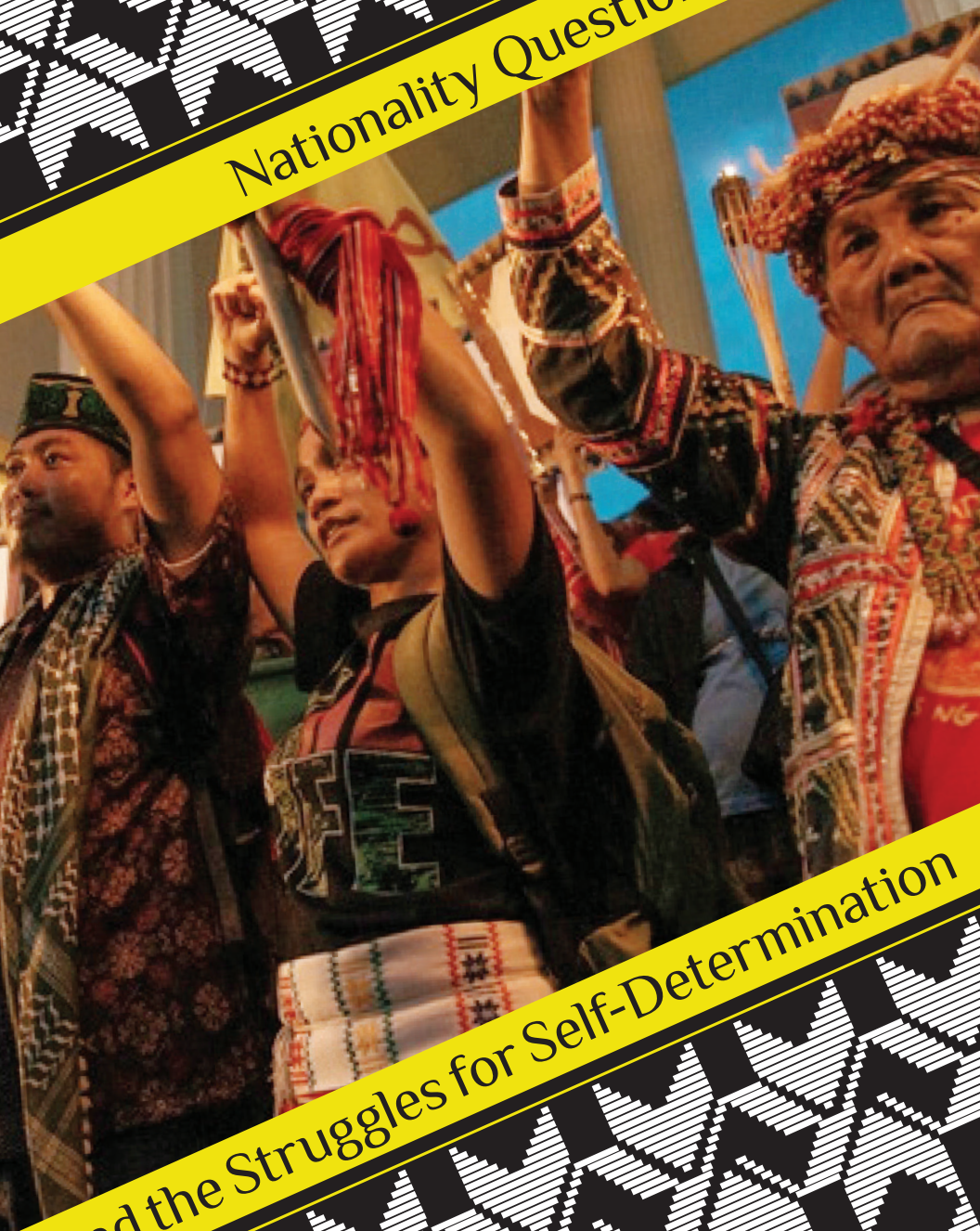




Nationality Question



and the Struggles for Self-Determination

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| The Philippine Revolution and the Nationality Question | 1 |
| The Lumad and Moro Peoples Struggles for Self-Determination | 27 |
| On Self-determination & Liberation | 55 |
| On the National Question | 67 |



INTRODUCTION

This compendium of articles on the nationality question and the struggles for self-determination of the national minorities of the Philippines – the Moro and Indigenous Peoples – is a special educational publication of the SANDUGO Movement of Moro and Indigenous Peoples for Self-Determination.

The articles provide the framework of the continuing historical struggles of the national minorities against foreign colonialism, imperialism and national oppression and for their right to self-determination.

THE PHILIPPINE REVOLUTION AND THE NATIONALITY QUESTION

Prof. Jose Maria Sison

Chairman, International Network for Philippine Studies
February 15, 1996

May I convey warmest greetings of solidarity to all the participants in the International Seminar on the Nationality Question. I am deeply pleased and honored to be invited as one of the lecturers. And I am thankful to the All India People's Resistance Forum for the invitation.

I regret that for an unavoidable reason I cannot attend the seminar. However, I am contributing a paper about the Philippine revolution and the nationality question.

The nationality question can be dealt with only in historical terms. It involves correctly relating the political, socioeconomic and cultural aspects of nationality as well as the whole national formation, its parts and the world. In its origination and development, Philippine or Filipino nationality is first of all a political concept that has arisen and developed from the necessity of uniting and activating the entire people of various social conditions and cultural traits in the anti-colonial and then the anti-imperialist struggles for national independence and democracy.

To this day, the Marxist-Leninist teachings on the nationality question are our best guide. There is yet no experience more advanced than that of Lenin, Stalin and Mao in successfully dealing with the nationality question in the course of overthrowing the counterrevolutionary state and establishing and building socialism. It is to the credit of all the great Marxist-Leninist builders of socialism that it took the modern revisionists a considerable period of time and effort both in the social-imperialist center and in its neocolonies to completely destroy the national formations under proletarian class dictatorship and to cast away the bonds of proletarian internationalism.

1. THE PHILIPPINE REVOLUTION OF 1896 AND FILIPINO NATIONALITY

The Philippine revolution of 1896, whose centennial the Filipino people are celebrating this year, had the distinction of being the first bourgeois democratic revolution to overthrow a Western colonial power in Asia. It was guided by the bourgeois liberal ideology. It was for national liberation against Spanish colonial domination and racial oppression. It was for democracy not only in terms of civil and political liberties for individuals, associations and the people but also in terms of being opposed to the feudal oppression inflicted on the people, chiefly by the Spanish religious corporations, the biggest landlords in the country then.

As a concept and historical force, Filipino nationality was originally the product of the revolutionary movement of the people led by the revolutionary organization Katipunan. Previously, the Spanish colonialists referred to their colonial native subjects as indios or indigenes and to the Philippine-born Spaniards as Filipinos. It was in a manifesto that the revolutionaries categorically appropriated the term Filipino to refer to the entire colonized people of various ethnolinguistic communities in the struggle for national liberation. Previously, the Katipunan leaders and common people often referred to

themselves as Tagalog, Malay, or lahing kayumanggi (brown race) and the reformists in the propaganda movement in Spain as indios bravos (noble indios).

Filipino nationality was first of all a political-revolutionary term and at the same time it all-roundedly carried political, socioeconomic and cultural significance and content. It denoted the revolutionary will and movement of the people to establish the first nation-state encompassing the entire archipelago. It was essentially in the manifestos and decrees of the Katipunan and the Philippine revolutionary government, in the proclamation of Philippine independence on June 12, 1898 and in the Philippine Constitution of 1899.

The Philippine Revolution of 1896, which lofted the concept of Filipino nationality, was the product of a long series of armed uprisings of the people in various localities through more than 300 years of Spanish colonial rule. More than 200 uprisings had taken place, at first sporadically and then increasing in scale, intensity and duration. The Spanish colonialists could continue their colonial rule for as long as there was yet no national consciousness and no nationwide revolutionary mass movement to wage the anti-colonial resistance. It was in the 19th century, especially within its last three decades, that Filipino national consciousness spread throughout the archipelago.

National consciousness arose in response to the intensification of colonial, feudal and racial oppression. The people started to realize that they must rise up as a new nation in armed revolution in order to liberate themselves from the foreign oppressors. National sentiment and aspirations became defined in terms of achieving national independence from Spanish colonialism and establishing a modern nation-state. This was in repudiation of the reformist demand in the Propaganda Movement for the Philippines to become a regular province of Spain in order to enable the native people in the archipelago to acquire rights and duties under the 1812 liberal Cadiz Constitution of Spain.

In the course of the revolutionary struggle against Spanish colonialism from 1896 to 1898 and then against US imperialism from 1899 onward, the Filipinos of the Malay race, the mestizos (with Chinese and Spanish blood) and non-Malay ethnic communities united and participated in the struggle for national liberation and democracy. They were bound by socioeconomic relations, by a lingua franca and growing mutual respect for each other in every region and by a long-running resentment over and resistance to colonial impositions.

Upon the coming of Spanish colonialism, the Malay people, who according to anthropologists, had been in the Philippines around 500 BC with an iron age culture, comprised more than 85 percent of the one million population and inhabited the seacoasts and banks of big rivers. Generally, they had small scale communities of the patriarchal slave form of society. They belonged to more than 100 ethnolinguistic communities but the overwhelming majority of them belonged to the biggest eight ethnolinguistic communities: Ilocano, Pangasinan, Kapampangan, Tagalog, Bisaya, Ilonggo, Waray and Maguindanao.

It possible for the Spanish colonialists to conquer by armed force and convert some communities into Christianity and then conscript troops from one locality in order to further carry out the conquest and conversion of another locality from the late 16th century onward because the native people were characteristically divided into so many independent small societies and scores of ethnolinguistic communities.

The highest sociopolitical formation attained in the archipelago before the coming of the Spaniards were the Islamic sultanates in southwestern Mindanao whose population then comprised around 4 percent of the population of the entire Philippine archipelago. These sultanates had been established since at least the 15th century. They carried the elements of slave and feudal societies and were the most conscious and best organized to engage in prolonged armed resistance against the Spanish conquest. The Spaniards derisively called them moros

in recollection of the Catholic *reconquista* against the Moors in the Spanish peninsula and for a long time systematically roused the Christianized population against them.

The Spaniards also had great difficulties in extending their rule to the upland hill tribes which comprised some 10 percent of the population. They were in the main descendants of pre-Malay inhabitants (the so-called Austronesians with a neolithic culture) who had started to be in the archipelago since at least 5000 BC. Like the Moros of southwestern Mindanao, the Igorot tribes (currently presumed to have been in the archipelago since the first Christian millennium) continuously resisted attempts of the Spaniards to occupy the Cordilleras in Northern Luzon and to open gold mines there until the last quarter of the 19th century.

Also, the Spaniards simply did not have enough troops and priests to go into the areas of the Lumads in Mindanao and found no necessity to conquer and proselytize among the nomadic forest-based and food-gathering aborigines, the Negritos, who comprised less than one percent of the population. The Negritos or Aetas are the most probable earliest people in the Philippines. Archaeological evidence shows that the islands were inhabited by people since 22,500 BC. But human fossils and associated artifacts of the Tabon cave man do not indicate the racial stock.

Long before the coming of Spanish colonialism, the people in the Philippine archipelago had commercial and cultural connections with the rest of the Malay people, who were earlier and more heavily influenced by Hindu and Arab culture, and with the Arab, Indochinese and Chinese traders. Islamic proselytization had been extended from southwestern Mindanao to the Visayas and Luzon only a few decades before the coming of the Spanish colonialists. Trade with the Chinese became so brisk that a few of them stayed on as permanent residents, very often intermarrying with the native women.

The Spanish colonialists encouraged the residence of Chinese traders and artisans. They were most interested in the trade of goods between Mexico and China via the galleon trade via the Manila-Acapulco route long before the opening of the Suez Canal in 1815. But almost every 30 years on the average they roused the native population to engage in racial pogroms against the Chinese in the environs of the walled city of Manila.

To achieve their oppressive and exploitative purposes, the Spanish colonialists imposed a centralized system of administration on the colonized people and laid out a network of Spanish lay administrators and priests to control them. In more than 300 years of colonial rule, Spain developed a colonial and feudal society in the Philippines. The owners of the best and biggest estates were the religious corporations and the colonial bureaucrats, the religious corporations and the foreign merchant companies dominated commerce, especially foreign trade.

At the end of Spanish colonial rule, the social structure of the native population was as follows: the top class were the landlords who concentrated on the production of staple crops; the intermediate strata, which included the small entrepreneurs, master craftsmen, merchants and the few professionals; and the basic exploited classes, which included a huge peasant class comprising more than 90 percent and a working class comprising no more than 5 percent and consisting of workers in transport, printing, wood, tobacco, food processing and the like.

2. FILIPINO NATIONALITY UNDER US IMPERIALISM

The bourgeois-democratic revolution of the old type led by the liberal bourgeoisie in alliance with the native landlords against the Spanish colonialists and religious landlords was eventually frustrated by US imperialism. The US prevailed in the Filipino-American war from 1899 to 1902 by using its military

superiority, directly and indirectly causing the death of 10 percent of the seven million Filipino people, and by issuing the proclamation of “benevolent assimilation” which promised autonomy and liberal reforms in order to coopt the dominant bourgeois liberal ideas in the revolutionary leadership and to split the revolutionary movement.

The main forces of the Philippine revolutionary army were broken in 1902. But armed resistance continued or reemerged in substantial parts of Luzon and the Visayas until 1910. When this dwindled, the US military forces increasingly paid attention to the Moro provinces. The Moro people fought heroically but were completely defeated in 1916 and brought under US colonial administration.

The US imposed its own colonial rule on the Philippines, banned all expressions of Filipino patriotism and promoted a blatantly counterrevolutionary political party of native puppets that espoused assimilation into the U.S. federal state. Due to the people's irrepressible resistance and demands for national independence, however, the US colonial regime would subsequently allow the formation of a political party among another set of puppet politicians who grabbed the slogan of “absolute, immediate and complete independence” but who in fact pushed the reformist line of begging for the grant of national independence by the colonial master in order to avert armed revolution.

The revolutionary concept of national independence along the bourgeois liberal line in 1896 was at first suppressed, then reinterpreted and divorced from the requisite of armed revolution and ultimately became subordinated to a pro-imperialist kind of bourgeois liberalism, masking the power of US monopoly capitalism. The prevailing framework was for the US to teach “democracy” to the Filipino people and train them in self-rule before nominal independence was to be granted to the US-trained puppet politicians, bureaucrats and professionals. The US cleverly used the public school system and the Catholic and Protestant missionaries to bring the people in the remotest areas

under US colonial administration and counter the influence of the Philippine revolution.

A pro-imperialist bourgeois-liberal concept of Filipino nationality prevailed under US colonialism as the US developed a semi-feudal type of society. The US promoted the more efficient production of certain agricultural crops for export, opened mines and introduced US companies in the manufacture of certain products for domestic consumption. It improved the system of transport and communications. It expanded and encouraged the public and private educational system in correspondence with the expanded requirements of the bureaucracy and business under modern imperialism. Unlike old-type colonialism, which engaged in sheer plunder to serve the primitive accumulation of capital in the West, foreign monopoly capitalism delivered surplus goods and capital from abroad in order to extract maximum profit from the colony.

The social structure among the people changed. The comprador big bourgeoisie among the natives and permanent residents, including the Spanish and Chinese descendants of the colonial ruling class, arose as the most wealthy and powerful basic exploiting class and acted as the principal financial and commercial agent of the foreign monopoly capitalists. At the same time, the landlord class was retained and remained as the more widespread basic exploiting class. The intermediate social strata expanded and included the national bourgeoisie limited to light manufacturing of goods for domestic consumption and the urban petty bourgeoisie. Among the basic exploited classes, the working class expanded but the peasantry remained as the most numerous exploited class.

Inspired by the national consciousness as Filipinos, the people of various ethnolinguistic communities, religions and races, persevered in various forms of struggle for national independence. The struggle for national independence against imperialism favored and forged a revolutionary sense of national unity. From decade to decade under US colonial rule, the most

progressive of the workers and peasant organizations carried the political demand for national independence in combination with their social and economic class demands. They launched strikes and other forms of mass actions. There were outbreaks of armed resistance in every decade.

When organized for the first time under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism in 1930, the Communist Party of the Philippines made the call for national independence but simplistically focused on the contradiction between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. It neither stressed sufficiently the need to gain genuine national independence nor succeeded in making a profound analysis of Philippine society and revolution. Nonetheless, in a few months' time, it was suppressed. When it was legalized in 1937 and it merged with the Socialist Party in 1938, it accepted the US-approved Philippine Constitution of 1935 and the Commonwealth government as the transition form of government towards the US grant of independence in 1946, as provided for by the US Tydings-McDuffie Law of 1935.

Among the Filipino communists, there was yet no complete clarity about all the basic requirements of the new-democratic revolution both in theory and in practice. However, in opposition to the Japanese invasion and occupation of the Philippines in World War II, the merger party of communists and socialists were able to take the political lead against imperialist Japan in the Central Luzon region, waged armed struggle and carried out land reform. As a result of the armed struggle against the Japanese invaders, the revolutionary forces became strong enough to be considered by US imperialism and the local reactionaries as the principal threat to them. And yet the merger party never withdrew its reformist support for the US grant of independence and readily adopted the slogan of "peace and democracy" after World War II.

In the course of the patriotic armed resistance during World War II, the Filipinos of various ethnolinguistic communities, including the aboriginal Aeta clans and hill tribes of the

Itnegs, Igorots, Mangyans, Lumads and the like, participated actively and fiercely in the guerrilla warfare against the Japanese collaborators. The Japanese grant of nominal independence to the Philippines ahead of the US version failed to deceive the people and only incited them to fiercer national resistance.

As soon as the US imperialists returned to the Philippines within the last year of World War II in the Pacific, they carried out a policy of using their troops and their puppets to suppress the armed revolutionary movement, reconcile the pro-US and pro-Japanese reactionaries, dismantle the provisional provincial and municipal governments proclaimed in Central Luzon by the revolutionary movement and undo the land reform carried out there by the revolutionaries during the war. As if blind to the determination of the US and local reactionaries to wipe out the revolutionary movement, the old merger party of communists and socialists decided to convert the People's Army against Japan (Hukbalahap) into a veterans' association and a legal peasant association to engage solely or mainly in parliamentary struggle.

In the aftermath of the 3-year Japanese occupation of the Philippines in World War II, the US granted nominal independence to the Philippines on July 4, 1946 and thereby shifted from direct colonial to indirect semi-colonial rule over the Philippines. Responsibility for administration was turned over to the representatives of the local exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords. At that time, the Philippine population had risen to 17 million, despite the loss of one million Filipino lives in World War II.

The US had no choice but to grant nominal independence in 1946 not only because it was bound by the Tydings-McDuffie Law and the long historical train of popular demand for national independence but also because it wanted to head off the armed revolutionary movement for national liberation. This became more assertive and militant after the imperialists and local reactionaries frustrated the reformist and revisionist line.

They expelled from Congress the elected communist and progressive noncommunist representatives who had run for office under the banner of the Democratic Alliance in 1946. A patriotic war for national liberation and democracy, led by the merger party of communists and socialists, ensued until the main revolutionary forces were defeated in the early '50s.

In granting sham national independence, the US retained its all-round economic, political, military and cultural power over the Philippines. It preserved and expanded the property rights of US corporations and citizens in the Philippines; it kept its military bases; it made the armed forces of the neocolonial state dependent on the Pentagon; it continued to manipulate the reactionary parties and advise and direct the bureaucracy; and in so many ways it superimposed cultural imperialism on the Philippines. The US kept the Philippines in neocolonial subordination not only in the framework of bilateral relations but also in the framework of regional and global relations under the hegemony of US imperialism.

Among the colonies in Asia, the Philippines was the first to be granted nominal independence by a Western colonial power after World War II. For 25 years the US touted the Philippines as the show window of democracy until 1972 when martial rule was imposed on the Filipino people upon the instigation of the US. Nonetheless, the Philippines continued to be the model of neocolonial subservience to foreign monopoly capitalism.

3. THE NEW-DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION AND FILIPINO NATIONALITY

Since the '60s, the proletarian revolutionaries responsible for reestablishing the CPP on the theoretical foundation of Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought have clarified as never before the character of Philippine society as semi-colonial and semi-feudal, the character of the Philippine revolution as

national-democratic of the new type, the motive forces of the revolution such as the proletariat, the peasantry and other patriotic and progressive strata of Philippine society, the targets of the revolution such as the comprador big bourgeoisie and the landlord class, the national-democratic and socialist stages of the revolution, the current national-democratic tasks and the socialist perspective of the Philippine revolution.

The ongoing national-democratic revolution in the Philippines is a resumption of the old democratic revolution in the sense that it struggles for national liberation and democracy in the entire Philippines. But the struggle is at a new and higher level. The class leadership no longer belongs to the bourgeoisie or any of its stratum but to the working class whose advanced detachment, the Communist Party of the Philippines, follows the ideological line of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism and pursues the general line of new-democratic revolution through protracted people's war. In the era of modern imperialism and proletarian revolution, it is only under the class leadership of the proletariat that the struggle for national liberation can be completed and that the struggle for land reform can be realized as the main substance of democracy.

At this time, the class proportions in the structure in Philippine semi-colonial and semi-feudal society have become as follows: the basic exploiting classes of big compradors and landlords are a mere fraction of one percent, the intermediate stratum of the national bourgeoisie is some one percent and that the urban petty-bourgeoisie is 6 to 8 percent and the basic exploited classes of workers and peasants are 14 percent and 76 percent, respectively. This class structure has basically persisted from 1968 when the Philippine population was still 36 million to the present when the population is already 71million, especially because of the deterioration of the socioeconomic conditions during the Marcos and post-Marcos regimes.

The CPP adheres to the line that the big comprador-landlord state must be overthrown through armed revolution and replaced by a people's democratic state. Accordingly, the character of

Filipino nationality must change politically, socially and culturally. The CPP criticizes and repudiates the counterrevolutionary line of the imperialists and the local exploiting classes that the bourgeois concepts of nation-state and Filipino nationality are unchanging and irreplaceable, that these permanently transcend, gloss over or reconcile exploiting and exploited classes and that these are expressible only in abstract terms such as individuals, associations and the state, with constitutional rights and duties unrelated to imperialism and the exploiting classes.

The CPP and the revolutionary movement of the Filipino people are fighting for the overthrow of the existing counterrevolutionary state which is the joint class dictatorship of the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class and for the establishment of a people's democratic state under the leadership of the working class. The character and concrete content of Filipino nationality under the people's democratic state are radically different from those under the big comprador-landlord state.

It is of crucial importance to know the differences because there are reformists and revisionists who masquerade as Marxist-Leninists and who cannot think of nationality beyond the confines of the big comprador-landlord state because in the first place they do not wish to overthrow such a state and do not recognize at all the need to establish the people's democratic state. Every time there is resistance to the existing counterrevolutionary state, they denounce this automatically as an attack on national unity which is in fact the social system ruled by the exploiting classes.

The CPP's Program for a People's Democratic Revolution clearly defines what constitutes the Filipino nation and the Filipino people, as including all the patriotic and progressive classes and strata and excluding the comprador big bourgeoisie and landlord class whose loyalty is to foreign monopoly capitalism and to themselves.

In waging the national-democratic revolution through a protracted people's war, the CPP is building the people's army as the main

component of democratic state power and is building the local organs of democratic political power among the people. It is building a new state even while the big comprador-landlord state is still well-entrenched in the cities. Since 1972, the building of revolutionary state power has been guided by the Rules for Establishing the People's Democratic Government.

There are now thousands of local organs of political power, especially at the village and municipal levels. At levels higher than those at which organs of political power have not yet been organized, the CPP Central Committee is responsible for governmental leadership. The National Democratic Front has the task of assisting in the formation of the organs of political power and has also been authorized to engage in diplomatic and other international relations.

The CPP considers the political revolution as the most important prerequisite to the making of the people's democratic state and the new Filipino nationality. In connection with the political revolution, which involves the overthrow of the old counterrevolutionary state and the establishment of the new revolutionary state, the socioeconomic and cultural revolutions are carried out. The political, socioeconomic and cultural aspects of people's democratic revolution result in the further revolutionary development of the character and content of Filipino nationality.

In the social revolution, the relations of production are so arranged that foreign monopoly capitalism and the local exploiting classes are overthrown and cease to exploit the working people and that the forces of production are liberated. The land problem is solved and national industrialization is carried out. The nationalization of the industrial means of production, sources of raw materials and major lines of distribution, land reform and cooperativization of agriculture and the temporary concessions to small and medium producers are done to facilitate and not to obstruct and delay the socialist transformation of the economy and society.

In the cultural revolution, a national, scientific and mass culture is promoted under the guidance of Marxism-Leninism. The national cultural heritage must be cherished to serve the present. The scientific outlook and education must be propagated to let the nation learn and benefit from the outside and advance materially and spiritually with the rest of the world and must combat imperialism, chauvinism, religious obscurantism, bourgeois decadence and racism. Culture must serve the people, especially the working people.

The national language, which is Manila-based Tagalog, and the literature in this language must be vigorously promoted to replace English as the principal domestic language in the Philippines and the local languages and literature must be respected, cherished and promoted and not to be the target of any chauvinist discrimination. However, English may still remain as the No.1 foreign language of the country for international intercourse.

So far, the reactionaries have used the English language, rather than the officially designated national language, as the principal medium in bureaucratic communications, legislation, judicial proceedings, education, public information and all other fields and as an instrument for the exploiting classes to browbeat and discriminate against the exploited classes.

The revolutionaries have promoted the use of the national language to facilitate nationwide revolutionary communication and understanding in opposition to the absurd primacy of English over the national language within the country. They have demonstrated that the national language is a beautiful language in literature and is a precise language in any kind of discourse.

At the same time, they use and promote whatever is the language of any locality because the point is to arouse, organize and mobilize the people immediately for the new-democratic revolution. So far, in recent times, the imperialists and the local exploiting classes have failed to generate any widescale

communal conflicts from ethnolinguistic, racial, religious or other cultural differences by way of dividing and ruling the people. The people have a high sense of Filipino nationality as a consequence of the old-democratic revolution, the continuing opposition to foreign domination be it old colonial or modern imperialist and, of course, the new-democratic revolution.

Discrimination due to ethnolinguistic differences is subdued by the development of social, political, economic and cultural relations and by the now widespread acceptance of the national language in addition to the much earlier acceptance of a lingua franca on a regional or provincial scale.

Malay chauvinism, usually against Negritos and the Chinese is subdued by a number of factors. The Negritos stand up for their rights and participate in the revolutionary movement against the oppressors and exploiters. Some Chinese have adopted Filipino nationality in an all-round sense, whether or not they retain their distinctive cultural traits. Other Chinese have legally opted for citizenship in the People's Republic of China since the latter half of the '70s. The Chinese have their own cultural and commercial associations and tend to cluster in residential and commercial areas in various cities.

Christian chauvinism is usually directed against the Muslims and the animists who are derided as heathens. But it is counteracted by the forces of the national-democratic revolution movement and by the people of various religious beliefs who uphold the freedom of belief. They have so far frustrated every major attempt of the reactionaries to rouse Christian chauvinism against the Moros. But the imperialists and their local agents persist in trying to build political parties and movements based on religion and directed against the new-democratic revolution.

In principle, policy and concrete practice, the CPP has exerted the utmost effort to put into full play in the new-democratic revolution the unity and militant participation of the Filipino people with diverse customs, race, languages, religious affiliation and other

cultural traits. In more than 27 years of revolutionary struggle since its reestablishment on December 26, 1968, the CPP has surpassed all previous revolutionary and patriotic movements in going to the remotest areas and going deep among the native inhabitants and the poor settlers there.

The reasons are obvious. The people there are the most oppressed, exploited and neglected by the counterrevolutionary state and are exceedingly interested in the new democratic revolution. Even as they are being rapidly dispossessed of land and other natural resources by the foreign monopoly capitalists and the local exploiting classes, they still inhabit an extensive and rough terrain suitable for guerrilla warfare in the protracted people's war. They have valiantly fought against the enemy and withstood the most brutal campaigns of suppression and genocide, including bombardments, arson and forced mass evacuations.

The CPP and the revolutionary movement unite the native inhabitants and the poor settlers against the foreign and domestic agrocorporations, the bureaucratic and military landgrabbers and speculators, the logging firms, the big ranchers, the mining firms and other types of "development" aggressors who grab the land and despoil the environment. The right of the native inhabitants to their ancestral land is upheld and defended. At the same time, the poor settlers who have come to the hinterland and stayed for generations are accommodated.

4. THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION AMONG THE MINORITIES

The CPP and the revolutionary movement recognize the right to self-determination of the national minorities, including the right to secede from an oppressive state and the right to autonomy under a non-oppressive state. The principle of self-determination is an inalienable right. The right is always there to be invoked

and exercised whenever there is the need to struggle against oppression, to promote the legitimate interest of a community and to demand and undertake affirmative action.

But the right cannot be justly invoked nor exercised in order to deliver a community to the imperialists and the counter-revolutionaries or to serve micro-chauvinism, ethnocentrism, racism, counterrevolutionary localism, cultural nationalism, religious and other cultural prejudice against the common interest of the Filipino nation. The forces of the national-democratic revolution criticize and repudiate those imperialist and reactionary forces that superimpose cultural nationalism on political and social questions in order to slander and attack the revolutionary movement and prevent the people with various cultural traits to participate in the national-democratic revolution.

In opposition to the revolutionary political concept of Filipino nationality as encompassing all the people in the Philippine archipelago of whatever ethnolinguistic, religious, racial or other cultural affiliation, some ideologues and propagandists of the imperialists and reactionaries try to drum up the notions that only those who have been Christianized, Hispanized or Westernized are Filipinos and that, according to their counterrevolutionary definition, Filipinos are intrinsically chauvinist or colonialist (relative to the upland people and the Moro people) even when promoting the national revolutionary consciousness and unity of the entire Filipino people against the imperialists and their local lackeys.

The objective of the enemies of the national-democratic revolution, in whipping up Filipino chauvinism or some micro-chauvinism against the revolutionary concept and reality of Filipino nationality is to divide the entire people of the Philippines now and in the future and undermine the Philippine revolution. The enemies of the Philippine revolution seek to manipulate the differences in the cultural traits of the people and to disrupt the course of the political, socioeconomic and cultural revolution.

Historically and currently, the imperialists and the local reactionaries have directed and funded the ideologues, publicists and so-called NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) who push the line that ethnicity is beyond the range of communists and the anti-imperialist and class struggles. At the moment, the imperialist-dominated UN is pretending to be concerned about indigenous people. In fact, the imperialists and their agents have been responsible for the most dastardly forms of oppression and exploitation as well dispossession and destruction of the environment at the expense of the indigenous peoples.

The forces of the national-democratic revolution have consistently championed the right to self-determination of all the peoples in various ethnolinguistic communities against the chauvinism and national oppression and exploitation perpetrated by the counterrevolutionary state, the foreign monopolies, the local exploiters, the Catholic church and other dominant institutions. The principle of the revolutionary movement is to rely on the masses everywhere in the Philippines, to respect their cultural characteristics and to put into full play their all-round initiative.

While the necessary number of outside cadres are utilized in order to open any new area of revolutionary work, the unwavering purpose of the CPP and the revolutionary movement is always to let the local masses assume responsibilities in the revolutionary struggle for their own social benefit and to develop revolutionary cadres and organizations among them. In the building of organs of political power of whatever scale, there is always a special regard for the particular characteristics and interests of minorities and for local autonomy and proportionate representation whenever there is a mixture of people with different ethnic characteristics.

In doing revolutionary work among the hill tribes and other upland people, the cadres and forces of the national-democratic revolution do rigorous social investigation, integrate themselves with the local people and their way of life. They show respect for the local customs and beliefs and avoid bureaucratism and roughness in dealing with these. Even in combating superstition,

they use the most persuasive means of education and the good results of appropriate scientific alternatives to put forward the new ideas and practices.

They have respected traditional but benign forms of local leadership, like the council of elders, and have acted as facilitators and guarantors of unity and peace in intertribal relations even as the new mass organizations and organs of political power are established. They have also recruited, trained and transformed the local warriors as people's militia auxiliary to the New People's Army.

There are scores of ethnolinguistic communities or national minorities in the upland. They comprise around 10 percent of the Philippine population (excluding the Moros). They include such communities as those under the generic names of Aetas, Itnegs, Igorots, Mangyans, Lumads and the like.

Revolutionary organizations have arisen among the national minorities, such as the Cordillera People's Democratic Front (CPDF), the Revolutionary Organization of the Lumads, Moro Revolutionary Organization (MORO) and are allied organizations within the National Democratic Front of the Philippines. At the same time, there are legal progressive organizations of national minorities, such as the Cordillera People's Alliance (CPA), the Federation of Indigenous Peoples in the Philippines (KAMP), the Central Luzon Aeta Association (CLAA), the Subanen Union of Lumad Organizations (SULO) and the Tribal Association of Mangyans in Mindoro.

The various ethnolinguistic communities are not known to easily invoke the right to secede for obvious reasons. Their respective population and social economies are small scale. They are interconnected with the existing social system in the country. They have repeatedly joined up with the lowlanders in patriotic armed struggles against foreign oppressors. Their way out of oppression and exploitation is bound up with the new-democratic revolution of the rest of the Filipino people.

So far, only one significant force has arisen from among the ethnolinguistic communities or national minorities to invoke the right to secede. This is the Moro National Front (MNLF). It had its historic distinction of adopting the political concept of Moro nation to encompass some 13 small ethnolinguistic communities in southwestern Mindanao, with the current population of some 3 million and with Islam as the common dominant cultural characteristic. Originally, the MNLF was a petty-bourgeois radical organization trying to combine Moro nationalism, Islam and Marxism. From 1972 to 1976, it waged an armed struggle strong enough at its peak to absorb 30 percent of the combat effectiveness of the reactionary armed forces and was objectively helpful to the new-democratic revolution when the NPA was still germinal in most parts of the Philippines.

The forces of the national-democratic revolution have always supported and encouraged the MNLF and other Moro organizations to act according to the Moro people's right to self-determination, including the right to secede, as a weapon against the counterrevolutionary state, national oppression and Christian chauvinism. It is in the common interest of the Filipino people, including the Moros, that the Moro organizations wage armed struggle, for self-determination.

The CPP and the revolutionary movement have therefore repeatedly offered revolutionary alliance, cooperation and coordination with the MNLF and other Moro organizations and have held in prospect regional autonomy under a nonoppressive unitary or federal state of the future. At the same time, they have taken definite steps to organize the Moro masses and develop cadres among them wherever the MNLF and other Moro organizations are not doing revolutionary work.

The Christians for National Liberation (CNL), which is a major allied organization in the NDF, have been active since the early '70s in counteracting and frustrating every scheme and attempt of the counterrevolutionary state to rouse Christian chauvinism among the Filipino people in general against the Moro nation

in particular. Contrary to the view of Moro micro-chauvinists, the Filipino people in general and the Moro people in particular need each other in the common struggle against foreign monopoly capitalism, domestic feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

Moro chauvinism, which denounces even Filipino revolutionaries as colonialists, needs the puncturing of its arrogance. It circulates the myth that the Moros have never been conquered by any foreign power and are different from and superior to the rest of the Filipino people. While it is true that the Moros have retained Islam as the dominant religion among them, it is not true that they have never been conquered.

The heroic prolonged resistance of Sultan Kudarat was subdued in the 17th century by the Spanish colonialists. Equipped with iron-side gunboats, the Spaniards forced the sultanate of Sulu to agree to the deployment of Spanish garrisons in the Sulu archipelago in the middle of the 19th century. The US imperialists subjugated all the Islamic sultanates by force of arms after the defeat of the forces of the old democratic revolution in Luzon and Visayas. Thus, the Moro people were put under US colonial rule and subsequently under the existing counterrevolutionary state.

From the viewpoint of the national-democratic revolution, the MNLF has contradictory characteristics. Even if led by petty-bourgeois radicals who use nationalism and Islam as their rallying points, it is progressive in fighting for self-determination against a counterrevolutionary state. But it is also reactionary because it has a negative attitude towards the new-democratic revolution of the entire Filipino people and does not have any clear democratic program for the benefit of the Moro people. It has nothing to say against the Moro big bureaucrats, big compradors and landlords conniving with the existing counterrevolutionary state.

The MNLF leadership has verbally attacked the forces of the national-democratic revolution as those of what it defines as Filipino colonialism. And yet it has repeatedly gone into

accommodations with the counterrevolutionary Philippine state. In 1976, it signed with the Marcos regime the Tripoli Agreement, whose first provision requires the MNLF to submit itself to the principle that the Moro problem be solved within the framework of Philippine "sovereignty and territorial integrity". It chose to capitulate in principle to the Marcos fascist regime at a time that the Filipino people, including the Moro people were under extreme oppression by that regime.

The MNLF leadership has also gone into accommodations with the succeeding Aquino and Ramos regimes. It entered into a truce agreement with the Aquino regime and renewed this with the Ramos regime. It has solicited from both the privilege of ruling the whole of Mindanao in utter contempt of demographic facts. The 1990 population of the Moro nation is 2.6 million, only 4.3 percent of the total Philippine population of 71 million and only about 19 percent of the entire Mindanao population of 13.9 million.

Even as it has gone into peace negotiations and agreements with the counterrevolutionary state, the top leadership of the MNLF has repeatedly refused to negotiate and enter into alliance, cooperation and coordination with the forces of the national-democratic revolution. On several occasions, it has even issued hostile statements to the effect that the forces of the national-democratic revolution are even worse as an enemy than the counterrevolutionary state.

The forces of the national-democratic revolution have avoided making any hostile statement towards the MNLF. They have consistently supported the Moro people's struggle for self-determination, have repeatedly urged the MNLF and other Moro organizations to wage revolutionary armed struggle against the oppressive state and have exerted efforts to cooperate with the MNLF at any level. However, they are aware of the anticommunist influence exercised on the MNLF by its supporters among the oil-producing Islamic countries.

When the new-democratic revolution wins in the Philippines, it is highly probable that the imperialists and the reactionaries abroad will utilize the pro-imperialist and reactionary forces all over Mindanao and in particular in the Moro areas against the people's democratic state. It is therefore absolutely necessary for the forces of the national-democratic revolution to arouse, organize and mobilize the Moro people in concert with the rest of the Filipino people and develop truly revolutionary forces and cadres among the Moro people.

5.CONCLUDING REMARKS

After the basic completion of the new-democratic revolution through the nationwide armed overthrow of the big comprador-landlord state, it becomes necessary and possible to proclaim the people's democratic state and begin the socialist revolution even as bourgeois-democratic reforms are still undertaken in the transition.

Under these conditions, the people of various nationalities, ethnolinguistic communities, religious affiliation and other cultural traits, will become united in a revolutionary modern nation-state of a higher type than the one envisioned and struggled for in the Revolution of 1896. Filipino nationality or citizenship in the people's democratic state means national liberation from imperialism, freedom from class exploitation and the enjoyment of individual and collective rights in the political, social, economic and cultural spheres.

The socialist revolution will strengthen the national cohesion and integration of the entire Filipino people. The unity of the international proletariat and the cooperation of socialist countries under the principle of proletarian internationalism will also strengthen the entire nation against chauvinism at any level in the country and against imperialism from without.

The defeat of the imperialists and the local exploiting classes will certainly drive these evil forces to multiply their resistance to the revolution, in ways more clever than before, when the opportunities for a violent return to power are not immediately available. They will use sugarcoated bullets. As already demonstrated by the experience in socialist countries, where capitalism has been restored through a gradual process of peaceful evolution, revisionism can arise and prevail if unchecked by proletarian revolutionary vigilance and militancy despite all socialist achievements.

The most clever counterrevolutionaries will attempt to undermine the proletarian ruling party, the state, economy and the whole of society by misrepresenting revisionist ideas as proletarian, spreading cynicism against socialism and the masses and ultimately claiming that the working class has accomplished its historic mission or that the class struggle is dying out and all that needs to be done is to develop the forces of production. The revision of the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism is carried out and the policies are adopted to dissolve socialism.

When socialism and proletarian internationalism are lost in a country, the most reactionary centrifugal forces reemerge in society. The imperialists and their agents now misrepresent the preceding period of revisionism and capitalist restoration as a period of socialism and blame socialism for the reemergence of unbridled bourgeois nationalism, ethnocentrism, racism and religious obscurantism. But they cannot really conceal the culpability of the bureaucrat monopoly capitalists as well as their own culpability for the ever worsening national disorder and disintegration in the former revisionist-ruled countries. The crisis of overproduction in the world capitalist system is accelerated by the competitive use of high technology and the most abusive methods of finance capitalism. It is wreaking unprecedented havoc in the industrial capitalist countries and more so in the neocolonial client-states. It is generating social turmoil and armed warfare and is pushing the exploiting classes to use nationalism, ethnocentrism, religious fundamentalism and fascism as their tools of political rivalry and mass deception.

Nevertheless, economic crisis and war create the conditions favorable to the revolution.

A new round of revolutionary struggle is bound to develop under the initiative and leadership of the proletariat against imperialism and the local reactionaries. When the forces of national liberation and socialism resurge, they shall be led by the revolutionary parties of the proletariat that are guided by Marxism-Leninism-Maoism because these are at a vantage point to comprehend the previous experience of socialism, the betrayal of modern revisionism and the current world disorder and are in the best position to further develop in theory and practice, under the new global conditions, the requirements for national and social liberation at a new and higher level, the current national-democratic tasks and the socialist perspective of the Philippine revolution.

THE LUMAD AND MORO PEOPLES STRUGGLES FOR SELF-DETERMINATION

NATIONAL MINORITIES OF MINDANAO AND THEIR STRUGGLE FOR SELF-DETERMINATION AND NATIONAL LIBERATION: A QUESTION & ANSWER BRIEFER

*Briefer for West Papua Study Conference on Self-Determination,
March 26-27, 2017, Davao City, 24 March 2017 version*

PASAKA, Suara Bangsa Moro, Kalumaran, AM Ragragio and MJ
Paluga (Department of Social Sciences, CHSS, University of the
Philippines Mindanao)

COMPONENTS

- 1.0 Commonalities and Differences of Moro and Lumad Peoples
- 2.0 Historical Highlights from the Moro and Lumad Peoples' Resistance
- 3.0 Learning-Points from Mindanao Peoples' Resistance

1.0 COMMONALITIES AND DIFFERENCES OF MORO AND LUMAD PEOPLES

In this briefer, we define the two central terms, 'Moro' and 'Lumad', as the following:

Moro. Originally a derogatory term from the Spanish, and adapted by the Americans, this term has been reclaimed to become the self-ascription of Islamized ethnic groups in the Philippines. The different Moro groups in Mindanao are the Maguindanao, Iranun, Maranao, Sangir, Kalagan, Tausug, Yakan, Samal, Badjao, and Jama Mapun.

Lumad. A Cebuano-Bisaya term meaning “native” or “locally derived”, the term Lumad began to be used to pertain to various non-Bisaya, non-Muslim, and (traditionally) non-Christian ethnic groups in Mindanao. The term began to be used in the 1980s, when human rights and environmental issues affecting these various groups became more public, necessitating the conception of a word that could refer to a collective term for 18 or more ethnolinguistic groups sharing the same political and economic challenge as minoritized and marginalized indigenous groups.

1.1 What are the key economic and political features of Moro and Lumad societies just before the start of the colonial period in the 16th century (some resilient patterns of which might still be present up to the present)?

Although there are exceptions to this pattern, generally speaking, the demographically dominant Moro groups (Maguindanaons, Iranuns, Maranaws, and Tausugs) had relatively complex political and economic structures at the advent of the Spanish colonial period, compared to the majority of Lumad communities. These Moro groups had developed feudal and slavery modes of production, while most Lumad groups had communal or semi-communal social organizations.

Lumad societies. The social organization of most Lumad groups at the beginning of the colonial era in the sixteenth century were what could be characterized as segmentary, chieftain-led, horticultural societies. Food production through swidden farming was mostly at subsistence level, and most necessities

were easily acquired from forest resources, such as abaca for clothing, and various woods for housebuilding.

Land rights were asserted as rights to harvest from plants one had planted, but did not extend to actual ownership of land. Land was largely communal (in the simple sense of not having an abstract notion of private ownership) but with usufruct rights given to kin groups who share labor in their swidden parcels and regularly domiciled areas. Villages would periodically move about, a strategy which avoided the over-exploitation of forest lands for extended periods of time.

Though largely self-sufficient, these groups were by no means isolated. Trade connected highland groups with lowland ones; the movement of products were generally forest products from inland to the coast, while traders from the coast (including Moros) brought coastal products and imported goods. These trade networks also included slaves captured through inter-village raids who were sold to Moro slave traders (see below).

Political power was decentralized, and their loose social hierarchy was based more upon achieved status than heredity. Leaders are called by various terms per group, such as *bujag/igbujag* (elder) for the Manobo; *fulong* (wise man), *ganlal* (official), and *tua* (elder) for the Blaan; *matanem* (elder) for the Bagobo; *timuay* (elder) for the Subanen and Teduray; *matikadeng* (elder), and *mankatadeng* (council of elders) for the Mansaka and Mandaya.

Generally, the term *datu* may be used; they are almost always elder males, and their prominence in a community is derived from the respect they earned through sound decision-making and sensible counsel and judgements. They cannot compel other people to obey them, and so they must be good at persuasion and able to set an example to follow for their village-mates. While villages are normally autonomous from each other, certain conditions may require that *datu* from different villages converge to hold a council, especially in the face of a common enemy.

Decisions within and across different villages are still made collectively and consultatively; datu and other prominent community members hold caucuses at the level of individual villages, and in conjunction with others.

In rare but not unheard-of cases, a woman can be recognized as having political authority matching that of the datu. The terms *bai* and *bibiyaon* are used as honorifics for highly respected women, such as *Bai Bibiyaon Bigkay*, whose real name is *Abiok Bigkay*. Other prominent members of a village are the *bagani* or warrior, and the *baylan* or healer/spiritual practitioner. Both of them could also wield political power, as they could influence decision-making and conflict resolution. There are also suites of behaviours and actions with political implications that are allowed the *bagani* and *baylan*, even without the permission or authorization of the datu.

For example, a *bagani* may directly engage in *pangayaw* (or traditional warfare or revenge killing) of his own accord, as this is how the role of *bagani* is defined.

While these are specialized social roles, there were no rigid rules as to who may acquire these statuses nor strict initiation rites that held social knowledge exclusively.

One village may have more than one datu, and with other community elders, and possibly the *bagani* and the *baylan*, they could settle conflicts through mediation sessions called *husay*. Punishments normally took the form of a fine, with the steepest prices paid for the killing of another person. Inability to pay a fine could possibly make the offender an *olipun* or a debt-slave who had to work off his fine.

Moro societies. Since the arrival of Islam to western Mindanao in the 13th century, Islamized communities have complexified to follow the trend of other Islamized localities in Southeast Asia. This resulted in a centralized political organization that conscripted a permanent military, collected tax and redistributed

goods, imposed the Sharia law and managed schools, and forged alliances with neighboring polities.

Unlike the Lumad, there was the notion of creating defined territorial boundaries, and land use was not permitted without the permission of the Sultan or his legitimate representatives. This makes the Moro population unique in Philippine history for having developed a feudal mode of production without the influence of the West.

Additionally, the Moro actively solicited slaves from the interior Lumad populations in eastern Mindanao, which were sold along with other goods to buyers in other Southeast Asian polities, and even to the Dutch and Portuguese.

This complexity is manifested in the three major political formations that held sway over the western half of Mindanao: the Sulu Sultanate, the Maguindanao Sultanate, and the Lanao multi-polar polity called “Pat a Pangampong Ko Ranao”.

With centralized political power, a military force, and consolidated communities, the Moro were organized enough to repel invaders through armed means and/or hold them off through diplomatic negotiations, whichever was necessary at certain points.

The sultanates of Sulu and Maguindanao, in particular, had extensive networks of trade partners and allies across Island Southeast Asia, whose possible involvement in a war against the Spanish was a major consideration (and headache) for the latter. Thus, the several attempts of the Spanish to enter western Mindanao were largely unsuccessful (see below).

1.2 What changes happened to these societies after colonization?

The Philippines experienced two major colonial periods: the Spanish from the mid-16th century until the end of the 19th

century, the Americans from the late 19th century until the mid-20th century.

Unlike the two other major Philippine regions of Luzon and the Visayas, Mindanao was not completely and continuously subjugated by the Spanish. While the Spanish were able to maintain nominal footholds in the coastal parts of Northern and Eastern Mindanao, the rest of Mindanao coastal areas were either part of the organized Moro sultanates, or were under Moro influence and/or protection, making it easier to defend against Spanish incursions. The Lumad peoples were also able to devise their own responses towards colonization that held off their complete subjugation for three centuries.

The Moro response. Given the consolidated political formation of the Moro and the costliness of waging war against them, the Spanish authorities periodically sought to establish diplomatic relations with them. One such treaty was forged with Datu Buisan of the Maguindanao, which lasted until his death. However, upon Buisan's death, his son Kudarat soon exceeded his father's power when it came his turn to rule.

Kudarat was also less receptive to Spanish overtures for peace, being aware of the conditions of conquered inhabitants of Luzon and Visayas and being wary of the Moro people falling into the same fate.

By marrying off one of his sons to the daughter of the Sultan of Sulu, Kudarat was able to forge an alliance with the Tausugs. With this new alliance, Kudarat launched an armed uprising that provoked the Spaniards to retaliate. However, the target of the Spanish attack were Iranun and Marano areas who, already knowing that the Spanish were their real adversary, joined forces with Kudarat and the Maguindanaons and Tausugs.

The uprising of all the major Moro groups under the leadership of Sultan Kudarat was significant enough for the Spanish to hold off on any further ambitious plans of incursion into Mindanao

until the mid-19th century, when improved arms and the declining state of the Moro sultanates urged Spain into renewing her campaign of conquest.

This renewed campaign won several victories for Spain such as the establishment of defensive forts and ports in several points in western Mindanao. These reignited the Moro drive towards armed defense of their territory, which paralleled the armed engagements of the Philippine Revolution in Luzon and the Visayas by 1896 onwards.

The deployment of Spanish troops from Mindanao to quell the revolution in Luzon weakened their armed response to the Moro peoples, giving the latter the leeway to win victories against the Spanish.

But these armed gains would be overtaken by the quick surrender of the Spanish to the Americans with the Treaty of Paris in December 1898. The Americans would then succeed where the Spanish couldn't in the almost complete pacification of Mindanao through a combination of military force and aggressive economic policies.

The first approach of American authorities to a Moro formation was through the Kiram-Bates Treaty of 1899, wherein Gen. John Bates, purportedly speaking on behalf of the American government, assured Sultan Kiram of Sulu that the Americans would respect the political and religious authority of the sultanate over its subjects. A monthly "allowance" of \$250.00 and \$60-75.00 was assured for the sultan and minor leaders, respectively. But this required the Moro leaders to recognize the sovereignty of the American colonial government, and it was only a stop-gap measure to prevent war in Mindanao, as the Philippine-American War raged in Luzon and the Visayas. The Americans needed to buy more time to allow more troops to be deployed to the Philippines.

Like the treaties they signed with Native American nations in North America, the provisions of the Kiram-Bates treaty slowly

began to be ignored until it was directly abrogated in 1904. The Americans accused Kiram of being unable to control his own soldiers, while Kiram protested that the Americans had demanded taxes to which his people were not used.

Armed uprising would begin again. A series of battles and massacres perpetrated against the Moro populace until the mid-1910s (effectively an extension of the Philippine-American War, popularly accepted to have ended in 1902), such as the Battle of Bud Dajo in 1906 and the Battle of Bud Bagsak in 1913, would be exceptionally fierce, with lopsided casualties on the side of the Moro populace.

Kiram would eventually step down as sultan of Sulu in 1916, completely surrendering control to the Americans.

Non-armed ways of chipping away at the political strength and influence of the Moro sultanates had begun even before Kiram stepped down. The American policy of cooptation sent 200 Moro youth to finish studies in the US in the early 1910s as pensionados, with the intention of turning them into future Moro leaders who were sympathetic to, or could even be puppets of, American interests. They also gave token recognition to lower rulers as the local representatives of the American colonial government, for which they received a monthly remuneration. Again, this was in order for the Americans to be able to exert control over local governance. This divide and conquer tactic, also employed by the Spanish in the past, pitted the common Moro people with the leadership elite, which tended to be more compromising. While of the former would prefer to actively fight against the colonizers, American accommodation made some leaders more pliable towards their demands.

The Lumad response. The footholds that the Spanish were able to create at the northern and eastern coasts of Mindanao were Manobo areas that were nominally integrated by the Spanish with the establishment of missions and pueblos. However, lack of manpower and vulnerability to Moro raids prevented complete

consolidation, and stronger campaigns in the mid-19th century came too late as the colony was on its decline by the latter part of that century.

More extensive changes in Lumad lifeways occurred as a response to American, instead of Spanish colonization. Aside from being able to build upon the footholds carved out by the Spanish (by this time, including the Davao region in southern Mindanao), the Americans were more aggressive in expropriating Lumad lands and directly intervening in Lumad lifeways.

An ethnohistorical study of the Davao region during these crucial years would show the range of Lumad responses to the decline of Spanish colonization and the rise of American dominance, which is delineated to four types: withdrawal/avoidance of conflict; two-faced engagements or “trickster” strategies; nativistic cultural revival and resistance; and outright armed revolt.

The first, withdrawal or avoidance of conflict, is exemplified by the highland Manobo groups of the Pantaron Mountain Range. This entailed the collective withdrawal of entire communities deeper into the Pantaron to elude colonial authorities towards their *ilihan*, or refuge. The *ilihan* strategy is an old one which also used to be widespread during precolonial times. The reason for the *ilihan*’s decline was that, in many areas, even places of refuge would already be taken over by colonial authorities.

This was not the case in the interior of the Pantaron, which was virtually impenetrable all throughout the colonial periods (and even until the 20th century), and hence, this was retained as a viable response to colonial incursion. The effect of this strategy has been the maintenance and continuation of many aspects of highland Manobo culture, such as epic chanting, belief system, social organization, and tattooing.

The second, which is termed as two-faced engagements with colonial authorities, wishes to foreground the complex socio-political maneuverings of groups like the Tagabawa Bagobo

in handling American officials. Though related to highland Manobo groups, the Tagabawa Bagobo occupied the lower lands proximate to the Davao Gulf, which placed them in contact with Moro groups like the Islamized Kalagan. As such, they were exposed to elements of Moro culture and politics, such as social hierarchy, a vertical leadership structure, and political negotiation. The Tagabawa Bagobo began to adapt such practices when it became necessary to engage with American officials. It is possible that, during this time, the Bagobo modified their settlement and leadership structure by forming settlements in such a way that there was increasing difficulty of access as one comes closer to their most important settlement of Tudaya, where their most prominent leader Bitil, resided, and where traditional knowledges such as weaving, prayer, medicinal practices, and metal forging were maintained. Surrounding Tudaya were numerous settlements like Sibulan, Sta. Cruz, and Astorga, which were much easier to access and were much more open to dialoguing with the colonial officials.

The cleverness of this Bagobo response was that, the Americans appears to be effectively “tricked” into believing that Sibulan, with its resident leader Tongkaling, was the heartland of the Bagobo people. They accorded Tongkaling respect and were careful in their dealings with him. In turn, Tongkaling held them off from realizing that the Bagobos had actually hidden away their true center, so that it can continue flourishing with little trouble from the Americans. Indeed, this strategy had worked so well that it was not until the Aboitiz campaign in the opening years of this 21st century that Tudaya was made easily accessible to the outside world via the roads built by the energy company.

This strategy would not have been possible if the Bagobos had not actively changed their social organization from fragmented, autonomous villages to villages of varying degrees of accessibility, with at least one central settlement (Tudaya) that was protected on all sides; and political leadership to assign roles such as those given to Bitil and Tongkaling. These modifications were also facilitated by the Bagobos’ proximity to Moro styles of

governance. The same trend followed other Lumad groups like the Arumanen Manobo and the Pulangihon. It is important to pursue this hypothesized “two-faced” nature of this strategy that directly corresponds with the face that the Bagobos showed the Americans, and their inward face that looked to the protection of their traditions and lifeways.

The third strategy is that of cultural revival and resistance, particularly through dance and religiosity, as manifested by the nativistic uprisings of the Mandaya, Kalagan, and other groups in the Davao Gulf. The distinctive characteristic of this uprising was the innovation of a dance, coupled with prophetic messages that Lumad deities would return to vanquish the western occupiers and usher in an age of prosperity to all.

The Americans did not look upon this phenomenon with neutrality, having had a similar experience – that of the “Ghost Dance” – during their wars of genocide against the Native Americans. They were afraid that if discontented groups of people, with common grievances, began to gather and dance and pray for the betterment of their lot, it was no small leap that they would begin to organize against the Americans and even launch an uprising. The colonial government then immediately moved to quell the dance by arresting the leaders responsible for teaching and spreading the dance.

These dances are akin to other nativistic uprisings in the past that shaped forms of resistance according to older frameworks of religiosity, physical expression, and ideas of good community life.

Finally, the fourth strategy was outright armed uprising, such as what happened to Davao pueblo in 1909, when conscripted natives from different ethnic groups rose in mutiny against their American superiors. However, this was short-lived and the leaders were easily captured.

The salient points of this study are: the experience of the Lumad is a font of lessons and ideas in innovating forms of resistance.

This diversity in responses stems from the diversity of the social and ecological settings of each of these groups, hence once can see the cleverness, foresight, and deep understanding of local conditions. Also, the last two forms especially resemble Kudarat's accomplishment of being able to band together different Lumad groups.

1.3 What are the commonalities and intersections among Moro and Lumad groups that we should highlight?

Shared genealogical origin stories. Many Moro and Lumad groups have origin stories that share a similar theme of two siblings, who become separated because one chooses Islam and the other chooses to remain within their traditional life. For the Manobo, Teduray and Maguindanaos, the sibling pair are the brothers Mamalu and Tabunaway. For the Blaan, the siblings are a brother-sister pair named Flasab (male) and Fu Bli (female) respectively. Flasab chooses to remain with his Blaan kin, while Fu Bli is married to a Moro sultan.

These common origin stories are indications that there is a collective acknowledgement that the Moro and Lumad peoples are related, and that in the distant past there was an episode of parting ways, so to speak, with some of the inhabitants of Mindanao choosing to be Islamized while others did not. The sibling story is the metaphor for this historical process.

Economic links. Many parts of Mindanao have been, for generations, connected by mountains and river systems trade links. Upstream, inland/highland Lumad populations would gather raw materials and forest products (like musk, beeswax, hardwoods, bird's nest, and resin) that were exchanged for downstream, coastal goods, as well as items imported from neighboring Asian countries (such as salt, seashells, porcelains, fabrics like silks, and semi-precious stones). Another important commodity were human slaves captured in raids, who were exchanged for horses. For example, the Teduray Lumad was

loosely integrated into the Moro Maguindanao trading polity from the 14th to 19th centuries, where Maguindanaoan chieftains acquired their forest products to sell to Sulu or Chinese merchants. This trade relationship thus extended to spheres even outside the country, and they were formalized and further reinforced by the symbolic conferment of chiefly titles by the Maguindanao to prominent Teduray. Anthropological studies reveal that this type of symbiotic trade relationship was common throughout Mindanao and the rest of the Philippines.

Structural oppression. Both groups bear the brunt and structural effects of landgrabbing, resettlement of their ancestral lands, institutionalized discrimination and disenfranchisement in the economic, political, and cultural arenas of social life.

By the end of the Filipino-American War, it had become apparent that the American goal in colonizing the Philippines was not so much to benevolently assimilate it, but to exploit it for their imperialist ends and to build their own overseas empire. The Philippines was (and still is) a rich source of raw materials and metal ores, which America needed in order to assert global economic and political supremacy. America used its new status as colonial master in order to directly grab Moro and Lumad lands in Mindanao to open it for private plantations, like Weyerhaeuser, Del Monte, and Goodyear. By 1910, 159 large American and European plantations had established operations, aside from the Davao Planters Association, whose properties measured more than a million hectares in all.

But sequestration of lands were not only for economic purposes. As part of the “Filipinization” campaign of the American-run Philippine Commission, which aimed to fully integrate “non-Christian tribes” into the nation-state, it encouraged Christian “homesteaders” from Luzon and Visayas to occupy Moro and Lumad lands. It was thought that if Christians lived side-by-side with non-Christians, it would accelerate the amalgamation of the latter into “mainstream” society.

The premise of these land policies was the Regalian Doctrine, introduced by the Spanish and still in effect until today. Under this, the State is declared the 'sole owner of the state domain and reserves the right to classify' these state lands. The government can therefore decree which lands can be privately owned and which cannot.

Through these powers, the American colonial government enacted a series of land laws that were highly discriminatory against indigenous peoples. For example, the Land Registration Act No. 496 required the registration of privately owned lands in writing, when this very concept was alien to many indigenous people who did not have writing, and who still held lands under communal, and not private individual ownership. The effect was that many private individuals (mainly large landlords) registered vast tracks of lands under their name, even if there were people already living there.

Another, the Public Land Act No. 926, allowed homesteaders to seek permits to work lands of up to 24 hectares (for Christians), while "non-Christians" were given only 10 hectares. Because of the regalian doctrine, the American government could decree that land made productive under this scheme could be privatized, while land that was not reverted back to the State. Because Indigenous peoples did not traditionally extensively work the lands, many traditional lands were deemed unproductive.

Additionally, by 1936, though the Commonwealth Act No. 41 reduced the land area allowed for Christian homesteaders from 24 to 16 hectares, it further reduced that allowed for "non-Christians" from 10 to only four hectares.

The underlying perception of these land policies was that Mindanao was "uninhabited", since, as non-Christians, the Moro and Lumad peoples were considered not fully human with rights over these lands.

This continued and even intensified under the Commonwealth Government (still controlled by the Americans) of the 1930s in

response to agrarian unrest in other parts of the Philippines. The majority peasant Filipino population had been promised land distribution by the Americans, in contrast to the Spanish who had held on to their haciendas and estates. When it became apparent that American policy only further concentrated land ownership into the hands of a few, farmers in Luzon and Visayas began to organize and stage localized uprisings.

The land policies of the 1930s served to quell these uprisings by pitting poor landless peasants from the Christianized north against the indigenous Moro and Lumad, who were also beginning to be dispossessed of their lands. This was to the advantage of landed families in Luzon and the Visayas, and to the pleasure of American authorities in Mindanao, for whom Christian settlers were easier to deal with and could be used to push the Moro and Lumad farther into the hinterland. The proper analysis of this historical episode therefore is that it is not a conflict between Christian settlers and the indigenous Lumad or Moro, but a conflict between those who wish to exert inordinate control over vast tracks of land, and those who claim it only as a matter of subsistence and survival.

It is important to emphasize this point because the conflict in Mindanao is often simplistically framed to be religious in nature, i.e., Muslim versus Christian. While religion is an important dimension in the spirit of resistance of the Moro peoples, the roots of this simplistic framing must be teased out in order to see how we must properly view the roles of socio-cultural or religious phenomena. Such an approach can help guide other analyses of people's resistances where cultural or religious "differences" may be a significant feature.

The structural economic oppression of the Moro and Lumad peoples was greatly enabled by the propagation of the idea that such "non-Christian" peoples were not part of the nation-state. The Spanish were the first to hold such a view, with their extreme racial chauvinism that they were able to so deeply embed in Filipino consciousness that even progressive Filipino liberals

of the late 19th century were reluctant to include these “non-Christians” in the young nation that they were struggling to forge.

This discrimination was continued by the Americans who specifically set up the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes precisely to handle Muslim populations and the Lumad in the south, as well as the Cordillera peoples in the north. The purported premise of the Bureau was that such peoples were wild and uncivilized, and part of America’s Manifest Destiny in the Philippines was to ‘educate, uplift, civilize, and Christianize’ its inhabitants to create a harmonized nation. However, the Bureau merely “institutionalized the alleged superiority” of Christians over the “pagan” Moro, Lumad, and Cordillera peoples (Rodriguez 2010) through reinforcing racial typologies in their “research”, and characterizing the difficulties in dealing with such groups in terms of their culture and/or religion, and not in the political and economic impositions of the new colonial government. This outlook was passed on to the other government agencies that succeeded the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes, such as the post-independence (post-1946) Commission on National Integration (CNI), and the Martial Law agencies Presidential Assistance on National Minorities (PANAMIN) and the Southern Philippine Development Authority (SPDA). Both the Lumad and the Moro, in a word, were, and continue to be, ‘minoritized’ in the process of colonial occupation and neocolonial expansion and consolidation.

Enduring political (negotiation and/or armed struggle) and cultural modes of resistance to colonial and neocolonial state. Because of their long history of and ample experience in unconventional ways of dealing with the state (both the colonial states of the Spanish and the Americans, and the “independent” state of Filipinos), both the Lumad and the Moro have developed numerous forms and methods of resistance that form the rich heritage of people’s struggles in the Philippines.

The Moro peoples had already been, for centuries, astute political negotiators and disciplined warriors. Looking at their

history we can see that they almost always employed both at the same time, reflecting the necessity of having a handle on both peaceful and non-peaceful methods (or antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions) for dealing with adversaries. The Lumad as a whole varied in their responses, from the Manobo's constant avoidance of confrontation, to the Bagobo's, Blaans, and Mandaya's careful and choosy engagement with colonial authorities, with either armed or withdrawal options at the ready depending upon the circumstances.

Today we can see many parallels between these "traditional" and current responses.

The Manobo practice of abandoning the village to seek refuge has been translated into the present-day *bakwit*, and Lumad leaders are able engagers in legal, political, and public arenas like the media. Finally, armed struggle is still a viable option among the Moro and Lumad.

This should not be surprising given that hundreds of years later, the conditions of colonization have persisted through neocolonial arrangements that still necessitate the cultivation of creative and effective ways of resistance.

1.4 What are the differences between Moro and Lumad groups in terms of understanding their modes of living and resistance?

Although there are actual variations, the following can be listed as thematic points when emphasizing the patterns of variations between most Moro and Lumad groups:

Modes of production. (*Please see above, 1.1*)

Religion. Most of those classified as belonging to the Moro groups, especially those in the upper strata of their societies, are strictly following standard Islamic practices (as opposed to what is usually called as 'folk Islam' among community folks). Most

Lumad groups at present have been converted to varied sects and branches of Christianity; while some Lumads who are in the interiors and uplands are still practicing varying degrees of animistic (non-Islamic and non-Christian) practices and traditions.

Notions of territory or homeland. The four major Moro groups (Maguindanaons, Iranuns, Maranaws, Tausugs) have, especially starting in late colonial and the neocolonial period (from 1946 up to the present), developed an idea of a broadly demarcated and claimed 'territory', and much later, being part of the wide 'Bangsa Moro' ('Moro nation') homeland. The relatively smaller in sizes, disparate and varying, 'ancestral domains' of the many Lumad communities did not evolve formally into being construed as a political 'territory' until late in the 20th century (and only among some Moro- and state-challenged Lumad communities, like in Bukidnon and North Cotabato).

Political identity. The Lumad groups have not developed a kind of trans-ethnic form of 'national identity' as that of the 'Bangsa Moro' ('Moro nation'), which became a vehicle for a shared political identity among various Moro groups, especially in the 1960s (although seeds of this supra-ethnic political identity already appeared during the time of Sultan Kudarat, 1619-1671). A strong consciousness of a shared political direction, as captured in the unifying word, 'Lumad' (Visayan word for 'indigenous'), did not emerge among Lumad groups until the 1980s.

2.0 HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE MORO AND LUMAD PEOPLES' RESISTANCE

2.1 What is the major contribution of the Moro peoples to the general direction of the national liberation of the whole Filipino people?

Faithfulness to the importance of waging sustained armed resistance, as their major mode of struggle, against the militaristic

machinery of the dominant state is the supreme contribution of the Moro peoples to the national liberation of the broad Filipino people. Since the time of Sultan Kudarat in the 17th century up to the armed resistances of the (originally) separatist Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) of the 1970s and, with MNLF's state cooptation, its ideological reinvigoration by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) of the 1990s, the Moro peoples have shown faithful adherence to armed struggle as the main form of resistance against the oppressive neocolonial state.

2.2 What lessons can we learn from the various waves of 'peace negotiations' entered into by the MNLF and MILF?

The MNLF and MILF groups have conceded to the very limited powers "given" by the government in the negotiation agreements. After the series of negotiations, the territory claimed by the groups has continually decreased.

2.3 What is the political vision of the 'national democratic' Moro revolutionary and underground movement?

At present, it is the Moro Resistance and Liberation Organization (MRLO) that flies the banner of the true alternative to the coopted Moro revolutionary groups. One can see the importance of 'party leadership'—for organizational strength and class orientation—among these national democratic and communist revolutionaries.

2.4 What is the history of the Salupongan organization?

"Salupongan" is the Pantaron Manobo word for "a gathering of leaders", which is what Datu Guibang Apoga, a highly respected Manobo leader, called for some time in 1993. This gathering was in response to what Datu Guibang and other leaders noticed was the expanding, and increasingly harmful, operations of the Alcantara and Sons (also known as Alson's) logging company in the Pantaron Mountains. The decision reached was to wage a pangayaw, or traditional warfare, against the logging company.

A study of this historic event shows that Guibang's pangayaw was signaled the processual change of pangayaw from along traditional lines (in the sense of pangayaw as waged by the older generations) towards becoming an active military-political campaign informed by an awareness of various groups with various interests, such as private companies, formal military, government officials. This process can be seen in the unfolding of the events that led to Guibang's declaration of pangayaw and its resolution. The Alson's logging company had already been operating in the Pantaron since _____. Their logging arrangement was legitimized by the state-sponsored policy of the Integrated Forest Management Agreement (IFMA) scheme of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. They had recruited workers among the Lumads such as Jose Libayao, who served as head of the Alson's forest guard, and who would later capitalize on his monetary and public gains to run and win as mayor of Talaingod town. According to our informants, Libayao had been especially assiduous in his promotion of the IFMA even as most of his fellow Lumads were beginning to notice and question the negative effects of logging to their health and communities.

One of the recognized triggers of the first phase of the pangayaw was the murder of Mokiling, a Manobo leader from Tibukag on the Simong River, by Andigaw, an associate of Libayao. His was compounded by the killing of another Manobo, Iparay, by CAFGU (auxiliary military personnel). The initial response of the Manobos of Talaingod was to launch a pangayaw of the old type of targeting kin of and villages associated with Andigaw, with the foreseeable effect of the pangayaw spilling over to become a multi-inter-village conflict. But this first phase was already characterized by external provocation, specifically, the deployment of Alson's -backed Libayao and his men.

This point was not missed by Datu Guibang whose next steps were informed by two circumstances: first, that his associates were being killed, and second, his "inability" to take firm action had become the object of taunts by Alson's men, what

could be deemed a personal affront to a leader like him. But Guibang's response, even if partly motivated by personal grievance, in effect pushed the definition and exercise of the right to self-determination. It deployed a "traditional" Lumad response (*pangayaw*) against agents who normally would not be subject to it. The legitimacy of such an action, from the side of Guibang and other Lumad leaders, drew from the newly-formed consciousness that active defense of ancestral lands would now mean direct engagement and even confrontation with hegemonic external forces, such as large companies. Connected to this was concurrent formalization of the *Salugpungan Ta Tanu Igkanogon* as a people's organization via a caucus of *datus* and other leading community members in 1993.

Datu Guibang then formally declared a *pangayaw*, marking the second phase of the war separate from the first phase described above. It was also marked not by inter-village warfare, but the uniting of different villages across two river systems (the Talomo and the Simong), with Alson's personnel as the clear targets. Thus, another advancement of Guibang's *pangayaw* was putting a stop to the overflowing effect of the old-type of *pangayaw* that pitted different Manobo villages against each other.

After several fatalities of Alson's personnel, the military finally set upon the Talomo River to stop Guibang's *pangayaw*. It was during this time that the Battles of Laslasakan and Tibukag occurred – exemplary events in the Talaingod Manobo defense of the ancestral domain that exhibited not just inter-village unity and cooperation, but also military acuity.

To demonstrate this, the Battle of Laslasakan was reconstructed based upon oral recollections of some its participants. The military assault on the Talomo River began in the relatively lower village of Nasilaban, easily reached by soldiers from the lowlands. In their pursuit of persons wanted for the attacks against Alson's men, they had to climb the ridge above the Talomo in order to reach the interior villages, including Laslasakan, the village after Nasilaban.

The Manobo communities along this ridge had already prepared beforehand by letting the women, children, and elderly find refuge in the deeper Pantaron Mountains.

Among the men, labor was carefully divided among who were responsible for the direct military attacks, who were in charge of cooking and maintaining their sustenance, who had defensive roles, and who among the elder leaders would accompany the women and children (this group would eventually cross the Pantaron and slip out at the side of Bukidnon province, to eventually evacuate to Davao City, where support groups met them).

The soldiers had expectedly taken this ridge, while Manobo warriors lay in wait at various high spots right before Laslasakan. A portion of this trail exits out on to a caldera-like feature; upon the soldiers reaching it, the Manobo began to snipe at them from their vantage points. Taking advantage of their intimate knowledge of the geography, control over high ground, and well-laid organization of personnel and resources, the Manobo were able to drive the soldiers away after three days.

Sometime later the military again tried to reach the highland areas of the Pantaron, but this time, following the Simong River via the village of Tibukag. The local Manobo were once again ready, and were again able to repel the soldiers using a similar military technique.

We know so far of these two battles, but further interviews and reconstructions may tell us of how the second phase of the pangayaw were conducted in other areas, as well as uncover other details of the planning and coordination for their defense.

The Salupungan organization is therefore a clear product of the Pantaron Manobos' right to self-determination – to organize themselves, and to conduct affairs in their ancestral domain as they see fit. But at that time these actions were met with ambivalence from the state. The leaders who took part in the

pangayaw were declared wanted men, and the Pantaron as ancestral domain was not (and still not) recognized through formal paperwork. This is why there would still be periodic instances of violence perpetrated by state troops such as soldiers and auxiliary personnel, culminating in the murder of Sangkoyog, of the village of Nalubas (a member village of Salupungan), while he was on his way to purchase some items at the marketplace in Sto. Niño.

As it happens, Sangkoyog was also the son of a prominent Manobo woman leader, Sio-an. Being able to rise above the call of old tradition of launching another inter-village pangayaw, Sio-an decided to use her son's death to push for a formalization of peace terms and the recognition of Salupungan as an organization with its own domain. She and other Salupungan leaders called for a Tampura, or peace pact, between Salupungan leaders and government officials at Natampud, on the border of the Salupungan domain and where her son was also buried. This act symbolized the end of Datu Guibang's pangayaw.

2.5 What are the major highlights and concrete gains of the Salupongan struggles?

The first major highlight in the struggle of the Salupongan communities was their decision to deploy a pangayaw against a company, and not against the traditional targets of a pangayaw, namely, rival or enemy clans or villages. This was an extraordinary example of exercising the right to self-determination wherein non-members of the tribe had no choice and are made to answer to the culturally accepted way of handling conflict in the locality they have entered. I'm The symbolic import of launching a traditional response against a modern threat must also not be lost.

For the Salupongan, waging warfare must also come with building a new society, which they have tried to do in the years after Datu Guibang's pangayaw. Towards this direction the Salupongan has established indigenous schools, with the assistance of support groups such as church and people's

organizations. In other Salupungan areas such as Kahusayan, within Davao City, the local community has explored ways of coping with land grabbers through direct land occupation and cooperative farming of reclaimed lands, and practicing sustainable agriculture.

2.6 What are the continuing threats to Lumad communities and organizations?

There are two main and interrelated threats to Lumad communities and organizations:

(1) capitalist plunder and (2) state aggression.

The notion of ‘development aggression’ emerged as a catchphrase among cause-oriented groups in the 1980s to refer to the phenomenon of state-backed ‘development’ projects—either directly conducted by state agencies or via private companies or multinational corporations—generated without robust community or people’s consent and/or whose output give minimal benefits to disadvantaged communities. While this term has much more popular currency among NGOs, we here prefer the term ‘capitalist plunder’ (or ‘imperialist plunder’) to convey a more precise reference to an opposed economic arrangement, as this reflects the idea that rather than being disconnected instances (say, as separate ‘development projects’, implemented by ‘autonomous’ firms), these are part and parcel of, and are indeed integral to, the operation of a predominantly commodity-driven mode of production.

The use of ‘plunder’ in the phrase underlines the forced, systematic, and even fascistic, manner of appropriation of what should otherwise be people’s resource like the ancestral domain. This furthermore removes the obfuscation behind which such companies hide, i.e., the belief (sincere or otherwise) that their projects really do bring about economic development, and puts the focus back upon the logic of profit and capital.

In ground reality terms, these are manifested as extractive activities such as large-scale mining projects, legal logging concessions to big loggers, or other forms of natural resource consumptions (like the so-called 'integrated forestry management' schemes) that usually result in displacements of local villages and forced transformation of traditional modes of living.

'Militarization' is another state-critical phrase of advocacy and rights groups that is coined in order to name the phenomenon of open use of state military power, most especially against militant Lumad and poor settler communities assertive of their rights to self-determination and people-oriented governance. We here use the term 'state aggression' to emphasize the role of the state in conceptualizing, implementing, and maintaining a militarized status over communities.

'State aggression' covers varied forms in the experience of peoples: hamletting, encampment in settlements and school premises, threatening and red-baiting of civilians, arson, indiscriminate bombing of farm and forested areas near settlements, arbitrary arrests and detention, forced conscription into paramilitary and 'civilian defense groups', and murder (such as the Lianga massacre). Specifically in the Talaingod case, there was the abduction of civilians to be used as guide (as in the case of Ubonay which became one of the triggers of Talaingod 2014 bakwit), and many other cases of related human rights violations.

The reported military-backed and/or organized paramilitary units (who are believed responsible for the killing of Manobo student Alibando Tingkas in January 2016) that espouse anti-communist propaganda (even hysteria) in varied areas are a recent offshoot of 'militarization' which taps into the "Lumad fundamentalist" strain in the thinking of indigenous communities/individuals.

This phenomenon of "Lumad fundamentalism" must be openly discussed especially among progressive indigenous peoples' organizations, for based upon the Mindanao experience, this

phenomenon is a result of a false reading of the concept of “self-determination”.

There is therefore the possibility that similar “fundamentalist” strains of thinking will emerge in areas or nations with (1) a strong conceptual grasp and public familiarity with this right to “self-determination”, and (2) a repressive state and/or military ready and able to manipulate such public concepts to serve their own ends.

A concept that has emerged in recent decades in association with global indigenous peoples’ discourses, “self-determination” means precisely the right of culturally distinct ethnic groups to be able to define their own needs and shape their future directions as a group, with full respect and support from the wider nation-state. But this has been given a reactionary twist in the hands of the aggressively pro-state indigenous and non-indigenous groups to turn into “Lumad fundamentalism”.

Drawing from the experiences of the Lumad in Mindanao, there are three features to this phenomenon, and also included below are examples of their concrete effects.

First is their treatment of ancestral domain like private property. This notion is consciously uttered through pronouncements such as: ‘we have already divided our ancestral domain claims; don’t go into my territory and I will not go into yours’ (recorded during a dialogue between Lumad evacuees, and the AFP and AFP-handled tribals on February 25, 2015), as well as in instances when private companies are allowed access into indigenous lands after securing the ‘free, prior and informed consent’ of only one or a handful of Lumad representatives.

Second, and related to this, is the notion that each group should keep each-to-his-own.

This not only goes against historically-recorded centuries of Lumad mobility, between-group interaction, trade, and the

facilitation mutually beneficial relations, but also, in effect, simply keeps the Lumad divided.

Third is the rigid reckoning and use of ritual and other 'tribal trappings', of the "strict adherence to 'the traditional way of life', and of the prevention of the 'contamination' of the tribe". This was the accusation levelled against educator Emerito Samarca, who was one of those killed in Lianga. He and his school were denounced as 'polluting' and 'manipulating' the tribe, hence his 'execution' by paramilitary agents. Lumad fundamentalism also actively invokes 'tradition' and indigenous terms and notions to justify such acts: paramilitary agents are called 'bagani' (warrior), paramilitary groups are 'tribal defense groups', called thus by, among other state-backers, Congresswoman Nancy Catamco.

These ideological or conceptual maneuverings designed to influence the public and policymakers have a longer-lasting and more insidious disempowering effect during the course of the Lumad struggle. This false reading of 'self-determination' has the double consequence of (1) trotting out the seemingly accurate and attractive-to-the-middle-class view that simply leaving the Lumad alone is a long-term solution in complete consonance with the fulfillment of 'indigenous peoples' rights' while (2) completely undermining efforts at unity between marginalized peoples, sectors, and classes (which include the non-Lumads).

3.0 LEARNING-POINTS FROM MINDANAO PEOPLES' RESISTANCE

3.1 What important points can we learn from the above review of the Moro and Lumad resistance?

Reviewing the many cases of historical and recent examples of people's resistance to state/development aggressions and the varied levels of assertions for self-determination by both the Moro and the Lumad communities, we can see the important

role of the following factors in seeing to it that the substance of what the communities are fighting for are not watered-down by the twist and turns of the struggles: (a) the necessity of forming a strong organizational structure among diverse communities; (b) the importance of undertaking a solid, step-by-step organizing among groups and communities; (c) the combination of armed struggle and parliamentary struggles; (d) the critical role of a 'united front' work among the 'middle forces' of society; and, lastly, (e) the importance of continually developing creative forms of doing mass movements, as shown recently in the 'Manilakbayan' undertakings which eventually led to the formation of Moro-Lumad alliance, the 'Sandugo'.

Selected references that can be consulted

Majul, Cesar Adib. 1999. Muslims in the Philippines. Quezon City: UP Press.

Manuel, E. Arsenio. Manuvu Social Organization. Quezon City: UP Press.

Rodil, B. R. 1994. The Minoritization of the Indigenous Communities of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago. Philippine Edition. Davao City: AFRIM, Inc. Tan, Samuel K. 2002. The Filipino-American War, 1899-1913. Quezon City: UP Press.

ON SELF-DETERMINATION & LIBERATION

(For the Study Conference on West Papua Self Determination
March 26-27, 2017, Mergrande Ocean Resort, Davao City)

Joanna K. Cariño
Cordillera People's Alliance
*Co-chair, SANDUGO (Alliance of Moro
and Indigenous Peoples for Self-Determination)*

It is an honor and privilege to be able to address this Study Conference on West Papua Self Determination. I first learned of the national oppression of the West Papuan people from my involvement with Commission 10 of the International League of People's Struggles (ILPS) and the Indigenous People's Movement for Self-Determination and Liberation (IPMSDL). IPMSDL and ILPS have sponsored a number of international conferences where there have been presentations on the struggles for self-determination, and where Jerry, Mr. Leonard Imbiri of Dewan Adat Papua, has presented the case for West Papua. I have also kept up with the developments and supported the West Papuan struggle through your Free West Papua Campaign Facebook page.

I will speak specifically on the theme of self-determination and liberation as we seek to see its application to our specific struggles in the Philippines and West Papua. I propose to do so from the concrete experience of the national democratic mass movement in the Cordillera region and my organization, the Cordillera People's Alliance, and relate this to some theorizing on these themes.

BACKGROUND

The significant events which sparked the militant mass movement in the Cordillera region Northern Philippines in defense of indigenous peoples' rights were the Kalinga and Bontok people's struggles against the World Bank funded Chico mega-dams, followed soon after by Tinggian opposition to the huge Cellophil logging and paper-pulp concession in Abra. Chico and Cellophil were so-called priority "development projects" of the US-Marcos dictatorship throughout the dark years of martial law during the 1970's and 80's.

The Chico and Cellophil struggles gave a deeper dimension to human rights, going beyond the narrow definition of individual civil and political rights as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to the collective human rights of indigenous peoples. The Chico and Cellophil struggles were waged in uncompromising defense of ancestral land and the assertion of the right to self-determination, to freely determine our continued existence as distinct peoples, and our economic, political and socio-cultural development, at a pace which we ourselves define.

Chico and Cellophil led to an increased self-awareness among the indigenous peoples of the Cordillera and paved the way for the formation of a Cordillera-wide indigenous peoples mass movement, as it marked the shift from spontaneous localized reaction to more conscious and concerted unified action. As the different Igorot tribes and sectors were increasingly exposed to each other in mass meetings, inter-tribal activities and peace pact (bodong) conferences, there was the opportunity for dialogue and mutual sharing and learning. From here, the different groups realized that beyond their diversity, they shared a common history of national oppression; a common geography and territory – the Cordillera mountain range; a common persistence of their indigenous lifeways in the face of various threats, albeit in varying degrees; common problems and common enemies.

Chico and Cellophil brought to the fore the fact that the present-day problems of tribal peoples and indigenous communities are much bigger and more complicated than any faced in earlier historical periods. More concretely, Chico and Cellophil showed the indigenous peoples of the Cordillera that their problems cannot be taken in isolation from the wider Philippine realities, and the incursions of imperialist globalization.

The indigenist romanticized view of tribal society as a static autonomous entity which should be preserved in its pure form shattered, as Igorots united with as broad an alliance as possible for the defense of indigenous peoples collective rights, alongside the wider defense of human rights. Although the Chico resistance at the start was the spontaneous tribal response to outside threat, it soon positioned itself firmly within the mainstream of the national democratic struggle in the Philippines.

TOWARDS DEFINING THE SUBSTANCE AND FEATURES OF SELF-DETERMINATION

We organized the Cordillera Peoples Alliance for the Defense of the Ancestral Domain and for Self-Determination in 1984. At that time, the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Populations was still in its infancy and the international process was just starting, unlike today when we already have the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We had to exercise our brains Towards Defining the Substance and Features of Self-Determination in the Cordillera.

After the Marcos dictatorship was toppled through a people power revolution in 1986, the CPA successfully lobbied the new government of Corazon Aquino for the recognition of ancestral land rights and regional autonomy, which were included in the new Constitution of 1987.

The process defined in the Philippine Constitution towards setting up the Cordillera Autonomous Region is for Congress, with the help of a Cordillera Regional Consultative Commission, to draft an Organic Act to establish the autonomous region. The Organic Act is to be submitted to the people for ratification in a plebiscite called for the purpose.

In 1990, RA 6766, the Organic Act to create the Cordillera Autonomous Region was submitted to the people in a plebiscite but was rejected by the voting population. Again in 1997, a new Organic Act, RA 8438 was the subject of a plebiscite, and again it was resoundingly rejected.

On both occasions, our mass movement campaigned for its rejection, notwithstanding that it was the CPA that had lobbied for the inclusion of such a provision in the Constitution. The CPA interpreted rejection to mean not necessarily a rejection of the concept of genuine regional autonomy as the form of self-determination in the Cordillera. Rather, the rejection was of the collusion of central government and local reactionaries to coopt the earlier gains and derail the mass movement, the infighting and corruption of traditional politicians and opportunists who had jockeyed themselves into position in the new Cordillera bureaucracy, and the insincerity of government to substantially recognize indigenous peoples rights.

The militant mass movement has learned valuable lessons from the failed government experiment with regional autonomy. Genuine regional autonomy cannot merely be structural nor mechanical. For it to be truly meaningful for the indigenous peoples, it has to be predicated on a full and substantial recognition of indigenous peoples rights to ancestral land and self-determination. It cannot be merely granted from above; it has to be asserted by a conscientized and empowered people. It cannot be rushed, as it can only succeed when the people are fully knowledgeable and prepared for it.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION

This year, 2017, is the centennial of the October Revolution in Russia and the establishment of the first socialist state. As we commemorate this centennial, it is good to be reminded that the right of nations to self-determination was a key issue in the formation of the first socialist state. In fact, Lenin wrote two treatises on this theme: *The Right of Nations to Self-Determination* in 1914, and *The Socialist Revolution and the Rights of Nations to Self-Determination* in 1916. Before this, Stalin also wrote on Marxism and the National Question in 1913. As Stalin was a Georgian minority nationality, he was appointed as the minister for the nationalities, and he would prepare regular reports on the matter. We will use these references for the historical background.

Historically, the concept of the right to self-determination was originally applied to nations in creating their own independent states, and in asserting national sovereignty and territorial integrity against those that would impose upon them. The process of the elimination of feudalism and the development of capitalism was also the process of the formation of nations as historically constituted, stable communities of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up as manifested in a common culture.

Such was the case in Western Europe where the market economy integrated formerly self-sufficient feudal estates and other pre-capitalist formations into forming the German, French, Spanish and Italian nations with their own independent nation states. (The United Kingdom was the integration of the England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland nations, with the uneven integration of Ireland, leading to its division).

Capitalism brought trade and commerce, money, improved the system of communication, led to the development of a common

language, etc. The bourgeoisie led in nation-building and the integration of what were formerly separate and self-sufficient feudal estates in order to widen and secure their own markets against the competition from the other arising capitalist nation-states. Thus the protectionism of early capitalism.

Unlike in Western Europe, where the development was towards integrated nation-states, in Eastern Europe where capitalist development was uneven, multi-national states were formed, states consisting of several nationalities. Thus minority nationalities were formed side by side with a dominant nationality in the multi-national states (eg. Austria-Hungary, Poland, Russia). There existed inequality and national oppression between the dominant nationality and the minority nationalities, which often broke out in ethnic strife, then and up to the present. It is important to note, though, that these wars were between the bourgeoisie of opposing nations.

Thus the issue of the right to self-determination was a major concern in the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) after the victory of the October Revolution. One of the major achievements of the socialist USSR before its revisionism and dissolution in 1991 was the unification of the various nationalities of what were once 15 separate republics in Eastern Europe, the Baltics, Central Asia and Transcaucasia for the socialist cause. They willingly joined the USSR with the guarantee of the complete equality of rights for all nations, full recognition of the right of nations to self-determination, regional autonomy for national groupings occupying their own territory within a multi-national state, and the principle of the international solidarity of the working class. Their right to self-determination was guaranteed such that they would be free to leave the Union should their rights be trampled upon.

Expansionism and colonization then, and present-day neo-colonialism have stunted the natural course of development of many nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America, for whom the autonomous development towards the capitalist nation-state has already been

effectively closed. Instead, there is the continuing underdevelopment in the so-called “developing” countries, with monopoly capitalism at the root of this phenomenon. The oppression and exploitation brought about by direct colonization then and imperialist globalization now have resulted in the rise of national liberation movements in the colonies and neo-colonies, with the demand for sovereign independence as the form of self-determination.

The Philippines was colonized by Spain. Filipinos asserted their nationhood and waged a revolution to oust the colonizer. On the eve of victory of the Philippine revolution, Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States through the Treaty of Paris. The Filipinos waged the Filipino-American war against the new colonizer. Even after the grant of formal independence, the Philippines continues to be a neo-colony of the United States. The national democratic struggle aims to build a truly sovereign and independent Philippine republic.

Indonesia was colonized by the Dutch. It declared its independence from the Dutch after WWII, while West Papua remained under Dutch control until 1961 when the people there asserted their independence. This was shortlived, however, as Indonesia invaded West Papua and annexed it to the Indonesian State.

Within the neo-colonies, and even in pockets inside the developed countries, there is the persistence of pre-capitalist modes of production and social formations among indigenous peoples and national minorities who have been marginalized and minoritized through colonialism and the historical process over time in the countries that they find themselves in. Indigenous peoples are to be found all over the world and many are self-proclaimed “nations,” while living within a defined national territory of a nation-state. Such tenacious persistence of traditional lifestyles even in the face of neo-colonialism and imperialist globalization are by themselves manifestations of self-determination.

In the Philippines, the national minorities are to be found here in Mindanao, the lumad and the Moro, the Igorots in the

Cordillera region, and also in the other regions. We define the national oppression which we are subject to as the following: landgrabbing and the non-recognition of our ancestral lands and territories, political misrepresentation and the non-recognition of indigenous socio-political institutions, historical government neglect, commercialization and vulgarization of indigenous culture, institutionalized discrimination, militarization and ethnocide.

Just last November, we launched SANDUGO, the alliance and movement of the Moro and indigenous peoples of the Philippines for self-determination and a just peace. We have been actively involved in the peace negotiations between the Government and the CPP-NPA-NDF, and submitted our proposals to be included in the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms.

In West Papua, the people continue to suffer gross human rights violations. The Indonesian state sanctions the vilest military atrocities, sponsors the daily transmigration of Indonesians, and institutionalizes racism, while the giant multinational Freeport Macmoran plunders the people's patrimony. In response, West Papua now wants to be free.

From the above, and notwithstanding the changing historical context, we may observe that self-determination has been a response to repression, to inequality, to discrimination. Self-determination is thus an assertion of a people's collective human rights and identity against national oppression.

Whereas national oppression may outwardly appear as the political oppression of a dominant nationality against another, it is important to take note of the class perpetrators of national oppression. National oppression is perpetrated by imperialism and the local ruling classes against the national minorities. The discrimination from the national majority arises from the bias spread through the dominant culture of the institutions of society and unwittingly accepted

by the majority. These are contradictions among the people which should be resolved democratically.

UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK AND ITS LIMITATIONS

When the United Nations (UN) was established after WWII, it appropriated the term *nation* (or *nation-state*) to refer to its member-states, notwithstanding that many of these states are not homogenous entities but are actually multi-national states.

Article 1 of the UN Charter says that among its three purposes is “to develop friendly relations among nations based on the respect for the principle of equality and self-determination of peoples...”

Article 1 of both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) also expressly state that “All peoples have the right to self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.”

Take note that the application of the right of self-determination as used by the UN has been expanded from its original usage to *nations* to now include *peoples*.

The formulation appears to be an unequivocal statement of human rights. This is not as simple as it seems, however, as the controversial question for a long time was how to define the category *people/s*, and which groups would qualify under this category.

With the approval by the UN General Assembly of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2007, indigenous peoples have won international recognition as *peoples*. But what about other oppressed nationalities and national minorities, or even ethnic minorities, who are not

necessarily indigenous peoples but who are presently minority peoples encompassed within wider State systems?

The UN is composed of States which are dominated by local ruling classes who speak as though they represent equally all of the people in their country's population, when in truth, there are significant sections of the population who are oppressed and discriminated against. Furthermore, the majority of these States are subservient to the US superpower. This makes it difficult for oppressed sections of the national population to qualify, in the view of States, as separate *peoples*. Thus the modern States which compose the United Nations are threatened by the very concept of self-determination. In truth, it was the indigenous lobby which brought UNDRIP to fruition, often against the position of their own State systems.

There is no explicit UNDRIP provision that refers to an indigenous people's right to create an independent state. Indeed, Article 46 clearly states: *Nothing in this Declaration may be...construed as authorizing or encouraging any action which would dismember or impair, totally or in part, the territorial integrity or political unity of sovereign and independent States.*

The right of a people to freely determine its political status, in theory, includes the right to form an independent state that stands on equal footing with other nation-states, or otherwise, to define its mode of associating with an existing state wherein it enjoys the same rights as the other constituent peoples of that state.

Thus, the right to self-determination directly translates into the right of peoples to govern themselves without external impositions. Historically, this right covers a wide range of options:

- seceding outright from a state of national oppression and creating their own independent state;
- joining a federation of states as one constituent and co-equal state;

- constituting an autonomous political unit wherein it exercises a degree of self-rule within a broader nation-state; and
- asserting specific rights as defined by the basic laws and through specific processes of the nation-state.

Whereas the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples quibbles on the right to self-determination, the Universal Declaration of the Rights of Peoples, otherwise also known as the Algiers Declaration of 1976 proclaims *that all the peoples of the world have an equal right to liberty, the right to free themselves from any foreign interference and to choose their own government, the right if they are under subjection, to fight for their liberation and the right to benefit from other peoples' assistance in their struggle.*

While there may be a whole range of forms of self-determination, the key issue is the empowerment of the people, the level of organization they are able to build, the struggles that they can successfully wage, including the support that they can generate from the wider population in the country, and internationally, based on the legitimacy of their struggle against oppressive structures.

Presently, despite the great diversity of indigenous peoples worldwide, the truth is that there is also a great commonality in the problems that we face, among them:

- Intensified plunder of land and resources by multinational corporations
- Massive displacement due to large-scale destructive projects of States and imperialist corporations (mines, dams, logging, SEZ, monocrop plantations, etc) and concomitant militarization
- Grave human rights violations under the US-led War on Terror & corresponding "Security" Acts
- Government neglect, deprivation of basic social services, impoverishment

- Racism, chauvinism and discrimination
- National oppression and the non-recognition of our identity as indigenous peoples and national minorities

Today, as we come together for this Study Conference on West Papua self-determination, we in the ILPS and the IPMSDL pledge our solidarity to your struggle. We come together to to learn from each other and build a higher solidarity among indigenous peoples and national minorities in this part of the world. We come together to build our strength to be able to militantly assert our people's rights against national oppression and for self-determination, beyond the parameters circumscribed by the UN. Let us unite as an international indigenous peoples' movement for self-determination and liberation as we strive to build a better world based on a deeper appreciation that imperialism and neo-liberal globalization is at the root of our common problems.

Merdeka!

ON THE NATIONAL QUESTION

*(October Revolution Centennial Celebration Study Conference
May 6, 2017, Malcolm Hall, University of the Philippines)*

Joanna K. Cariño

Cordillera People's Alliance

SANDUGO Alliance of Moro and Indigenous Peoples for Self-Determination

This year, 2017, is the centennial of the October Revolution in Russia and the establishment of the first socialist state. As we commemorate this centennial, it is good to be reminded that the right of nations to self-determination was a key issue in the formation of the first socialist state. In fact, Lenin wrote two treatises on this theme: *The Right of Nations to Self-Determination* in 1914, and *The Socialist Revolution and the Rights of Nations to Self-Determination* in 1916, in addition to *Imperialism – The Highest Stage of Capitalism* that same year.

Before this, Stalin also wrote on *Marxism and the National Question* in 1912, and included this theme in *Foundations of Leninism* in 1924. As Stalin was a Georgian minority nationality, he was appointed as the minister for the nationalities, and he would prepare regular reports on the matter. We will use the above references for some historical background.

Historically, the concept of the right to self-determination was originally applied to nations in creating their own independent states, and in asserting national sovereignty and territorial integrity against those that would impose upon them. The

process of the elimination of feudalism and the development of capitalism was also the process of the formation of nations as historically constituted, stable communities of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up as manifested in a common culture.

Such was the case in Western Europe where the market economy integrated formerly self-sufficient feudal estates and other pre-capitalist formations into forming the German, French, Spanish and Italian nations with their own independent nation states. (The United Kingdom was the integration of the England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland nations, with the uneven integration of Ireland, leading to its division).

Capitalism brought trade and commerce, money, improved the system of communication, led to the development of a common language, etc. The bourgeoisie led in nation-building and the integration of what were formerly separate and self-sufficient feudal estates in order to widen and secure their own markets against the competition from the other arising capitalist nation-states. Thus the protectionism of early capitalism.

Unlike in Western Europe, where the development was towards integrated nation-states, in Eastern Europe where capitalist development was uneven, multi-national states were formed, states consisting of several nationalities. Thus minority nationalities were formed side by side with a dominant nationality in the multi-national states (eg. Austria-Hungary, Poland, Russia). There existed inequality and national oppression between the dominant nationality and the minority nationalities, which often broke out outwardly in ethnic strife. It is important to note, though, that these wars were between the bourgeoisie of opposing nations.

The issue of the right to self-determination was a major concern in the formation of the Union of Soviet Socialist

Republics (USSR) after the victory of the October Revolution. One of the major achievements of the socialist USSR before its revisionism and dissolution in 1991 was the unification of the various nationalities of what were once 15 separate republics in Eastern Europe, the Baltics, Central Asia and Transcaucasia for the socialist cause. They willingly joined the USSR with the guarantee of the complete equality of rights for all nations, full recognition of the right of nations to self-determination, regional autonomy for national groupings occupying their own territory within a multi-national state, and the principle of the international solidarity of the working class. Their right to self-determination was guaranteed such that they would be free to leave the Union should their rights be trampled upon.

Expansionism and colonization then, and present-day neo-colonialism have stunted the natural course of development of many nations in Asia, Africa and Latin America, for whom the autonomous development towards the capitalist nation-state has already been effectively closed. Instead, there is the continuing underdevelopment in the so-called “developing” countries, with monopoly capitalism at the root of this phenomenon. The oppression and exploitation brought about by direct colonization then and imperialist globalization now have resulted in the rise of national liberation movements in the colonies and neo-colonies, with the demand for sovereign independence as the form of self-determination.

Within the neo-colonies, and even in pockets inside the developed countries, there is the persistence of pre-capitalist modes of production and social formations among indigenous peoples and national minorities who have been marginalized and minoritized through colonialism and the historical process over time in the countries that they find themselves in. Indigenous peoples are to be found all over the world and many are self-proclaimed “nations,” while living within a defined national territory of a nation-state. Such tenacious persistence of traditional lifestyles even in the face of neo-colonialism and

imperialist globalization are by themselves manifestations of self-determination.

Throughout history, there have been different forms of national oppression:

- Expansion and colonialism of the original nation-states
- Dominant nationality vs minority nationalities in the original multi-national States
- Control by imperialist powers over TW countries thru economic/political/ cultural means (neo-colonialism)
- Within countries, discrimination and oppression of indigenous peoples and minority nationalities (eg. annexation of West Papua by Indonesia)

Whereas national oppression may outwardly appear as the political oppression of a dominant nationality against another, it is important to take note of the class perpetrators of national oppression. National oppression is perpetrated by imperialism and the local reactionary ruling classes against the national minorities. The discrimination from the national majority arises from the chauvinism and bias spread through the dominant culture through the institutions of society and unwittingly accepted by the majority. These are contradictions among the people which should be resolved democratically.

The right of a people to freely determine its political status, in theory, includes the right to form an independent state that stands on equal footing with other nation-states, or otherwise, to define its mode of associating with an existing state wherein it enjoys the same rights as the other constituent peoples of that state. Thus, the right to self-determination directly translates into the right of peoples to govern themselves without external impositions. Historically, this right covers a wide range of options:

- seceding outright from a state of national oppression and creating their own independent state;
- joining a federation of states as one constituent and co-equal state;
- constituting an autonomous political unit wherein it exercises a degree of self-rule within a broader nation-state; and
- asserting specific rights as defined by the basic laws and through specific processes of the state.

While there may be a whole range of forms of self-determination, the key issue is the empowerment of the people, the level of organization they are able to build, the struggles that they can successfully wage, including the support that they can generate from the wider population in the country, and internationally, based on the legitimacy of their struggle against oppressive structures.

From the above discussion of the Marxist-Leninist theoretical framework on the national question, there has been the creative application of theory to the particular conditions of the Philippines and the Cordillera region. Jose Maria Sison wrote on *The Philippine Revolution and the Nationality Question* in 1996.

The Philippines was colonized by Spain. Filipinos asserted their nationhood and waged a revolution to oust the colonizer. On the eve of victory of the Philippine revolution, Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States through the Treaty of Paris. The Filipinos waged the Filipino-American war against the new colonizer. Even after the grant of formal independence, the Philippines continues to be a neo-colony of the United States. The national democratic struggle aims to build a truly sovereign and independent Filipino nation.

Cordillera activists are fortunate that the historian William Henry Scott did so much research and writing on Cordillera

history and issues. He wrote on *The Creation of a National Minority* specifically for Cordillera pre-martial law activists gathered for the Cordillera Congress on National Liberation in 1971. In this seminal article, he clarified the historical formation of the national minorities vav the Filipino majority resulting from their differing experiences with Spanish colonialism, i.e. the majority were colonized and Christianized whereas those who were not effectively colonized were minoritized and became national minorities. He further elaborated on this theme in his book *Discovery of the Igorots: Spanish Contact with the Pagans of Northern Luzon* published in 1974.

As the Cordillera region is the only region where the majority of the population are national minorities, much effort has been put into studying the national minority question in theory and practice. Valuable lessons have been learned from the summing up of revolutionary experience. A special mass course has been developed, clarifying the historical formation of national minorities, the distinct manifestations of national oppression, and our form of self-determination.

And while the national minorities are a special sector in Philippine society, we also belong to the democratic classes and sectors. Through the historical process of integration, we already identify ourselves as Filipinos. Thus we also suffer class exploitation and oppression and the tyranny and plunder of US imperialism.

In the Philippines, the national minorities are the Igorots in the Cordillera region, the Lumad and Moro in Mindanao, various Negrito groups (Aeta, Agta, Aggay), Dumagat, Mangyan, Tumanduk, etc. We define the national oppression which we are subject to as the following:

- landgrabbing and the non-recognition of our ancestral lands and territories,
- political misrepresentation and the non-recognition of indigenous socio-political institutions,

- historical government neglect,
- commercialization and vulgarization of indigenous culture,
- institutionalized discrimination,
- militarization and ethnocide.

Just last November, we launched SANDUGO, the alliance and movement of the Moro and indigenous peoples of the Philippines for self-determination and a just peace. We have been actively involved in the peace negotiations between the Government and the CPP-NPA-NDF, and submitted our proposals to be included in a new separate section on the rights of national minorities to their ancestral lands and territories in the NDF draft of the Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms.

This coming September, national minorities from all over the country will again journey (Lakbayan) and converge in the National Capital Region in a Salubungan ng mga Pambansang Minorya para sa Sariling Pagpapasya at Makatarungang Kapayapaan.

The different organizations which make up Katribu, the national alliance of indigenous peoples' organizations (including my organization, the Cordillera People's Alliance), and SANDUGO, the alliance of Moro and Indigenous Peoples, acknowledge the continuing relevance of the October Revolution as the lessons drawn from here continue to guide us in our struggles against national oppression and for self-determination, and, in unity with the Filipino people, for national democracy and a just peace, with a socialist future.



SANDUGO:

a contraction of the Filipino word “isang dugo” which means one blood, is a national alliance and movement of Moro and indigenous peoples for self-determination. The Moro and indigenous peoples are the National Minorities in the Philippines. They are the special sectors of society who face similar problems as the rest of the Filipino people --- feudal inequalities, corrupt and repressive governance, and foreign domination --- but distinctly suffer from national oppression.

The National Minorities are the economically, politically, and socially marginalized ethnolinguistic groups in the Philippines. They comprise roughly 15-20% of total Philippine population.

MOVEMENT OF MORO AND INDIGENOUS PEOPLES FOR SELF-DETERMINATION

Room 304 NCCP Building, 879 EDSA, Brgy. West Triangle, Quezon City 1104, Philippines
sandugo.org | sandugo.kmkmisp@gmail.com | fb.com/SandugoNatMin