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Resisting the Culture of Noise and Irrelevance

Being noisy is not cool

■ By Reuben Muni

Faculty make a stand on high-pitched misdirections among our studentry

There is no reason to shout at the top of your voice if you want to tell your friends that you got a perfect score in your last Math 11 long exam. A simple “I got a perfect score” in the calmest manner does not reduce the fact that you are a math savant. There is no reason to be shouting if you are an emcee of a program just to emphasize the point that your audience is awed by your stage presence. That’s what the microphone should do for you. Shouting will not improve your hosting skills. On the contrary, shouting can make your voice hoarse, temporarily or permanently, nipping your upcoming hosting career in the bud. There is no reason for you to tell all the people passing the UP Baguio lobby that your thesis topic was approved by your adviser. Unless they will be your respondents or key informants, chances are, most of them will not even remember what you had for a thesis topic. They may not even remember you.

I am writing this piece because there is a specter haunting the UP Baguio campus. It is the culture of noise and irrelevance. This specter is not at all spectacular. I am glad that in the last meeting of the UP Baguio University Council, which



is composed of faculty members holding the rank of assistant professors and above, the issue of noise during class hours as a result of both official and unofficial student activities was discussed substantively. For me, however, it is not just an issue of noise. It is the culture of noise and irrelevance that is starting to creep into the campus today. It is UP Baguio culture turning kitsch. Dealing with the noise is just scratching the surface.

I use the term ‘issue’ or more accurately, ‘public issue’ the way that the sociologist C. Wright Mills used the term. Mills made a distinction between a ‘personal trouble’ and a ‘public issue.’ If it is only a few individuals who are noisy and, say another student or

a faculty member’s rest period is disturbed, then it’s a ‘personal trouble’ for the affected student or teacher. *Malas lang niya*. But, if it involves hordes of noisy individuals, say in a campus program or even a class activity that routinely disrupts the conduct of work by teaching and non-teaching personnel on campus or the study period of other students who are

equally entitled to their own space on campus, there is no doubt that it is a ‘public issue.’ Thus, I believe that what we have now is an issue.

To take it a step further, this issue of noise, which has persisted for some years now, seems to have taken the shape of what another sociologist, Emile Durkheim, calls as the state of anomie, roughly translated in English as ‘normlessness.’ It is tempting to immediately agree with this statement. All the noise and the meaningless activities, most of which target the freshmen as if they are helpless rabbits in the prairie, seem to have broken down the barriers of courtesy and mutual respect, not only between fellow university students but in some cases even between university students and the university faculty. There just seems to be no rules anymore. “Normlessness,”

you would perhaps also say and agree.

But I beg to differ. As I mentioned earlier, the issue of noise has taken a cultural dimension: the culture of noise and irrelevance. It has reached that level that we take for granted that things were not this way before at UP Baguio. Or at least, things were a little more tolerable before. But the scene today in the UP Baguio campus is really different. Some of us love to say that “UP is the microcosm of Philippine society.” In the case of UP Baguio, it is not only the microcosm of Philippine contemporary society but it draws its inspiration from it. Inspiration is a beautiful word. But let me use that in another sense. Many of the programs that are happening within the campus today are “inspired” by noon-time and early evening shows that we see on Philippine TV. The very same shows that we critique and abhor in our class discussions become the template of most of these campus programs. The very same shows over which we dare to voice our protest on issues like child abuse, promoting the culture of mendicancy, and gender discrimination are the very same shows that we love to imitate. Many of the campus programs I have seen lately follow the “Showtime” format on ABS-CBN. For me, this is NOT the only way that university students, UP students for that matter, can showcase their creativity and talent.

The preeminent anthropologist Clifford Geertz wrote a very interesting chapter in one of his books, *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology*. In a chapter suggestively titled “Common Sense as a Cultural System,” he argues that what is considered as ‘common-sensical’ is not always the same in every society or social group. What is ‘common-sense’ for a Filipino may not be ‘common-sense’ for a Japanese. Common sense therefore is cultural. I believe that this perspective can help us see through what is happening in our campus today. The culture of noise and irrelevance has



Thai Open University officials visit UP Baguio

Officials of administration, faculty and staff of the Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (STOU) in Bangkok, Thailand visited UP Baguio last month and were welcomed by the Executive Staff led by Chancellor Priscilla Macansantos. They were oriented by Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Alipio Garcia on the academic programs of UP Baguio. Led by PIC head Leah Abayao, students and alumni from the Program for Indigenous Culture presented music and dance of the Cordillera. The group was also given a campus tour. The STOU is a distance learning school that uses self-instructional media, radio broadcast, television programs, satellite communication and the internet for delivery of curricula under its bachelor, masters, graduate diploma and certificate programs. STOU programs are in liberal arts, educational studies, management science, law, economics, health science, home economics, agricultural extension and cooperatives, political science, communication arts, science and technology, and nursing.

taken a ‘common-sensical’ form for those who either *deliberately* or *unwittingly* display such “cultural traits.” They do not know that what they are doing is NOT common-sensical for me and for the many others who believe that this culture of noise and irrelevance must come to an end.

It is in this direction that I would like to pursue my argument. The only way to put an end to the culture of noise and irrelevance that we observe in UP Baguio today is to resist it. How do we resist it? I believe that voicing our objection to it is the first step. Activities, whether a musical show, an educational discussion, or a public forum being held within the UP Baguio premises, must ensure that what participants will be doing will not only be meaningful to the sponsoring groups and organizations alone but *must be able to reflect UP’s motto: honor and excellence*. If there is no honor in doing it and if there is no excellence involved in it, forget it. *There is no substitute for honor and excellence*. Moreover, to resist the culture of noise and irrelevance is to work towards

a culture that promotes the creation of activities that are both *meaningful and relevant not only to a few sectors or groups within the University but to the widest possible audience*.

We already have the rules on how to make our activities meaningful and relevant. What we have lost and what we ought to have, once again, is the culture. ■

Concerned faculty from the three colleges of UP Baguio have signed up in support of this statement.



TIMEK

— is an Ilocano term which means ‘voice’. It is a column that members of the faculty in the Governance and Public Policy (GPP) Program and the Department of Economics and Political Science (DEPS) write for **Ti Similla**. It aims to provide information and perspective on issues relevant to the Cordillera region in order to encourage public discourse.

De-/Reconstructing a Third Organic Act

■ By Lorelei Mendoza, with reports from Santos Jose Dacanay III and Alice FolloSCO

The Working Draft of the Third Organic Act was the output of the Third Autonomy Act Drafting Committee (TAADC) of the RDC through a Technical Working Group (TWG). These bodies were constituted on March 7 and March 11, 2011 respectively. The TWG was instructed to base the draft of the Third Organic Act on Republic Act No.

8438. In addition, the proposed provisions must adhere to the so-called ‘principles of autonomy’ which are (1) permanent regional identity; (2) non-diminution of existing benefits and powers; (3) nationally-paid officials and employees will continue to be nationally paid; (4) subsidy from the national government; and (5) after the period of subsidy, the national government shall continue to provide sufficient budgetary allocation to the region to ensure financial stability and sustenance. Sub-groups of the TWG worked on initial provisions which were collated and integrated through TWG meetings held from April 14 to May 10 and presided over by RDC Co-Chair Virgilio Bautista, Cesar Liporada, Chair of the Development Administration Committee of the RDC, and Atty. Alex Bangsoy. The completed output of the TWG was submitted to the TAADC on May 16, 2011.

Since then several consultation meetings have been called by the TAADC-RDC to discuss comments on the provisions of the Working Draft of the Third Organic Act. A first was held on May 31, 2011 with members of RDC-CAR and members of the Cordillera Association of Regional Executives (CARE). A second



meeting held on June 10, 2011 was a public consultation attended by close to 200 persons representing local government units (LGUs), civil society organizations, academic institutions, the media, and officials and employees of regional line agencies (RLAs).

A third was held on June 29, 2011 with 84 participants from LGUs, non-government organizations (NGOs), academe, media, and members of the former Cordillera Executive Board (CEB), Cordillera Regional Assembly (CRA) and Cordillera Bodong Administration (CBA). The latest meeting (as of this writing) was held on August 9, 2011 at the RDC Hall of the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), CAR at Leonard Wood Road. Mayor Mauricio Domogan, Chair of the TAADC, presides at these meetings. Another meeting is set for August 24. A UP Baguio representative was present at the June 10 and August 9 meetings.

The Working Draft as of June 13, 2011 consists of a preamble, sixteen Articles and 140 Sections (see www.cordillera.gov.ph). It is a document that is rapidly being revised with additional inputs and reactions submitted by individuals and organiza-

tions from both government and private sectors. Meetings have been held and scheduled beyond a deadline announced earlier. It seems that there was an intention to submit the document to Congress, at the earliest, at the beginning of its session in July this year and to schedule a plebiscite by 2012. However, the TAADC appears to

have heeded the remarks that the drafting of the Third Organic Act is being hurriedly undertaken and that the consultations have not been widespread nor have reached the ‘grassroots’ level.

UP Baguio’s participation in this ‘drafting’ activity commenced with the attendance of Alice FolloSCO, University Researcher of the Cordillera Studies Center, at the June 10, 2011 meeting. After the meeting she immediately contacted the members of the Governance and Public Policy (GPP) program requesting reactions to the June 13, 2011 draft. Dr. Lydia Casambre and Dr. Steven Rood, former UPB faculty members and former member and head, respectively of the Governance and Public Policy (GPP) Program of the Cordillera Studies Center, UP Baguio submitted their comments. These, together with suggestions from the faculty of the Department of Economics and Political Science (DEPS), were put together into a 9-page document with a list of comments on the substance and style of the provisions of the Working Draft and submitted to the TAADC on June 27, 2011. Following are the more salient points contained in the document.

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Is not the 'distinctiveness of the region' necessary?

The Working Draft lacks a clear and powerful articulation of a *raison d'être* of an autonomous Cordillera region. For example, the '*ili*' [or the 'local communities' if one prefers not to use the term *ili*] is nowhere to be found in the Third Organic Act. Based on social science researches by the Cordillera Studies Center, the distinctiveness of the region lies in the political and social practices of its local communities. It can be argued that recognizing and 'empowering' these local communities politically and administratively is the very reason for the pursuit of Cordillera Autonomy. It is worrisome that if the crafters of the Third Organic Act continue to side-step, or worse, ignore the fundamental role that local-level autonomy, i.e., at the '*ili*'-level, plays in the identity of the Cordilleran, it will have lost a crucial platform from which to reach out and include the people at the 'grassroots' as allies in this project to establish an autonomous Cordillera Region.

A similar sentiment was expressed during the June 10 meeting by Dr. Peter Cosalan and Atty. Joe Molintas who argued for stressing the 'uniqueness of the Cordillera and its indigenous communities and to infuse the Working Draft with provisions that reflect the values of the Cordillerans.' The response of Mayor Mauricio Domogan was to point out that the provisions have to be crafted in such a way that a balance is achieved between highlighting the uniqueness of the Cordillera as home to indigenous peoples and the fact that there is the presence of non-Cordillerans. This balance, according to Mayor Domogan, is an advantage particularly in convincing Congress that all inhabitants of the Region will benefit from the grant of regional autonomy.

At both June 10 and August 9 meetings, differing opinions surfaced on whether to have a 'broad' or 'narrow' definition of who is a 'Cordilleran.' The relevant provision in Article I in the Working Draft states "The term Cordilleran shall apply to all Filipino citizens who are

domiciled within the territory of the Cordillera Autonomous Region." It was clarified that the term domicile refers to 'permanent' residence.

Why an additional 'layer' of regional government?

The Working Draft proposes to add a layer of regional government to the normal operations of the national government. The national government agencies will continue to operate and national government employees will continue to be nationally paid. The regional government will not be taking over from the national government. And yet there are 'Regional Executive Assistants which shall coordinate, harmonize and oversee the functions of the various regional line agencies in the region' (see Article VI of Working Draft).

Note that in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), the functions of the national government agencies are devolved and their personnel are paid by the regional government. Why is this not the case for the proposed Cordillera Autonomous Region? Perhaps the crafters of the Working Draft are hoping to dispel one of the oft-cited reasons for the rejection of the Second Organic Act in 1998 – the fear among nationally paid government employees that they would 'suffer' the fate of those who were affected by the devolution that followed the implementation of the Local Government Code of 1991. This is what they expect to happen when national government powers get devolved to the regional government of the Cordillera Autonomous Region.

Is it after all only about financial resources?

It appears that the Third Organic Act is all about financial resources (see Article VIII on Sources of Revenues and Other Fiscal Matters)!

Section 73 (a) proposes that "the regional government shall have a share in the internal revenue taxes equivalent to 1% ... in addition to the internal revenue allotment shares of the local government units. Eighty percent of such share shall be appropriated in the annual regional budget for development projects." If the

Internal Revenue Allotment released to all local government units in 2011 is 280 billion pesos, one percent of that is about 2.8 billion pesos.

Further, the section states that "the internal revenue allotment share of the regional government shall be released directly to the regional government treasurer and shall not be subject to any lien or holdback that may be imposed by the National Government for whatever purpose." This implies that the Cordillera Regional Government will receive **automatic** sets of revenue. Again this is not the case for the ARMM where 95% of the ARMM budget, except for the 5% which is locally raised, goes through DBM and Congress like any government Department.

Section 76 proposes that "the national government shall provide appropriations for the mandatory organizational structure and positions of the regional government." These positions include that of the governor, vice-governor, assembly members, regional executive assistants, members of the office of the regional governor and regional management staff. Why are the positions of the regional government not funded out of the regional government's budget?

Section 134 of Article XV: Transitory Provisions states that "the national government shall continue its annual allotment to the regional government and devolved regional line agencies, and in addition, provide the Cordillera Autonomous Region an annual assistance of Ten billion pesos for the first five years and Five billion pesos for the next five years..." Together with the one percent share of Internal Revenue taxes provided by A one percent share in the internal revenue taxes provided by Section 73 (a) and the annual assistance provided by Section 134 add up to billions of pesos that will be given to the Regional Government. As someone remarked 'a billion pesos here, a billion pesos there, and pretty soon you are talking about real money!'

Another important input in the par-

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Cordillera Day 2011

A just and lasting peace: an elusive dream?

*“Genuine peace is possible
only where justice is nurtured”*

■ By Erlinda Palaganas

I had the honor of being part of the presidium for the revered joint Peace Consultation with the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP). The Joint Consultation was the first of its kind in the country, consulting indigenous peoples, conducted jointly

and in plenary by the official representatives of the GPH and the NDFP. The consultation was held at the grassroots in a far flung village, simultaneous with the well attended Cordillera Day celebration. This was a great effort on the part of the organizers – the Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA) and KATRIBU Party List who made the consultation multi-sectoral and regional in scope and with a significant number of national and international observers. It was also an occasion to remember historic moments of the IPs such as the struggles and victories over the Chico River Dam led by Ama Macli-ing Dulag and the triumph over the Cellophil Resource Corporation (CRC).

The Joint Consultation held the theme: *“Addressing the Roots of the Armed Conflict towards a Just and Lasting Peace.”* I felt small and unworthy to be part of the presidium, described as a “presidium of great probity and track



record of advocating for the recognition and promotion of IPs rights.” I was truly honored to be amidst Rev. Leon Mateo Jr., official representative of Bishop Elorde Sambat, Northern Luzon Jurisdiction-United Church of Christ in the Philippines (NLJ-UCCP); Sr. Alice Sobrevinas, OSB, Sta. Escolastica Convent; Geraldine Fiag-oy, anthropologist and researcher; and Rev. Denver Marerro, official representative of the Rt. Rev. Renato Abibico, Episcopal Diocese of Northern Luzon. I represented the academe as a Professor of Management of the University of the Philippines Baguio.

The GPH panel was headed by Ednar Gempesaw Dayanghirang, a Lumad (indigenous peoples of Mindanao), belonging to the Mandaya tribe of Davao Oriental. He is a member of the 5-person GPH panel for peace negotiations with the NDFP. He is also the chairman of the Reciprocal Working Committee (RWC)

for the drafting of the Comprehensive Agreement on Social Economic Reforms (CASER). With him were Fr. Albert Alejo Jr. (from the Society of Jesus, and member of the RWC for the drafting of CASER); Jimid Mansayagan (a Lumad, belonging to the Aromanen Manobo of North Cotabato Province, Region 12 in Central Mindanao; one of the consultants for indigenous peoples of the RWC for the drafting of CASER) and their secretariat from the Office of the Presidential

Adviser on the Peace Process (OPAPP).

The NDFP panel was officially represented by Rafael De Guzman Baylosis, one of the NDFP consultants on the Peace Process and a member of the NDFP RWC-CASER. Beverly L. Longid, President of the KATRIBU Partylist, was with the panel as a resource person on IPs of the NDFP upon the invitation of the NDFP Peace Panel.

The pursuit of peace

In her introduction, Sr. Alice reiterated what peace is all about. She said, “Peace is not merely an absence of war, an absence of hostilities. Peace is not only the silencing of guns. Peace is, above all, the well being of every woman, man and child. Peace lies in a just and equitable distribution of the earth’s resources. In concrete, peace begins when the hungry are fed and when the thirst for justice is quenched. Genuine peace is only possible

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is a society where justice is nurtured by the dignity felt by every human being – free from poverty, cynicism, violations and other evils borne out by greed and the insatiable crave for power. Thus, peace is not solely a term and a concept. It is a process.”

After six years of impasse, the peace negotiations were resumed between the GPH and the NDFP from February 15-21 in Oslo, Norway. There are four substantive agenda in the peace negotiation between the GPH and the NDFP. One, the respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, resulting in the signing of a Comprehensive Agreement on Respect for Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law (CARHIHL) in 1998; Two, on social and economic reforms, the signing of a Comprehensive Agreement on Social and Economic Reforms (CASER) is much anticipated before the year ends; Three, on constitutional and political reforms, the signing of the Comprehensive Agreement on Political and Constitutional Reforms (CAPCR) is targeted in early 2012; and Four, on the end of hostilities and disposition of forces, a Comprehensive Agreement on End of Hostilities and Disposition of Forces (CAEHDF) will be completed and signed by the Panels in mid-2012.

It is recognized by both parties that the CASER is the core of the peace negotiations primarily because it would address the roots of the armed conflict, the rationale behind the long-running revolution in the country. Also, the IPs' concerns must be a major element in this dialogue. Previous bilateral agreements were also upheld and confidence-building measures were discussed. Included in the bilateral agreements is the Hague Joint Declaration which states that “the common goal of the negotiations shall be the attainment of a

just and lasting peace and that the holding of such must be in accordance with mutually acceptable principles, including national sovereignty, democracy and social justice and no precondition shall be



Dr. Palaganas (second from left) with barefoot doctors and nurses of Barangay Uneg, Lacub

made to negate the inherent character and purpose of the peace negotiations”.

GPH and NDF Panel Presentations

Both panels presented their programs on the CASER. GPH representative, Mr. Dayanghirang, claimed that although the “GPH and NDFP are contending forces, they are also partners and on equal footing in the quest for a just and lasting peace, and development.” The GPH’s draft on CASER shall address and contain the following: poverty, poor delivery of social services, marginalization and exploitation of indigenous peoples, inequitable distribution of wealth, unemployment and underemployment, and destruction of the environment.

Rafael Baylosis delivered the NDFP opening statement, encouraging the people to bring out their true issues before the two panels. He called for the implementation of and faithful compliance with international standards, particularly the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). He said that the NDFP is in solidarity with people

who call for a moratorium on large scale commercial mining. He reiterated that true partnership in the peace process must be based on the analysis of the basic problems of Philippine society and their corresponding solutions. It must also be based on agreement by both parties to obey or fulfill agreements in good faith. He pointed out the insincerity of the GPH in past peace negotiations (e.g. the January 1987 Mendiola Massacre where state security forces killed many peasant demonstrators who demanded land reform; the unilateral suspension of the GPH in 2004 of the JASIG [Joint Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees] and issuance of warrants of arrest against NDFP consultants and officials). He informed

the delegates that the NDFP agreed to resume the negotiations with the Aquino regime for two reasons: 1) the GPH restored the JASIG and suspended the warrant of arrests against the said 17 NDFP consultants; and 2) the head of the GPH negotiation panel earlier declared to the press that the CPP-NPA-NDFP is not a terrorist organization because the GPH has a policy not to negotiate with terrorists. He also said that the armed conflict might stop anytime, if the GPH and NDFP through their negotiation panels sincerely agree on a concise and meaningful agreement addressing the root causes of armed conflict. He also challenged the GPH to provide immediate economic relief for the people to cope with worsening poverty, while the CASER is being consolidated. He said that the NDFP has started formulating proposals to respond to the various IPs Agenda and the Consensus IPs Policy Agenda last year and the National IP Summit Declaration last March.

Peoples' Response

The issues, demands and aspirations for a just and lasting peace of the six provinces, Baguio City, and five sectors of the urban poor, women, youth, workers and peasants of the Cordillera region were then presented to the Panels. The common issues of IPs among the six provinces of the Cordillera and Baguio City revolved around the following:

1. Recognize indigenous peoples' right to self determination and central to this is the recognition of ancestral land rights including resources found therein, including respect and support of traditional systems of governance;
2. Respect indigenous socio-political systems against political misrepresentation and undermining of indigenous systems. This concern called for the review and revision of the IPRA and of the NCIP and reversal of anomalous decisions, investigating the performance of the NCIP officials and personnel, and holding those found to be violating IPs rights accountable; ensure genuine participation of IPs in the setting-up of any structure meant for IPs to establish a commission truly dedicated to upholding the rights of IPs; and transparent and participatory selection and appointment process in such structure, and in its monitoring, assessment and evaluation;
3. Stop destruction of the environment, to include the cancellation of all approved mining applications and the repeal of the Mining Act of 1995; a moratorium on hydrodams and geothermal plants, and implement programs on alternative and sustainable energy production; stop logging operations specifically in Apayao and allow the regeneration of logged-out forests; culprit mining firms should indemnify and rehabilitate the communities for

damages due to their operations, specifically the destruction of the Abra river and agricultural lands along its banks, and the denudation of the Abra forests;

4. Stop militarization and violation of human rights, and justice must be served to all victims; end the government's new counter insur-



gency program, Oplan Bayanihan, that violates individual and collective rights;

5. End the commercialization and perversion of indigenous culture such as tourist-oriented festivals; respect and enhance indigenous culture, traditions and practices;
6. Stop corruption in the government that severely affects the delivery of basic social services, and the culprits must be brought to justice;
7. Investigate and prosecute former Pres. Arroyo and other officials for corruption, human rights violations and other crimes against the peoples of the Cordillera;
8. Raise agricultural production in the region based on people's need and promote food security and self-reliance instead of relying on agricultural importation and agro-chemical food production; recognize, revive and strengthen indigenous institutions, knowledge and practices that promote and enhance food security and agricultural

biodiversity;

9. Legislate policies and implement programs that would end the unequal distribution of wealth manifested in the disparity of income and budget allocations;
10. Prioritize IPs in the delivery of basic social services like health, education, livelihood, infrastructure, communications, water, transportation and the like;
11. Sectoral issues and concerns include the high cost of commercialized education that makes it inaccessible to many; develop a nationalist, scientific and relevant education curriculum and ensure academic freedom and freedom of expression. The women called for the respect of women's rights; provision of adequate jobs and rural development to prevent the number of women forced to migrate; institute protection for migrant workers against illegal recruiters and abusive employees; support livelihood and services that will enable the families to meet their daily basic needs; provide support for the urban poor such as land and housing, livelihood and employment opportunities, and adequate social services. Other concerns include stopping of repression in the work places; eliminating contractual and other forms of flexible work; stopping privatization of social services and repeal of the oil deregulation law. There is also the call to legislate across-the-board and nationwide wage increase; implement a national industrialization program to resolve unemployment and under employment.
12. Investigate the scattering of spikes on the roads to Lacub that caused flat tires of several vehicles of participants attending Cordillera Day; prosecute the perpetrators. ■

Sociology and Development Issues

Université du Québec professor lectures at UP Baguio

■ By Narcisa Canilao

Including a critique of certain NGOs in North America and Europe

Dr. Dmitri della Faille of the University of Quebec was in UP Baguio, June 27, 28, and 29, 2011 to share his sociological reflections on development issues, drawn from his researches, developmental practice, and teaching of international development. UP Baguio faculty and graduate students, mostly from the College of Social Sciences, attended the lecture series.

Is development studies still relevant? No and yes, depending on how development is defined. In his first lecture, Della Faille initially cautioned that he would approach the question “Is Development Studies Still Relevant?” not from nowhere but from the perspective of one multiply located as a development researcher, teacher in a graduate program in development, and an observer of development studies programs in Europe and North America. First, he defined development (choosing to give indicators or components rather than the meaning), as pertaining to poverty alleviation, gender equality, health education, autonomy of decision-making, providing solutions to problems of society, among others.

Della Faille then came up with a three-fold typology of study programs in development: international development, local/national development, and disciplinary programs on development. The first type is most visible in Europe and North America, and has two sub-types – international studies (strategic) which includes studies in political science, macro-economics, and history; and international solidarity or cooperation studies which is closest to the missionary vision. The second type, local/national development studies is usually taken by local administrators who want to develop expertise in, for example, sustainable development. Such an



Dr. Dmitri della Faille

expertise may be exported to other countries. This type of development course works closely with governments and state agencies, and it is not expected to be critical of development. The third type are the disciplinary programs – anthropology, economics, history, agro-economy, statistics, and other disciplines, that study or include development among their topics. In his development studies typology, della Faille said, it is the strategic type of international development that is most popular among students, while the solidarity type of international development studies is the least popular.

So, is development studies still relevant? If development means “imposed social change,” “helping” or “aid,” the exportation of development’s “birth defects” (pertaining to the post-war context of the rise of development), if development stud-

ies is not truly but only nominally inter or multi-disciplinary – then development studies is no longer relevant. But yes, development studies remains relevant if it is a venue for understanding and mulling over solutions to inequalities, if it adds the important ingredients – “responsibility,” “sustainability,” and if the multi-leveled complexity of development discourse and theories are analyzed vis-à-vis the realistic *habitus* of developing and participating communities. Conceived in this way, development studies can continue providing well-trained and skilled work force in development work.

Some Critical Reflections on NGOs

The graduate class of SDS 271 (Ethical Issues in Development) was the venue for della Faille’s second lecture. Normally above and away from criticism and censure, NGOs became the object of sociological analysis here. The main theme of the lecture was: while NGOs present themselves as non-state on the one hand, and non-market on the other, in reality they are structurally isomorphic with government and the market. Big international NGOs based mostly in North America and Europe, are of course the objects of della Faille’s structuralist analysis, because it is these NGOs that he has researched, especially their presence in Africa and Latin America. He especially takes issue with the way these NGOs have called themselves “civil society” and having been the most visible, the way they have monopolized the title to themselves, to the exclusion of other bona fide civil societies such as other types of societies working for causes – religious, the arts, labor unions, grassroots, militants, and minorities. This has been tantamount to the latter groups being branded, and actu-

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Vending and the Politics of Space in Baguio City

Paper Presented by Dr. B. Lynne Milgram,
Cordillera Studies Center Research Affiliate

■ By Maileenita Peñalba

Women vendors negotiate uneasy terms with local government and leaseholders just to make a living

The Baguio market is my favorite ‘tourist spot’ in the city. Why I have this sustained fascination with the Baguio market is simple- I grew up in a small, quaint town where the market only appears twice a week, every Tuesday and Friday, days that we locals fondly call “mother’s day.” Our market is not exactly remarkable; you see more or less the same wet and dry goods arranged facing each other along a narrow, open space and the same mothers, women who celebrate their day buying and selling goods until there is nothing left to buy and sell. The Baguio City market, on the other hand, is brimming with all sorts of people offering all kinds of products from “honey bee” to DVD, and services from shoe repair to dollar exchange. The city market is there seven days a week, attracting tourists and locals with its colors, delights and best finds. It is therefore no wonder that the Baguio City market also captured the fascination of Cordillera Studies Center’s (CSC) research affiliate, Dr. B. Lynne Milgram, who presented a paper on June 30, 2011 on women selling at the Baguio City market.

Dr. Milgram is a professor in the Faculty of Liberal Studies at the Ontario College of Art and Design University in Toronto, Canada. Her paper, “Taking the Street into the Market: Vending and the Politics of Space in Baguio City,” is about women’s informal sector work and the various challenges and opportunities women face in their struggle to make a living. In particular, Milgram, a cultural anthropologist, focused her research on women selling in the aisles and roadways of Baguio City market and how they have been able to organize themselves and suc-



cessfully lobby to gain access to such spaces for commerce.

Taking the Street into the Market

The thriving street economy in Baguio City, according to Milgram, illustrates how government agenda and policy can mesh with street sellers’ needs. Such a situation simultaneously creates a paradox. With the explosion of street sellers’ population within the last fifteen years resulting from the lack of viable livelihood brought about by the 1997 financial crisis and the 2008 global economic slowdown, the city government of Baguio has become more tolerant of vendors’ presence in the streets during specific hours, allowing them to make a decent living out of street vending. Street vending, however, occupies an “edgy” position according to Milgram. While vendors generate income for their families and actually satisfy the consumption needs of urban residents and visitors, their presence in the streets “simultaneously frustrates the city government’s efforts to establish a clean, tidy, neat, vendor-free modern

center.” Such urban dynamics creates tension which becomes particularly evident in Baguio City as seen in the ongoing conflicts and confrontations among street vendors, large retailers and local officials regarding who has rights over access to the street for commerce.

Efforts to remove the street vendors have thus become mostly unsuccessful as vendors have become more organized, demanding that government provide them suitable spaces where they can sell. Given the fact that these vendors need a source of income in these difficult times, the city government, through the market superintendent, has allowed these vendors access into the market and provided them specific hours to sell along the market aisles and roadways. These vendors are then charged space rental of P10 to P20, allowing them to sell goods such as cooked food, fresh produce, manufactured goods and grooming implements during specific hours of the day. By setting up business in these in-between spaces of the public market, that these vendors, mostly women, “in effect activate what David Harvey calls new economic zones and they then challenge their exclusion from the city’s modernizing plan,” Milgram argued.

What is remarkable in such incorporation of street vendors into the market is the fact that they have successfully negotiated their claim to use public space for commerce despite their “illegal and informal” status. While city government legislations, past and present, have been unsupportive of the expansion of the informal sector economy, city officials have been unsuccessful in invoking these laws in order to establish their own version of

continued next page

Vending and Politics of Space, *from page 9*

a neat, tidy, modern public market. What we see in the Baguio City market today is in fact the proliferation of street and aisle vending and the complicity of the market authority, legal and permanent stall owners and consumers in such activity.

The Politics of Space

One unique feature of the Baguio City market, Milgram remarked, is its wide aisles and roads that seem to invite vendors in. These spaces have now turned into arenas of contestation given the limited commercial space available in the market and the increasing number of itinerant vendors demanding stable, more or less permanent spaces to sell. With the vendors' success in getting the condition of "maximum tolerance" in 1996, they were allowed to use specific sections of these market aisles and roadways during specific hours of the day. This, Dr. Milgram argued, illustrates how these vendors transform space use and value to confront the state's conflicting idea of how public space is to be used.

Interestingly, with the current policy that allows vendors access to these public spaces for a minimal space rental fee, these aisles and roads have now become the "official" host to semi-permanent women vendors whose survival techniques have put into question rigid categories of formal/informal sector and legal/illegal work. While the fact that these otherwise informal/illegal vendors are somehow granted formal or legal status because they now pay rental fees to the local government, they are still considered informal or illegal under the Market Code by virtue of their semi-permanence and their non-payment of the regular, formal fees for the permit or license to sell. This situation thus creates blurred boundaries between what is formal and informal, legal and illegal work. As Milgram clearly argued, "informal sector work in Baguio City seems to suggest that by expanding the spatial parameter of their trade to new business frontiers such as the aisles and roadways of the public market, vendors challenge taken for granted understandings

of formal/informal work, legality/illegal-ity."

Through the use of these contested spaces, Milgram also looked into what she called the "amoeba-like relationship" between what's formal/informal sector work and legal/illegal enterprise and how women can facilitate a livelihood given current economic and political conditions. With her case study data, Milgram presented how the aisle vendors forged "innovative and special trade relations" with permanent stall owners, allowing them to survive in an otherwise highly competitive environment. Aisle vendors, for instance, only sell products that are different from what permanent stall owners within their immediate vicinity sell. There are also times when these vendors sell the stall owners' products voluntarily and without commission in their space along the more accessible market aisle. In exchange, stall owners provide aisle vendors storage of their goods at night and they even bring them out and sell them when the aisle vendor is late or ill. The relationship between the aisle vendors and the permanent lease holders, however, is not always easy and without conflict. There are also permanent lease holders who have prohibited selling in front of their stalls or who have continuously complained about aisle vendors due to loss of sales. The women vendors have therefore learned how to constantly negotiate with those in the formal or legal sector such as the local government and the permanent lease holders with regard to their access to and use of the public space for a viable livelihood. ■



Third Organic Act, *from page 4*

ticipation of UP Baguio in the activity of drafting the Third Organic Act was provided by Dr. Santos Jose Dacanay III, Professor of the Institute of Management. He was invited as a guest resource person in the third week of May by the TWG to comment on the provisions included in the Article on "Sources of Revenues and Other Fiscal Matters." Following is a condensed version of his remarks.

First, Dacanay says that "what struck me was that the source of revenues is basically the national government. The article explicitly prohibits the regional government from imposing taxes. Hence the strategy adopted was to get a percentage share for the autonomous regional government from the national taxes that are collected in the region. I suggested that they expand it to include all other possible sources." The Working Draft of June 13, 2011 contains a provision, as Dacanay suggested, stating that the regional government has a two percent share out of Economic Zones Tax (see Section 73c). Second, he remarked that "there should be a clear basis of the estimates of uses of funds in order to be able to assess whether the sources are sufficient. The group tasked to work on the revenue sources, to their credit, did come up with sound estimates." Third, Dacanay disagrees with a provision contained in Section 76 (a) that "each national government agency [shall] appropriate not less than 5% of its nationwide lump sums to fund priority programs in the region." He argues that "there are different levels of needs as well as varying development concerns across sectors; hence this proposal would not be sound."

Fourth, Dacanay says that the working draft paid lip-service to the use of other tools of revenue generation such as fees and charges, the use of build-operate-and transfer schemes and its variants, loans and possibly bond flotation, donations and grants, as well as the grant of incentives. ■

Sociology, from page 8

ally treated as “uncivil society.” MASDS student A.K. Riva wittingly translates this hierarchical distinction as that between the *sibilisado* (civil society) and the *barbariko* (uncivil society).

These NGOs are not really non-state. They are structured like governments, they have hierarchies. They work closely with the state, and at worse they are instrumentalities, or extensions of the state. Some NGOs in developing countries, according to della Faille, are actually results of calculations of foreign governments in order to disrupt local political organization. In another sense, if political entails coercion, it is wrong to say in the case of some NGO's that they do not coerce, and thus they are more statist rather than civil societies.

On the other hand, these NGOs are really not non-market, because some do business, act like corporations, and in the case of a few, make profit. It is hence wrong to say that NGOs are non-profit organizations. Furthermore, it cannot be denied that some NGOs promote neo-liberalism. Particularly in the 1990s privatization trend, some NGOs functioned “to fill in” the functions that governments were not able to do. Another neo-liberal dimension of these NGOs is revealed in the way they are in competition with each other in terms of access to public platforms, funding sources, number of converts or volunteers, and authority on a subject, which in this case is their commodity.

In the area of problematization, NGOs choose which aspect of society they problematize and the problem becomes their specialization. In calling attention to their special problem field these NGOs resort to advertising tactics - appeal to emotions through heart-breaking or gruesome stories, arguments of authority (I lived there myself, I am a political scientist), and appeal to statistics.

Is There a Future for International Development?

In this third lecture, della Faille once again clarified the concept of development which has a specific history, having been



Work Force. The 2011 Alumni Homecoming is being handled by a core group that has been meeting regularly on reunion concerns. College Deans like Dr. Wilfredo Alanguí and Dr. Raymundo Rovillos have also dropped in and the UPB Cooperative has sent in their reps. We are inviting interested faculty and alumni to join us. In photo: (front row, from left) Luchie Maranan, Lelet San Luis, RR Rovillos, Vickie Costina, Zenaida Baoanan; (second row, from left) Janice Domogan, Nadine Navarro, Gloria Rodriguera, Ofel Valencia, Julie Calica, Yzanne Merced. For details, pls. text us through contact numbers: 09175062959/ 639176277358

a north to south initiative in the post-war, to remedy extreme economic inequalities among nations and to establish long-lasting peace. Earlier shifts in geopolitics due to the collapse of European empires and the emergence of the US as a global power accompanied by theoretical shifts resulting from seeing nature as a commodity, and new ways of organizing knowledge contributed much to the emergence of international development.

Recent changes in these early determinants and conditions for international development are now creating unprecedented challenges to the concept of international cooperation and unidirectional transfer of knowledge, expertise, and material as well as financial resources. If “international” formerly pertained only to nations, now global partnerships also encompass non-state actors, and institutions. International development, if it has to have a future, will need to rise to the challenges brought about by: failures of economic development policies in the last 40 years, contestations of development from the academe, new focal points, for example, war on terrorism, realigning funds earmarked for international development, rise of MNCs, reconfiguration of geopo-

litical dynamics, and contestations on powerful nations, the UN, the World Bank and the IMF as major actors in development. From a sociological point of view, international development may disappear in 2 or 3 decades, more and more “development” is disappearing and being supplanted by other buzz words. Ultimately, della Faille prognosticates – “We expect a downscaling of objectives as the logic of the market persists.”

The three lectures and the rich exchanges with the audience following every lecture were a timely input into the ongoing review of the Master of Arts in Development Studies (MASDS) by the graduate program faculty through the initiative of College of Social Sciences Dean, Dr. Raymundo Rovillos and other graduate program faculty. Dr. della Faille holds a Ph.D. in Sociology, and has pursued post-doctoral researches in Mexico and Canada. His research interest is the link between knowledge, discourse and underdevelopment. It is hoped that his short stay, and the deep acquaintances he's had with local NGOs and UP Baguio faculty will lead to continuing long-term collaborations with him and the University of Quebec. ■

Dr. Charles Angelo Lansang Young

BS Biology, 1999, UP Baguio

Restoring vision

An ophthalmologist takes stock

■ By Victoria Costina

A Bible verse goes: Where there is no vision, the people perish. Another version writes: Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint. Ophthalmologists can appreciate this either way, but also quite literally. Charles Young, alumnus of UP Baguio, says that he has found it “especially rewarding” to be able to help restore people’s vision, in medical and surgical treatment of eye diseases that ophthalmology provides, alongside eye care services like prescription of eyeglasses and contact lens.

Charles took medicine at Saint Louis University and graduated in 2003. He then worked at Bethany Hospital and La Union Medical and Diagnostic Center in San Fernando City, La Union. He also worked at Sto. Niño Jesus Medical Foundation in Baguio, and did further training at Ilocos Training and Regional Medical Center in San Fernando City. He passed the board last year and now holds clinic at CICOSAT Hospital at San Fernando City.

He initially wanted to go into internal medicine, specializing in cardiology or infectious diseases, but in his senior year he realized he didn’t want the “ultra-toxic” life of an internist. Instead he enjoyed rotation at the ophthalmology department. He did residency at the PGH, do-

ing rehabilitation medicine, intending to sub-specialize in sports medicine. He says he got homesick so he moved to La Union and Pangasinan for work. He decided to train in another field, closer to Baguio. Ophthalmology training was opened at ITRMC; he took this and has found it “very fulfilling.”



About college life, Charles says it was “a bit of an adventure” here at UP Baguio. He got married in his second year, and so he took his studies seriously after that. He was getting “average grades with the occasional 1.5 or 1.75 here and there.” Since he “sucks at math,” he got a 5.0 in Math 11 under Joel Addawe. Chem 26 was also a problem. Then too Gene Abedania gave him a 5.0 for Botany and Abel Villafania flunked him in Zoo 11; in both he recalls being “always absent and late.” So. He got a 1.0 in PE for being on the Taekwondo Varsity Team.

Charles eventually became a member

of the State Varsity Christian Fellowship (SVCF). He was also friends with most of his batchmates and his closest pals were Jonathan Babsa-ay (his classmate all the way from grade 1), now also a physician, graduated from UP-PGH; and Joey Lucas, also a doctor, an alumnus of SLU (Charles’s friend from first year high school).

In spite of the circuitous route he took, Charles knew that if he graduated from UP, he’d stand a better chance of finding work. He says that it was “the whole institution of UP” that helped him most and made him prouder of his heritage. This has in fact made him decide to stay in the country and not “jump ship just yet.” Ophthalmology practice has been good since his patients, healed, are able to “walk unaided, eating by themselves, enjoying the sight of their families.”

Charles is married to Marilen Medina, also an alumnus of UP Baguio. They have two children: Mark Genesis, now in second year, Philippine Science High-CAR; and Chloe Angela, a second grader at SPED Center. Charles calls Marilen a “super mom and wife.” Things have fallen in place for this young doctor who has pursued his life’s own vision. ■



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