the increased and more open discussion of the 1965–68 mass killings of supporters of President Sukarno, the Indonesian Left, and the Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), internationally and within Indonesia. The stark and cruel brutality of the 1965 murders revealed by the confessions in the film “The Act of Killing” has played a very important role in provoking this discussion. The public release of the main findings of the KOMNASHAM Report affirming the systematic role of the state and the military in the killings and the passing of this report to the current Indonesian government has also been very important. The ongoing work of the former members of the pre-1965 political left—now mostly aged—in raising the issue of their plight, digging up mass graves, and through other campaigns has been crucial. Former GERWANI leader, Sulami, played a heroic role in pioneering this process among her comrades. There have also been court cases seeking compensation for loss of property and violence suffered, which are sometimes successful, sometimes not.

The role of younger activists has also been crucial at certain times. The first digging up of mass graves was carried out under Suharto by *Partai Rakyat Demokratik* (PRD) founder, Danial Indrakusuma, with English film-maker, Max Stahl. Indrakusuma led two further mass grave efforts during the short Habibie interregnum.

This increased activity has certainly won more profile and more space for campaigning and lobbying on the issue of rehabilitation and justice for the victims of the 1965-68 terror. At this point, however, we

would have to register that the main gains won have been at the level of a small increase in public discussion; not of broader public opinion shifts, nor changes at the level of state policy. The state, under the current Yudhoyono government, has ignored the KOMNASHAM report. In fact, the Minister for Politics and Security made a comment that he thought the 1965 mass killings were justified as it was what guaranteed the creation of the Indonesia that exists today. There were rumors that the President may “*mintamaaf*” (apologize) but that did not eventuate. Indeed, the rumors provoked a string of organizations, including the Nahdatul Ulama, to make statements rejecting such a stance.

The ability to launch these campaigns and court cases does represent a change in atmosphere. This was helped greatly by the fact that as soon as Suharto left power and the New Order as such ended, so too ended the systematic and intense national New Order anti-PKI propaganda. Most symbolic of this has been the end to the systematic, compulsory screening of the terrible but brutally vivid film “Pengkhanatan G30S.” School children who have gone through the school system in the last 15 years have not suffered that indignity. It is making a difference, but not yet a defining one. Indeed, in the schools, the old policy of referring to G30S as G30S/PKI has recently been reintroduced, with very intimidating messages being sent into the teacher training system.

### **Counter-revolutionary state**

The reality is that while the repressive power of the state was delivered a heavy blow in 1998—when the army was unable to protect Suharto’s dictatorship; and in 1999, when it was also unable to enforce a victory in the East Timorese referendum—the basic character of the state, and the ruling class of which it is an instrument, has remained the same. It essentially remains as a counterrevolutionary state.

There have been very few counter-revolutionary states in the world over the last 100 years or so. Of course, all states are latently counterrevolutionary; that is, they will probably try to suppress efforts to

overturn and destroy them. There have also been many examples of repressive states, one of which is in Southeast Asia, the Philippines under the Marcos regime. But actual counter-revolutionary states—states who have *come to power on the basis of the active suppression of revolution*—are rare. Perhaps Hitler’s Germany and Stalin’s Russia are the two other big examples, although of very different types. It is important to be able to identify the differences among a repressive state, a very repressive state, and a counter-revolutionary state. In my abstract, I criticized the formulation by Douglas Kammen who referred to it as a “counter-revolution” aiming “to destroy the social bases of President Sukarno’s left-leaning Guided Democracy.” While using the term “counter-revolution,” Kammen fails to sufficiently and explicitly recognize the revolution that was underway, or about to take place. The counterrevolutionary violence of 1965–68 was not aimed at ending Sukarno’s “left-leaning” regime but was primarily aimed at destroying the social bases of the *next government*.

Both liberal scholarship and commentary since 1965, as well as the minuscule amount of left-wing analysis, fail to give sufficient weight to a crucial reality: that the Indonesian Left—comprised of Sukarno, the PKI, the left-wing of the *Partai Nasional Indonesia*(PNI), *Partai Indonesia* (Partindo), smaller groups like *Angkatan Komunis Muda* (ACOMA) and their mass organizations—were on the verge of political victory.

Ironically, but not surprisingly, it was the far-right commentators and academics, such as Justus van der Kroef and the horrific Arnold Brackman, who proclaimed the reality that Indonesia was about to “fall” (as they would see it). Liberal scholarship did not want to emphasize this reality because in the Cold War atmosphere of the time, anti-communist sentiment was powerful. The U.K., U.S. and Australian governments expressed open and strong praise for the counter-revolution and its violence, defending the counter-revolution politically, diplomatically, financially, and in some cases, militarily. Liberal and left liberal scholarship wanted to be able to say that the violence was politically unnecessary. They also emphasized that Sukarno himself was not a communist.

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It is important to understand that Indonesia was close to revolution. Not only was the Indonesian Left winning the political battle, they were also gaining support among the population. Within the PNI, its left wing was expelled in August 1965. A significant section of the *Nahdlatul Ulama* (NU) leadership had aligned with Sukarno. The Left's main civilian opponents that were weakened by relative lack of support were being pushed out of the system through undemocratic, administrative means. *Partai Majelis Syuro Muslimin Indonesia* (MASYUMI) and *Partai Sosialis Indonesia* (PSI) were banned in 1960. *Musjawarah Ra'jat Banjak* (MURBA) was later banned after a campaign by the PKI. The influence of the left was undoubtedly growing within the Armed Forces officer corps. But simply, the scale of the support for the Left forces was the crucial thing. Scholars who researched the PKI in the 1960s, like Donald Hindley and some others, estimate that left-wing organizations in Indonesia had around twenty million active members. I estimate that if there had been elections in 1963 or 1964 there would have only been between thirty-five million voters. The Left also de facto "held" the position of the President, although it was excluded from significant positions in the Cabinet and the Army top leadership.

The prospects for a Sukarno-PKI-Left government were real. These political organizations, whatever the Left critiques of the programs might perhaps be offered, were based on the mobilization of Indonesia's poor against the social classes of landlords and military capitalists. That is where the twenty million members came from; and their class targets were explicit.

The impending revolution—one that is based on mass support—framed everything that the Right did, whatever kind of Indonesia it may or may not have delivered. If successful, a political revolution with class struggle as its basis rarely leaves the possibility of going back to the previous order open. It is set as a life-and-death battle. The closer to revolution, i.e. the more support the revolution has, the more desperate the counterrevolution.

There is a kind of ugly, horrific dialectic to these situations which is very evident in the case of Indonesia. The Left grew from tens of thousands of members in the mid-1950s to 20 million just ten years later. This happened with the ideological support of the President, but in the face of physical harassment from the Army and conservative groups. It is an absolutely incredible growth; one I suspect is unprecedented anywhere in the world. One significant factor that made this possible was the Left's political opponents' weak class basis. There was no capitalist class of any note; just a mass of poor petty bourgeoisie and peddlers (as Geertz called them) as the vast majority. There were military capitalists who only emerged around 1958-60 when Dutch firms were nationalized and reigned over a bankrupt modern sector that had just lost its Dutch investors. There was a localized and fragmented landlord class who relied almost entirely on religious ideology to win support. By the early 1960s, it was clear that the political parties of the right were losing the battle for hearts and minds. They then had no choice. If they did want to lose the political war altogether, they had to turn to the Army for political leadership. In 1965, when these forces were implementing the killings, they also had to rely on mobilizing lumpen-proletariat elements. So weak and bereft were the elite classes of cultural, political and ideological strengths. We see this in the film "The Act of Killing."

A brief comparison with Chile is interesting. The military seized power, overthrowing President Allende and violently crushing the Chilean left in 1973. A new constitution was introduced banning parties that held the class struggle ideology as their basis. It was still *de jure* in effect. However, the balance of forces between the Left and the Right was closer. While there was a well-organized and significant Left wing, there was also a significant bourgeoisie and at least two established, right-wing or center-right parties, such as the Christian Democrats. In parliamentary elections, the votes were close to 50-50, Right versus Left. Allende from the Socialist Party, Unidad Popular and the Christian Democrats even held talks to discuss a possible coalition. The parliament in 1973 had an anti-Allende majority that continually undermined him. In Indonesia, Marxism-

Leninism was banned. However, the 1965 Indonesian parliament, which had been appointed by Sukarno, had a clear majority in support of Sukarno, if not always in support of his most radical policies.

This meant that in Chile, there was not much total desperation among the civilian anti-Left political parties for military protection against the Left, i.e. its total physical destruction. They were grateful for the coup, but the classes opposed to the Left could draw on their own ideological and political strengths that were separate from the Army to help consolidate the new regime under Pinochet. The violence was horrific in Chile where the pre-coup slogan was “Jakarta is coming.” However, the Indonesian reference for the scale of repressive violence was not necessary; neither was the same level of the use of lumpen elements. Chile then had its *reformasi* in 1988—ten years before Indonesia’s. The counter-revolutionary state there was weaker and more short-lived. The most crucial part was that the ideological traditions of the Left among the large urban working class were not wiped out. In some ways, a revolution was further away in Chile in 1973 than in Indonesia in 1965.

In Indonesia, the New Order was founded as part of a successful, all-out counter-revolutionary measure desperate to prevent the success of an impending revolution. The long and centrally important existence of the ideology of class revolution had to be wiped out and it was done so systematically and with desperation. Marxism-Leninism, Left Sukarnoism, and all revolutionary writers were banned. Even today, the publishers of *Dibawah Bendera Revolusi* do not dare publish the second volume containing Sukarno’s post-independence speeches, which were often aimed at domestic ruling classes. But Bonny Triyana and friends did dare publish his post-30 September 1965 speeches, breaking important ground in the book, *Revolusi Belum Selesai*.

The ideology of the twenty million people active on the Left before 1965 is banned, tabooed, and demonized. Maintaining this is core to the state, while it remains counterrevolutionary and organically connected to how it came into existence. Some of the repressive mechanisms of this state have been weakened, but its basic character has not yet changed.

### **Rehabilitating victims, rehabilitating revolution**

Of course, every effort to expose the human suffering of those years; every effort to bring the violence, injustice and illegality of that suffering to the attention of a new generation of Indonesians; and every effort to seek justice should be supported. An apology from the state, if it were to happen, would help. But real rehabilitation and justice cannot occur without rehabilitating the ideology of the victims; and in this context, we must remember that there are twenty million victims who lost their right to express and campaign for their ideology.

I am not arguing here that it is necessary to re-win support for that ideology—that is a separate question. I am arguing that full rehabilitation for all the twenty million victims, whether posthumously or not, will not be possible unless there is full restoration of normal (liberal) democratic rights. That is their need—to regain the right to openly exist and be active under the now-demonized ideologies; and for such ideologies to rightfully exist alongside others. The millions of victims will not be rehabilitated and the injustice they suffered will remain unrecognized as long as they are defined by their attachment to a demonized ideology. The fate of the victims is intimately intertwined with regaining this legitimacy, equality, and right.

There have been efforts. President Wahid declared his desire to repeal the offending bans of the People's Consultative Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia (MPR) on communist ideologies and to have a "free market of ideas," as he put it. This was without doubt one of the reasons why many parts of the elite in and out of the parliament turned against him. More recently, Constitutional Court Judge and presidential hopeful Mahfud stated that communists and atheists were legal. This was a step forward, but a very tiny one, as he also made it clear that they could existentially "be" a communist, but not try to spread their ideas. But the parliament, I suspect, would still be 100 percent against such liberalization.

"The Act of Killing" makes many important points. Central to this is that the counter-revolution was victorious and is still in power. While some of its repressive mechanisms have weakened, the state is still fully



counterrevolutionary; it has not yet been pushed back to being only latently counterrevolutionary, like what happened in Chile.

This sometimes appears lost in some of the discussion in Indonesia, and is most obvious in discourses about ‘reconciliation.’ Reconciliation was made popular in post-apartheid South Africa—in a situation where the previously repressive state had been overthrown and where its victims were stating their willingness to reconcile with their previous oppressors, whom they had just defeated. In Indonesia, those arguing for reconciliation use a *de facto* argument that the victims, who are still demonized and oppressed, should reconcile with their tormentors.

I attended a special event in 2002 for Joesoef Isak at Taman Ismail Marzuki (T.I.M.). During the evening, a choir of elderly women, all former political prisoners or members of leftist mass organizations, sang songs on stage. One of these was a spirited and well-sung rendition of the “Internationale.” Also during the evening, Isak—a veteran journalist from before 1965 and the publisher of Pramoedy Ananta Toer’s books after 1980—invited the veteran and respected anti-PKI journalist, Rosihan Anwar, who was in the audience, to the stage. It was a ‘conciliatory’ gesture. But the next day, Anwar complained, asking how reconciliation would be possible when they still sang the “Internationale.” Reconciliation meant accepting the conditions of the counter-revolution’s victory. This was also the issue also behind the sharp polemics between Goenawan Mohammed and Pramoedy Ananta Toer at one point, when the former attacked the latter for calling “reconciliation” rubbish.

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Regaining equal rights for the ideology of the pre-1965 Left, of course, will inevitably be a complicated process. At one level, it relates to a basic democratic principle: freedom of speech and organization—a right which has also not been regained for various religious outlooks as well as for separatist ideas. It should, of course, be addressed at this level as a

fundamental principle. At the same time, it cannot but also be addressed in its specific historical context.

The truths of the political situation that developed during the 1950s and 1960 urgently need to be re-studied, written about, and debated. What was being struggled over—the programs and platforms of parties; the interests that they represented; the weaknesses, limitations and contradictions of the tactics; and methods of all forces—need to become a central issue of politics. What exactly happened on the evening of 30 September and the morning of 1 October is also important and is being more and more explained very well, I think, in John Roosa’s “Pretext for Mass Murder.” Exposing the reality of the terroristic nature of the violence, as depicted in “The Act of Killing,” is also a crucial part of the process; so that the contemporary generation is aware of the inhumane origins of the state that now governs them. For 15 years, the much lower intensity of the old counter-revolutionary systematic propaganda in schools—which is a reflection of the weakening of repressive mechanisms—makes young people much more open to listen and then investigate for themselves. In all these areas of research and writing, researchers and analysts from outside Indonesia can make a contribution, although the now thousands of social science academics as well as activists in Indonesia will have to carry out the majority of these tasks.

Campaigns to force a statement of apology, court cases, and more exhumations of mass graves—all these will play a role. But I suspect that they may all come to nothing if the basic demonization of the twenty million victims via the official state-demonized ideology they held at that time is also not challenged, at the very least, at the level of rights. One manifestation of how the avoidance of this issue creates unhelpful ambiguities is reflected in the recent bout of novels and films set against 1965 or its aftermath period, such as Leila Chudori’s *Pulang*. While these novels have an element of acknowledging the 1965 violence as a humanitarian tragedy, and some hand-wringing as well, none of the characters are Leftists, unashamedly members of the PKI or other

organizations and are comfortable with their ideological choice. They are usually people caught up as collateral damage, friends, relatives, people manipulated into becoming involved, or at best, naïve people who didn't really know what the nature of the ideology they were supporting. On the one hand, these novels and films strengthen the sense that there was indeed a terrible event; but they also actually reinforce the demonization of the twenty million members of left-wing organizations. They are so tabooed, "*najis*," that they cannot even appear in the story. Of course, given the political culture in Indonesia today, one cannot expect a spate of novels with communist or leftist heroes. However, that is not the point. The point is that there is no depiction of such people as genuine, active and comfortable with their ideological choice, whether or not they are main or minor characters. They are too demonized. Winning rehabilitation means defeating the unqualified hegemony of this perspective.

There is, of course, another aspect of this process of winning democratic equality of rights for ideologies. Discussed here so far is its relevance as part of the process of rehabilitation of the victims of the 1965–68 violence. The other is its significance for new generations of Indonesians who wish to have the freedom to exercise that right in contemporary Indonesia. It is already clear that there is an increasing number of people exercising this right despite its formal illegality. This will be a part of the overall process of pushing the counterrevolutionary state back—winning, at least, liberal democracy and its full rights. While the ideology remains formally demonized, the poor have no historical lexicon to draw upon and formulate their perspectives. They can still face an outburst like that of Deputy Jakarta Governor Ahok who slammed the Pluit poor who resisted his plans to remove them from their homes as PKI.

I have argued that the systematic murder and violence of 1965–68, as well as the mobilization of urban and rural lumpen elements, was part of a counterrevolution aimed at preventing an impending political and social revolution. This has formed the character of the current ruling class (whose character is also vividly exposed by "The Act of Killing") and its

state. The demonization of the ideology of the people and the counter-revolution murder is essential to its character. Regaining equal rights for that ideology, at first perhaps *de facto* and then *de jure*, is an essential part of any process of winning rehabilitation, justice, and even compensation for its victims—the millions of them—and their descendants. The victims who suffered most were those tortured and then killed, and those imprisoned and tortured. But all those who lost their rights, often their livelihoods, were victims as well.

But there is also a deeply existential aspect of this analysis. Yes, its primary purpose is to bring out the politics of what happened back then and its implications today. However, some of these former activists are perhaps no longer convinced of their old ideology, but many remain so. Some old, in their 80s, can still gustily sing NASAKOM Bersatu, the Internationale and other songs of their ideology. That is indeed “who they are;” in many ways their personhood is defined by their ideological allegiance. Some have been imprisoned, tortured, raped, and murdered. Others have lost their livelihood and property, if they had any. Many lost their youth to prison or hiding. For fifty years, all of them had their personhood denied through the total banning and demonization of their ideology, and its rubbing out from all of history. They can only be who they are in private or when they are with close friends. One is saddened and angered to witness this up close. Pramoedya called himself a mute who could only sing to himself: *nanyi sunyi seorang bisu*—and he was a rare *korban* (victim) who did win some public space.

This enforced mute’s silent singing is what needs to be ended.

### Note

- <sup>1</sup> This essay appeared on 4 September 2013 on Max Lane’s blog, *Max Lane Online*. Originally titled, “After THE ACT OF KILLING....Indonesia and 1965: rehabilitating victims, rehabilitating revolution under a counter-revolutionary state,” it has been reproduced here with minor changes in formatting, etc. The editors would like to express their gratitude to Max Lane for kindly granting permission to publish his essay in this issue of *Asian Studies*.

# Cross-Strait Relations: Diplomatic Entanglement or Rapprochement?

Raymond Leh-Sheng WANG

## **Preface**

SINCE MAYING-JEOU became the President of the Republic of China in 2008, Taiwan has taken a series of diplomatic initiatives in the hopes of expanding its role in international affairs. The Ma administration's foreign policy can be summarized as a "viable diplomacy"—another side of Taiwan's diplomatic truce based on the growing mutual trust between the Republic of China (Taiwan) and the People's Republic of China (Mainland China). "Viable diplomacy" allows all concerned sides in the region to breathe a sigh of relief. It allows Taiwan and Mainland China to interact peacefully and rationally and to create harmonious and nonconfrontational cross-strait relations. This essay examines (1) the evolution of cross-strait contacts and relations from 1949 to the present; (2) the effects of pragmatic cross-strait relations; (3) Taiwan's participation in international affairs; (4) impact of cross-strait relations on Washington-Taipei-Beijing relations and; (5) future prospects of cross-strait relations.

## **Evolution of Cross-Strait Contacts**

Cross-strait relations refers to the relations between Taiwan and Mainland China, which are separated by the Taiwan Strait in the west Pacific Ocean, and by political differences between their respective governments: the Republic of China (ROC) and the People's Republic of China (PRC). The 1949 Chinese Civil War turned decisively in favor of the Chinese Communists, who then proclaimed the PRC in Beijing; the ROC government led by the Kuomintang (KMT) retreated to Taiwan.

Military conflicts continued, and both governments diplomatically vied to be the “legitimate government of China,” each declaring the other as illegitimate. But during this period, until around 1971, most members of the United Nations recognized the ROC as the legitimate government that represented Taiwan and Mainland China. The PRC had legitimacy only for the members of the Soviet Bloc and the Non-Aligned Movement. In 1971, however, the PRC occupied the Chinese seat at the United Nations, replacing the ROC. Subsequently in 1979, the U.S. established formal diplomatic relations with the PRC. The international community thus generally acknowledged “One China, with the PRC as the representative government of China” (Lee 2001).

Beginning in the 1980s, the ROC underwent political and economic democratization. And since the lifting of martial law in 1987, Taipei has progressively adopted more open policies toward Beijing, spurring economic, cultural, and educational exchanges (Gluck 2007). In order to effect negotiations, Taiwan established the Straits Exchange Foundation (SEF) in November 1990, and Mainland China established the Association for Relations across the Taiwan Straits (ARATS) in December 1991. This mechanism allows the two governments to engage each other on a semiofficial basis without compromising their sovereignty. Since SEF and ARATS were established, the two organizations began a series of talks that culminated in the famous “1992 meetings,” which—together with subsequent correspondence—established the “1992 Consensus.” It is a tacit agreement, and the singular basis by which solid exchanges between Taiwan and Mainland China could be reached (Soong 2011). The 1992 Consensus, some observers describe, posits that, on the subject of the “One China principle,” both sides recognize only one China—that both Taiwan and Mainland China belong to the same China. However, the two sides agree to interpret its meaning according to their own definition (Su 2002).

However, in 2000, cross-strait relations completely changed because the Chen Shui-bian administration adopted a confrontational stance against Mainland China. Chen’s repudiation of the 1992 Consensus, along with

Mainland China's insistence that Taiwan agree to the "One China" principle for negotiations to occur, prevented further improvements on cross-strait relations. And after an eight-year rule and losses in the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) still struggles with and holds internal debates about cross-strait policy. Some scholars believe that if the DPP does not recognize the 1992 Consensus, cross-strait relations will deteriorate even if it wins the 2016 presidential election.

After decades of tension, relations between Taiwan and Mainland China have warmed since Ma Ying-jeou became the President of the ROC in 2008. The Ma administration has carried out initiatives to create conditions conducive for regional peace, stability, and prosperity on the basis of the 1992 Consensus. For better understanding between the two countries, President Ma reiterated the 1992 Consensus on 5 November 2014 (before APEC forum held in Beijing), saying that "both governments oppose Taiwanese independence and support a 'one China' policy with their own respective interpretations. It is therefore conducive to peace and helpful for future development"(United Daily News 2014) President Ma's basic cross-strait agenda is to maintain the status quo during his presidency under the framework of the ROC Constitution. This means no unification talks with Mainland China, no pursuit of Taiwan independence, and no use of force to settle sovereignty issues (Lam 2008).

Since the Ma-led KMT regained power in 2008, relations between Taipei and Beijing have continued to move forward. It is no exaggeration to suggest that cross-strait relations have been in its most stable phase in decades. Public opinion polls in 2014 showed that a vast majority of the population approves of the easing of tensions with Mainland China and believes that the rapprochement trend can boost Taiwan's economy. When Ma Ying-jeou was reelected by a larger-than-anticipated margin in January 2012, Beijing reaffirmed its conviction that President Ma's policy since 2008 had for the most part achieved its principal objectives of holding off opposition to Taiwan independence and fidelity to the 1992 Consensus (Ni 2012).

### **The Effect of Pragmatic Cross-Strait Relations**

Since President Ma assumed office in May 2008, the ROC and the PRC have undertaken a systematic effort to stabilize ties, reduce the level of mutual fear, and reverse previously negative relations. They have made significant progress on the economic front, removing obstacles and facilitating broader cooperation. The two have signed 23 agreements thus far—most notable of which is the Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) signed on 29 June 2010. The ECFA serves as the foundation for a free-trade area between Taiwan and Mainland China. And since the start of Ma Ying-jeou's administration in 2008, China has become Taiwan's largest export market and its second largest source of imports. It accounts for the largest share of Taiwan's trade surplus, and the largest share of Taiwan's overseas investment (see Table 1). The signing of the ECFA is a major step forward in giving Taiwan the opportunity to participate more fully in the process of regional economic integration (Liu & Shih 2012, 16).

In 2008 and 2009, Taiwan and Mainland China signed the Cross-Strait Air Transportation Agreement and Cross-Strait Air Transportation Supplementary Agreement, respectively. Since then, direct flights between major cities in Taiwan and Mainland China have increased almost every week (see Table 2), with more than 850 weekly direct flights. As for cargo ships, there are at least 160 freighters which embark and disembark on 70 ports in both countries each month.

In 2008, Taiwan and Mainland China signed the Cross-Strait Agreement Concerning Mainland Tourists Travelling to Taiwan. Since then, the number of tourists from Mainland China visiting Taiwan has increased yearly (see Table 3). Currently, at least one million Taiwanese people work, study, travel, or migrate to Mainland China on a daily basis. On the other hand, 5,000 Chinese tourists are allowed to visit Taiwan everyday (see Table 4).



TABLE 1: Bilateral trade volume between Taiwan and Mainland China from 2005-2014

Year	Total Bilateral Trade Volume	Taiwan Export to Mainland China	Taiwan Import from Mainland China	Note
2014	103.2	82.1	48.0	
2013	124.3	81.7	42.6	
2012	121.6	80.7	40.9	Europe Debt Crisis
2011	127.5	83.9	43.5	
2010	112.8	76.9	35.9	In 2010, ECFA was signed and took effect.
2009	78.6	54.2	24.4	Global Financial Crisis in 2008-2009
2008	98.2	66.8	31.3	Start of Ma Ying-jeou's Administration
2007	90.4	62.4	28	
2006	76.5	51.8	24.7	
2005	63.7	43.6	20.1	Dr. Lien Chan's visit to Chinese Mainland to meet with President Hu Jintao

Data Source: Bureau of Foreign Trade of R.O.C.

\*Total bilateral trade volume is expressed in USD billion

**TABLE 2: Weekly Direct Flights between Taiwan and Mainland China, 2008-2014**

Year	Total Weekly Direct Flights
2014	850
2013	670
2012	558
2011	370
2010	270
2009	108
2008	36

Data Source: Department of Statistics, Ministry of Transportation and Communication of R.O.C.

**TABLE 3: Chinese Mainland Visitor Arrivals to Taiwan from 2008-2014**

Year	Total Visitor Volume	Growth Ratio
2014	3,987,152	38.93%
2013	2,870,000	10.96%
2012	2,586,428	44.90%
2011	1,784,185	9.41%
2010	1,630,735	67.75%
2009	972,123	195.30%
2008	329,204	—

Data Source: Tourism Bureau of R.O.C.

TABLE 4: 2014 Visitor Arrivals to Taiwan

	Origin	Total Number of Tourists	%
1	Mainland China	3,987,152	41.37%
2	Japan	1,634,790	16.96%
3	Southeast Asia	1,388,305	14.41%
4	Hong Kong and Macau	1,375,770	14.28%
5	United States of America	458,691	4.76%
6	Korea	527,684	5.48%
7	Europe	264,880	2.75%
Total		9,637,272	100%

Data Source: Tourism Bureau, Ministry of Transportation and Communications, R.O.C.

Taiwan and Mainland China signed the Cross-Strait Service Trade Agreement (CSSTA) under ECFA in 2013, which entails service market access and various reciprocal conditions. However, the DPP strongly opposed the CSSTA in the Legislative Yuan. And as a sign of protest, the youth, together with 54 civic organizations and NGOs, occupied Taiwan's Legislative Yuan from March to April 2014. Later coined as the "Sunflower Movement" (Cole 2014), the occupation was a response to the public's demand for supervision of cross-strait agreements, and an indication of national security concerns in the negotiation process. The government deemed it necessary to have a more open and transparent process to strengthen communication between the Legislative Yuan and the public. Given Taiwan's unique political ecology, it must be stressed that Ma Ying-jeou has never gained support from the opposition bloc for his cross-strait policy. They have repeatedly questioned his ability to handle the subtlety of Taiwan's relations with Mainland China, warning him to not overlook the extreme complexities of the matter.

### Taiwan's International Participation

Under the 1992 Consensus with Mainland China, Taiwan's policy of "diplomatic truce" has created a pragmatic and viable approach to expand its international space. Ma's administration compromised its participation in a certain range of international activities to some extent, but it called on Chinese leaders to stop isolating Taipei in the international community, and worked towards providing Taiwan an adequate 'international space' in global affairs. President Ma (2008) stated in his first inaugural address in 2008 that

"Only when Taiwan is no longer being isolated in the international arena, can cross-strait relations move forward with confidence."

Recognizing the need to seek Beijing's cooperation to expand Taiwan's international space, the Ma administration decided to commit to the 1992 Consensus and hold off pursuing Taiwan's *de jure* independence. As mentioned, the 1992 Consensus is a verbal agreement between Beijing and Taipei that allows them to support a One China policy, but have different interpretations thereof. Because this 'agree-to-disagree' formula aims to maintain the status quo, President Ma hopes that both governments could set aside their differences over sovereignty issues and advance relations—including Taipei's demand for international space—that will benefit both its people (Chu and Nathan 2007). President Ma's initiative is generally recognized as pragmatic and viable.

For its part, Beijing has become increasingly sophisticated and subtle in its cross-strait policies. Its leaders have repeatedly made calls for talks to end military confrontation, enhance economic cooperation, and negotiate arrangements for Taiwan's international participation (Xu and Vogel 2009, 114). And Beijing hopes that President Ma continue his conciliatory approach to cross-strait relations (Lam 2008) to meet Taipei's demand for more international space. For this purpose, priority was given to Taiwan's participation in the World Health Organization (Xinhua 2005). In addition to the Taiwan Minister of Health's participation in

seven consecutive World Health Assemblies (WHAs) since 2008, Taiwan was also invited to attend the triennial Assembly meeting of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in September 2013. It is noteworthy that Taiwan's participation in international affairs enables it to contribute experience and knowledge that benefits the global community and justifies its status as a responsible stakeholder.

### **Impact on the Trilateral Washington-Taipei-Beijing Relations**

The improvement of cross-strait relations under Ma Ying-jeou has created a *modus vivendi* among Taipei, Beijing, and Washington despite their different, if not conflicting interests. This is evident in the matter of U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. Taipei has wanted closer ties with the United States and continued asking for more advanced weaponry system from the U.S. This has not been to the liking of Beijing, which wants the amount of arms sales significantly reduced, if not altogether suspended. For its part, Washington has exercised subtlety and restraint on these sensitive issues in order to not jeopardize the progress of cross-strait relations (Wang 2010).

It is interesting to note that in the midst of all the rows caused by the arms sales of the U.S. to Taiwan, overall cross-strait relations have not been adversely affected. Most likely, Taipei calculates that it can pursue the parallel course of benefiting from the improvement of cross-strait relations and purchasing arms from the US to strengthen its defense. Beijing, however, cannot afford to jeopardize the hard-earned achievements in cross-strait relations simply for the sake of opposing Taiwan's arms purchase from the U.S. Although Chinese officials kept arguing that such arms sales will send the wrong signal to the forces of Taiwan independence and seriously undermine the peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, Beijing has not done anything to criticize Ma administration. Apparently, both Beijing and Washington are willing to show deference to President Ma as it is indeed in their common interest

to forge ahead with stable cross-strait relations. It can also be argued that with the significant improvements of cross-strait relations since May 2008, coupled with the Obama Administration's strong desire to maintain a stable U.S.-China relationship, the time might have arrived for all three sides to take a fresh and more creative look at the issue of the arms sale under the new dynamics in cross-strait relations and to find a way to manage, if not resolve, the problem.

### **Future Prospect of Cross-Strait Relations**

At any rate, it is fair to say that the dazzling and swift improvement on cross-strait relations since Ma Ying-jeou took office has significantly reduced the prospect of military conflict in the Taiwan Strait and has brought tangible and intangible "peace dividends" to people on both sides of the Strait and to the Asia-Pacific region as a whole. And after decades of twists and turns, Taipei and Beijing have toned down their assessments as to how far cross-strait relations can go under the current situation. Both should realize that difficult and sensitive issues remain and will need to be earnestly and jointly tackled in the future if the two sides can create and sustain a peaceful environment in the region.

One issue is the concern in some quarters that the rise of China poses a challenge, if not threat, to regional stability, including cross-strait relations. Whether that holds true or not, the maintenance of peace and stability with Taiwan and in the region would actually be more conducive to China's sustained development and national interests. Any hindrance or disruption of China's development efforts would pose harsh repercussions on its seething domestic issues such as income inequality, unemployment, and corruption.

Second, Ma's resounding defeat in the local elections on 29 November 2014—the litmus test for the coming 2016 presidential election—not only increased the stakes but also the unpredictability of future cross-strait relations because no one knows if President Ma's mainland China policy, especially the adherence to the 1992 Consensus,

would be maintained. Moreover, Taiwan's domestic situation and the "Blue-Green" entanglement have complicated Taiwan's handling of subtle domestic as well as cross-strait issues.

Third, while Beijing-Taipei rapprochement is still in its current stage of dealing with "easy and functional issues," Washington may still feel comfortable with the warming up of cross-strait relations. But when the relationship begins to touch on more sensitive political and security issues that have implications on U.S. interests and future U.S.-Taiwan-China relations, not only will Beijing and Taipei need to overcome more hurdles, but Washington may also find it more challenging to adjust to the changing new reality in cross-strait relations.

Fourth, even though there are demands to push for political consultation from Mainland China, it is important to know that if Beijing is perceived by the Taiwan public as pushing too hard, it could be counterproductive. All sides agree that the cross-strait relations have entered a period of "peaceful development," different from the period of "peaceful unification" and that the former could last for a long time. In this light, Mainland China should respect the achievements in cross-strait relations and avoid developing an eagerness for quick success and instant gratification. Beijing should not push to resolve difficult issues when the conditions for doing so are not there. It makes more sense to tackle political differences after the two sides have accumulated enough mutual trust. Indeed, Taiwan has adopted a "building blocks" approach in its pursuit of long-term peace across the Taiwan Strait.

Finally, a position on cross-strait relations under the R.O.C. Constitution framework is the best way of improving future negotiation process, both theoretically and practically. No matter who the ruling party is, only the R.O.C. Constitution ensures and steadily promotes institutionalized cross-strait negotiations on the basis of the 1992 Consensus of One China with respective interpretations. This was the ROC position in response to the 18th Congress of the Communist Party of China in November 2012; Taipei stated that it

would continue to adhere to the status quo of “no unification, no independence, and no use of force” as it promotes exchanges, dialogue, and negotiations under the premise of effective risk control and the framework of the R.O.C. Constitution. Taipei will continue to promote institutionalized negotiations in order to seek peaceful, stable, mutually beneficial, and win-win cross-strait relations (Mainland Affairs Council 2012).

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**ACSC/APF  
2015**

## **Reclaiming the ASEAN Community for the People**

**ASEAN Civil Society Conference and ASEAN People's  
Forum 2015**

### **1. PREAMBLE**

- 1.1. This ASEAN Civil Society Conference and ASEAN People's Forum marks the 10th anniversary since the first regional gathering of civil society in Malaysia. We, the civil society in Southeast Asia,<sup>1</sup> welcome the commitment of ASEAN in the years since to establish a people-centric ASEAN and a peaceful, prosperous community. With deep regret and concern, the people's recommendations submitted to ASEAN member states since 2005 have been neither implemented nor adopted in any meaningful way.
- 1.2. While ASEAN governments are heading towards developing the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision, the people of ASEAN continue to suffer from authoritarian and military regimes, increased militarisation, violence and armed conflicts, unlawful foreign interference, lack of fundamental freedoms and human rights violations, undemocratic processes, corruption and poor governance, development injustice, discrimination, inequality, and religious extremism and intolerance. ASEAN's restrictive interpretation of the principles of state sovereignty and non-interference hamper the organisation's effectiveness in addressing

regional challenges, and the people remain excluded from participating fully in influencing ASEAN decision-making processes.

- 1.3. The failure of ASEAN to meaningfully address the people's issues is deeply rooted in the organisation's continued adherence to a neoliberal model that prioritizes corporate interests and elite groups, including state-owned enterprises, over the interests of the people. Our engagement with the ASEAN process is therefore anchored on a critique and rejection of deregulation, privatisation, government and corporate-led trade and investment policies that breed greater inequalities, accelerate marginalization and exploitation, and inhibit peace, democracy, development, and social progress in the region.
- 1.4. Reflecting on the past 10 years of engagement in ASEAN, and after extensive consultations,<sup>2</sup> we reiterate our previous recommendations and highlight the following four (4) regional priorities and overarching cross-cutting concerns:

## **2. REGIONAL PRIORITIES**

### **2.1. Development Justice**

- 2.1.1. ASEAN's development model for regional integration, and the unequal trade and investment agreements negotiated and agreed to by member states fail to guarantee redistributive, economic, gender, social and environmental justice, or accountability. They result in further inequality, lack of social protection, denial of basic information and communications infrastructure, environmental degradation, adverse impacts of climate change, and the systematic dispossession of the people's access to land, water, safe and nutritious food, and other resources. Large-scale mining and other extractive projects; the expansion of corporate agriculture (including promotion of genetically modified organisms); corporate and commercial fisheries; and intensified aquaculture continue to violate rights of local communities in ASEAN.

- 2.1.2. Despite all ASEAN states' voting in favour of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), "national development" continues to be used as a pretext for plundering and appropriating indigenous lands, territories, and resources. Further, nationalisation of lands owned by individuals, religious communities, and indigenous peoples justifies land grabbing and further marginalises a growing number of people who are already economically, politically, and socially disenfranchised.
- 2.1.3. Women's human rights are fundamentally threatened by regressive policies and programmes that instrumentalise and exploit women in the name of development. Women, girls, and other marginalized groups continue to be trafficked and subjected to sexual and gender-based violence that threaten their dignity and human rights.
- 2.1.4. The liberalization of the labour market has increased the number of precarious jobs and will continue to adversely impact the rights of workers, especially women, and including local and migrant workers, sex workers, domestic workers, and those working in the informal sector regardless of their documented or undocumented status.
- 2.1.5. Forced labour migration is exacerbated by state denial of decent jobs and living wages for workers, the rights to organise and form free and independent trade unions, collective bargaining, security of tenure, social security, occupational safety, access to safe and affordable health services, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, access to quality education, protection from violence, and an effective process for holding traffickers accountable. Failure by source country governments to protect their own citizens who are exported as migrant workers, and government prosecution of workers who expose their exploitation, aggravate the likelihood of abuse and human trafficking.
- 2.1.6. The regional economic integration plan does not hold corporations accountable for violations of human rights, and

social and environmental standards. In fact, corporations are given increased power through investment protection measures and investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) in the ASEAN Comprehensive Investment Agreement of the AEC blueprint. ISDS empowers corporations in some instances to sue governments over local laws that may be in the public interest but counterproductive to the corporate interests.

## **2.2. Democratic Processes, Governance and Fundamental Rights and Freedoms**

- 2.2.1. Over the years, ASEAN has committed itself to the regional promotion of democracy and human rights. In a true democracy, the people have the right to full, meaningful, inclusive and representative participation by the people. Through transparent governance and free, fair and public elections in a truly multi-party, pluralistic system shall the will of the people be expressed. Yet no effective regional consultation mechanism exists for civil society in ASEAN to participate in crafting and critiquing regional policies. There has been a systemic breakdown in electoral processes in the region; and the people's will continues to be suppressed at both the regional and national levels.
- 2.2.2. An alarming number of restrictions in the region deny freedom of expression and information, freedom of religion or belief, peaceful assembly, and association, in both online and offline spaces. Laws in some countries deny the right to form civil society associations, people's movements, independent religious institutions, political parties, and free and independent labour unions.
- 2.2.3. States and non-state actors continue to commit violations with impunity, including police brutality, torture and enforced disappearances, against civil society activists. For example, the lack of immediate and transparent investigation into the case of Sombath Somphone<sup>3</sup> by ASEAN governments, the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR), or any other human rights mechanisms in the region. Human

rights defenders continue to be persecuted under oppressive laws, including laws against activities as “injuring the national unity,” “propaganda against the State,” “abusing democratic freedoms,” and sedition laws, which deny the people safe and constructive political space.

- 2.2.4. Despite increasing human rights violations in Southeast Asia, no human rights mechanism in ASEAN is able to address these concerns. Both the AICHR and the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) lack strong monitoring, accountability and enforcement mechanisms and fail to provide human rights protection consistent with international human rights law and standards.

### **2.3. Peace and Security**

- 2.3.1. Ongoing territorial disputes and border conflicts continue to exist within the ASEAN region and between ASEAN countries and non-ASEAN nations. The lack of states’ commitment in comprehensively fulfilling their extra-territorial obligation also exacerbates cross-border issues. These conflicts are often used by states to perpetuate xenophobia, misogyny, and ultra-nationalism. The inability of ASEAN to bring about sustainable peace, justice and development contributes to political unrest, internal displacement, statelessness, the refugee crisis, human trafficking, forced migration, sea and maritime conflicts, human rights violations, insecure livelihood of fisherfolk in coastal regions, unfounded territorial water claims, competition for access to and control of natural resources, sexual, gender-based and other violence, and general human insecurities.
- 2.3.2. Strict adherence to non-interference principle allows states to act with impunity, perpetuate or disregard human rights violations, such as those against the Rohingya; Montagnard, Hmong, and Khmer Krom; Bangsamoro; Patani; Papuan and in other conflicts in the region.



- 2.3.3. In peace negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction, the region has failed to establish an inclusive and representative process that includes all affected communities and recognises the significance of contributions by women and other marginalized groups to the process. Existing dispute settlement mechanisms<sup>4</sup> do not cover the ambit of internal armed conflict situations and have yet to be effectively used to resolve existing disputes. There is no clear mechanism for enforcing dispute settlement agreements and no regional, legally-binding conflict prevention instrument or mechanism. Lack of political will results in non-adherence to ceasefire and peace agreements.
- 2.3.4. State and non-state actors such as businesses and financial institutions who aggravate the existing crisis situation and/or commit gross human rights violations in times of conflict are not held to any regional or international framework of accountability. Moreover, military and paramilitary forces used to secure investments, such as foreign mining projects, dams, and plantations, exacerbates land grabbing, and violates the peace and security of affected communities.

## **2.4. Discrimination and Inequality**

- 2.4.1. Discrimination denies the people their inherent rights and preserves the imbalance in power relations that prevent realisation of equality of opportunities, access and benefits/results. Multiple and intersectional discrimination, which can result in persecution, cuts across race, inter- and intra-religious practices or belief, ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, class, political and economic status, ability, geographic location, HIV status, marital and pregnancy status, and sexual orientation and gender identity/expression (SOGIE). This is seen in the private as well as the public spheres of lives of the people in Southeast Asia.
- 2.4.2. Inequality and discrimination continue to be perpetuated, both directly and indirectly, in laws and practices of state and non-state actors, particularly the private sector and extremist

groups. Cultural, traditional, and religious practices inconsistent with human rights standards remain unrectified by governments and are sometimes used to justify serious human rights violations. They act to impose patriarchal forms of traditional norms and practices, that result in restriction and denial of a separate legal personality, increased violence particularly on the basis of gender and sexuality, and are often used to increase restriction on people's mobility and access to public life including education, culture, sexual and reproductive health care, employment, and holding leadership positions. No clear regulation or accountability exists to address violations committed by non-state actors.

- 2.4.3. As ASEAN moves towards regional economic integration, unequal and unsustainable economic growth will result in worsening poverty, inequalities of wealth, resources, power and opportunities between countries, between the rich and the poor and between men and women. This economic inequality persistently prevents the people of ASEAN to realise the benefits of economic growth or redistributive changes.

*Considering these regional priorities, the civil society in Southeast Asia reiterate our previous recommendations and call on ASEAN and ASEAN member states to promptly adopt and implement the following overarching and specific recommendations:*

### **3. OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS**

*We urge ASEAN states to:*

#### **3.1. Uphold international human rights principles and standards**

- 3.1.1. Ratify and fully implement state obligations, including extraterritorial obligation under all international human rights treaties, including the Optional Protocols; withdraw all

reservations, if any; and enact enabling legislation or establish other accountability mechanisms that institutionalise and support implementation. All states to uphold the principle of non-derogation by reforming and repealing all laws that undermine the right to life, liberty and dignity, including death penalties.

3.1.2. ASEAN human rights instruments must strictly adhere to international law and universal principles and standards of human rights.

### **3.2. Ensure accountability to all people of ASEAN**

3.2.1. Protect, promote, fulfil, and realise the individual and collective human rights of all peoples, especially the more vulnerable and marginalised. This includes extraterritorial obligations and recognition of primacy of universal principles of human rights over and above all other obligations.

### **3.3. Strengthen the mandate of AICHR, ACWC, ACMW (ASEAN Declaration for the Promotion and Protection for the Rights of Migrant Workers) and future human rights mechanisms**

3.3.1. Strengthen the terms of reference of these bodies to include the capacity to conduct onsite country visits and investigations, issue binding recommendations to member states, provide for periodic peer reviews on human rights conditions, set up working groups on emerging thematic issues, receive and address complaints, and institutionalise an inclusive framework of engagement with all relevant stakeholders, particularly civil society, national human rights institutions (NHRIs), and victims/affected communities.

3.3.2. Adhere to the principle of transparency, impartiality and independence, and also as prescribed in the terms of reference of the AICHR and the ACWC,<sup>5</sup> and ensure that appointees meet minimum requirements such as expertise in a human rights field, good human rights track record, and the ability to discharge their duties with integrity, probity, and independence.

3.3.3. Develop a transparent, participatory, and inclusive process involving civil society, NHRIs, and relevant stakeholders in their selection and appointment.

### **3.4. Enshrine international commitments in the ASEAN Community’s Post – 2015 Vision<sup>6</sup>**

3.4.1. Ensure the standards and elements in the proposed ASEAN Community’s Post-2015 Vision and ASEAN Development Goals meet human rights international commitments and do not undermine universal principles of equality and non-discrimination. Commit to a framework that aims to dismantle rules and systems that enable the gross inequalities of wealth, power, and resources between countries, between rich and poor, between men and women and other social group. Adopt an inclusive and constructive modality of engaging civil society in the drafting process, and in the monitoring of the implementation of the Post-2015 vision.

## **4. RECOMMENDATIONS SPECIFIC TO THE CONTINUING REGIONAL PRIORITIES**

*ASEAN and members states should:*

### **4.1. Ensure Development Justice**

4.1.1. Develop the ASEAN Community integration that is rooted in values that promote cooperation, active contribution to development, self-responsibility and accountability of civil society organisations, and development justice that ensures redistributive<sup>7</sup>, economic<sup>8</sup>, environmental<sup>9</sup>, gender and social justice<sup>10</sup>, as well as accountability<sup>11</sup>.

4.1.2. Put in place accountability mechanisms that are binding on both state and private actors, and that recognise and enhance the rights of all people of ASEAN. This includes: ensuring that all poverty reduction measures harmonise with ecological and environmental sustainability; signing up to initiatives such as the Open Government Partnership that adhere to the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; ending land

- expropriation policies under the guise of economic development that have resulted in devastating impact to indigenous peoples and their ecology; and introducing laws that respect individuals' private ownership and communities' collective ownership of lands.
- 4.1.3. Guard against extensions of intellectual property rights in national or regional trade agreements that restrict access to seeds, free and affordable medicines and healthcare, as well as information including public research and creative content, and which may undermine public health, farmers' rights, traditional knowledge and practices of indigenous peoples, and the right to information commons among other undesirable effects.
  - 4.1.4. Establish the Environmental Pillar and adopt a common position on climate change, emphasising common but differentiated responsibilities, and defend it at the 21st Conference of the Parties. Incorporating the principles of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Rio Declaration, ASEAN should undertake regional collaboration in terms of adaptation and mitigation, focus on the protection of food sovereignty, and increase use of renewable energy and provision of long-term finance, especially for mitigating loss and damage.
  - 4.1.5. Provide lawful recognition to indigenous peoples as citizens with collective equal rights to free, prior and informed consent, and to lands, territories, and resources as recognised in UNDRIP and other international instruments including the Outcome Document of the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.
  - 4.1.6. Ensure that trade policy-making and negotiations are transparent and consistent with human rights obligations, particularly at the local level. This includes: Involving input from civil society and social movements, including those representing farmers, women, youth, LGBTIQ persons, rural communities, and workers in the design, implementation and monitoring of aid modalities, development programmes and strategies.

- 4.1.7. Adopt domestic laws and policies in adherence to international human rights treaties and ILO norms and standards in anticipation of the open labour market under the 2015 ASEAN Economic Community. This includes: ensuring workers have the rights to job security, decent work, and living wage, equal pay for work of equal value, safe and secure working environments with gender equality, collective bargaining, and trade unions; relieving women of the burden of unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of social care services and infrastructures, social protection policies, and the promotion of shared responsibility within the family and the community; and eliminating child labour, forced labour, human trafficking, and government labour export programmes that exploit migrant labour, increase propensity towards international marriage brokerage for commercial purposes, and result in human trafficking.
- 4.1.8. Adopt a binding legal instrument in line with international human rights standards to protect and promote the rights of all migrant workers and their families regardless of their immigration status.

#### **4.2. Protect Democratic Processes, Governance, and Fundamental Rights and Freedoms**

- 4.2.1. Commit to and establish mechanisms to ensure meaningful and substantive participation, inclusion and representation by all people in ASEAN in all processes at both the national and regional levels without prejudice or restrictions.
- 4.2.2. Immediately reform all constitutions and laws that restrict or deny full civil and political participation of its people in democratic and other processes, including those in accordance with the Bangkok Declaration on Free and Fair Elections, and institute laws that promote greater transparency and people's participation in governance, including the right to form political parties and opposing voices.

4.2.3. End human rights violations and persecution targeted at human rights defenders and activists. This includes: repealing laws restricting freedom of expression, both online and offline, and freedom of religion or belief; releasing those imprisoned or detained under such laws; reforming laws restricting free and open access to information; immediately signing, ratifying and implementing measures aligned with the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and the UN Human Rights Council Resolution on Protection of Human Rights Defenders; and banning and punishing all forms of violence committed by state and non-state actors including police brutality, torture, and enforced disappearances.

#### **4.3. Commit to Peace and Security**

4.3.1. Demonstrate commitment to comprehensive and collective security as stated in the ASEAN Political-Security Blueprint through cutting military spending, ensuring accountable and transparent utilisation of state budgets for community development, and providing an enabling environment for women's meaningful participation and representation in decision-making processes, including support for women's leadership, and community education to counter all forms of sexual- and gender-based discrimination and violence.

4.3.2. Establish a Dispute Prevention and Settlement Mechanism as a regional instrument for preventive and emergency response. Specifically, approve inclusion of a preventive clause in the existing Dispute Settlement Mechanism<sup>12</sup> in the next review of the ASEAN Charter.

4.3.3. Act in strict adherence to the principles of peace and security enshrined in the UN Charter and ratify and/or implement all international human rights laws, international humanitarian laws, particularly the Geneva Conventions, the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol, as well as the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Person, their

- obligations under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and put in clear measures as part of their national jurisdiction to prosecute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.
- 4.3.4. Ensure that justice and reparation systems conform to international human rights frameworks, including the Updated Set of Principles for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights through Action to Combat Impunity (2005), which is premised on the right to know, the right to justice, and the right to reparation/guarantees of non-recurrence.
- 4.3.5. Recognise the significant contributions of women and indigenous peoples in peacebuilding and post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction processes. This includes: developing and implementing National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security according to the principles enshrined in the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, Security Council Resolutions 1820 and 1888, CEDAW and General Recommendation 30; providing effective and timely remedies for different types of violations experienced by all women and children and adequate and comprehensive reparations; and address all gender-based violations, including sexual and reproductive rights violations, domestic and sexual enslavement, forced marriage, and forced displacement in addition to sexual violence, as well as violations of economic, social, and cultural rights.
- 4.3.6. Resolve issues of territorial disputes and border conflicts under the principle that resources beyond the limits of national jurisdiction are to the common heritage of all peoples and nations. This includes: working with all related parties and countries to settle disputes only by peaceful means, in accordance with international law, including the UN Charter, UN



Convention on the Law of the Sea, the ASEAN Charter, the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea, and achieve at the earliest the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea; resolving issues of sea and maritime under the principle that the high seas are open to all States, and that no state may validly purport to subject any part of the high seas to its sovereignty. Lastly, exploring joint administrations by contending states over disputed areas.

#### **4.4. End discrimination and Inequality**

- 4.4.1. Immediately adopt the definition of “non-discrimination” defined by international human rights law, particularly the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD); and immediately eliminate all forms of discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of race, inter- and intra-religious practices or belief, ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, class, political and economic status, ability, geographic location, HIV status, marital and pregnancy status, and sexual orientation and gender identity/expression (SOGIE).
- 4.4.2. Recognise multiple sites and intersectionality of discrimination and realisation of substantive equality through guarantees of equal opportunities, equal access and equal benefits to all peoples, from all sectors, including, women, LGBTIQ persons, children, and youth.
- 4.4.3. Eliminate public morality clauses and cultural relativist justifications used to deny and violate rights of the people, especially women, LGBTIQ persons, and other marginalized and vulnerable groups; and create accountability mechanisms especially to address violations by non-state actors.

## 5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1. We, the civil society of Southeast Asia, guided by the principles of human rights, democracy, good governance, rule of law, non-discrimination, substantive equality, progressiveness and non-retrogression, remain united in our quest for a regional development in Southeast Asia that upholds democracy, peace and security, individual and collective human rights, and sustainable development, for a transformative and “people-centred ASEAN.”
- 5.2. We, therefore, reiterate our previous recommendations and call on all ASEAN member states to seriously consider these continuing regional priorities and recommendations, and immediately adopt positive measures to implement them.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> The ASEAN civil society is represented by various civil society organisations, community-based organisations, NGOs, social movements of women, children and youths, migrant workers, formal and informal workers from both urban and rural sectors, persons with disabilities, trade unions, sex workers, indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, peasants, farmers, small-scale fisher folks, refugees and stateless persons, domestic workers, lesbian gay transgender/transsexual intersex and queer (LGBTIQ) people, human rights defenders and other groups.
- <sup>2</sup> This statement was adopted at the 3rd ACSC/APF 2015 Regional Consultation (23 – 24 January 2015) in Malaysia. This was preceded by the 1st Regional Consultation on 24 – 25 September 2014 and the 2nd Regional Consultation on 11 – 12 December 2014, respectively. The drafting of the statement has also gone through a rigorous consultation process through national and regional thematic groups.
- <sup>3</sup> Sombath Somphone, an internationally acclaimed community development worker and prominent member of Lao civil society, went missing on 15 December 2012, when police stopped his vehicle at a checkpoint in the capital. He was then transferred to another vehicle, according to police surveillance video, and has not been heard from since. Reports say that the Lao government continues to deny responsibility for his disappearance.
- <sup>4</sup> 1976 Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC), signed at the first ASEAN Summit on 24 February 1976 in Denpasar, Bali; 2004 ASEAN Protocol on Enhanced Dispute Settlement Mechanism, adopted by the Economic Ministers at the 10 ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, Laos on 29 November 2004; 2010 Protocol to the ASEAN Charter on Dispute Settlement Mechanisms, adopted in Hanoi, Vietnam on 8 April 2010.

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- <sup>5</sup> TOR of the AICHR Chapter 5, and TOR of the ACWC Chapter 6.
- <sup>6</sup> Nay Pyi Taw Declaration on the ASEAN Community's Post-2015 Vision, Nay Pyi Taw, 12 November 2014.
- <sup>7</sup> "Redistributive justice" aims to reduce inequalities between and within countries, among women and men, and among different social and ethnic groups through policies that redistribute resources, wealth, power, and opportunities.
- <sup>8</sup> "Economic justice" aims to develop economies that enable dignified lives, accommodate for needs and facilitate capabilities, employment and livelihoods available to all.
- <sup>9</sup> "Environmental justice" recognises the historical responsibility of those responsible for human rights violations, increased global warming and environmental disasters and compels them to alleviate and compensate marginalised groups who suffer from their actions.
- <sup>10</sup> "Gender justice and social justice" eliminate all forms of discrimination, marginalisation, exclusion and violence.
- <sup>11</sup> Accountability to the people's demands for democratic and just governments, transparency, and governance enables the people themselves to make informed decisions over their own lives, communities and future.
- <sup>12</sup> 2010 Protocol to the ASEAN Charter on Dispute Settlement Mechanisms. Adopted in Hanoi, Vietnam on 8 April 2010.

# Japanese NGOs' 10 Recommendations for Revision of Japan's ODA Charter

11 September 2014

WE, JAPANESE NGOS, as civil society organizations that promote international cooperation, are keenly interested in Japan's Official Development Assistance Charter (hereafter ODA Charter) that defines the principles and the basic policies of international development cooperation carried out by the Government of Japan. Since the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) started the revision process of the ODA Charter this March, we have been actively providing our feedback and advocating for changes in the contents as well as the process of the revision based on our principles, knowledge, and experiences.

The revision process is coming to the most crucial juncture as MoFA is currently drafting a text of the revised ODA Charter, taking into account the discussion paper submitted by the Advisory Committee of Experts on ODA Charter Review (The Advisory Committee) last June. Before the policy is finalized, we Japanese NGOs hereby present 10 recommendations that should be reflected in the revised ODA Charter.

## Objectives

1. The ODA Charter should clearly define the alleviation of poverty, the reduction of inequalities, and the realization of equitable society as the primary objectives of Japan's ODA.
2. The ODA Charter should clearly define the people of developing countries as the primary beneficiaries of Japan's ODA.

## Principles

3. 'The Four principles of ODA' (for further details, see the 'Details' section) stipulated in the present ODA Charter should be maintained and presented clearly as a package in the revised ODA Charter as well.

4. The principle of non-militarism should be maintained in the revised ODA Charter so that ODA and military activities are clearly separated.

- Major foci

5. Japan's ODA should strengthen assistance that ensures fundamental human rights and human security, such as universal access to primary education and basic healthcare.
6. Japan's ODA should contribute to the reduction of inequalities within respective developing countries by empowering marginalized people that tend to be left out of national economic growth processes and by enhancing income redistribution systems.
7. Japan's ODA should strive for environmental sustainability and reduced inequalities between countries in the pursuit of development and lead the effort for realizing a sustainable world.

- Governance

8. Japan's ODA should involve NGOs from the policy planning phases to project implementation phases and to promote citizens' participation, information disclosure, and development education. As a result of diversification of its implementing partners, Japan's ODA should be channeled through the NGO sector, similar to other DAC countries.
9. Equitable and transparent governance of Japan's ODA should be ensured. Its budget allocation by sectors and regions should be clearly disclosed to the public, and its development effectiveness should be improved.
10. Japan's ODA expenditure should aim to reach the target of 0.7% of GNI set by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) without any compromise to quality. The International Development Cooperation Act should be enacted incorporating our above-mentioned recommendations 1-9. A Ministry of International Development Cooperation should be established so that Japan's ODA will be planned and implemented with consistency, and thus ensure effective development strategies.

## Objectives

### **1. The ODA Charter should clearly define the alleviation of poverty, the reduction of inequalities, and the realization of equitable society as the primary objectives of Japan's ODA.**

Economic growth alone cannot solve the problems of the world's poor. It may be a necessary condition for poverty alleviation, but certainly NOT a sufficient condition. In order to realize genuinely inclusive, equitable, sustainable, and resilient societies, we need equitable redistribution of wealth and strong public sector that provides social services required for human dignities, on top of 'inclusive, sustainable, resilient growth'. Environmental conservation is an imperative, particularly for the poor people of developing countries whose livelihoods are heavily dependent on nature. ODA can and should be an effective tool for environmental conservation, thus this aspect should be expressly included as one of the major objectives in the revised ODA Charter.

### **2. The ODA Charter should clearly define the people of developing countries as the primary beneficiaries of Japan's ODA.**

The primary objective of Japan's ODA must be poverty alleviation through sustainable and equitable development of developing countries. As secondary benefits only, economic returns and diplomatic benefits to Japan may be sought in the mid- to long-term. 'Simultaneously realizing economic growth both in developing countries and in Japan', an expression that appears in the discussion paper of the Advisory Committee of Experts on ODA Charter Review (The Advisory Committee), is misleading. It could give a higher priority to short-term economic gains for Japanese corporates advancing in developing countries than to autonomous development and poverty/inequality reduction of developing countries.

## Principles

### **3. 'The Four Principles of ODA' stipulated in the present ODA Charter should be maintained and presented clearly as a package in the revised ODA Charter as well.**

The present ODA Charter defines its Four Principles as follows:

1. Environmental conservation and development should be pursued in tandem.
2. Any use of ODA for military purposes or for aggravation of international conflicts should be avoided.
3. Full attention should be paid to trends in recipient countries' military expenditures, their development and production of weapons of mass destruction and missiles, their export and import of arms, etc., so as to maintain and strengthen international peace and stability, including the prevention of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and from the viewpoint that developing countries should place appropriate priorities in the allocation of their resources on their own economic and social development.
4. Full attention should be paid to efforts for promoting democratization and the introduction of a market-oriented economy, and the situation regarding the protection of basic human rights and freedoms in the recipient country.

The Four Principles are still very relevant to avoid human rights violations and environmental destructions through the entire process of Japan's ODA from the planning to the implementation phases. Thus the principles should be maintained and presented clearly as a package in the revised ODA Charter as well.

**4. The principle of non-militarism should be maintained in the revised ODA Charter so that ODA and military activities are clearly separated.**

Deployment of militaries in conflict or disaster affected areas, even if it were for 'non-military purposes,' could further destabilize the power balance of the localities and cause new conflicts. If such military deployment were carried out in any relations with ODA, the local people would doubt the peaceful and humanitarian objectives of ODA and eventually lose their trust in Japan. In order to avoid such situations, the principle of non-militarism should be maintained in the new ODA Charter as firmly as the Four Principles of the present ODA Charter and clearly presented as 'principles' or 'standards' binding the entire ODA. Non-militarism should be the supreme norm and the guiding principle that the entire ODA must obey.

### **Major foci**

**5. Japan's ODA should strengthen assistance that ensures fundamental human rights and human security, such as universal access to primary education and basic healthcare.**

In the present world, 850 million people are still suffering from hunger, 57 million children are out of school, and 6.9 million children are dying under 5 years old due to poor health or nutrition every year.

Further, 20 percent of the poor population in the world is with disabilities.<sup>1</sup> In view of this context, Japan's ODA should prioritize fundamental human rights including health, education, and eradication of hunger and poverties. A recent national survey also indicates that the people of Japan think that those rights should be prioritized in ODA. Nevertheless, only one percent and two percent of the bilateral ODA of Japan are used for basic education and basic health respectively, while as much as 40 percent is allocated towards infrastructural development. In order for Japan's ODA to receive the supports of its own people too, fundamental human rights should be prioritized.



**6. Japan's ODA should contribute to the reduction of inequalities within respective developing countries by empowering marginalized people that tend to be left out of national economic growth processes and by enhancing income redistribution systems.**

The rapid economic growth in many developing countries including in Africa is also causing extreme income inequalities. Such economic inequalities also exacerbate social inequalities in terms of ethnicity, gender, disability, and geography. In the mid- and long-term, this could result in social division, political destabilization, and economic stagnation. As private investment tends to be concentrated on export-oriented industries with limited job creation, the benefit of economic growth is unlikely to 'trickle down' to the populations living in poverty. The combination of high-volume private sector investment and rapid economic growth makes it all the more important that Japan's ODA, as a form of public development finance, serves public interests by addressing the failures and limitations of the market. More specifically, priority must be given to strengthening progressive national taxation systems, essential social services, and social protection systems.

**7. Japan's ODA should strive for environmental sustainability and reduced inequalities between countries in the pursuit of development and lead the effort for realizing a sustainable world.**

Japan's ODA should not only minimize the environmental impacts but also mitigate even the residual impacts, as well as contribute to nature conservation, with the understanding that the natural environment is the fundamental basis for human well-being and growth of the society. Japan should take the lead in rule making and its effective implementation on global and cross-border issues, including climate change, the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and marine resources, and the impact of population growth on the environment. It should also take the lead in reduction of inequalities between countries, recognizing that the sustainable world cannot be realized without closing the gap between advanced countries and developing countries.

## Governance

- 8. Japan's ODA should involve NGOs from the policy planning phases to project implementation phases and to promote citizens' participation, information disclosure, and development education. As a result of diversification of its implementing partners, Japan's ODA should be channeled through the NGO sector, similar to other DAC countries.**

For Japan's ODA to effectively eradicate poverty and inequalities based on the principles of 'sustainable development,' 'non-militarism,' and 'fundamental human rights,' there must be proactive disclosure of information on as well as citizens' participation in ODA. Therefore, the revised ODA Charter must clearly mention that it will encourage citizens' participation and information disclosure. Likewise, the revised ODA Charter should clearly mention that ODA will strengthen development education to promote Japanese people's understanding about the relations between their lives and developing countries. Japan's ODA, for its delivery, should strengthen its partnership with NGOs that are directly reaching the poor people of developing countries and are familiar with the social environment in those countries. As a mid-term bench mark, the rate of Japan's ODA channeled through NGOs (2 percent as of FY 2009) should be increased up to the level of other DAC countries (16.7 percent as of FY 2009).

- 9. Equitable and transparent governance of Japan's ODA should be ensured. Its budget allocation by sectors and regions should be clearly disclosed to the public, and its development effectiveness should be improved.**

Information disclosure, transparent decision making, and participation of people of beneficiary countries should be ensured when the policies of Japan's ODA—regardless of its terms, regional scopes, and thematic subjects—are formulated. The policies of Japan's ODA, from its highest level to lowest level, should be consistent throughout the process of

planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. The application of Guidelines for Confirmation of Environmental and Social Consideration should be further strengthened. Complaint mechanisms for the people of beneficiary countries who may suffer the negative effects of Japan's ODA should be introduced and these cases should be treated fairly, appropriately, and quickly to rescue victims by suspending or reexamining projects. The budget allocation of Japan's ODA by geographies and thematic subjects should be disclosed from its planning stage to improve its transparency as well as strategic effectiveness.

**10. Japan's ODA expenditure should aim to reach the target of 0.7 percent of GNI set by the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) without any compromise to quality. The International Development Cooperation Act should be enacted incorporating our above-mentioned recommendations 1-9. A Ministry of International Development Cooperation should be established so that Japan's ODA will be planned and implemented with consistency, and thus ensure effective development strategies.**

As Other Official Flows (OOF) and private funding are often criticized because of its negative effects on the people of developing countries, at least similar restrictive guidelines as the one for ODA should be applied for confirmation of environmental and social consideration. We, Japanese NGOs, also argue that it is inappropriate for good governance to define such wide-ranged activities of the national government by a cabinet document only. International Development Act should be enacted incorporating our above-mentioned recommendations 1-9 to define the overall policy framework of Japan's development cooperation. The Ministry of International Development Cooperation should be established to implement the Act.

ODA or international development cooperation should not be regarded just as a means to serve diplomatic and economic benefits of Japan. It

should have an internationally shared common goal to support the self-reliance of the people of developing countries. Japan's ODA should enhance its strategic edge by highlighting its peaceful and humanitarian principles.

In parallel with the above-mentioned efforts to improve its quality, Japan's ODA should also aim at reaching the internationally agreed quantitative target of 0.7 percent of GNI to fulfill its international responsibilities.

Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC) •	(98 membership)
Yokohama NGO Network (YNN) •	(21 membership)
Nagoya NGO Center •	(54 membership)
Kansai NGO Council •	(34 membership)
Hiroshima NGO Network •	(15 membership)
Fukuoka NGO Network (FUNN) •	(25 membership)
Ugoku/Ugokasu (GCAP Japan) •	(39 membership)
Japan NGO Network for Education (JNNE)	(23 membership)
GII/IDI MoFA-NGO Meeting •	(33 membership)
Japan Women's Watch (JAWW) •	(106 membership)

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### Note

<sup>1</sup> *World Report on Disability* (WHO and World Bank, 2011)

(These ten recommendations were published by the Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC). <http://www.janic.org/MT/pdf/Japan-oda.pdf>. It has been reprinted here with very minor changes—Eds.)

# Why is the Umno-BN government using the Sedition Act to arrest people now?<sup>1</sup>

Francis LOH

THE LEARNED JUDGES' 'GUILTY' DECISION in *Sodomy II*—which first went to trial on 3 February 2010 and then went the distance from the High Court to the Appeals Court before ending up in Federal Court—was criticised by many sectors of the Malaysian public from the ordinary rakyat to learned lawyers including the Bar Council.

International human rights groups like the ICJ also said the decision was a major blow to human rights and democratisation in Malaysia.

Quite naturally, people took to expressing their dissent and dissatisfaction too—for it seems as though the courts, the police, the Attorney General's chambers, quite apart from the UMNO-BN government in power, could no longer be relied upon to deliver justice and uphold the rule of law in the country.

In response to such protests in the form of rallies, media statements, blog posts and social media updates, and even a speech read on behalf of the detained Opposition Leader in Parliament, Malaysians witnessed a new wave of arrests and detention of Opposition politicians, activists, students, and even people who tweeted.

Yet Article 10 of the Federal Constitution grants us the right to express ourselves, to assemble and to associate. A recent Court of Appeal judgment in *Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad v Public Prosecutor* [2014] 4 CLJ 944 unanimously reaffirmed this constitutional liberty as a fundamental right of all Malaysians. Moreover, the prime minister has proudly proclaimed in the United Nations, in Oxford and all over that we are a moderate country and a democracy.

In this regard, it is most disturbing that the authorities are now resorting to the anachronistic colonial-era Sedition Act 1948 (which the prime minister had earlier promised to get rid of) and the Peaceful Assembly Act, 2012 (which, ironically, can be used to limit our democratic right to freedom of assembly), as the bases of these recent arrests. In several cases, the detainees were being detained and investigated under both these Acts.

In yet other cases, these Acts have been used together with the Penal Code, which, drafted in the era of Emergency, 1948–1960, contains many restrictive clauses. Worse, there are now plans to introduce a Prevention of Terrorism Act, which will contain undemocratic features including detention without trial.

### **The Case of Nurul Izzah**

Nurul Izzah Anwar, the two-time *Lembah Pantai* Member of Parliament, was asked to appear at Dang Wangi police station on 16 March to answer queries concerning her participation in a Free Anwar rally at Sogo on 14 February. So she showed up at Dang Wangi at the allocated time.

She was then asked to present herself for investigations under section 4 of the Sedition Act too. She had volunteered to the investigating police officer in charge that she would do so as soon as she had completed her first round of questioning about the Sogo rally.

As her lawyer has stated, Nurul has nothing to hide, realising fully that the speech she gave, which was actually on behalf of her father who remains Opposition Leader in Parliament, was protected under parliamentary immunity (See statement by Suhakam chief Hasmy Agam).<sup>2</sup>

As it turned out, she was not allowed to give her statement to the police. So she had to be detained overnight<sup>3</sup> instead. As intimated to her by the arresting officer, he was under orders from above not to take her statement, but to detain her! According to her lawyer Sivarasa Rasiah,<sup>4</sup> the IGP blatantly lied when he suggested in public that Nurul was being detained in order to get a statement from her. In fact, Nurul Izzah had voluntarily gone to the police station to offer her statements on both matters.

The Opposition and civil society groups have called for the IGP to resign or to be sacked for blatantly lying about the details of Nurul's arrest. However, it appears that no one in authority was going to listen to the Opposition and CSOs even though they were highlighting the critical question of the integrity of the police system, indeed, of the IGP who leads the police force.

Fortunately, Nurul Izzah was let out the next day. No doubt, this was because the story of her unjust arrest had gone viral and was carried not only in the local alternative media but the regional and global mainstream media too, from Jakarta, Bangkok, and New Delhi to London, New York, Canberra and the Middle East. Everywhere. Incidentally, the claims by Nurul's lawyer of a lying IGP were NOT carried in the local mainstream media.

### **Prior to Nurul Izzah's case**

Such arbitrary harassment and bullying of Nurul Izzah is not an isolated incident. Many other Opposition leaders, CSO activists and students had been arrested prior to Nurul Izzah's case.

On 19 February at 7.00 p.m., PSM secretary-general Arutchelvan was detained under sec 4(1) (c) of the Sedition Act for stating that the Court's decision on 10 February to jail Anwar was a "political judgement beyond reasonable doubt." He was taken to the Dang Wangi Police Station.

On 20 February, Lawrence Jeyaraj was detained for tweeting about Sirul, Altantuya, the prime minister, Shafee, Saiful and the IGP over the Altantuya and Anwar Ibrahim cases. He was held until the next morning.

On 7 March, Saifullah Zulkifli was arrested to assist police in their investigations about the rally.

On 8 March, Nik Nadzmi Nik Ahmad, the Selangor State Government Executive Council member, was arrested and then remanded for three days. Apparently, he was investigated under section 9(5) of the Peaceful Assembly Act and section 143 of the Penal Code for "illegal assembly."

On 10 March, Fariz Musa, a PKR leader and head of Jingga 13, was similarly detained under section 143 of the Penal Code for ‘illegal assembly’.

On 10 March, Mohd Fakhurulrazi Mohd Mokhtar was also arrested and remanded for one day.

On 10 March, Pandan MP and PKR secretary general Rafizi Ramli was arrested under section 143 of the Penal Code and under Sec 9 (5) of the Peaceful Assembly Act. In his case, Rafizi was detained in Dang Wangi after having made a police report on the 1MDB financial mismanagement.

On 14 March, Manjeet Singh, an NGO activist, was held for investigations into the 7 March #KitaLawan rally. He was remanded for three days and released on 17 March

On 14 March, Adam Adli was similarly detained and remanded for three days. He too was freed on 17 March.

On 14 March, Rasah MP Teo Kok Seng was detained and remanded for one day.

### **Outside Klang Valley**

On 10 February, several elected Opposition leaders in Johor – Jimmy Puah (Bukit Batu PKR), Liow Cai Tung (Johor Jaya DAP), and Cheo Yee How (Pengkalan Rinting DAP) were called in to Seri Alam Johor District Police Headquarters under Section 9 of the Peaceful Assembly Act for their participation in a “solidarity gathering” in support of Anwar Ibrahim in Taman Molek, Johore Baru.

On 4 March, Tanjong MP Ng Wei Aik was asked to give a statement regarding his allegedly seditious statement regarding Anwar Ibrahim’s jailing, which appeared in the Chinese daily, Kwong Wah.

### **After Nurul Izzah’s case**

On 17 March, PKR human rights and legal bureau deputy chair S Jayathas was detained for questioning, also on the Sogo rally.



On 20 March, PKR vice president and Batu MP Tian Chua was called in for his involvement in the Sogo rally. He was released after a remand for his detention was disallowed.

On 22 March, Eric Paulsen, founder and executive director of Lawyers for Liberty, was taken in, one day ahead of a press conference that was to be called by Gerakan Hapus Akta Hasutan (GHAH), at Paulsen was scheduled to speak. The main item of the press conference was to highlight concern about police investigations under the Sedition Act against those who are legitimately expressing dissent. Also, GHAH, a movement supported by 133 CSOs in Malaysia that aims to get rid of the anachronistic Sedition Act, intended to highlight how police tweeting was creating a climate of intimidation and suppressing expression.

On 23 March 1989, anti-GST protestors were arrested following a peaceful sit-in protest at the Customs complex in Petaling Jaya to demand answers to 106 questions regarding the Goods and Services Tax (GST) to be implemented in April. Among those arrested were Sungei Siput MP Dr. Jeyakumar Devaraj and Kuala Krai MP Dr. Hatta Rami. Others included Che'gu Bard, and several other PSM leaders including its secretary general, Arutchelvan. Twenty-five of them were transferred from the Kelana Jaya police station to the Shah Alam District Police Headquarters.

### **Justice must be done and seen to be done...but where?**

The police appear rather anxious, even efficient, in detaining these Opposition leaders, activists and critics. In fact, they have violated the recent Court of Appeal ruling which reaffirmed that gathering peacefully is a fundamental right of every Malaysian.

Contrast this with their lack of enthusiasm and slow motion ways in dealing with Ibrahim Ali, who had called for the burning of Bibles.

Or their dealing with the cases of Ismail Sabri Yaakob,<sup>5</sup> the Minister for Agriculture and Agro-based Industry, who had called on Malays to boycott all Chinese traders, and Dr. Mashitah Ibrahim, the Minister in the Prime Minister's

department, who had irresponsibly and incorrectly stated in the last UMNO general assembly that a Chinese man had burnt pages of the Qur'an.

No doubt, the statements by these two ministers and Ibrahim Ali had caused some measure of "disharmony, disunity or feelings of hatred or ill will" and/or jeopardised "the maintenance of harmony or unity on grounds of religion". But our point is not that the Sedition Act should be used against them. Rather, the Sedition Act should be repealed, as the prime minister had promised. On their part, the Police must also begin to act efficiently and treat all citizens fairly.

Worse, the IGP himself had delayed arresting the Muslim convert who was ordered by a Civil Court to return the child he had seized from his ex-wife, who had custody of the child. Yes, he has argued that the Civil Court's order contradicted the Sharia Court's. Be that as it may, inaction on his part did cause loss of faith among the rakyat in the course of justice, not to mention in him as the IGP.

Six years on, Teoh Beng Hock has still not been given his due of justice, as a recent demonstration of 30 family members and friends of the deceased outside the MACC office reminded us. It was especially disturbing to read that three MACC officers who were involved in investigations into Teoh's death had since been promoted!

On 18 March, amidst this new round of arrests, the Court of Appeal sentenced 13 Pas supporters who had demonstrated against the appointment of Zambry Abdul Kadir as the MB of Perak in February 2009 to 10 months jail and a RM5,000 fine.<sup>6</sup>

### **About turn**

Just four years ago, in 2011, the prime minister announced the repeal of the draconian Internal Security Act, the Emergency Ordinance and the Banishment Act. A year later, he announced the repeal of the Sedition Act.

More recently, however, we have seen an about turn: detention without trial has been brought back via the Prevention of Crime Act, and the prime minister has recanted on his promise to repeal the colonial-era Sedition Act.

Worse, a Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA), which will allow for detention without trial, will be introduced in this sitting of Parliament. Unlike the previous prime minister, who reintroduced parliamentary select committees to conduct public hearings on important laws and amendments prior to their introduction in Parliament, there has been no consultation whatsoever with parliamentarians, let alone with the public!

(Incidentally, it was also under the previous prime minister that a Royal Commission into the workings of the Royal Malaysian Police was conducted. Among others, the Commission, headed by a former IGP, had recommended the setting up of an Independent Police Complaints and Misconduct Commission. Under the current prime minister, this recommendation has been pending since 2005).

Apparently, POTA will allow the government to accumulate new powers with little checks and balances.

Why is there a need for such an Act at this time? If it is to facilitate detention without trial, the Prevention of Crime Act (Amendments) 2012 already allows for detention without trial for up to two years. The Security Offences (Special Measures) Act or Sosma, 2012, which replaces the ISA, allows for electronic surveillance to establish a case against suspects.

Detention under such unverifiable grounds of suspicion lends itself to abuse, and the legal fraternity and other groups concerned with human rights have already expressed their concerns about according extra powers without adequate checks and balances (Check out the overview of this Act in this Suaram assessment, a statement by Kua Kia Soong).<sup>7</sup>

### **Back to the arrests – Why now?**

The questions that arise are: why are they arresting all these people for expressing their dissatisfaction at this time? Indeed, why did the UMNO-BN government spend so much time, money and personnel going after Anwar Ibrahim? And why is there a need for more stringent control of citizens in this moderate and democratic country?

It seems clear that they are using this opportunity to destroy Anwar Ibrahim and his party PKR.

Not that they have not tried to destroy its partners, the DAP and Pas. Indeed, the overall plan since the UMNO-BN's poor performance in GE13 in 2013, has been to split the Pakatan Rakyat coalition.

Remember the attempts to deregister the DAP in the run up to the elections? And the Malaysia handouts when they spent millions and millions to buttress the MCA, Gerakan and SUPP, to little avail? And the RM1m-plus spent, supposedly by a private firm, on getting Mr Gangnam to perform in Penang prior to the prime minister taking over the microphone?

Or the current support by UMNO for the conservative Islamists within Pas to introduce hudud law in Kelantan which will drive a wedge between Pas and its partners,<sup>8</sup> especially the DAP?

In turn, a wedge is also being driven into the Muslim party to split those pushing for the implementation of Sharia law and a more exclusive Islamic state from those who consider themselves as progressives who are more inclined towards a more inclusive Islamic welfare state. Coincidentally, the former is in favour of working closely with UMNO, even forming a unity government with UMNO, as opposed to the latter, who value close ties with the Pakatan Rakyat.

It is commonly believed that it is Anwar and his party that held the central ground and pulled the coalition together. In fact, it wasn't only Anwar, but also the older group of leaders like Nik Aziz, Fadzil Noor, Hadi Awang, Karpal Singh, Lim Kit Siang and Syed Husin Ali who developed close ties with one another, and held the coalition together.

Several of these leaders are now gone and Anwar is in jail once again. For UMNO-BN, this appears the most opportune time to isolate the DAP by painting it as a chauvinistic party, to drive a wedge into Pas to break it up, to arrest and destroy the young enthusiastic leaders of PKR while their leader is in jail again, and to break up the Pakatan Rakyat ultimately.

Umno itself is experiencing an internal struggle too. Former prime minister Dr. Mahathir has openly called for the prime minister's stepping aside.

The recent declaration of support for the prime minister by the 14 BN component parties suggests all is not so well. Alas, perhaps the only common project that UMNO leaders agree upon is the destruction of Anwar Ibrahim and his party, and the breaking up the Pakatan Rakyat coalition.

For the rest of us, now even more than before, we need an independent judiciary, elected representatives who serve the people, an efficient and corrupt-free bureaucracy, and an excellent educational system that will allow us to earn decent salaries to cope with rising costs, what with the new GST.

Above all, we need an impartial police force that upholds the rule of law, not the rule by (their own) law, a police force that protects the people and delivers justice for all.

We must continue to struggle for all these.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> This essay appeared on 24 March 2015 on Aliran's online website/newsletter. It has been reproduced here with minor changes in formatting, etc. The editors would like to express their gratitude to Dr. Francis Loh for kindly granting permission to publish his essay in this issue of *Asian Studies*. The original essay may be accessed at <http://aliran.com/e-newsletters/2015-e-newsletters/why-is-the-umno-bn-government-using-the-sedition-act-to-arrest-people-now/>.
- <sup>2</sup> <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/police-overboard-with-nurul-izzahs-arrest-suhakam-says>
- <sup>3</sup> <http://aliran.com/coalitions/clean-and-fair-elections/mps-arrest-for-parliamentary-speech-unnecessary-malicious/>
- <sup>4</sup> <http://aliran.com/civil-society-voices/2015-civil-society-voices/igp-is-lying-to-the-public-about-nurul-izzahs-remand-lawyer/>
- <sup>5</sup> <http://aliran.com/web-specials/2015-web-specials/an-open-letter-to-ismail-sabri/>
- <sup>6</sup> <http://aliran.com/civil-society-voices/2015-civil-society-voices/hukuman-penjara-untuk-penunjuk-perasaan-adalah-zalim/>
- <sup>7</sup> <http://www.suaram.net/?p=6919>
- <sup>8</sup> <http://aliran.com/media-statements/2015-media-statements/hudud-umno-has-trapped-and-shackled-pas/>

# Scholars, Writers and Thinkers Call for Academic Freedom in Thailand

OVER NINE MONTHS AFTER THAILAND'S 12th military coup since the end of the absolute monarchy in 1932 was launched by the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO), 238 scholars, writers and thinkers, issued a call in support of academic freedom in Thailand in solidarity with colleagues inside the country who did so the week before. Catalyzed by the summary firing of prominent historian Dr. Somsak Jeamteerasakul by Thammasat University, they note that there has been a sharp decline in protection of freedom of expression in Thailand since the coup. They are critical of the summary dismissal of Dr. Somsak and comment that it is an example of alignment between the NCPO and Thammasat University.

They do not privilege academic freedom, but note that attacks on it during dictatorship are particularly dangerous as this “prevents students and scholars, those whose daily job is to think about knowledge and its implications, from imagining and working to return to a democratic regime founded on the protection of rights and liberties.”

The scholars are from 19 countries, including Australia, Austria, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, France, Germany, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Sweden, Taiwan, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States. They conclude with a request for Thammasat University and all universities in Thailand, “to take an active and leading role in support of academic freedom and freedom of expression in a broad sense.” They link academic freedom with freedom of thought and human rights more broadly, and note that, “To think differently is not a crime. If one cannot do so within the walls of the university, spaces of learning and the pursuit of truth, then the space to do so outside those walls will dwindle as well.”

## **A Call for the Protection of Academic Freedom in Thailand**

As concerned international observers of Thailand, we stand in solidarity with our colleagues who have condemned the summary dismissal of Dr. Somsak Jeamteerasakul by Thammasat University on 23 February 2015. We have watched with growing concern as the space for freedom of expression has shrunk precipitously in Thailand since the 22 May 2014 coup by the National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO). By choosing to join with the NCPO to attack Dr. Somsak Jeamteerasakul, the Thammasat University administration has abdicated its responsibility to protect academic freedom and nurture critical thinking. While academic freedom is not worthy of protection greater than that of the right to freedom of expression of all citizens, the impact of its destruction during a time of dictatorship is particularly severe as it “prevents students and scholars, those whose daily job is to think about knowledge and its implications, from imagining and working to return to a democratic regime founded on the protection of rights and liberties.”

For more than twenty years, Dr. Somsak Jeamteerasakul has been a lecturer in the Department of History and has trained and inspired many students at Thammasat University. As a public intellectual, he has produced a significant body of work in modern Thai history that has impacted and challenged Thai society beyond the walls of the university. His critical stance has made those in power uncomfortable, and in 2011 he faced an accusation from the Army of violating Article 112, the section of the Criminal Code that addresses alleged *lèse majesté*. In February 2014, there was an attempt on his life when armed gunmen shot at his house and car with automatic weapons. Concerned about his life and liberty following the May 2014 coup, Dr. Somsak fled the country. He was subsequently summoned to report by the junta, and when he did not, the NCPO issued a warrant for his arrest and appearance in military court, as examination of violations of the junta's orders was placed within the jurisdiction of the military court following the coup. In December 2014, he submitted his resignation. However, rather than accept his resignation, Thammasat University fired Dr. Somsak.

We stand in solidarity with our colleagues who note that, at the very least, Dr. Somsak Jeamteerasakul should be permitted to appeal the decision by Thammasat University to summarily dismiss him. In addition, he should be permitted to fight any legal charges against him in the civilian criminal court, not the military court. We further call on Thammasat University and all universities in Thailand to take an active and leading role in support of academic freedom and freedom of expression in a broad sense. To think differently is not a crime. If one cannot do so within the walls of the university, spaces of learning and the pursuit of truth, then the space to do so outside those walls will dwindle as well.

*(This statement was signed by 238 scholars, activists, and/or public intellectuals. The names were not included here for spatial considerations. - Eds.)*



# Reviews

## Book Reviews

***Ryōsai Kenbo: The Educational Ideal of “Good Wife, Wise Mother” in Modern Japan.*** By Koyama Shizuko. Translated by Stephen Filler. Leiden: Brill, 2013, 216 pp., ISBN 978-90-04-23061-3.

KOYAMA SHIZUKO ADMITS THAT the *ryōsai kenbo* (“good wife, wise mother”) ideal still pervades her life and the lives of women in Japan. It is this thought that spurred her to look for answers to the following questions: “What exactly does *ryōsai kenbo* mean? What do these adjectives ‘good’ and ‘wise’ refer to? And in what historical circumstances did this phrase come to be used?” (xi). She specifically looked for the *ryōsai kenbo* in sources and studies from the mid-eighteenth century to the late 1920s.

In the preface to the English edition of her book (1991), Koyama mentions that previous studies on *ryōsai kenbo* treated the concept negatively and thought it “unique to pre-war Japan” and “based on feudal or Confucian ideas” (vii). Koyama, however, looks at *ryōsai kenbo* as a “modern view of women” (vii). Instead of being truly “Confucian,” it actually spread from Japan to Korea and China in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (4–5). Koyama uses the phrase “*ryōsai kenbo* thought” (*ryōsai kenbo shiso*) instead of “*ryōsai kenbo* ideology” (*ryōsai kenbo shugi*). She asserts that the “*ryōsai kenbo* thought” is more appropriate because it underscores *ryōsai kenbo*’s nature as a modern set of ideas that are attuned to the views of womanhood of modern nations in the West and that penetrated post-World War II Japan, while the “*ryōsai kenbo* ideology” refers to a pre-World War II view of women. For Koyama, *ryōsai kenbo* developed alongside the creation of the “modern family” and the “modern citizen-state” (7–8). And it is a product of the “modern concept of the sexual division of labor” (viii).

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Chapter one is concerned with the formation of *ryōsai kenbo* thought. In the early years of the Meiji Period, it was deemed important to train *kenbo* (wise mother) by educating women. The partiality towards *kenbo* resulted from the near-silence of Edo-Period texts on the virtues of a mother (15). Thus, the *ōraimono* (texts for studying handwriting and reading) for girls in the Meiji Period started mentioning the virtues mothers should possess (28). Policy makers underscored the role of the *kenbo* because “wise mothers” would raise citizens of “good quality” (33). But it was only during the aftermath of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–1895 that discussions on girls’ education started mentioning *ryōsai kenbo* thought (35). The *ryōsai* was in charge of manual tasks at home while her husband was at work (39). Koyama also highlights that although *ryōsai kenbo* became the framework of women’s education, it actually constricted the content of that education (42). *Ryōsai kenbo* thought, as crafted then, had the following characteristics: 1) it assumed that women and men are vastly different, 2) equality was only “equality between abstract persons,” and 3) women had a subordinate position to men (44–48).

The relationship between *ryōsai kenbo* thought and the public education system is the topic of chapter two. The *ryōsai kenbo* were tasked with their children’s home education; they were the partner of the newly created public education system (53). Women’s magazines, education experts and psychologists and others discussed the role of women in home education. Girls’ middle schools even offered electives such as educational studies, physiology, and psychology (63). The father’s role in the education of his children was hardly mentioned; it was considered the mother’s realm (73).

Chapter three discusses the factors that led to the recalibration of *ryōsai kenbo* thought. Koyama mentions two causes: 1) the “woman problem” (*fujin mondai*); and 2) World War I. The “woman problem” resulted from changes in women’s situation and the ideas of Women’s Liberation that Yosano Akiko and Hiratsuka Raichō espoused (76–87). Exposure to Western women’s participation in the war effort also prompted discussions on how to harness Japanese women’s abilities other than using *ryōsai kenbo* thought (92, 95).

Chapter four focuses on the reconfigurations of *ryōsai kenbo* thought. Women's higher education, physical education, and training in domestic science were policies that aimed to make Japanese women on par with their Western counterparts. Women were now expected to have at least some work experience or work at home. This new expectation placed more pressure on women as they were supposed to balance their responsibilities towards home and work (125). Another change was that women had to use their supposed "unique nature" not only for the home but also for the nation (126). The home was also now seen as a "woman's kingdom" (130). These changes resulted in the modification of the Girls' Middle School Act in 1920 (137).

In chapter five, Koyama looks at morality textbooks used in girls' schools to examine the evolution of *ryōsai kenbo*. In these texts, *ryōsai kenbo* were variously seen as obedient wives and daughters-in-law, exemplary mothers, and wives who gently reprimanded their husbands and could readily work in case of dire circumstances. They were also expected to see their contribution as *ryōsai kenbo* as the bedrock of Japanese society (161–66).

Koyama's work systematically shows that *ryōsai kenbo* was not a static notion and that it was a product of the times in which it was conceptualized and taught. Her book should make a wider impact, given that *ryōsai kenbo* is still seen as "a traditional Japanese pattern.... This is the splendid woman that guarded the Japanese household (*ie*) over the years" (Goldstein-Gidoni 2005, 163). And it is allegedly "an amalgamation of Confucian teaching on womanhood and the Western cult of domesticity" (Matsumoto 2004, 241). Koyama, as she mentions on the epilogue, hopes to publish a sequel that focuses on the impact of *ryōsai kenbo* from the 1960s to the present. The reviewer wishes that Koyama look into the reformulation of *ryōsai kenbo* in the wake of increasing international marriages, since apparently, even the Filipino wives of Japanese men employ the terms "good girls" (wife/mother) and "good wife, good mother" (Suzuki 2008, 71, 73). Koyama, as a pioneer in the

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rethinking of *ryōsai kenbo*, is more than qualified to look into the transnational impact and reconfiguration of a system of thought that originally influenced Japan and other Northeast Asian countries.

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***Misalliance: Ngo Dinh Diem, the United States, and the Fate of South Vietnam.*** Edward Miller. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013, 432 pp., ISBN 978-06-74-07298-5.

EDWARD MILLER'S BOLD NEW BOOK is a tightly argued historiographical corrective that recuperates the overlooked nuances and dimensions of the political career of former president of the Republic of Vietnam (RVN), Ngo Dinh Diem and his alliance with the U.S. government. Using declassified French, American, and Vietnamese sources, Miller's historical revision contravenes many of the assumptions and conclusions of English-language scholarship on the subject.

Miller's attention to individual agency and contingency (personal decisions and accidents as responsible for historical change) is a response to the existing literature, which is rife with structural interpretations of the U.S.-Diem alliance. These interpretations conclude that; a) Diem was an anticommunist client caught in Cold War geopolitics; b) Diem was a "traditionalist" swept away by modernizing forces; c) U.S. support was a means to establish an international liberal economic order; d) American policymakers were preoccupied with racist and Orientalist assumptions. Echoing historian Fredrik Logevall, Miller argues that the problem with such structural explanations is that they present the U.S. government's actions in Vietnam as foregone conclusions.

In contrast, Miller presents a multivocal history that converges on the processes and ideas of nation-building. Conflicting approaches to nation-building encompass the Vietnamese and American voices in this history. Miller also distinguishes the high- and low-modernist approaches to nation-building that split the Americans between macro development versus communal village-level projects. He demonstrates that Americans were forced to adjust and abandon their nation-building ideas because of their inadequate understanding of Vietnamese social/political realities.

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The South Vietnamese had their own understandings of how nation-building should proceed. Miller pointedly portrays the Ngo brothers—Ngo Dinh Diem and Ngo Dinh Nhu—as political agents. While Colonel Edward Lansdale thought it necessary to “win hearts and minds” of the Vietnamese, Ngo Dinh Nhu believed that a right organization could inspire people to support it. Wesley Fishel—who headed the Michigan State University Advisory Group that trained South Vietnamese civil servants, civil guards, and police—advocated building coalitions and alliances. But Ngo Dinh Diem advocated a divide-and-conquer strategy. Wolf Ladejinsky, an advisor to the US AID Mission, supported land reform, while Ngo Dinh Diem called for rural resettlement.

In addition, Miller rejects the perception, held by Colonel Lansdale, that Diem was fumbling his political role. Miller argues that the Ngo brothers were neither naïve nor helpless, and had actually calculated and planned for their movement into executive power. As Miller’s book elucidates, Diem had long championed the building of a viable Third Force in Vietnamese society that would be distinct from both French colonialism and Viet Minh communism. By the 1930s, Ngo Dinh Nhu had come to espouse personalism, a strain of Catholic social thought that he encountered in the writings of Emmanuel Mounier. Against both the self-interested individualism of liberalism and the oppressive tendencies of Marxism’s suppression of personal identity through extreme focus on the collective, Mounier sought to define *la personne* beyond merely economic terms; he saw the human being in its dignified totality and advocated social policies that balanced material needs with “spiritual” considerations. Personalism became the Diem administration’s official doctrine, labeled as a form of revolution and a new way of addressing Vietnamese political and social issues. Hardly passive recipients of U.S. aid and transmitters of U.S. nation-building designs, the Ngo brothers had their own political vision for the regeneration of Vietnam.

Miller provides rich stories about Diem’s early political career, which may lead one to question the credibility of the extant Vietnamese- and

English-language literature on Diem. Given his long and conspicuous personal history in politics, what accounts for the putative neglect of Diem's agency vis-à-vis the U.S. in historical narratives of the U.S.-Diem alliance? Any biography of Diem should give accounts of his early career and nationalist initiatives so that it would turn out to be illogical for scholars to conclude that he was simply plucked from obscurity or installed in office by the United States in 1954. This book manifests the mastery of Miller's research, which proves that popular notions on this subject seem suddenly unthinkable.

With regard to Miller's theoretical framework, one thinks of the limitations of agency and contingency as a model to determine cause-effect relations. In moving from structure to agency, there should be a meeting point of the two, wherein one illuminates, not replaces, the other. In this spirit, a deeper discussion on French colonialism would have enriched the discussion of personalism and that of nation-building of the Republic of Vietnam. Too much attention to contingency is also problematic in terms of focus and scope because focusing on historical accidents and unpredictable circumstances and outcomes can spiral into incoherence without a tightly delimited set of actors and field of analysis. For this reason, Miller's book focuses too much on Ngo's personal life at the expense of the crucial historical questions. The book is poised to answer the question that Miller himself poses to the extant literature—"what explains the spectacular early triumphs and the equally spectacular demise of the Ngo Dinh Diem government?" (8). However, Miller only answers that "the rise and the fall of the U.S.-Diem relationship turned on the agency of particular American and Vietnamese individuals" (10). His answer is ultimately secondary to his primary agenda of historical revision regarding Diem.

In a narrative that privileges both agency and contingency, the actors must be limited, but if so the larger Vietnamese population inevitably becomes obscured. This limitation becomes a disadvantage when Miller concludes that, in addition to their unworkable sweep and scale, U.S. and RVN nation-building designs "were also undermined by numerous and



repeated U.S. and RVN failures to accommodate the diverse revolutionary aspirations which existed within South Vietnam and which resisted subordination to a single ideological formulation” (326). For this reason, despite the discussion on the ideas of nation-building of certain actors, the book fails to provide a true picture of the nation, which should necessarily include the people who comprise the history of its making.

Those seeking a radical history may critique that Miller ultimately provides a traditional historical narrative that once again centers on Great Men. This is a valid charge. But revisionist history is not necessarily radical history. In fact, it often avails of traditional methods precisely to destabilize the previously accepted assumptions and conclusions that resulted from those methods. Miller set out to provide a more pluralistic and contingent narrative of the U.S.-Diem alliance, and on these grounds he offers a startling, persuasive historiographical revision indeed.

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***State and Finance in the Philippines, 1898–1941: The Mismanagement of an American Colony.*** Yoshiko Nagano. Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 2015, 248 pp., ISBN 978-97-15-50703-5.

AMERICAN COLONIAL RHETORIC elucidated during the annexation of the Philippines in 1898 emphasized its (economic) developmental mission in the archipelago. As the Philippine Bill of 1902 straightjacketed the entry of American private investment to underpin this project, (Philippine) state financial resources were utilized to provide needed support for the export-oriented agriculture sector, the cornerstone of the entire enterprise. Thus, banking and finance, international trade, and the foreign exchange system formed key pieces of Philippine economic development during the colonial period.

Yoshiko Nagano's *State and Finance in the Philippines, 1898–1941: The Mismanagement of an American Colony* can be viewed as a landmark study of Philippine political economy and history, particularly during the American colonial period. It is a detailed and nuanced investigation of the Philippines' currency and banking systems of the period, focusing on specific policy changes that resulted into an epic financial meltdown during the post-World War I period.

Nagano proposes the following causal connections: it was the changes in the monetary policy initiated or allowed by the Washington-based Bureau of Insular Affairs (BIA, chapter one) and the creation of banks—especially the Philippine National Bank (PNB)—to finance the export-oriented agricultural sector (chapters two, three and four) that exposed the country's financial system to tremendous risks. Emanating from tremors in international trade after the end of World War I (chapter five), these risks were exacerbated by the PNB “corruption scandal” (chapter six). All of these shortcomings were exposed during the 1920s after a battery of government-initiated investigations, and became the subject of the reform

and reconstruction agenda in the subsequent years (chapter seven). In sum, Nagano argues that the Americans mismanaged colonial finances during the crucial World War I period, thus giving birth to the Financial Crisis of 1919 to 1922, highlighted by the PNB scandal after the war. The Bureau of Insular Affairs was supposed to provide guidance to the insular government from a financial policy standpoint, yet it fell asleep on the wheel and the result was a huge wreck. To save face, the Americans blamed the financial crisis on the collapse of the PNB, itself packaged as a corruption scandal perpetrated by the Filipino officials of the bank.

The book tends to portray Filipinos as minor actors or even bystanders in this unfortunate episode. It partially exonerates the Filipinos from the PNB debacle, save for the fact that Filipino (and American) officials of the PNB had to account for the irregularities associated with the credit inflation that they engineered through the issuance of (long-term) loans. I have trouble accepting the peripheral role of the Filipinos in the financial crisis for a couple of reasons: (1) there is enough evidence of Filipino participation in this unfolding crisis; and (2) the book leans toward the historiographical tendency to portray Filipinos as mere bystanders in their own history, even if doing so tends to excuse them from complicity in this epic disaster.

Some parts of the crisis, particularly the reduction of the currency reserve fund from 100 percent of the currency in circulation to 60 percent, came about due to legislative action by Filipinos in Manila (Act no. 2776 passed on 16 August 1918). The emergence of the PNB as a financial institution providing massive loans to the export-oriented agricultural sector was, in fact, part of the Filipino-dominated legislature's grand design to Filipinize the colonial economy, according to Nagano (1993, 220) herself in one of her earlier essays. The Filipinization of the colonial economy during World War I was the legislature's way of blocking off the entry and entrenchment of American capital in the Philippines and clear the way for independence from the United States in accordance with the Jones Law of 1916 (Castillo 1936, 157–59; Quirino 1971, 166). In my own work on the subject, I saw the hand of Filipino political actors who

staunchly and conveniently stood behind an emerging developmental state, or at least, a fledgling state-led developmental framework—in lieu of the previous laissez-faire framework—as central to the unraveling of a public fiscal crisis (in 1921 only) that accompanied and contributed to the financial problems of 1919–1922 (Ybiernas 2014, 77–78).

In recognition of Nagano’s thesis/arguments, I would like to suggest further contextualization of the political economy of the Philippines during the American colonial period in general, and of the role of the PNB in the financial crisis in particular. The role of the Filipinos during this very crucial stage of the country’s economic development cannot be de-emphasized even if doing so tends to excuse them from involvement in one of the country’s worst economic disasters and ascribes full blame to the BIA or any other American agency or agent. Nevertheless, Nagano’s contribution to Philippine political economy and history, especially during the American colonial period, is unmistakable and significant. This book is a must-read for earnest students of Philippine political economy and history.

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***Patriarchy in East Asia: A Comparative Sociology of Gender.*** Sechiyama Kaku. Translated by James Smith. Leiden: Brill, 2013, 329 pp., ISBN 2213-0608.

SECHIYAMA KAKU'S BOOK, English translation of his 1996 book in Japanese, offers a more nuanced analysis of the models of East Asian patriarchy understood by most scholars to be homogeneously belonging to the Confucian cultural sphere. A deeper scrutiny reveals counterintuitive findings that illuminate the cultural specificity and universality of the different models of patriarchy in East Asia.

Common to East Asian models of patriarchy is the allocation of gender roles, where men and women are expected to engage in productive and reproductive labor, respectively. Along with this universality are a multitude of models of patriarchy that cut across and transcend political and economic systems, and sociocultural norms. In the case of Japan, Confucianism had little to do with the modern and contemporary models of patriarchy. Instead, it is more of a function of capitalist development and a conscious effort of the state to institute an ideology that sets the role of married women in reproductive labor and men in the productive sphere. The emphasized role of the mother on housework is also a characteristic inherent in Japanese patriarchy.

The book consists of ten chapters grouped into three parts. Chapters one and two lay down the theoretical framework used in analyzing the discourse on patriarchy—how it is conceived in cultural anthropology, sociology, marxist feminism, history, and psychoanalysis. In his discussion, Sechiyama highlights two important elements in understanding patriarchy in the context of East Asia: gender and generation (22). Having said this, the author defines patriarchy as, “a comprehensive set of relationships and norms characterized by...gender-based and... generation-based allocation of set of roles and an unequal distribution of power” (24). Chapter two traces the emergence, transformation and anticipated disappearance or resilience of the “housewife” in East Asian

societies. Sechiyama conceptualizes modern and contemporary housewives vis-à-vis modern and contemporary patriarchies in East Asia, in both capitalist (Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan) and socialist (China and North Korea) societies.

Chapters three and four deal with unearthing the universality and specificity of patriarchy in Japan, with primary focus on the role of the housewife and her changing labor participation in both productive and reproductive realms. Sechiyama traces the birth of the modern housewife and the factors that contributed to its emergence. Critical to this discussion is the “good wife, wise mother” ideology misconstrued by most scholars as a product of Confucian influence in Japanese society. A peculiar feature of contemporary patriarchy is that Japanese women are allowed to engage in both productive and reproductive labor.

Chapters five, six, seven, and eight examine the types of patriarchy in four East Asian societies—South Korea, Taiwan, North Korea and China. Using a plethora of data gathered from archival research and official statistical documents, Sechiyama argues the following: (1) China and North Korea both have socialist political systems and managed economic systems (at least in the beginning) but gender-based allocation of roles and unequal power was more striking in the latter compared with the former; (2) South Korea and Taiwan have transformed into liberal democratic states with free market economic systems (albeit South Korea came in later than Taiwan) yet more married women chose to become housewives in South Korea than in Taiwan. Moreover, the labor participation of Taiwanese women does not follow the “M curve” unlike the case of South Korea.

One of the strengths of the book lies in the applicability of its analysis to policy formulations especially in addressing the current issues and problems facing the East Asian region (chapter nine). These include declining birth rate, ageing, and shrinking labor force. For Taiwan to address its declining birthrate and shrinking labor force, the author proposes that it may be best to utilize the labor of senior citizens, whereas for Japan and

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South Korea, encouraging women to participate in the labor force by expanding their employment opportunities might be a more feasible option (285). Considering the sociocultural norms in each society, such policy options may perhaps be more sustainable solutions to initially augment the labor force requirement as against the massive labor migration option discussed by Vogt (2007), among others.

The last chapter of the book offers a comprehensive synthesis on the findings and assertions about the multiplicity of models of patriarchy in East Asia that cannot be explained by Confucian influence or even political and economic systems alone. Patriarchy, Sechiyama argues, should be treated as an independent variable that serves as one of the catalysts of gender relations and gender-role allocation particularly in East Asian societies.

Sechiyama opines that setting aside the discussion about men and putting primary emphasis on housewives are validated because “the man’s main role in the family has almost always been that of the breadwinner, the member the others rely on to earn a living” (28). I disagree. The focus should be on the power relations between the subject of subordination (commonly women) and the source of domination (men) so as to cast a wider perspective and better understanding of patriarchy. Treating the patriarch as a static concept in the power relations within the household posits a dangerous tendency to silence many voices, denying diversity of identities and experiences among men in societies. Analysis should not be restricted to the ideological and representational hegemony of the elite male breadwinner. Roberson and Suzuki (2003) and their cohorts have compiled critical essays about the politics of multiplicity of Japanese masculinities. Such should be excellent complementary readings to this work.

Nonetheless, Sechiyama’s analysis—which is based on voluminous statistical data and a wide array of documents compiled through archival research—as well as his proposed theoretical framework, is an outstanding contribution to the discourse on patriarchy in East Asia.

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**Alleson D. VILLOTA II**  
University of the Philippines Diliman



Poetry

# Hanoi October

Thomas CHAVES

My piano lies moot,  
mugged from the deadweight.

There is no escape.

The felt pads are clogged,  
water-logged as the wall  
and floor that can trip  
to a final call.

The keys play  
to disembodied grunts, a  
danse macabre or a trauermarsch  
if at all and all the way.

What does one  
do in such a flogged estate,  
the sodden song to traffic dead  
air? Why even touch is damp  
the skin a sump of fetid sweat,  
the breath the

thirteenth labor. Mush  
rooms brew to burnish  
rot and sludge in the mad under-  
story of the wearying season,  
where only plot is thick and  
thud without reprieve, not  
even character can live to hell  
and back and tell, until end-

November when the cold jolts  
like solid thunderbolts in the  
bone and I begin to inch sky-  
ward and rise to sing again.

## Hacienda Haiku

Pauline Mari HERNANDO

Bitter-sweet estate  
Sugar sacks for seven corpse  
Scarred and penned in debt.

## Bali, Indonesia

Max LANE

Green, deep green  
Chlorophyll blinds the eyes keen  
Black earth, brown aches  
Sticky mud between toes cakes.

Tears irrigate the picture  
painted under the labouring harvest's stricture  
Paddy, palms, coconuts, frangipanis  
Creations of peasant hands canny.

Rice sold and eaten  
Suffices to keep deep want beaten  
But for the future there are no savings  
School, culture, dignity unsatisfied cravings.

Green beauty massages the soul  
A rested spirit is the tourist's dole.  
The holy dollar has bought the view  
Aching fingers sculpt paradise for the few.

*Melbourne, 2010*

## To a Filipina in a Peony Garden

Jose Duke BAGULAYA

Lovely are the peonies  
In Luoyang's garden:  
Colors of red, white and yellow.  
But, my love, when you walk around them,  
Chinese eyes, like butterflies,  
Move and land on you.

## Ngadto Hin Filipina Ha Hardin Han Mga Peony

Jose Duke BAGULAYA

Maganyag an mga bukad nga peony  
Ha hardin han Luoyang:  
May pula, may busag, may dulaw.  
Pero, hinigugma ko, kon nalabay ka na ha ira ligid,  
An siplat han mga Tsino in mga alibangbang  
Nga nagkakabalhin paghapon ha imo.

# Manifesto

Kyoto University Campaign for Freedom and Peace<sup>1</sup>

War begins in the name of defence  
War rewards the weapons industry  
War quickly becomes uncontrollable

War is easier to start than to end  
War wounds not only soldiers but also the elderly and children  
War cuts not only the body but leaves scars deep inside the heart

The mind is not an object to be manipulated  
Life is not a pawn to be played

The sea is not to be lost amid military bases  
The sky is not to be erased by fighter planes

We would rather live in a country that is proud of its wisdom  
than in a country that thinks shedding blood is the contribution

Scholarship is not a weapon of war  
Scholarship is not a tool of business  
Scholarship is not a servant of power

To create  
To protect  
A place to live  
The freedom to think

We will strike against this conceited power

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<sup>1</sup> This poem was published <http://www.kyotounivfreedom.com/manifesto/en/>.

## About the Contributors

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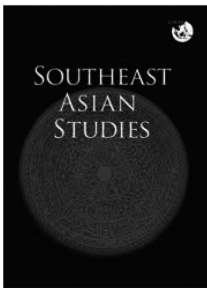
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