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## **Green Neoliberalism, Ecogovernmentality, and Emergent Community: A Case of Coastal Resource Management in Palawan, the Philippines**

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# **Green Neoliberalism, Ecogovernmentality, and Emergent Community** A Case of Coastal Resource Management in Palawan, the Philippines

Despite the burgeoning literature dealing with the formation of ecorational subjects under the neoliberal governmentality of global environmentalism, the complexity of the resource users' agentic practices, which are carried out in the matrix of power relations inherent in a particular resource management regime, remains in need of careful examination. The practice of agency cannot be fully comprehended through the simple binary of power and resistance. This article discusses the agency of resource users and the emerging community, which engage in various practices to expand the social space in which an alternative pattern of resource use, more embedded in the local community's setting, can be made possible.

**KEYWORDS: COASTAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT • NEOLIBERALISM • GOVERNMENTALITY • AGENCY • SOCIAL PRACTICE**

Global environmentalism, which is supported by such discourses as “sustainable development” and “biodiversity conservation,” produces various regimes of resource management, which in turn require subjects with a proper sense of obligation and responsibility as rational managers of nature. Such resource management regimes are constituted by the ideologies of “green neoliberalism,” under which “*neocolonial* conservationist ideas of enclosure and preservation and *neoliberal* notions of market value and optimal resource allocation find common cause” (Goldman 2004, 168). It also can be said that resource management regimes, as the modern apparatuses of power and knowledge, exercise “ecogovernmentality” under which the people go through a process of discipline and normalization to become rational, or more specifically “ecorational,” subjects (Goldman 2001, 2004, 2005; Hanson 2007).<sup>1</sup> In other words, it is a process in which a modern Western view of nature and its relationship with human beings has acquired both legitimacy and authority as a truth regime (Escobar 1996).

While there is burgeoning literature dealing with governmentality and the formation of ecorational subjects in the age of neoliberalism (Agrawal 2005; Goldman 2005; Hanson 2007; Li 2007; Sivaramakrishnan 1999),<sup>2</sup> the aspect that still needs to be examined carefully is the complexity of the agentive practices carried out in the matrix of power relations among various stakeholders. Quite often, such agentive aspect of the resource users tends to be equated with “resistance” (Peluso 1992, 1993) or other counterhegemonic acts, such as “counter-mapping” (Peluso 2005) or “counter-legal strategies” (Tsing et al. 2005, 23–27) against oppressive regulations and institutions. However, the practice of agency cannot be fully comprehended through the simple binary of “power-resistance” (Li 2005a; see also Ahearn 2001; Dove et al. 2008; Ortner 1995). As Tania Li (2005a, 385) has argued, it cannot be presupposed that there are “pristine spaces outside power, pure sites of resistance”; rather, “practices position people as subjects with variable capacities for action and critique.” Subordination and resistance, as well as acquiescence and negotiation, are intermingled inseparably in such practices.<sup>3</sup> This article aims to deal squarely with the complexity of such practices of agency among resource users through a case study of coastal resource management in Palawan.

While being constrained by the neoliberal governmentality of global environmentalism, which requires a standardized regime of resource man-

agement, the agency of resource users engages in various practices to expand the social space in which an alternative pattern of resource use—which would be more embedded in the setting of the local community—can be made possible. In other words, people’s resource use and management in this study can be considered a part of social life, which Sherry Ortner (1996; 2006) calls “serious games.” According to Ortner (1996, 12), social life as constituted by “serious games” is “culturally organized and constructed, in terms of defining actors, rules and goals of the games.” It further consists of “webs of relationship and interaction between multiple, shiftingly inter-related subject positions, none of which can be extracted as autonomous ‘agents’; and yet at the same time there is ‘agency,’ that is, actors play with skill, intention, wit, knowledge, intelligence” (ibid.). Thus the discussion in this article relies on a framework of practice theory concisely summarized by Ortner (ibid., 2): “human action is constrained by the given social and cultural order (often condensed in the term ‘structure’); but there is also an insistence that human action makes ‘structure’—reproduces or transforms it, or both.”

In order to discuss the aspect of “serious game” in resource management, this article focuses on two interdependent processes. First is the process of institutionalization in which a particular regime of coastal resource management—supported by several national laws, administrative orders, and local ordinances—exercises the power to restrict and constrain the daily resource use of people, who are shaped into rational subjects by green-neoliberal governmentality. Second is the process of contextualization in which the agency of the resource users interprets and translates the institution in order to adapt it into a specific situation of local resource use.<sup>4</sup>

Emerging from such practices is a community of resource users, because agentive actions are always “communication with others,” and, as such, “agency entails an ability to coordinate one’s actions with others and against others, to form collective projects, to persuade, to coerce, and to monitor the simultaneous effects of one’s own and others’ activities” (Sewell 1992, 21; cf. Emirbayer and Mische 1998). However, the community discussed in this article cannot be defined by such terms as small size, territorial fixity, group homogeneity, and shared norms and identities (Agrawal and Gibson 2001). It is not a bounded unity that can be counterposed to state, market, and civil society. While maintaining closely knit ties among kinsmen and village peers, the emergent community in this study activates networks with various

stakeholders, who are located beyond the bounded locality and differentially positioned in the matrix of asymmetrical power relations.<sup>5</sup> In view of the characteristics of the community emerging in the midst of the abovementioned dual processes of coastal resource management, this article further argues that a clear boundary between community as a private sphere and civil society as a public sphere cannot be maintained, and the conventional binary of community-civil society fails to capture the complexity of micro level practices of resource users.

After the setting of the research site is described, two interweaving processes of coastal resource management are discussed. The data presented in this article were gathered during fieldwork conducted in a coastal municipality of southern Palawan, a province in the southwestern Philippines. The province of Palawan comprises a main island, which stretches 425 kilometers in length and has a width of 40 kilometers at its widest point, and numerous small islets. The province is bounded by the Sulu Sea on its southeast shore, and by the South China Sea on its northwest shore. It is rich in resources and possesses vast arable land, timber, mineral, and marine products. These abundant resources have enticed a huge number of immigrants from other parts of the country since the mid-twentieth century. As a result, the competition to control, exploit, and, more recently, preserve these resources has increased and “the politics of resource use” dominates the everyday lives of the residents (Eder and Fernandez 1996).

### The Setting: A Stratified Fishing Community

The fieldwork was conducted mainly in a barangay named San Pedro, one of the twenty-two barangays that compose the municipality of Ipil, which lies about 90 kilometers south of Puerto Princesa City, the capital of Palawan.<sup>6</sup> Barangay San Pedro was established by Ilonggo migrant fishermen who, with their families, came to Palawan from Sicogon Island of the Municipality of Carles in Iloilo Province. The first batch of immigrants settled here beginning in the early 1950s. Even though the in-migration of the Ilonggo fishermen ceased in the 1970s, that of other Visayan fishermen from Cebu, Leyte, and Samar continued through the 1980s. Currently, the second-generation Ilonggo migrants who have remained actively engaged in fishing comprise the majority in this coastal settlement.<sup>7</sup>

San Pedro has a total population of 8,656 persons and 1,768 households as of 2008.<sup>8</sup> Compared with the average barangay in the rural Philippines,

San Pedro has a large number of residents engaged in various occupations aside from farming and fishing, particularly because of its proximity to the town proper of Ipil. Barangay San Pedro, in turn, consists of fourteen *purok* (neighborhood) seven of which are on the coast. The study focuses mainly on these seven purok of San Pedro, where most of the fishermen, their families, and others engage in fishing-related livelihood reside.

The research area has a total population of 4,464 persons and 880 households as of 2008. Although an accurate record of the population of fishermen and fishing households is not available, approximate numbers were acquired based on a field survey. Table 1 shows the number of people, households, and fishing boats according to the fishing methods and activities carried out in San Pedro.

**Table 1. Number of persons, households, and fishing boats, based on fishing activities, Barangay San Pedro, 2008**

FISHING ACTIVITIES		NUMBER OF PERSONS	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	NUMBER OF FISHING BOATS
<i>Likom</i>	Owner	7	7	21
	Crew	146	109	—
<i>Kulong</i>	Owner	21	21	46
	Crew	145	68	—
<i>Pangawil</i>	Owner	108	108	155
	Crew	111	73	—
<i>Suwayan</i>		4	4	4
<i>Baklad</i>		3	3	3
<i>Pamanti</i>		19	19	19
<i>Pamana</i>		3	3	3
<i>Likos</i>	Owner	10	10	10
	Crew	6	3	—
<i>Pamarongoy</i>	Owner	5	5	5
	Crew	6	5	—
Dried Fish Dealer		30	30	—
Dried Fish Retailer		4	4	—
Dried Fish Worker		26	17	—
Fresh Fish Retailer		4	4	—
<b>Total</b>		<b>657</b>	<b>507</b>	<b>240</b>

Source: Field survey in 2008

There are two mainstays of commercial fishing in San Pedro in terms of the number of fishermen involved and the amount of fish caught; these are *likom* and *kulong*.<sup>9</sup> Likom is nighttime purse seine for catching round scad (*Decapterus sp.*), indian sardine (*Sardinella Longiceps*), slipmouth (*Family Leiognathidae*), and the like.

A unit of likom fishing group is composed of at least two boats, one with high-powered light to attract fish at night, another carrying the fishing net. One unit of likom costs around P1.2 million (P1 is approximately US\$0.02, as of this writing) for the two boats, and from P700,000 to P1 million for the net. This method of fishing requires a fishing crew of around forty on average, and there are fine distinctions among the ranked officers on the basis of their designated roles and expertise. It is extremely difficult to know the exact number of members of the likom fishing crew owing to the fact that many crew members are on casual work basis. Unlike the regular members of the group, these casual laborers, called *bolero*, do not accompany the operation on a daily basis, and are considered a pool of floating manpower from which boats and community draw services as needed (cf. Veloro 1995). Thus, the total number of crew indicated in table 1 would substantially increase when the number of bolero, fluctuating significantly depending on the season, is included correctly.

Fig. 1. Boats used in Barangay San Pedro for the operation of *kulong* fishing.



Kulong, the other mainstay of commercial fishing in San Pedro, is the daytime purse seine for catching mainly anchovies (*Engraulis japonicus*). Kulong fishing is carried out by one boat that is loaded with the net and, occasionally, by an accompanying boat with an appropriate storage for carrying the catch to shore (fig. 1). The fishing boat for the kulong costs about P200,000 currently, while the fishing net costs about P450,000. Although kulong is carried out usually by a crew of fifteen to twenty men, the group is, similar to likom, a loosely structured organization with flexible membership whose number will increase when the mobile, and hence elusive, bolero are considered.

Apart from “commercial fishing,” various small- and medium-scale fishing activities, or what are officially categorized as “municipal fishing,” can be found in San Pedro. *Pangawil*, hook and line fishing, is one of the municipal fishing methods for catching various kinds of coral fishes such as grouper (*Cephalopholis sexmaculata*), bream (*Nemipterus bathybius*), and snapper (*Etelis coruscans*). Pangawil is quite popular in San Pedro because it requires a small amount of capital and simple gears. It is usually carried out by two to three persons, including the owner of the boat as the skipper. The recent phenomenon of the drastic increase of pangawil fishermen will be discussed later in relation to the institutionalization process of coastal resource management in San Pedro.

There are several traditional fishing methods in San Pedro. Although these methods cannot be said to be market-oriented and have a rather subsistence character, many village residents rely on these activities, particularly during the off-season of major fishing operations. One of the traditional activities is the *suwayan*, a beach seine. Suwayan, a method that requires intensive labor for pulling the net toward the shore, provides an opportunity for daily sustenance for many villagers who otherwise would have no source of income. However, as will be explained in detail later, in the process of coastal resource management the operation of suwayan began to be restricted, and today only four owners of suwayan remain in the village. Another method is called *baklad*, an artificial fish corral made of bamboo, which utilizes the ebb and flow of the sea. Although there are still three persons who own this device at sea, building a baklad has become extremely difficult today, as will be explained in the case to be shown later, owing to the coastal resource management process, particularly its general trend of establishing the Marine Protected Area. There is also *pamanti* or small-scale



gill net fishing, carried out mostly by the owners themselves and occasionally with their wives.

In addition to the many who are engaged in actual fishing operations, a number of people in the community are also involved in fishing-related activities on shore, among whom the dried fish dealer makes up the largest group. They process dried fish using the *kapil* (fig. 2), split-bamboo trays or bamboo thatched mat for drying, after having bought fresh fish mainly from the owners of likom and kulong. They then sell their product to buyers from the town proper, who in turn bring the tons of dried fish to Manila. These dried fish dealers employ workers for processing the dried fish. Many women, particularly widows and unmarried youth, earn their subsistence or augment their household income as dried fish workers.

It can be understood that San Pedro today is not a community with a homogenous socioeconomic class, but rather a highly stratified commercial fishing village. To simplify, it has a three-strata pyramidal structure where, occupying the top stratum, are the owners of commercial fishing such as kulong and likom, as well as the large-scale dried fish dealers; at the middle stratum are the owners of small-scale fishing, such as pangawil and *likos* (encircling gill-net); and finally at the bottom stratum are the numerous rank-and-file and casual crew of the commercial fishing operations, and workers of dried fish processing.

### **Institutionalization of the Coastal Resource Management and its Impact on the Community**

#### **Current Institutions of Coastal Resource Comanagement**

In the general trend of the democratization and devolution in the Philippines during the 1990s, the institution of comanagement, which involves various stakeholders such as the national–local government, nongovernment organizations (NGOs), and local resource users, had become mainstream.<sup>10</sup> Several national laws provide a basic institutional framework of the current coastal resource comanagement in the Philippines. First, Republic Act (RA) 7160, the Local Government Code, issued in 1991 regulates the devolution process of the national government and defines the scope of local government authority on local resource use. Secondly, RA 7586, the National Integrated Protected Areas System or NIPAS Act issued in 1992, is meant



Fig. 2. Seashore of Barangay San Pedro filled with *kapil* (split-bamboo trays) holding dried fish.

for establishing sanctuaries and reserves for the country's natural resources. Thirdly, RA 7611, the Strategic Environmental Plan for Palawan Act, issued also in 1992 is for the conservation and utilization of the resources endemic to Palawan. Finally, the law that has the most substantial effect on local coastal resource use is RA 8550, the Fisheries Code of the Philippines (henceforth "Fisheries Code"), issued in 1998.

The main features of the current coastal resource comanagement can be culled from the provisions of these laws. First, it defines the boundary of the resources that belong to the local government, as well as the control of access to such resources. RA 7160 defines the "municipal waters" as marine waters included within 15 kilometers from the shoreline, and stipulates that the municipal government has the authority and responsibility for the management, conservation, and utilization of the fish and aquatic resources within their respective municipal waters. In turn, the Fisheries Code imposes various restrictions on the use of fishing methods and gears within municipal waters. Fishing vessels that weigh 3.1 gross tons and above are categorized as commercial, and deemed illegal for operation within municipal waters. Further, the operation of active fishing gears, which involve any movement, such as pulling, encircling, driving, or chasing, is also prohibited within

municipal waters. The fine mesh net, which is defined as a net with mesh size of less than 3 centimeters, is also prohibited for use within municipal waters. The Fisheries Code further limits access to resources within municipal waters in favor of the residents of the municipality only. These residents will need to secure a permit and ID from the municipal mayor, following a prescribed procedure and the payment of a required fee. In addition, the law stipulates that 15 percent of municipal waters needs to be designated as a Marine Protected Area or MPA (fig. 3).

The Fisheries Code also provides for the creation of a particular organization that would play a pivotal role in the mechanism of the current comanagement institution. This organization is called the Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council, or MFARMC, which is constituted by an elected town councilor, particularly the chairman of the Committee on Agriculture and Fishery in the town council, the engineer of the Municipal Development Office, an officer in the local office of the Department of Agriculture, a representative of an NGO based in the municipality, as well as at least eleven representatives of the local fishermen. The main functions of the MFARMC are to recommend municipal fishery ordinances for discussion in the municipal council, and to assist

in the enforcement of these ordinances. The national fisheries laws are implemented and put into practice in the local fishing communities only after the municipal council has issued the respective municipal ordinances. In order to draft such ordinances, the MFARMC in Ipil frequently holds public hearings among local resource users. The MFARMC then submits to the local government various recommendations based on the interests of local resource users, which at times conflict with the centralized interests of the state, to be incorporated into the municipal ordinance. In this sense, the MFARMC is considered a venue where conflicts in the appropriation of, access to, and allocation of local resources are negotiated between the community and the state.

### Cases of Institutionalization

Three aspects of the process of institutionalization of coastal resource management are discussed in this section through case descriptions. These are (1) the enclosure of local resources, (2) the zoning and classification of municipal waters, and (3) the inculcation of a new notion of obligation and responsibility in the community.

#### *Case 1: Enclosure of Local Resources*

As explained above, the Fisheries Code reserves the right to utilize the resources within municipal waters exclusively to the fishermen residing in the same municipality. Owing to this provision, conflicts and disputes frequently arise when fishermen trespass into the municipal waters of other towns. In San Pedro, the most affected by the current situation are the fishermen of kulong and likom. These fishing groups were used to operating in fishing grounds located in neighboring towns, where the competition among the commercial fishers is lower than that in the municipal waters of Ipil. Since several years ago, however, the likom and kulong fishers began to be apprehended frequently by the local enforcement agency in the neighboring municipalities. When apprehended, they were fined the amount of P5,000 to P10,000, and sometimes jailed for a few days.

Generally, and traditionally, small- and medium-scale fishermen of the Philippines are accustomed to a rather mobile way of life, migrating seasonally between several settlements depending on ecological factors such as monsoon winds, flow of currents, and migratory routes of fishes (Seki



Fig. 3. Sign indicating one of the municipal waters in Ipil as a Marine Protected Area.

2000b). However, the current trend of enclosure of local resources has put a great constraint on the conventional way of resource use of the fishermen, as indicated in the following case.

A resident of San Pedro named Lito had been a skipper of likom for several years. Normally the fishing groups of likom in San Pedro maintain several seasonal camps for their operation during certain months of the year. Particularly during the season of the northeast monsoon winds from October until March, some likom fishing outfits from San Pedro transfer to the fishing grounds of Honda Bay and Ulogan Bay, which are at the northeastern side of Palawan island facing the South China Sea. These bays, which abound in marine resources, are protected by the strong northeastern monsoon winds. As was usual in his likom fishing, Lito carried out his operation in Ulogan Bay in January of 2006. On the night of 31 January, an enforcement team composed of the Philippine National Police, the Coast Guard, and a local environmental NGO apprehended him and his fishing group. Because the waters of those bays fell within the jurisdiction of Puerto Princesa City, the fishermen from San Pedro were prohibited from operating in the area. As a result, not only were Lito's fishing gears confiscated but he was also fined and had to face a criminal lawsuit in the provincial court. He was forced to stay in the provincial capital in order to go through the legal proceedings. The owner of this likom fishing operation spent more than P70,000 for legal expenses and the retrieval of his confiscated gears. The skipper Lito, even after he was able to return to San Pedro, was prohibited from operating the fishing group during the pendency of his lawsuit.

### *Case 2: Zoning and Classification of Waters*

Another aspect of the current regime of coastal resource management is the zoning and classification of municipal waters according to the distribution of resources and their market values. At times this process conflicts with the traditional way of resource utilization. A case of baklad, a fish corral, which the local government had ordered to be relocated, illustrates one such conflict.

Rafael is a resident of San Pedro who, since 1986, had been an owner of a baklad located near Rasa Island, which is about twenty minutes away by motorized boat from the shore of San Pedro. A mangrove and coral reef surround Rasa Island, providing a rich fishing ground for the residents of San Pedro. The baklad, a traditional device built of locally available materials such as bamboos, has been a means of subsistence for local fishermen.

Rafael, however, was suddenly ordered by the PAMB (Protected Area Management Board) of Ipil and the KATALA Foundation (an environmental NGO based in the Ipil town proper) to remove his baklad as soon as possible. Rafael found himself at a loss and could not understand why he had to remove the baklad, which he had been operating for over twenty years.

Behind this order by the local government were two related laws, RA 7586 and RA 7611. The first establishes and manages the NIPAS, which encompasses biologically important public lands that are habitats of rare and endangered flora and fauna. It stipulates the creation of a PAMB composed of the mayor and other representatives of the municipal government, as well as representatives of the barangay, NGOs based in the locality, and departments and agencies of the national government. RA 7611 adopted a strategic environment plan for rare natural resources and endangered flora and fauna endemic to Palawan. It conferred on the provincial and municipal governments of Palawan the authority to manage, utilize, and conserve the natural resources existing in the territory of Palawan province. Based on the authority bestowed by these two national acts, the local government of Ipil declared Rasa Island a protected area.

Rasa Island was so declared because it is a habitat of a rare and endangered species of bird called *katala*, or Philippine cockatoo (*Cacatua haematurphygia*), which is endemic only to some places in southern Palawan. The local NGO named KATALA Foundation, which is funded by European environmental NGOs, has been conducting its operations in Ipil town proper since 1998. It started an activity that combined the preservation of *katala* with ecotourism, of which the main attractions are *katala* bird watching and scuba diving in the coral reef around Rasa Island. The municipal fishery ordinance of Ipil issued in 2001 prohibits the building of a baklad within the protected area, and based on this regulation the KATALA Foundation, in cooperation with the Ipil municipal government, insisted strongly on the removal of the baklad owned by Rafael.

Further, the same ordinance requires that the municipal waters should be classified and delineated into several zones according to specific activities such as aquaculture, communal fishing grounds, navigational lanes, tourism belt, recreational and sports fishing areas, fish and marine sanctuaries and reserves, and so on. The baklad of Rafael, according to a representative of the local government, was not properly located within the zone specifically allotted for this kind of activity. Thus several laws and ordinances, coupled with



a NGO as a new actor with the power to implement legislation, lay behind the order to relocate Rafael's baklad.

### *Case 3: Inculcation of the Idea of "Obligation and Responsibility"*

As a third aspect of institutionalization, it is worth noting that to successfully implement new rules and regulations the idea of obligation and responsibility, which particularly emphasizes concepts such as self-empowerment, accountability, and a sense of audit, should now be internalized by the people. These concepts can be said to fit well into the green neoliberal ideology, which lies behind the current regime of resource management and further encourages the formation of ecorational subjectivities.

The Fisheries Code states that the actors authorized to enforce these rules and regulations are national agencies such as the Philippine Navy, the Philippine National Police (PNP)–Maritime Command, and the Philippine Coast Guard; and community-based local representatives such as the Bantay Dagat (a coast patrol assigned by the town mayor) and the fish wardens who are local residents who act by virtue of deputized authority after having undergone training in law enforcement.<sup>11</sup>

In the case of Ipil, there are about thirty deputy fish wardens selected from each coastal barangay including San Pedro, who frequently patrol within municipal waters. They keep a close watch for fishermen engaged in illegal fishing activities, which include not only grave violations such as the use of dynamites and poisonous chemicals such as cyanide, but also light negligence such as the conduct of fishing operations without a valid license and ID. Officials of the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources (BFAR) based in Puerto Princesa provide regular seminars aimed at "retooling" the skill and knowledge of local fish wardens. These seminars inculcate in fish wardens various "duties" and "responsibilities" in the implementation of laws and administrative orders regarding coastal resource management. Wardens are taught that they are endowed with the "full power to enforce all fishery laws, rules, and regulations within an area of jurisdiction"; that they should "act as government witness in court for the speedy prosecution of criminal complaints against fishing violations"; that they are "authorized to make an arrest even without a warrant of arrest"; that they should "deliver the offender to competent authority within the prescribed period from the time of his arrest and file the proper complaint within the appropriate offices"; that they are to "assist in the dispositions of confiscated illegally caught fish"; that they

are "to conduct fishing information campaign against all forms of illegal fishing"; and finally that they are "to submit a monthly accomplishment report to BFAR field offices."<sup>12</sup>

Through these seminars, local residents are certainly disciplined to be "responsible" wardens of their community resources. However, they often find themselves under pressure due to conflicting obligations as fish wardens, on the one hand, and as kin and peers of community members, on the other. It is not an easy task for fish wardens to actually intervene in an illegal fishing operation by their peers within the same community, all the more to impose a fine on them and confiscate their gears. It is particularly difficult when the violation is that of light negligence, such as operating without a valid license and ID, as fish wardens are aware that the probable reason for this offense are the processing fees that the fishermen could not afford to pay. In these situations, the wardens would call on other wardens from adjacent villages, who are not directly related to the fishermen to be apprehended, to do the job. In this way they are able to avoid conflict with their kin and peers within the community and maintain a balance between being fish wardens and members of the local community.

As presented above, the institutionalization process of coastal resource management has been seriously constraining local resource use in San Pedro. One fisherman said, "Unlike before, we are unable to move freely on the sea. It is like we are paralyzed." The residents have been trained and disciplined to be ecorational subjects in order to survive in the intensifying politics of resource use and preservation. The next section shows that the agency of resource users, while being constrained by institutions, engages in the practice of contextualization through which an alternative pattern of resource use is made possible.

### **The Process of Contextualization: Alternative Pattern of Resource Use**

This section discusses the process of contextualization by focusing in particular on the enactment of the municipal fisheries ordinance and the resultant alternative pattern of resource use. As explained earlier, the Fisheries Code prohibits the operation of commercial fishing and the use of active gears and fine mesh net within municipal waters. Had those regulations been strictly implemented, most of the fishing methods in San Pedro would have been banned and, accordingly, most of the people would have been

deprived of their livelihood. Instead of this bleak scenario, however, what actually transpired was the emergence of an alternative pattern of resource use, which secured the means of subsistence even of fishermen who experienced adverse effects from the regulation. This process had been initiated by a municipal ordinance entitled “An Ordinance Regulating the Fishing and/or Fisheries in the Municipality of Ipil, Palawan” (hereafter “municipal fisheries ordinance”), which was enacted in February 2001.

#### Municipal Fisheries Ordinance and Its Effect on Local Resource Use

It is stipulated in the Fisheries Code that the MFARMC assists, recommends, and advises the municipal council to prepare and enact the municipal fishery ordinance. Thus the MFARMC plays a pivotal role in drafting municipal ordinances related to fishing activities. In August 2000 the MFARMC, for the purpose of drafting the recommendation to be incorporated in the municipal fisheries ordinance, initiated a series of public hearings in each coastal barangay in the municipality. The public hearing in San Pedro was held in the schoolyard of the San Pedro National High School. It was packed with fisherfolk, particularly those who would have been greatly affected by the implementation of the Fisheries Code. There were heated discussions, and strong opposition against the code’s implementation came from owners of fishing gears, such as the trowl, kulong, and likom, which were supposed to be banned by the law. Furthermore, most members of the MFARMC, particularly representatives of the local fisherfolk, were sympathetic to the opposition because they themselves were owners of kulong or likom.<sup>13</sup> After a series of exhaustive discussions at those public hearings, the MFARMC drafted recommendations for a new fisheries ordinance. Although in most parts the enacted fisheries ordinance apparently copied the detailed wording of the Fisheries Code, in some parts it rephrased sentences found in the code and it also inserted a new section. The slight rephrasing and insertion made in the ordinance actually had a substantial effect, as described below, in the coastal resource use of San Pedro.

It can be gleaned that, while the Fisheries Code prohibits the operation of all kinds of commercial fishing within municipal waters, which is 15 kilometers away from the shore, at the same time it defines a particular buffer zone within it. The law stipulates that “the municipal government may, through its local chief executive, authorize or permit small and medium

commercial fishing vessels to operate within the ten point one (10.1) to fifteen (15) kilometer area from the shoreline in municipal waters provided that no commercial fishing can operate in the above mentioned zone with depth less than seven fathoms.”<sup>14</sup> However, the municipal fisheries ordinance of Ipil slightly rephrased this regulation and inserted a new sentence. The related part of the ordinance states that “The Municipal Chief Executive may authorize or permit the following; 1) Small and medium scale commercial fishing vessels to operate within the 10.1 km to 15 km area from the shoreline in the Municipal waters at low tide; 2) Small scale commercial fishing vessels catching anchovies, *tabagak*, *salmon* during day time and night time in not less than seven (7) fathoms at low tide.”

The inserted sentence in the municipal fisheries ordinance is particularly relevant to kulong and likom fishing. The phrase “small scale commercial fishing vessels catching anchovies” refers to kulong fishing, while fishing for tabagak and salmon refers to likom. Kulong, on the one hand, is for catching anchovies at the surface of the seawater and the fishing grounds should have a favorable depth of 7 to 12 fathoms. Likom, on the other hand, requires a favorable depth of about 20 fathoms to set the net. Once outside the municipal waters, or even in the buffer zones, it would be quite difficult for kulong and likom to find fishing grounds with the favorable depths of water. Thus the strict implementation of the Fisheries Code would have been fatal for both fishing methods. In effect, the municipal fisheries ordinance saved kulong and likom through the insertion of a new stipulation on the “special permit” granted by the mayor. According to the local fishermen, the seabed suddenly sinks in many spots in the municipal waters of Ipil. As a result, the fishing grounds with a depth greater than 7 fathoms can be found easily even if the fishing operation is just a few kilometers offshore. The municipal fisheries ordinance of Ipil has taken this ecological feature of its local waters into consideration, and, as a result, enabled the kulong and likom to operate within municipal waters, even just near the shore as long as the spot is deeper than 7 fathoms. In this way, the owners of those fishing operations have avoided the banning of their operations, enabling it to save fuel costs and time for delivering their catch to shore.<sup>15</sup>

How do the members of the MFARMC explain the reason behind their drafting and enactment of the fisheries ordinance? The council’s president in Ipil, a woman in her forties and owner of several kulong, explains, “In order for the national laws such as the Fisheries Code to be accepted among the

local people, it should be balanced so that no one will be disproportionately disenfranchised (*para walang maaagrabyado*).” Another member, a 40-year-old male, says, “The national laws are made by the politicians in Manila who don’t know the local situation. Thus, the laws should be applied into the local context. We enact the municipal ordinance in order to implement the laws while applying it into the local context. Unless the municipal ordinance reflects the local context, the local fishermen cannot be protected.” He says further, “Of course we have to abide by the law. However, sometimes the law is cruel to the people. There are times that we have to adjust the law a bit.” Another female member, who also owns kulong in San Pedro, further expresses her feeling that “The Fisheries Code will kill the small fisherfolk like us. . . . I was born and grew up here in San Pedro, and experienced every kind of fishing together with my father and my husband. I know how it is to live by fishing. I, as a person who understands the hardship of the fishermen, wanted to show my concern (*malasakit*) for my fellow fisherfolk.”

In a sense, the process presented above suggests a familiar scenario in the Philippine setting. The owners of commercial fishing groups, who occupy the upper stratum of the socioeconomic hierarchy of the village, were elected as members of the MFARMC owing to the backing of a large number of their crew of fishermen. Exploiting a lacuna in the national law, they were then able to recommend and have enacted an ordinance that serves to secure their own interest. However, rather than simply focusing on this somehow mechanistic explanation of cause and effect, this article explores the fishermen’s social practices that accompanied the implementation of the municipal fisheries ordinance. Such practices made possible the shift in the pattern of resource use and further resulted in the emergence of a new fishing complex. While this shift in the resource use pattern was initiated by the enactment of the local fisheries ordinance mentioned above, it was actually the agency of the resource users engaged in microlevel negotiation and cooperation that finally brought about this shift.

### Changing Pattern of Resource Use

As the most conspicuous feature of the changing pattern of resource use in San Pedro, the phasing out of trawl fishing and consequent absorption of former trawl owners into various alternative opportunities should be examined. Before the Fisheries Code began to take effect around the turn of the new millennium, the fishing method most commonly utilized by the fishermen

in San Pedro was small-scale trawl fishing, locally called baby trawl. However, the Fisheries Code banned this method because it utilizes an active gear, which causes great harm to sea grass. Field survey data showed that forty-five fishermen, representing majority of owners of fishing vessels in the village, used to engage in baby trawl fishing and that fifty-five fishing boats were used for its operation until the advent of the Fisheries Code.

Aside from the fishermen who had specialized in baby trawl, others such as kulong fishermen utilized baby trawl as an alternative fishing method during the monsoon season. As earlier mentioned, the kulong involves catching anchovies at the surface of the sea such that operations are greatly affected by strong northeastern monsoon winds from October to March; in contrast, the trawl is seabed fishing that catches fish, shrimps, and crabs from the bottom of the sea and is thereby unaffected by the winds. Thus the fishermen occasionally shifted their fishing methods depending on the season, and small-scale trawl fishing contributed significantly in maintaining this pattern of resource utilization in San Pedro. Further, since the owner of the baby trawl

**Table 2. Number of former trawl owners according to their current sources of income, Barangay San Pedro, 2008**

CURRENT SOURCE OF INCOME	NUMBER OF FORMER TRAWL OWNERS
Dried fish processing solely	12
<i>Pangawil</i> solely	8
<i>Pangawil</i> + dried fish processing	3
<i>Pangawil</i> + dried fish processing + <i>likas</i>	1
<i>Pangawil</i> + <i>pamanti</i> + <i>bolero</i>	1
<i>Subtotal: Pangawil and Dried Fish Processing</i>	<i>25</i>
<i>Kulong</i> (owner)	5
Migrate to adjacent municipality	4
<i>Pamanti</i>	3
<i>Bolero</i>	3
<i>Bolero</i> + <i>Pamanti</i> + boat carpentry	1
<i>Bolero</i> + beach seine (crew)	1
<i>Likom</i> (owner)	1
<i>Baklad</i> (owner)	1
Tricycle driver	1
<b>Total Number of Former Trawl Owners</b>	<b>45</b>

used to be accompanied by one or two crews during the operation, it can be estimated that there were around 100 fishermen, aside from the owners, who had lived by baby trawl operations. Clearly, the trawl occupied a vital part of the pattern of resource use before the Fisheries Code took effect.

However, in 2002 the operation of baby trawl was restricted to the months of November through February only, when the northeastern monsoon is strong. When baby trawl fishermen failed to follow this regulation, they were frequently warned and fined, and sometimes their gears were confiscated by the local government and its enforcing unit, such as the Bantay Dagat, fish wardens, and also members of the MFARMC. Finally, after such seasonal regulation, the baby trawl was totally banned in 2004.

What had happened to trawl owners since their livelihood was banned? Table 2 shows the number of former trawl owners, forty-five people in all, according to their current alternative sources of income. Conspicuously many former trawlers are now engaged in dried fish processing. Among them a sizeable total of twelve are living exclusively by this activity. A significant number of former trawlers have shifted to the use of pangawil, that is, hook and line fishing. It can be understood that twenty-five out of forty-five, or more than half of the former trawlers, have found an alternative source of income from either dried fish processing or pangawil, or a combination of both.

It can also be seen from table 2 that several former trawlers utilize gill net fishing, locally called pamanti. Although pamanti is of a rather subsistence character, being carried out by husband and wife for fish meant for local consumption, this method plays a significant role as a substitute for the major commercial fishing during the monsoon season as explained below. Some former trawlers, who had succeeded in accumulating a good amount of capital, ventured into kulong or even likom fishing. Further, some of the former trawlers were absorbed by the bolero, the casual rank-and-file crew of kulong or likom. One fisherman shifted to baklad fishing. Four persons left San Pedro and migrated to adjacent municipalities, which seemed to offer better opportunities for fishing.

The other significant feature suggesting a new pattern of resource use in San Pedro is the drastic increase in the number of fishermen who rely on pangawil, or hook and line, in recent years. Table 3 indicates the transition in the number of fishermen and fishing boats engaged in pangawil fishing based on data collected during fieldwork. The data were gathered from eighty-three of the 108 total pangawil fishermen in San Pedro; and informa-

tion was obtained on 120 out of the 155 total fishing boats. According to table 3, forty fishermen started pangawil fishing after 2001. Further, among the twelve fishermen under the column of 1996 to 2000, eight people started pangawil fishing in the year 2000. This means that more than half of pangawil fishermen interviewed started their operation when the implementation of coastal resource management took effect in the local community and trawl fishing was banned. In the same way, eighty-four fishing boats out of 120 started to operate after 2000. This shows that many fishermen made or bought additional boats at the time when the restrictions on resource use were getting stricter. These fishermen, who have ventured into pangawil since 2000, had been engaged earlier in various activities; some used to work as crew of kulong or likom, others had joined pangawil operations owned by someone else, and still others had engaged in baby trawl fishing either as an owner or as a crew. In any case, it is safe to say that, although a former main source of income among the village fishermen such as baby trawl became prohibited, many fishermen found an alternative livelihood in pangawil fishing.

Pangawil fishing is carried out usually by two to three persons and requires a relatively small amount of capital. During the 1990s, the fish caught by pangawil used to be bought by a local middleperson and sold at the local market. In early 2000, the situation changed when some locals with sufficient capital to buy the fish in bulk started to bring them to the provincial market of Puerto Princesa, or even to Manila. The price of the fish caught by pangawil increased and it became a profitable business. This situation accelerated in 2004, when some buyers from adjacent municipalities started to buy live fish, particularly the grouper, for the markets of Hong Kong and Taiwan.

**Table 3. Number of pangawil fishermen and their fishing boats, Barangay San Pedro, 1975 to 2006**

	–1975	1976–1980	1981–1985	1986–1990	1991–1995	1996–2000	2001–2005	2006–	TOTAL
Number of fishermen	2	7	7	10	5	12	21	20	<b>84</b>
Number of boats	2	7	7	10	5	13	29	49	<b>122</b>

Clearly the contextualization of the institution of coastal resource management explained above has changed the pattern of coastal resource use,

and it has realized the emergence of a new fishing complex. As explained in detail below, this newly emerged complex has major commercial fishing, such as kulong and likom, at its center, which in turn supports other common activities such as dried fish processing and pangawil, and is complemented by alternative fishing activities, such as pamanti and suwayan, during the monsoon season when kulong and likom cannot operate. It is a coordination of interdependent fishing activities minutely adjusting their operations by utilizing specific seasons and space of the coastal environment.

### Emergence of a New Fishing Complex

While kulong and likom provide an ample supply of fresh fish for the dried fish processors, they also supply fish as baits for pangawil fishermen at prices much cheaper than those in the local market. In this way, these two major commercial fishing activities in San Pedro have enabled other activities that recently became popular. Pangawil fishing requires 40 to 50 kilograms of fresh fish as bait during an ordinary trip, which lasts for two to three nights. While at sea, pangawil fishermen approach the kulong or likom from San Pedro to ask for some fish as bait. When the kulong or likom have a bountiful catch, they even give around 5 kilograms of fish for free to the pangawil fishermen. On ordinary days, they sell the fish caught at a price much cheaper than the market price. Pangawil fishermen, for example, can purchase their bait at a very low price of from P700 to P800 for 50 kilograms, when these can cost them from P2,000 to P2,500 (at P40 to P50 per kilo) in the local market. On other occasions, the pangawil fishermen purchase their baits on the shore when the kulong and likom have just arrived from their operations. They can buy their bait for P1,000 to P1,500 per 50 kilograms on the shore, the price still much cheaper than that in the local market. Thus, the shift of the baby trawlers into dried fish processing and the drastic increase of the pangawil fishermen in recent years have been realized through the steady and cheap supply of fresh fish from the kulong and likom operations.

This complex, however, should be complemented by alternative fishing activities during certain periods when the kulong and likom cannot operate. While the kulong's operations cease when winds are strong, particularly during the northeastern monsoons, as groups of anchovies cannot be found at the surface of the sea, the likom ceases its operation during the full moon period, when lights to aggregate the fish at night would not work effectively. Accordingly, during these periods the dried fish processors and pangawil

fishermen bring their activities to a halt owing to the lack of fresh fish supply from the kulong and likom.

Alternative opportunities of livelihood are provided by simple fishing methods such as pamanti or gill netting on the nearby shore, suwayan or beach seine, and *pamisugo* or catching *bisugo* at the nearby coral reef protected by mangroves and the island. Although table 1 shows that pamanti is the main source of income of nineteen persons in San Pedro, this number does not include many fishermen who own pamanti but utilize it only as a substitute for their main fishing activities. While pamanti and kulong utilize the same fishing grounds and, as such, conflict might arise between the two, any such conflict is avoided since pamanti most frequently operates when the wind is strong and the seawater is turbid, at a time when kulong cannot expect a productive operation. Regarding this interchanging utilization of the fishing grounds, a pamanti fisherman explains, "If the water is turbid, the fish does not notice the net. That is why pamanti fishing can expect a bountiful catch during those times."

Suwayan, another alternative activity, which complements the fishing complex, is a traditional beach seine. As indicated in table 1, four persons own the net for suwayan, which provides subsistence opportunities to the village people. They say, "Most of the students in the village help to pull the net when school is out; in this way, they are supporting their parents." However, since the method is considered an active gear that utilizes a fine mesh net, its operation was prohibited based on the Fisheries Code. The MFARMC of Ipil negotiated with the municipal council and mayor, and reached an agreement that the suwayan would be permitted to operate only during the monsoon season when the kulong cannot operate. Suwayan is for catching anchovy, and thus appears to conflict with kulong, which catches the same fish. But again, owing to the same reason as in the case of pamanti, suwayan operates mostly during the season of the northeastern monsoon when kulong cannot operate. During this season, suwayan operations can expect a high price for their catch because the supply of anchovy from kulong is limited. Finally, the *pamisugo*, that is catching *bisugo*, in the nearby coral reef is an alternative activity for pangawil fishermen at times of strong winds when they are unable to reach their usual fishing grounds.

It should be noted that the three activities that complement the emergent fishing complex by providing alternative opportunities particularly during the monsoon season would have faced a conflict with the baby trawl had





Fig. 4. Isla Codel shore with installed *kapil* structures.

the latter's operations still been permitted. This is so because the alternative fishing activities mentioned above utilize the same fishing grounds and catch the same kinds of fish as the baby trawl does. Thus it can be said that the function of the three activities as the safety net for the emergent fishing complex has been realized because of the phasing out of the baby trawl. The case presented below is intended to illumine the microscopic dynamism of the emergence of a new fishing complex.

### The Case of Isla Codel

An island locally called Isla Codel can be reached by ordinary pump boat within two hours from the shore of San Pedro. Isla Codel has quite an important role in the livelihood strategy among the fishermen of San Pedro, particularly after the implementation of the Fisheries Code. It offers a shelter for a safer operation during the monsoon winds, and also a spacious area along the shore to set a series of *kapil* for dried fish processing (fig. 4). Three fishermen from San Pedro are called the "pioneers" of Isla Codel, because they "discovered" the island sometime during the 1970s. They built transitory huts (fig. 5) along the shore, which were utilized as spaces for processing

dried fish and also for the seasonal moorage of their fishing boats. As can be seen below, the fishermen who have been affected by the implementation of the Fisheries Code and its related laws and ordinances started to utilize the niche offered by Isla Codel by activating kinship ties with the pioneers. One of these pioneers is Dante Martinez (12) in fig. 6). During the 1970s, he conducted survey trips, together with his father (10) and uncle (1), to look for good fishing grounds and islands with wide shores that can accommodate the fishermen during the monsoon period. They found Isla Codel during one of those trips.

Dante owns three units of *kulong*, a *suwayan*, and also a fishing boat for *pangawil*. He used to own a baby trawl until it was banned in 2004. Currently he maintains his house and *kapil* both in San Pedro and Isla Codel, then he plies between the two places depending on the winds.

Former baby trawl owners, who are relatives of Dante, have shifted to dried fish processing after the baby trawl was banned. While maintaining their houses in San Pedro, they built *kapil* on the shore of Isla Codel, and started to buy fresh fish from Dante. Shown on the kinship chart are Dante's younger brother (11) and other fishermen (2, 4, 7, 8, 22, 23, and 21) who were former baby trawlers that have shifted to dried fish processing on Isla Codel. To build huts and *kapil* along the shore of Isla Codel, they asked permission from Dante, utilizing their close kinship relationships with him. Today these

Fig. 5. Fisherman's hut and *kapil* in Isla Codel.



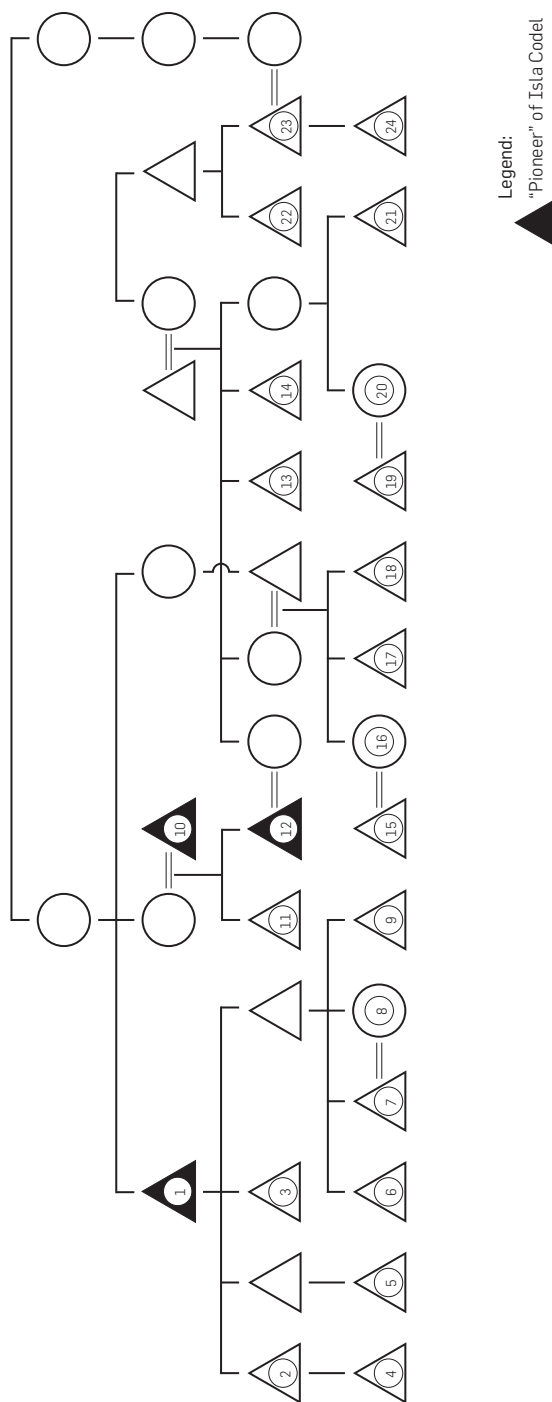


Fig. 6. Kinship relationship of the fishermen utilizing Isla Codel

new dried fish processors purchase fresh fish not only from Dante but also from other kulong, such as those mentioned below.

Many kulong owners in today's San Pedro used to combine their operations with trawl, as mentioned earlier. In times of strong winds, they shifted to trawl instead of kulong. However, this strategy had to be abandoned when the trawl was banned. They had to look for alternative activities when the winds were strong. Isla Codel offered those fishermen a shelter and secure space for their kulong operation during the monsoon season. The fishermen numbered (3), (5), (9), (14), (19), and (20) are among the kulong owners who found a niche in Isla Codel for operations during the monsoon season, and started to provide fresh fish for the dried fish processors mentioned above. Aside from those former trawlers and current kulong owners, Isla Codel offers an opportunity for additional income for the subsistence fishermen who live by pamanti (15) and (16), or who help in dried fish processing (17, 18, and 24), or who accompany the kulong operation as bolero (6, 13).

One informant said, "Isla Codel is a big help for our clan" (*Malaking pakinabang ang isla Codel sa angkan namin*). The case of Isla Codel indicates that the fishermen who have been affected negatively by the institutionalization of a coastal resource management regime have utilized a newly found niche for their alternative livelihood by activating kinship ties. Although this alternative might have been possible even without kinship ties, such ties have an important function even in this complex and stratified community, as discussed in the conclusion.

## Conclusion

In this article, the dual processes of coastal resource management observed in the field are examined: one process concerns institutionalization, in which the implementation of laws and ordinances regulates and constrains the people's local resource use; the other is the process of contextualization, in which the institution of resource management is embedded in the specific context of the local community. The first conclusion from this study is that these dual processes cannot be considered separate processes, each of which would have unidirectional vectors of power and resistance, respectively. Rather, the processes of institutionalization and contextualization are intermingled and have proceeded simultaneously as part of a single, larger process of coastal resource management.

As the municipal fisheries ordinance demonstrates, the rephrasing of laws and the insertion of a new sentence into the ordinance were not simply a rejection of the law or a counterlegal action meant to confront the regulation adversely. In fact, the people are fully aware of the power and constraints of the law. In this sense, as Li (2005a, 391) suggests, agentive practice “involves not simple rejection but the creation of something new, as people articulate their critiques, find allies, and reposition themselves in relation to the various powers they must confront.” The data suggest that power and resistance or, in this case, regulation and practice are intertwined and cannot be separated (Agrawal and Gibson 2001).

Under the regime of global environmentalism and green neoliberalism, people are disciplined, physically and mentally, to be subjects internalizing a certain rationality regarding their relationship with nature (Agrawal 2005). While being governed to be proper wardens of nature, people engage in agentive practice to create an alternative social order in the locality by rearranging their relationship with nature. The enactment of the municipal ordinance encouraged practices among the fishermen to realize a shift in the local resource use pattern aimed at avoiding a situation in which most of the local fishing activities would have been prohibited. This resulted in the emergence of a new fishing complex in which even the fishermen who were severely affected by the implementation of laws, such as the trawlers, were provided an alternative livelihood opportunity. As Chatterjee (2004, 77) discusses, people are not simply governed but at the same time they have an agency to devise “new ways in which they can choose how they should be governed.”

The second conclusion pertains to the characteristic of the community emerging from the agentive practice of the resource users. The community presented in this study is not an integrated, organic whole with a homogeneous social structure and shared norms and identity. Rather, it is composed of various stakeholders with multiple and sometimes conflicting interests (Agrawal and Gibson 2001). It is true that the interest of the actors who regulate and monitor resource management, such as national government entities (Department of Environment and Resources, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources), the local government (municipal mayors and councilors), environmental NGOs, fish wardens, and the MFARMC, sometimes directly conflicts with those of the resource users, such as the local fishermen. The point, however, is that such conflict of interests does not

simply result in discord among the various stakeholders who belong to different social classes. Rather, such conflict of interests coexists with networks among the stakeholders, which can be utilized to bring about an alternative pattern of resource use. As mentioned, the enactment of the municipal fisheries ordinance served to protect the interests of the commercial fishing owners who are at the same time members of the MFARMC. However, as we have seen stressed by two different informants, compassion, rather than self-interest, explains the motives behind the new ordinance. One says, “In order for the national laws such as the Fisheries Code to be accepted among the local people, it should be balanced so that no one will be disproportionately disenfranchised.” Another asserts, “I wanted to show my concern (*mala-sakit*) for my fellow fisherfolk.” As shown in this study, the alternative pattern of resource use and new fishing complex would not have been realized had commercial fishing, such as kulong and likom, been banned. Thus, on the one hand, while the ordinance has surely protected the interest of owners of commercial fishing, it has also enabled, on the other hand, the fishermen who had been deprived of their former means of subsistence to seek a niche for alternative livelihood opportunities. Thus the community presented in this study is not a given, bounded unit but rather a social space emerging from the practice of activating and utilizing the networks of various stakeholders with multiple interests.

The last point that can be made from this study is that the emergent community observed requires a reexamination of the conventional binary that counterposes community as a bounded intimate sphere with civil society as a discursive public sphere.<sup>16</sup> The community in this study certainly retains the characteristic of a traditional community bound by local and blood ties. As shown in the case of Isla Codel, the kinship ties in the locality contributed immensely and allowed many people to utilize the limited niche, where an alternative resource use pattern can be made possible. Still, such intimate ties are interacting and actively negotiating with the regulation and constraints emanating from the public rationality of resource management. Further, the fish wardens are made to internalize rationality and expected to belong transparently to a public sphere. However, they are doubly bound by, on the one hand, the obligations and expectations of the kinsmen and peers in the community, and, on the other hand, the responsibility that should be unencumbered by those conventional constraints. To illustrate further, the MFARMC, which plays a pivotal role in the regulation and monitoring

of the resource management process, can be said to be an actor that introduces public rationality to the community of resource users. However, the MFARMC initiated the enactment of the ordinance, which is motivated by the localized, and intimate, “concern for the small fishermen.” Within the community indicated in this case, the intimate sphere of personalized interests and the public sphere of ecorationality cannot be separated; rather both are infiltrated by each other. The “balance,” mentioned by the MFARMC member, which should be maintained “so that no one will be disproportionately disenfranchised,” can be possible in this social space of emerging community.

The idea that only the discursive space of civil society, made up mainly of the middle class, has the capacity to stand up against the power of the state and market has been severely criticized by some scholars (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999; Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Fraser 1992, 1995; Gupta 2006; Hann 1996). The emergent community in this study shares an “indigenous public sphere” (Comaroff and Comaroff 1999) in which differential power relations infiltrate into the supposed equity of the public sphere, and also a “subaltern counterpublics” (Fraser 1992, 1995), which is made up of the people marginalized by the bourgeois civil society of Western modernity. In other words, it is “the relatively unregulated negotiational domain of subaltern political society that is . . . not centrally governed by elite civil-society ideals of law, rights, citizenship, and equality” (Sharma 2006, 80). It is this indigenous, or alternative, public sphere where people engage in the agentive practice of “governmentality from below” (Appadurai 2002), against the centralized governance from above. This article is a preliminary attempt to decipher the complex matrix of differential power relations inherent in the regime of resource management. Further accumulation of grounded and microscopic studies is needed to understand the working of power and agency in contemporary neoliberal governmentality.

## Glossary

<b>baklad</b>	artificial fish corral made of bamboo
<b>bolero</b>	casual rank-and-file crew fishermen
<b>kapil</b>	split-bamboo trays or bamboo-thatched mat for drying fish
<b>kulong</b>	daytime purse seine
<b>likom</b>	nighttime purse seine
<b>likos</b>	encircling gill-net

<b>pamana</b>	spear fishing
<b>pamanti</b>	small-scale gill net fishing
<b>pamisugo</b>	line fishing for catching <i>bisugo</i> (thread bream)
<b>pangawil</b>	hook and line fishing
<b>suwayan</b>	beach seine

## Abbreviations Used

<b>BFAR</b>	Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources
<b>MFARMC</b>	Municipal Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Management Council
<b>NIPAS</b>	National Integrated Protected Area System
<b>PAMB</b>	Protected Area Management Board

## Notes

- 1 “Governmentality,” a neologism by Michel Foucault (1991), is defined as the “conduct of conduct,” that is, “a form of activity aiming to shape, guide or affect the conduct of some person or persons” (Gordon 1991, 2). “At the level of population,” Tania Li (2007, 5) discusses, “it is not possible to coerce every individual and regulate their actions in minute detail. Rather, government operates by educating desires and configuring habits, aspirations and beliefs.”
- 2 There is also a rich accumulation of literature, particularly by political ecology, discussing the governance of nature under neoliberal capitalism. See Mansfield 2004; McAfee 1999; McCarthy 2004, 2005; McCarthy and Prudham 2004; Reed 2007.
- 3 As for recent reappraisals of James Scott’s concepts of power and resistance by anthropologists, see Ferguson 2005, Greenhouse 2005, Herzfeld 2005, Sivaramakrishnan 2005, and, as a particularly relevant one to the current discussion, Li 2005a.
- 4 In this sense, this dual process is similar to the negotiation between the centralized scheme of high modernism and *mētis*, locally imbedded practical knowledge discussed by Scott 1998.
- 5 Arun Agrawal and Clark Gibson (2001, 7), realizing that all local interactions take place within the context of larger social forces, suggest the need for analyses of “layered alliances that can span multiple levels of politics.” As for the discussion on the community in the same line, but particularly in the context of coastal resource management in Palawan, see Eder 2005. Further, Li (1996) criticized the concept of community seen as a given “traditional” society or “culture-outside-of-history,” and discussed that community is rather imagined and created through the discourse and practice of differentially situated and positioned actors within contradictory social relations. She further reexamined the conventional view on the community as a domain separated from, and counterposed to, market and state, and pointed out that they are not only mutually implicated but also, in some respects, inseparable (Li 2001, 2005b).
- 6 The barangay is the basic administrative unit in the Philippines. Large barangays are further subdivided into smaller units called *purok*. The names of the research sites and informants in this article have been changed for confidentiality purposes. The author first visited San Pedro in March 1999 and intermittently continued fieldwork thereafter. The main data for this article were



gathered during fieldwork conducted from 21 Feb. to 11 Mar. 2006, 16 Aug. to 5 Sept. 2006, 4 to 14 Mar. 2007, and 11 to 30 Mar. 2008.

- 7 For a more detailed description regarding the history of the settlement, particularly the migration experiences of fishermen and social change in the region as their background, see Seki 2000a.
- 8 Data based on the survey carried out by barangay health workers in San Pedro.
- 9 "Commercial fishing" in the Philippines officially indicates the use of fishing vessels of 3.1 gross tons and above.
- 10 As for the major institutional transitions in coastal resource management in the Philippines, see Pomeroy and Carlos 1997. For case studies of natural resource comanagement in the Philippines, see Snelder and Persoon 2005.
- 11 While the Bantay Dagat are employees under the municipal mayor and thus members of the local government, the fish wardens referred to in this article are volunteers from among village residents. Hence the two groups differ in affiliation and function.
- 12 Officials of the BFAR frequently emphasize those phrases, which are written in a textbook used during the seminar. Fish wardens are required to pass the examination given at the end of the seminar in order to renew their status.
- 13 Among the members of the MFARMC, the representatives of the local fisherfolk are elected through votes cast by residents in each coastal barangay. Thus the owners of the commercial fishing outfits, such as *kulong* and *likom*, are usually elected because of the large number of votes cast by their crew. It is difficult for small-scale fishermen who go fishing by themselves or only with a small number of companions to garner enough votes to be elected as representatives.
- 14 In the Fisheries Code, commercial fishing is categorized into three scales: small scale, which utilizes fishing vessels of from 3.1 gross tons to 20 gross tons; medium scale, which utilizes fishing vessels of from 20.1 gross tons to 150 gross tons; and large scale, which utilizes vessels more than 150 gross tons.
- 15 On cursory reading, the municipal fisheries ordinance appears to contradict the provisions of national laws, particularly the Fisheries Code. Whether or not it will stand if any challenge is made as to its legality remains to be seen. However, the members of the MFARMC believe that their act and the ordinance they helped pass are justified based on the "jurisdiction" and "responsibility" bestowed upon them by the same Fisheries Code regarding the protection and utilization of coastal resources within municipal waters (cf. Philippine Fisheries Code of 1998, Art. 1, sec.16). As further discussed in the conclusion, this act of the members of the MFARMC cannot simply be considered resistance or a counterlegal activity. Rather, it is a revision, or translation, that capitalizes on a particular ambiguity in the national law, i.e., the Fisheries Code, and appropriates its authority, of whose power the members are fully aware.
- 16 Under this binary, both community and civil society are essentialized and given a series of contrastive and distinctive characteristics. For major discussions on civil society in the Philippines, see Hedman 2006; Silliman and Noble 1998; Ferrer 1997. In most of these studies, civil society is taken to be equivalent to the "sectors" or "organizations" such as NGOs. This study, however, considers both community and civil society as networks and social spaces. Along the same line, Dorothea Hilhorst (2003, 5) claims that "students of NGOs must shift their attention away from organizational features, structures and reports to the everyday practices of the social actors in and around the organization."

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