

BUILDING BASIC CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES:
RELIGION, SYMBOLISM AND IDEOLOGY IN A NATIONAL MOVEMENT
TO CHANGE LOCAL LEVEL POWER RELATIONS IN THE PHILIPPINES

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis reflects my interest in the role that non-local ideologies play in Third World progressive organizations, as well as my interest in the role of religion in popular political movements. I examine these issues by focussing on a nationally organized Basic Christian Communities program in the Philippines. In this program, which is inspired by Vatican II and liberation theology, reinterpreted Catholic symbols, narratives and practices form the medium for ideological transferal to target populations.

The thesis is organized according to the social levels at which the BCC-CO program is represented. At the national level I examine historical, political and cultural influences that shape BCC-CO program formation, and at the diocesan (town) and village levels I focus on processes that promote either change or orthodoxy as the program is put into practice. These include: the interaction of BCC-CO activists with local knowledge, practices, and goals of elites and peasants; the role of program mediators; and, degrees of indigenization and resistance at the local levels. Finally, I evaluate the potential of the BCC-CO program to promote local level social and political change.

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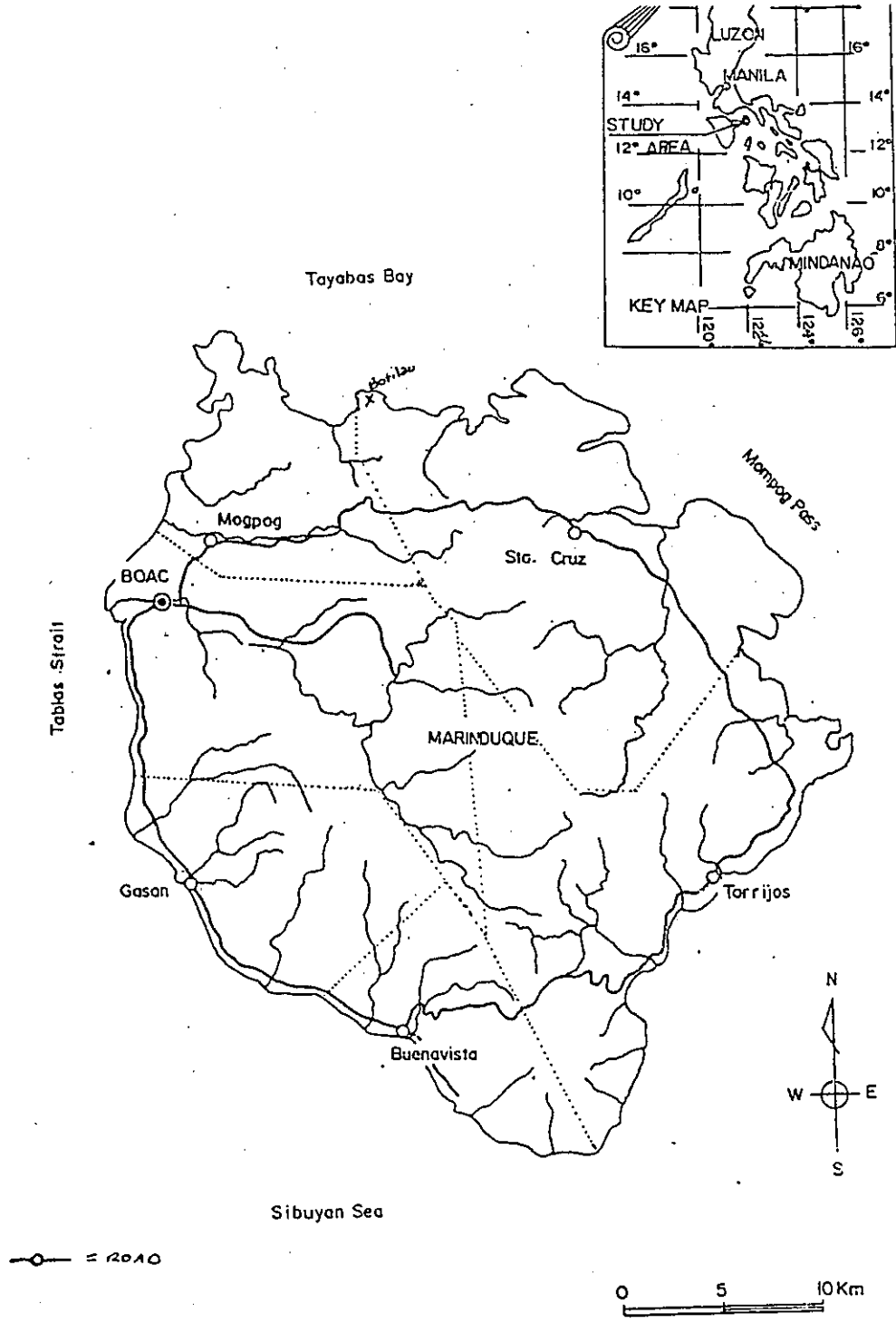
While there are many people who deserve my appreciation and thanks, I would like to dedicate this work to Philippine BCC activists, at all levels, clergy, sisters, and lay leaders, who daily sacrifice their own security and well-being in their struggle to bring about a more just and humane society.

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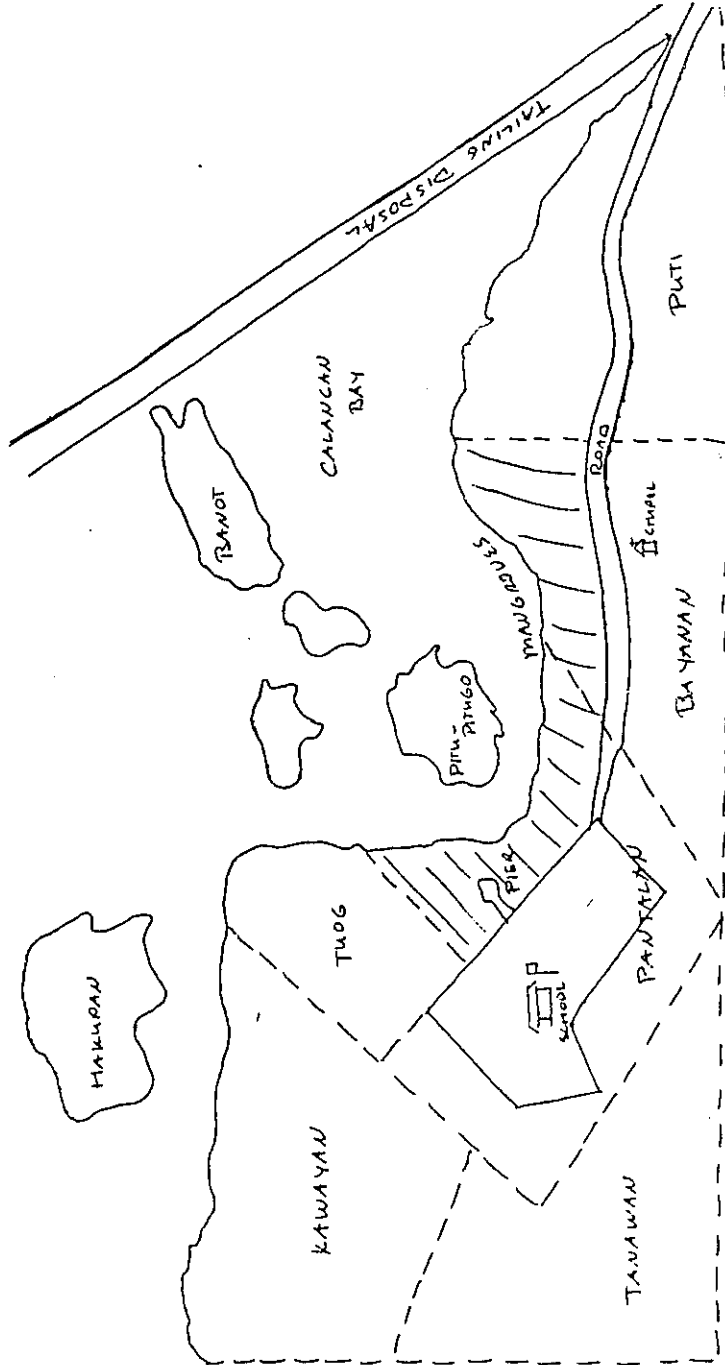
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Marinduque in the Philippines



Barangay Botilao



BOTILAO

CHAPTER ONE: Introduction

This thesis reflects both my interest in the role that non-native and non-local ideologies play in progressive organizations in Third World countries, as well as my interest in the role of religion in popular political movements. I explore these themes by focussing on one of two nationally organized Basic Christian Communities (BCC) programs in the Philippines. In the Basic Christian Community-Community Organizing (BCC-CO) program the two main themes of this thesis converge.

The thesis is divided into three sections that reflect the national, diocesan, and village levels at which the BCC-CO program is represented. I emphasize the production of BCC-CO ideologies at the national level, and degrees of reproduction and transformation of the program at the diocesan (towns) and village levels where the program is primarily mediated to local populations by, respectively, local Catholic clergy and lay leaders.

A central question raised in the local level chapters is, how is the reproduction and transformation

of the program in local towns and villages effected by the process of program mediation, and by local culture (local practices, goals, knowledge and experience of religiosity)? I aim to understand how and why BCC-CO program goals are achieved or thwarted at the local level. A central theme that emerges in the thesis is the conflict between etic and emic perspectives in this indigenous progressive movement.

Internationally, Basic Christian Communities are small scale, local level, organized social units that reflect new pastoral and social perspectives in the Roman Catholic Church rising out of the Second Vatican Council. While BCCs are usually also the practical application of some form of the progressive theology known as liberation theology, which is a hybrid of Catholicism and Marxist social theory, there are also some BCCs that are rooted in Vatican II alone, or are limited by local clergy to pastoral and liturgical applications. Philippine BCCs are informed by developments in the international Catholic community but also by specifically Philippine historical events and political and cultural traditions. The two principle non-local ideologies that inform BCC-CO program formation at the national level are Marxism and cultural nationalism.

The BCC-CO program is an essentially top-down,

Manila-centric but grass roots oriented, Catholic progressive movement. The organization has firm ties with members of the Catholic hierarchy, both bishops and priests, at national and at local levels but is primarily staffed, and participated in, by laity. (1) The BCC-CO program aims to change local level power relations by conscientizing peasants and laborers and mobilizing them to take social action on their own behalf. The process of consciousness raising is mediated by Catholic symbols, practices and narratives that are reinterpreted in the light of Vatican II and insights gained from Marxist theory. Ultimately, the program may be said to strive for large scale social and political change in the Philippines resulting in a redistribution of resources and political power. (2)

The ways in which reinterpreted Catholicism impacts on townspeople and on villagers is explored separately in the local level chapters of this thesis. In both cases, local clergy and BCC-CO activists are trying to gain control over traditional and popular expressions of Catholicism, which are commonly believed to support and legitimize unjust social relations, in order to introduce new social perspectives through Catholic symbols, rituals, and practices. The new exegesis is introduced at the village level primarily through seminars and through personal interactions

between villagers and lay activists and leads to the introduction of new religious practices and structures in the village. The aim is to change religious and social consciousness and, thereby, to stimulate social action.

The new exegesis is primarily introduced in the towns through sermons and personal interactions of the clergy with members of traditional religious organizations of the towns. While the aim in the towns is also to change religious and social consciousness, and new religious structures are also introduced, there is greater emphasis here on transforming existing religious practices of the towns to reflect the new exegesis. Important questions I address with respect to the introduction of a new socially critical exegesis to the local level are, how does it impact differently on various groups of people at that level, and, in what ways does religious experience shape the responses of townspeople and villagers?

In general, Philippine Basic Christian Communities (BCCs), many of which are entirely locally based programs, exhibit great diversity in form and ideological perspective throughout the country. I have decided to focus on one of two nationally organized and Manila based programs for a number of reasons. (3) First of all, organizers of the BCC-CD program, like

those of its nation-wide counterpart, have developed, collected, and supported the publication of an extensive body of texts on Philippine BCCs and related topics. These texts range from articles about Christian social action in which theological-sociological debates are reviewed by ecclesiastical and academic elites, to mimeographed pamphlets designed to explain the BCC-CO program's history and aims, and seminar modules created to aid activists in the development of BCCs at the grass roots. These texts, together with a few selected interviews, form the basis of my analysis of essential ideological components that make up the BCC-CO program at the national level.

Secondly, the national BCC programs best reflect a number of shared issues and perspectives that characterize a wide range of Philippine national progressive organizations. This allows me to speculate on the cross fertilization of ideas between progressive movements at the national level, as well as on the way in which ideological positions of different organizations are historically carved out in opposition to one another.

And, finally, by studying a nation-wide, but Manila-centred, BCC program I can illustrate by way of a specific case study the special problems that organized progressive movements may encounter in

linking national level perspectives on development and social transformation to local level realities. Basic Christian Communities are situated at the inter-face of institutional, structured and organized efforts at effecting social change, and spontaneous, grass roots and popular movements that struggle for social justice. The BCC-CO program itself is organized and institutional in its internal structures and in its links with the Catholic hierarchy. It also has quite firmly held ideological perspectives on society and social change. BCC-CO leaders, however, often play down these structural and organizational realities and emphasize rather the popular and grass roots orientation of the program. The movement identifies itself with popular protests, "people's" movements, and peasant struggles. It, at times, even identifies with past Philippine millenarian movements. By emphasizing the local level social group at the receiving end of BCC-CO organizing, and subsequently calling the program a grass roots movement, while at the same time working hard to bring about the kinds of dynamics they feel should characterize a successful grass roots social movement, the BCC-CO leaders find themselves in an ambiguous position.

While there is an undeniable contradiction in a nationally organized and centrally led "grass roots"

movement, there is also potential for transformations of the program as it moves from the national to the local level; transformations that may indeed lead, at least partially by way of "unintended consequences," to an indigenization of the program and to unexpected grass roots social action initiatives. While BCC-CO leaders emphasize the ultimately active and formative role of the properly conscientized and organized grass roots, the program itself is structured in such a way that orthodoxy of theory and practice is prioritized. The relative roles of institutional and program goals versus the knowledge and aims of local people is one of the subjects explored in this thesis.

Theoretical Links and Acknowledgements

As mentioned above, two important ideologies I identify as contributing to BCC-CO program formation at the national level are Marxism and cultural nationalism. (4) The significance of these ideologies is elaborated upon in national level chapters three and four, respectively, but a brief clarification is in order here. Marxist insights in BCC programs derive primarily from two sources: 1) from secular academic circles and associations with progressive activist groups; and, 2) from liberation theology. In chapter

three I review how liberation theology texts inform BCC activists and how preferences for particular forms of liberation theology reflect differences between the two nation-wide BCC movements. BCC activists commonly draw on well-known liberation theology texts to legitimize a particular social thesis, but in their own publications and practices they also continuously generate a synthesis of social criticism and Christian perspectives that perpetuates the dynamic and contextually relevant traditions of liberation theology. I do not identify liberation theology per se as one of the ideologies contributing to the BCC-CO movement but focus, rather, on Marxist social perspectives which inform the movement's social thesis, and which are partly derived from liberation theology texts.

By emphasizing cultural nationalism I am distinguishing between a more general nationalism that characterizes the BCC-CO movement, and one aspect thereof. Like activists in other progressive organizations, BCC-CO activists are fiercely nationalistic decrying the Philippine's past colonial subjugation and ongoing imperial relationships with the West. The movement takes a clear stance against the U.S. bases and against World Bank and International Monetary Fund dictates. But the aspect of Philippine

nationalism that I focus on has to do with a crisis of national identity and with attempts to discover, or come to terms with, national character traits.

In the following sections I review some of the literature that has influenced my responses to these two sides of the BCC-CO program's ideological make-up.

Marxism and BCC-CO Perspectives

There has been a growing theoretical interest in issues of power, hegemony and resistance in relations between politically and economically unequal social groups and in the study of popular political movements. Important recent contributions that have informed my thinking in this thesis have been made by Gaventa (1980) and Lukes (1974) on various aspects and guises of power, by Foucault (1980) on the diffuse nature of power throughout society, and by Bourdieu (1977) and Giddens (1979) on the relationship between forms of power and the everyday and changing practices of individuals and groups.

Recently there have been a series of important investigations into the role hegemonic processes play in the public acceptance of, and participation in, dominant ideologies by oppressed peoples. Some of this work is especially important in the context of this

thesis as it emphasizes the counter-hegemonic potential inherent in popular culture, religion, and peasant ideologies. Works exploring issues of hegemony that influenced the thinking in this thesis include Davidson (1984), Turton (1984), and Scott (1977a,b). (5)

With regard to resistance, important work on various "everyday" peasant forms of resistance has been done by Thompson (1966; 1987) and, of course, by Scott (1977 part I and II; 1985; 1987; 1990). This work adds a significant dimension to the study of popular protests, rebellions, and millenarian movements and is particularly important in the Philippine context where the emphasis on peasant resistance has traditionally been on large scale peasant uprisings (Kerkvliet 1979) and equally overt millenarian type movements (Sturtevant 1969; 1976). A recent exception is the work of Kerkvliet (1990) that focusses on the everyday political choices and strategies of members of a rural community. (6)

The insights that may be gained from the theoretical perspectives on power, resistance and hegemony put forth by the above mentioned scholars, and by others along similar analytical lines, are at the core of critiques of classical Marxist analyses of peasant society and the concomitant "necessary conditions" for social change represented in these

analyses. For this reason, the above perspectives also form the core of a theoretical challenge to one of the central underlying ideological currents in the BCC-CO movement, which is characterized by Marxist conceptualizations of power, perspectives on the role of ideology in society, and notions surrounding the necessary conditions which must be created among peasants in order to stimulate them to take concerted social action.

In brief, I will show that BCC-CO conceptualizations of power are primarily derived from a class-based social analysis in which economically rooted social and political power resides in the hands of members of dominant classes and is perpetuated and legitimized through the main social structures they control while poor and oppressed classes are systematically excluded from these structures and from gaining access to power. Power, in this model is primarily economic and political, and it is located concretely in certain individuals and groups and in the institutions they manipulate. (7)

Empowerment of dispossessed masses is seen, consequently, as the process of enlightening or conscientizing them to these class based realities (replacing "false consciousness" with enlightened insight), using "scientific tools of social analysis,"

and developing among them a sense of awareness of their similarities as a group in an attempt to develop class solidarity. This solidarity will then allow for concerted social action that puts pressure on dominant structures and individuals, and ultimately allows the poor to "wrest" power from the clutches of the wealthy in order to shape a more equitable society.

The BCC-CO program's one-sided conceptualization of power, as located in the dominant class, does not allow for an understanding of local level interactions between the wealthy and the poor that, at least on a daily basis in circumstances that are not extreme, are characterized by a form of negotiation that implies an acknowledgement of the power, albeit unequal, of both sides. Furthermore, a model based on economic and political understandings of power alone cannot make sense of the various local "faces of power" that are non-economic, such as spiritual power and cultural power. The ways in which local understandings of these forms of power motivate local people cannot be understood by either ignoring them or reducing them to economic variables. (8)

The BCC-CO class-based social model to a large extent determines its underlying perspectives on ideology. Peasant consciousness, in order to be revolutionary and transformative, must be firmly rooted

in an enlightened understanding of essentially conflictual class realities in society. Consequently, various existing forms of peasant ideologies, or world views, tend to be rejected in an a priori manner as "passive" or otherwise unhelpful in creating a coherent and effective social movement, and so are never fully explored or understood. Iletto's (1979) important work on Philippine millenarian movements challenges these assumptions. (9)

Peasant practices, based on local knowledge, are often interpreted in a negative light from the perspectives of the BCC-CD program. They are not seen to be viable adaptations to local realities that simultaneously challenge and negotiate social inequities on an individual and day to day basis, and that may form the basis for more radical concerted action in times of undue stress. A case in point in the Philippines is the much discussed patron-client form of relations between peasants and elites that is decried by leaders of the BCC-CD program as hindering class solidarity and perpetuating peasant dependency on elites. (10) If one were to study the actual negotiations and practices that make up such a relationship, the moral basis for both interaction and resistance, which is constantly being reaffirmed, recreated, and reassessed in the process, would become

apparent.

Cultural Nationalism and BCC-CO Perspectives

The other main ideological strand that informs the BCC-CO movement is cultural nationalism. The nationalist debate among Philippine progressives includes discussions about and evaluations of popular culture and folk-Catholicism that are reflected in BCC-CO texts and seminars.

Philippine nationalism is an important topic of debate among intellectual elites, politicians, and progressive activists at the national level and in various intellectual and cultural centers of the country. The intensity and urgency of this nationalist debate may be simply explained by pointing to obvious geographical, historical and political realities (for example Muslim factionalism and the vigorous communist guerrilla movement) that threaten the traditional notion of a sovereign national community.

A closer look at the way various social groups in the Philippines emphasize different aspects of the general concept, however, not only reveals the inherent complexity of the feelings that accompany nationalist expressions but also brings into focus the political dimensions of nationalist rhetoric. While academics may

concentrate on the effects of colonialism on historical, cultural and social structures and relationships, elected politicians and established elites emphasize the need to protect the nation from "foreign influences" (usually meaning left wing organizations) and from minority attempts to gain greater autonomy, and progressive organizations emphasize the need to shake off the cultural and economic shackles of a colonial past and right wing imperial present: ironically this latter goal is often hoped to be attained by embracing other non-native, usually Western-based, ideologies. Gellner (1964:169) emphasizes the political aspect of nationalism, "nationalism is not the awakening of nations to self-consciousness: it invents nations where they do not exist." This perspective highlights the ways in which nationalism becomes a tool in the hands of competing interest groups. The way in which a nation is envisaged and "invented" by a group is an indication of its political and social longings and goals.

The political ways in which nationalist feelings may be manipulated, or shaped, by various interest groups are of importance to the topic of this thesis. As Anderson (1991) has pointed out, nationalism can be an important component of progressive and revolutionary movements, and it does play a role in

BCC-CO ideology at the national level. But I concur with what I understand to be Anderson's (1991) important point that one should be wary not to take an overly politicized perspective on nationalism, thereby clouding over the very real emotional ties people have to the "imagined communities" they feel themselves part of or strive to bring about. In reality, aspects of these "imagined communities" will often have been derived through the incorporation of the same "foreign" elements some may insist are at the root of the "national identity crisis." I argue, below, that religion can be considered a powerful instrument of political manipulation only because it has inherent emotional reality for people, so that both the political and emotional faces of religiosity must be taken into consideration: I would argue the same for nationalism. In both cases, while I question the logic of programs that attempt to simultaneously tap and transform religious and nationalist sentiments to conform to perspectives held by program leaders, I consider the leaders themselves to be both emotionally involved in and manipulative with respect to religious and nationalist feelings.

Academic literature on nationalism has dramatically increased in volume in recent years and has also increased in sophistication. I draw on such

sources as A. Smith (1983), Anderson (1991), Gellner (1983), Chatterjee (1986), and Hobsbawm (1990) in my thinking, as well as on the works of Renato Constantino (1975; 1978a; 1978b) and Jaime B. Polo (1988) that bear specifically on the Philippines. (11) However, my aim in this thesis is not to present a thorough discussion of nationalism in the Philippines but rather to illustrate the role that one face of Philippine progressive nationalism plays in the BCC-CO movement. I consider nationalism to be an important ideological aspect of BCC-CO program formation at the national level, one that both informs thinking about the cultural world of peasants and directs BCC-CO seminars and practices at the local level.

The primarily nationalist themes that may be discerned in the BCC-CO literature at the national level are directly related to an intense longing for cultural and economic independence after a long colonial past and perceived neo-colonial present. The economic and political aspects of this longing for independence are conceptually relatively unproblematic, although the practical realization of such a possibility remains elusive. But the cultural debate among progressive forces in the Philippines is clouded by particularly insidious discussions about Filipino identity, cultural traits, and popular religiosity that

more often than not dissolve into an extreme negativism with regard to these perceived "Philippine national characteristics."

As I show in chapter four, these negative characterizations of Filipino national traits are at least partially rooted in colonial experiences and texts that live on in educational institutions and academic literature. They also live on in the activists of progressive organizations, such as the BCC-CO movement, whose negative perceptions about Filipino cultural characteristics and popular religiosity are further reinforced by a generally negative perspective on peasant ideology and practices derived from Marxist analysis. The national level BCC-CO literature subsequently reflects the conviction that "value formation" and the transformation of Filipino cultural and religious attitudes and behaviours, sometimes described as purifying these from foreign influences or as "positivizing" them, is a central concern.

Both ideological strands that inform BCC-CO program formation at the national level rely greatly on theoretically derived and a priori perspectives about society. These perspectives contain underlying assumptions about Filipino peasant behaviour and values that are further explored in this thesis. Both ideological adoptions effectively devalue local socio-

economic, political, and cultural knowledge and practices without investigating their everyday realities or meanings for local people. One way local knowledge is devalued, for example, is by describing it as both a historical product of, and continuing support for, unequal and oppressive social relations.

BCC-CO Communities as a Form of Peasant Movement

There exists a wide ranging body of literature that investigates various aspects of the role that non-native and non-local ideologies have played in peasant rebellions and popular movements. An important question that must be addressed at this point is in what way BCC movements in general and the Philippine BCC-CO movement in particular, are related to other forms of peasant movements, and how the study of BCCs may shed light on a few of the key questions raised in the above mentioned literature. Among these central questions are: what are the precipitants that give rise to a movement largely populated by peasants; what are the characteristics of such a movement (the role of ideology, of peasants, of elites); what types of social action does the movement occasion; and what are the outcomes of the movement for society in general and for the peasant communities that were involved in

particular? These are questions this thesis attempts to answer in the case of the BCC-CO movement.

An argument could be made for situating BCCs, as popular movements, somewhere between millenarian movements and essentially elite-led left wing rebellions and revolutionary movements such as those described by Benda and McVey (1960) for Indonesia, by Kerkvliet (1979) for the Philippines, by Scott (1976) for Vietnam, by Hill (1972) for England, by Cobb (1970) for France, and by Banarjee (1984) for West Bengal. I mention these examples as cases of "top-down" rebellions either because their ideologies were rooted in "great-tradition" political thought (Scott 1977 part I), or they were in some way led or fomented by radical elites and, or, had leaders based in cities. (12)

By situating BCCs on a continuum between, on the one hand, millenarian movements characterized by political and religious perspectives that usually contain non-native elements but are rooted in the "little-traditions" of local communities, and, on the other hand, top-down elite-led revolutionary movements characterized by more orthodox "great tradition" ideologies, usually Marxist based, I have seemingly done little to define the characteristics of these particular peasant organizations. The fact is that both BCCs that fall under the umbrella of a national

organization and various BCCs which are entirely locally based tend to vary greatly in their individual characteristics, but one of the means by which they may be meaningfully distinguished is the ways in which they resemble either millenarian movements or Marxist inspired revolutionary movements.

To compare qualities of BCCs to millenarian movements is to open yet another categorizational can of worms. Millenarian movements themselves come in a wide variety of shapes and colours. (13) I have, for the sake of comparison, attempted to derive a short list of features that I feel are central to millenarian movements and simultaneously provide important insight into aspects of BCCs that are not necessarily a part of other elite-led social movements based on great tradition ideologies. In composing this short list I relied on both the classic works on millenarian movements, such as Worsley (1968), Burridge (1960;1969) and Cohn (1961), as well as on reviews of various types of millenarian movements and the theoretical questions they raise, La Barre (1971), Lanternari (1974), Jarvie (1963), and Adas (1979). Important works on millenarian movements in the Philippines that have influenced my thinking are by Ilete (1979) and by Sturtevant (1976).

Adas notes that millenarian movements

were revolutionary, even though their visions of alternative orders were vastly different from

those that social scientists have come to associate with "true" revolutions. (1979:xix)

Indeed, millenarian movements share many outward characteristics with revolutionary movements based on great tradition ideologies. Millenarian movements may take on large-scale proportions, they can be violent, and, while they are often described as being a unique type of response to rapid changes brought about by colonialism, in an immediate sense they are, in these cases, a protest against the detrimental daily economic and social consequences of colonial rule that are unacceptable to their participants. These participants often include members of the elite, as well as peasants; indeed millenarian movements may be elite-led. Millenarian movements, like "true" revolutionary movements seek a total transformation of society, and they are often fueled by intense nationalist feelings.

While there may be other important differences that can be identified between millenarian movements and "true" revolutionary movements, the central point of distinction is to be found in Adas's quote above: "their visions of alternative orders were vastly different." These visions are primarily different because they are rooted in the "little-traditions" of local communities, as opposed to the "great-tradition" perspectives of, for example, Marxist based movements.

This distinction is so important that it serves to place all apparent similarities in a new light. So, while millenarian movements are described as expressing "nationalist sentiments" (Adas 1979:xix), the principles upon which participants hope to build larger and more stable communities than the village are often different than those of "great-tradition" nationalists.

(14) One common characteristic of millenarian nationalism is a longing to regain cultural continuity, to somehow recapture an imagined past of cultural coherence that seems to have been lost through acculturation. This is not a main characteristic of "great-tradition" progressive nationalism.

Furthermore, millenarian movements are often the result of the failure of alternative means of protest (Adas 1979:186), as opposed to the ideology-guided move to revolutionary action of Marxist based revolutionary movements. Importantly, millenarian movements are neither based on class consciousness (they are often hierarchical in structure) nor, as Adas notes (1979:185), may they be meaningfully understood by applying a "class-based analysis."

In order to understand millenarian movements, one must consider their "visions of alternative orders," as well as the frequently unusual methods by which this new order is hoped to be brought about. Much

has been written about the millennial vision, or dream, of a perfect society which is not captured in political or economic transformations alone, but encompasses a new human order in which the very members of society may be radically transformed from within, including in their relations to each other. This new, utopian, brotherhood of man, which is commonly constructed in opposition to everyday reality (Scott 1977 part I:20), will mark the end of all forms of injustice, but it may only be achieved through the mediation of supernatural forces.

Religious symbols that already hold great meaning in localized "little-traditions" are mobilized by charismatic leaders and sometimes reinterpreted to carry the messages of hope and renewal that characterize millenarian movements. Religious images become the medium, the idiom, through which ideas are expressed that challenge the existing political and economic social order. These associations with religious images and with supernatural forces simultaneously empower the movement's participants and sanction their radical actions. Leaders of millennial movements often encourage their followers to take action regardless of possible consequences, as their "tribulations and struggles" will ultimately "usher in an age of bliss" characterized by "societies without

injustice, illness, or conflict" (Adas 1979:187). The weapons and strategies employed by participants in millenarian movements are often believed to be supernaturally empowered or guided.

The powerful links between reinterpreted popular religious images, religious emotions rooted in everyday experiences, supernatural involvement and legitimacy, hope for a better future based on essentially transformed human relations, and the social action of millenarian movements could conceivably also characterize BCCs. It is possible to imagine how individual, localized, BCC programs may come to emphasize a mystical exegesis and understanding of liberation based on a "conversion of the heart," especially under the guidance of a local charismatic leader, while on the other end of the continuum one would find BCC programs that rely on modern, "scientific," great tradition Marxist tools of social analysis, on raising peasant consciousness about class, and on organizing peasant communities while instrumentally manipulating religious symbols, structures, and supernatural authority around these goals. While either of these "ideal types" may not be found, as such, they serve to situate the programs that do exist. In the Philippines, for example, the Basic Ecclesiastical Communities (BEC) program, which like

the BCC-CD movement is also nationally organized, is more millennial in its discourse and in its interpretations of the characteristics of a liberational state, and it relies more on God's grace and human spiritual conversion as means of social transformation than the BCC-CD movement does. The BCC-CD movement emphasizes community organizing as a liberational strategy and is closer on the continuum to secular progressive revolutionary movements that envisage a better society characterized by a democratic system that legally and politically enforces equality and a just distribution of resources.

The continuities between BCCs and millenarian movements, which have had a long and particularly potent history in the Philippines, have been recognized and highlighted by BCC organizers (Alay Kapwa 1982) but the BCC-CD program itself shares more characteristics with revolutionary movements inspired by the "great-tradition" of Marxism. Unlike most millenarian movements, the BCC-CD program's understanding of social injustice is rooted in an essentially conflictual analysis of class. Also, the form of nationalism which is apparent in the BCC-CD literature at the national level is anti-colonial and anti-imperial, but at the same time it decries traditional local level cultural practices and peasant

cultural characteristics and traits. The program thereby distances itself from the "little-tradition." Nonetheless, in the process of trickling down from the national to the local level there is a always potential for the program to become indigenized by little-tradition perspectives and local charismatic leaders.

On the other hand, there are important differences between the BCC-CD program and Marxist based revolutionary movements. While the BCC-CD program does anticipate large scale social transformation in the Philippines, contributed to by BCC organizing, the program does not teach the need for an organized uprising of the people, nor advocate the use of violent force. In this way, the program is also different from many millenarian movements, which usually led to some form of mass rebellion. Also, while the BCC-CD movement does not stress spiritual means of social transformation as much as the BEC program does, it does include improved spirituality, exemplified by a sense of self-sacrifice for the sake of others and of brotherhood of the people, as ideal characteristics of a better society of the future. (15)

Social transformation in the BCC-CD program is primarily envisioned to come about through democratic means. It involves a long term commitment to creating a conscientized, critical, and "modern," citizenry that

will use legal social action and the vote to bring about change. (16) Social action is usually localized and serves, in addition to directly helping a community in need, to encourage unity among BCC-CO participants and to demonstrate to participants the general theory that solidarity among the poor can empower them vis-a-vis the wealthy.

The Role of Religion in BCC-CO Programming

As I outlined at the start of this introduction I am interested in the role of religion in popular political movements, as well as in the role of non-native and non-local ideologies in progressive organizations. In the BCC-CO movement these two interests converge as reinterpreted Christian symbols, narratives, and practices form the medium, the idiom, through which BCC-CO political and social perspectives are transmitted.

While affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church grants the program relatively easy access to various local communities, the use of religion as a principle medium of BCC-CO perspectives also exposes the program to possible transformations as it trickles down to the local level. Popular religious traditions, symbols and perspectives are powerfully experienced and

contribute to shaping the world view of BCC participants at all levels. For this reason, among others, the new ideas offered by the program may become localized and indigenized, as its medium has powerful existing interpretations for the program's leaders, mediators, and participants, some of which are rooted in the little-traditions of peasants.

My main concerns with regard to the role of religion in progressive popular movements are: 1) to recognize and illuminate the instrumental and rational aspects of religious manipulation by leaders and participants of the movement; 2) to recognize and examine the important ways in which religious experience informs knowledge and social action at all levels; and, 3) to study attitudes of the movement's leaders towards local, "little-tradition," expressions of faith; in the case of the BCC-CD movement this is referred to as "folk Catholicism."

There is a wide body of literature, rooted in Marx, Durkheim, and Weber, that is concerned with the relationship between religious participation and beliefs, and social arrangements. Following on the heels of studies on millenarian movements there has been an upsurge of interest in the relationship of religious symbolism and ideology to socio-cultural change, to social and political survival strategies of

minorities, and to resistance movements (A.Cohen 1979; 1981; Comaroff 1985; Laitin 1986).

Much of this literature reflects what appears to be an essential opposition in perspectives on the role of religion in society. Recently, scholars have tended to favour an approach to this topic that emphasizes the instrumental and rational aspects of religious affiliation and participation (A.Cohen) (17), in which religious symbols and beliefs are often described as powerful tools in an essentially material struggle. Earlier studies stressed the experiential aspects of religious beliefs (Geertz). In either case, the initiators and adherents to a religious movements are put at risk of being depicted as, respectively, overly rationalistic and calculating, or overly culturally determined and even mystified. I propose a more holistic approach. This does not mean a pendulum swing back to the largely a-political attempts to understand the inner workings of religious experience—how it shapes our "moods and motivations" (Geertz 1978:3-4) — but rather the recognition that while religious affiliation and participation in a movement may partially be explained as the result of rational political and economic strategizing, religious expressions and practices also reflect local knowledge, and in turn effect the ways in which people give

meaning to experience.

In studies that have been conducted about BCCs, most of them in Latin American countries, the two perspectives outlined above are clearly reflected. Given a movement based on liberation theology, which blatantly weds religious faith and participation in Catholicism to a social perspective that favours the oppressed, two dominant analytical perspectives have presented themselves. Some researchers stress the fact that this is essentially a religious movement that "draws" the Church and its participants into the political realm in a new way. Others emphasize the essentially political nature of all theology, as well as of all social positions taken by leaders of the institutional Church, and therefore call for an analysis of emerging religious movements from within the wider perspective of the Church as an historical and political institution. In the Latin American literature Levine (1980, 1981, 1986, 1989) is representative of the former position and Gismondi (1986), who critiques Levine, is an example of the second position. (18)

Gismondi, departing from a Marxist point of view, argues that: "in a class based society religion is always politically partisan" (1986:13); that the Church has always been political, albeit traditionally

conservative in Latin America; and, that "religion was class divided" (1986:15). Gismondi argues that in a situation of hegemonic crisis, as in the Nicaraguan revolution religious symbols and perspectives become mobilized and their "appropriation" waged for in what is essentially a class struggle (1986:13-14). For Gismondi, the fact that "social structure influences theological positions" (1986:16) is a central tenet. As Gismondi puts it, "religion and politics provide the empirical facts, class and state the explanation" (1986:14).

Gismondi subsequently analyzes the words and actions of various religious parties, from Church leaders to BCC participants, from within a framework of class struggle. In this manner, Gismondi is able to illuminate the "contrasting tactical assessments...of the bishops, the lower clergy, and the popular church" (1986:14), each presented as more or less homogeneous groups, simply by linking them to class interests. Gismondi also speaks of how religion became a "channel for mobilization" of the people, how "religious values and actors lent themselves to the creation of a counterhegemonic ideology" (1986:15), and how "religious arguments and symbols....lent themselves to the overall struggle because of the pervasiveness of Christian symbols in Nicaraguan culture" (1986:29).

The macro theoretical approach Gismondi takes emphasizes class in its analysis and its conclusions about the actions and statements of various involved groups, to the point of an overly reductionist and instrumental view of religious affiliation and participation. Marxist analysis, in Gismondi's hands, is helpful in understanding broad changes in Church and state relations at the national level, and differences of opinion that exist between various levels of the hierarchy. It may also help us to understand the development of ideology at the national level in the BCC-CO movement. But it does not account for the complexities of differing and changing positions within the hierarchically ordered religious groups Gismondi discusses, in other words, why some bishops take a more radical perspective than others. And, Gismondi's overly class based explanation for grass roots involvement in radical BCCs (Gismondi 1986:27) ignores the essential differences in world view that exist between national level radicals and grass roots populations, and the ways in which these differences effect the process of ideological transferral. Ideology is not adopted unchanged at the local level, and the process of mediation from national to local levels may also subtly transform the positions of the mediators. As I will show, the reality of everyday religious experience,

which informs social understandings of all those involved in the BCC process, is one of the factors that transforms the great-tradition, class based, ideology of the program.

Gismondi's discussion of how religious symbols and perspectives were "used" and "manipulated" to serve competing interests in a class struggle warrants further examination. Gismondi focusses on the way in which these powerful popular symbols were contested and manipulated to activate, mobilize, and legitimate mass involvement. There are two underlying assumptions in such an approach; one, that religion plays a very important role in people's lives, and, two, that an ideology rooted in a class based social analysis alone would not sufficiently motivate the "masses" or legitimate social action.

While taking the power of religious symbols in people's lives for granted Gismondi, and others taking an essentially instrumental approach, neglects to probe how these symbols effect people in an everyday way, or why they may serve as such powerful political tools in the hands of skillful manipulators. By not addressing these questions, Gismondi also avoids exploring how existing local level religious interpretations inform knowledge, how these prior understandings interact with new perspectives, and whether popular religious

symbols, reinterpreted from outside, will, in fact, retain their power to motivate people to take social action.

The second underlying assumption which Gismondi does not further probe poses essential questions about the nature of elite-led revolutionary movements and the role of the "masses" therein. On the one hand, Gismondi discusses the manipulation of religious symbols and perspectives (1986:15;32), presumably by an elite of some sort, to mobilize masses essentially steeped in conservative religious culture (1986:29) and, on the other hand, he writes about a "popular church" that itself uses "religious themes to legitimate the radical new vision of society" (1986:15), and that "grassroots communities became new foundations from which an autonomous source of religious values competing with those generated by the hierarchy would flow" (1986:27). In the end, Gismondi remains vague on from where, above or below, these new interpretations and perspectives actually come and to what degree grass roots populations themselves are able to initiate concerted counter-hegemonic ideologies.

Gismondi critiques Levine (1980, 1981) for taking what he considers a historically "decontextualized" (1986:27) and "empiricist" (1986:14) approach to the topic of religion and politics, thereby

"obscuring the political face of religion" (1986:14-15). Levine, on the other hand, argues for the need to

grapple squarely with the content of religious belief and to appreciate the eschatological and transcendental qualities of religion that inform the ways in which people give meaning to experience. (Levine 1986:xi)

Levine argues strongly against reducing religious "ideas, organizations and strategies" to the status of "product of socio-economic or political interests" (Levine 1986:17). In the face of increased interest in the political role of religion Levine argues for the need to "understand the religious content of religion" (1989:208), in order to illuminate how it shapes "ideas about power, authority, and justice" (1989:208) that in turn inform the daily practices of individuals and impact on political action. Levine asserts the "centrality of religious motivation to political action," whether right or left wing, and argues that "although there may be isolated cases of individuals who use religion for instrumental purposes, religious motivation [in itself] must be taken seriously" (Levine 1989:208).

The approach I take in this thesis is one that is generally sympathetic to the need to recognize and understand religious experience in order to make sense of people's social choices. However, while I clearly share many of Levine's concerns I do recognize forms of

religious manipulation, as well as experience. Importantly, however, I do not allocate the propensity to manipulate religious perspectives solely to the elite (as exemplified in public political discourse or personal negotiations), and the propensity to experience religion to peasants, as many "instrumentalists" do. Peasants consciously mobilize religious viewpoints to argue their cases with landlords, and members of the elite spend small fortunes to travel to Israel to visit Bethlehem. Nor do I wish to privilege one form of behaviour over the other for either group. I believe that members of both may be deeply religious and yet simultaneously able to recognize the strength of attaching religious interpretations and justifications to an argument when presenting their case in a dispute.

Furthermore, I am concerned that Levine's argument for the "centrality of religious motivation to political action" and his assertion that the formation of concepts such as "power" and "authority" takes place in the religious sphere and then inform action in other social arenas harks back to the Geertzian (1978) position that the religious world view is the dominant one coloring understandings and motivating action in all other social spheres. I do believe that at times a melting together, or collapse, of the "sacred" and the

"profane" occurs, such as in rituals or in the case of a millenarian movement, which is much like a protracted and ongoing ritual. Intense conversion experiences, and ritualistic reminders of these experiences, may also cause social action to be fully committed to religiously expressed perspectives, if only temporarily. On a daily basis, however, I believe that social actions and aims are to a degree informed by, and outwardly justified by, understandings derived from the religious arena, but they are not necessarily determined by these alone.

Neither traditional religious interpretations, and related concepts of "power," "authority," and "justice," nor new "radical" religious interpretations necessarily translate into related social action. I do believe, however, that new meanings have the potential to become part of the discourse of people. They are debated and discussed and may therefore be mobilized in political or personal disputes. In the case of new, counter-hegemonic religious interpretations, such as those offered by the BCC-CD program, these may eventually become part of the "hidden discourse" of BCC participants and, as I will show, legitimize a radical position that may, under the right circumstances, support political action. In the village level chapters of this thesis I show that there are a number of

important factors that together support peasant action through BCCs, of which religious perspectives are one.

The ways in which religious experience informs knowledge and action at all social and ecclesiastical levels, as well as the ability of people to strategize and manipulate religious symbols, perspectives, and social organizations are central to my analysis of the ways in which the BCC-CO program is shaped at the national level and reproduced and transformed at diocesan and village levels. Leaders of the program, its mediators (clergy and lay), and its participants and adversaries at different levels are all aware of how religion may be used for political purposes, but they are also believers.

For example, as I will show, it is only by recognizing the gradual process by which the social and political perspectives of the BCC-CO program become linked with religious convictions in key lay leaders, a conversion experience, that one can understand the commitment these lay leaders display to active involvement in a program which leaves them particularly vulnerable to violent attacks by the program's opponents. It is also often the more or less inadvertant and unanalyzed but deeply held existing religious perspectives of BCC-CO participants and others effected, that cause unexpected transformations

to the program as it trickles down from the national to the local level. These changes may even be contributed to by local leaders in the program, despite their efforts to maintain a level of orthodoxy to its tenets, or, inadvertantly, by local members of the elite whose religious convictions keep them in contact with local radical clergy despite the fact that they feel their interests are being threatened. Transformations to the BCC-CO program also occur at the village level where, especially initially, the BCC-CO religious exegesis is but partially understood and adopted, but BCC-CO structures, networks, and funds are attractive features drawing peasants to the program.

Just as the BCC-CO program literature at the national level implicitly and explicitly expresses perspectives on the political and cultural traits of peasants, often derived from the two main ideologies informing the program, Marxism and cultural nationalism, so the program literature also reflects BCC-CO opinions about peasant religiosity, often described as "folk Catholicism." Frequently, the discussion about peasant religiosity accompanies a more general discussion about peasant "culture." I elaborate on BCC-CO views of popular religiosity in the fourth chapter of this thesis. This position may be summarized by saying that overall "folk Catholicism" is

viewed as predominantly peasant based, non-modern, characterized by "superstitions," and generally leading to passive behaviour that is unhelpful in forging social change. This position is, of course, not new or unique and, in fact, reflects, until recently, much of the Western literature on the subject of popular religion. (19)

My own position in this thesis, with regard to popular religiosity, reflects two more recent perspectives. First of all, I concur with Ellen Badone (1990) in questioning the validity and usefulness of the rigid distinction between "great-tradition" religious expressions and those of "little-traditions," or folk Catholicism, when these terms are used to imply a distinction between elite, or urban, religiosity and peasant, or rural, religiosity as this distinction cannot be justified for most Philippine Catholics. The Philippine situation is comparable to Christian's (1981) findings in Europe, as discussed in Badone's 1990 book, "the same 'local' religious style has been shared by members of all social classes, whether they be literate or illiterate, rural or urban dwellers" (Badone 1990:6). Following Christian, my own use of "great" and "little" for religious traditions relates to the distinction between, respectively, "religion as prescribed" and "religion as practiced" (Badone 1990:6)

(20)

A typical characteristic of the discussion about folk religiosity is that it describes "peasant" religiosity as inherently passive and conservative in nature. This view is reflected in the BCC-CO literature. As my discussion above indicates, I more readily concur with recent, more "positive" evaluations of peasant ideology in general, and religious perspectives in particular. These more positive evaluations emphasize the practical and relevant nature of peasant religiosity, as well as the revolutionary potential inherent in peasant ideologies (Kahn 1985; Scott 1977 part I and II; 1977a).

The Process of Slippage from National to Local Levels

Scott (1977 part I:1-5) discusses the fact that nationally based religious and political movements rooted in "great-tradition" ideologies, whether these be politically conservative or radical, experience "slippage" with regard to the orthodoxy of their ideology as the "gap" between the movement's urban leadership and its rural target population is negotiated. Scott notes that the "ideas of the leadership...lose their original features" as they "percolate" down to the "rural following" and "take on

the coloration of the local social environment" (Scott 1977 part I:3).

While Scott presents the reader with the "fact" of this slippage and some historical examples that illustrate that "little-traditions" took over and transformed "great-tradition" movements, I attempt in this thesis to describe the process by which this slippage occurs for the BCC-CO movement and how attempts are made along the way to maintain orthodoxy. In studying how, and why, program perspectives and goals are either maintained or transformed from the national to the local levels I focus on characteristics of the national leadership and the local level mediators, clergy and BCC-CO lay staff, and their interactions with their primary target populations at various local levels.

While I believe in the powerful, if usually latent potential, of political and religious "little-tradition" symbols, perspectives and practices to fuel transformative social movements (examples such as Ileteo's (1979) bear this out), I am primarily interested, in this thesis, in looking at why, and how, a progressive movement rooted in "great-tradition" ideologies is accepted or rejected at the local level. I am interested in studying if, and how, such a top-down movement becomes indigenized, and whether the

structures, funds, networks, ideas and practices it brings to the local level may be used to give expression to local level aims. In a sense, I am looking at the process and the structure of the "conjuncture" (Sahlins 1981) of the culturally organized ideas and practices of the BCC-CO program and those of its local level target population. (21)

In his introductory essay in a book about liberation theology in the Latin American context Levine notes that "the changing issues of religion and politics provide the context, but it is the individuals, movements and groups that breathe life into the process" (1986:18). Levine asserts the necessity to capture the "ideas" of "ordinary people," as well as "the more easily documented positions of elites and formal institutions" (Levine 1986:18). Levine concludes that:

It is difficult to combine so many kinds and levels of reality, but the task is essential if we are to grasp the process of change in all its richness and achieve durable, reliable understanding. (Levine 1986:18)

It is my hope that this thesis, which spans three levels of BCC-CO organization and attempts to present the views of program organizers, mediators, and participants, clergy and lay members of the elite and villagers, helps to contribute to an understanding of the complexities, as well as the potential, of the role

of religion in social change in the Philippines.

My contributions in this thesis are first of all to the study of Philippine liberation theology and its practical application through BCCs. There has, as yet, been very little academic literature published on this topic. (22) Secondly, much of the literature that has been published on similar movements in Latin America has focussed either on the historical genesis and aims of the program at the national level, deducing local responses either through the theoretical perspective of the researcher or through the aims of the program at the national level; or the focus has been on the initiatives of villagers often underemphasizing the important roles outside ideas, structures, and mediation have played in local actions. This literature tends to either overemphasize the effect of "great-tradition" ideologies on local populations, or underestimate the influences of top-down and elite-led organizing in shaping grass roots movements. I hope that this study will contribute to a more complete picture of the genesis and development of BCC movements and the roles of both religious experience and manipulation in the reproduction and transformations of such programs as they move from theory to practice. (23)

Finally, by tracing one program through the

process of ideological "slippage" from national to local levels, and by focussing on mediators and responses from participants and antagonists, I hope to elucidate the culturally structured dynamics involved. There are a growing number of nationally organized progressive non-government organizations (NGOs) in the Philippines that direct their attention at organizing the "grass roots," the insights gained from this study should have wider application than for the study of BCCs alone.

Background to the Study and Methodology

I believe that there is frequently a strong relationship between the personality and life-experiences of socio-cultural anthropologists and the research subjects we eventually gravitate towards. It may not always be an immediately obvious association, but many of us who know our fellow-field workers well enough have at some point "discovered" such a personal connection. Some might go so far as to argue that we study that which we ourselves need to understand better, for personal reasons. Whatever the case may be, I have done some thinking about the road that I have travelled in studying Philippine BCCs. I will briefly share some of these thoughts here, both as an

acknowledgement of the subjective and personal aspects of academic research and for the sake of readers for whom such information forms part of their critical understanding and evaluation of a study.

My interest in BCCs is might perhaps be traced to my Roman Catholic upbringing, although the liberal and somewhat cerebral Catholicism of Holland bears few, if any, resemblances to the emotionally rich Catholic performances I was to experience in the Philippines. In any case, there is a certain irony in the fact that religiosity in general, and Catholicism in particular, really came to life for me during my university years at, predominantly Jewish, Brandeis University.

The role of religion in personal identity, and the relationship between religious affiliation and politics, were important themes at Brandeis but equally important was a pervasive approach to human experiences and endeavors from a perspective of faith; this seemed in one way or another to permeate university life at Brandeis. Furthermore, the small but tight-knit Catholic community at Brandeis was an especially lively one in which, under the leadership of the socially engaged Fr. Loiselle, Catholicism and social action were closely related. All of these themes are reflected in some way in this thesis.

And where such, perhaps already overly

structured, reflections on the past leave off, historical accident takes over. While I knew, as I continued my studies in anthropology in Holland, that I wanted to study issues of religion and politics in Southeast Asia, a timely union between my diocese in Holland and the progressive BCC-CD oriented diocese of Ilagan (Isabela) in the Philippines offered me a field location to complement my analytical interests. This early fieldwork, which formed the basis of my M.Sc. thesis at the LSE, both increased my interest in the topic of BCCs and indirectly effected the location and the methodology of the Ph.D. research I eventually conducted on the island of Marinduque.

My original plan, to spend two months in Manila learning the rudiments of Ilocano before returning to Isabela, was upset by the fact that Isabela had become a more violent place between 1984 and 1988 and BCC workers are a primary target of suspicion by the military. My two months in Manila were, instead, taken up by the search for an alternative and safer field location; Marinduque fit this description. The consequences of my choice of Marinduque as a field location were primarily two-fold: I had no time left in Manila to learn Tagalog and so relied on the services of a full-time research assistant and, Marinduque, while excellent as a "safe" field location has certain

unique features that distinguish it from other BCC-CO areas in the Philippines. A brief comparison of Isabela and Marinduque may help to illuminate the features of my field location for this study.

There are differences in the directions in which the BCC-CO program developed in Isabela and in Marinduque. In Isabela, for example, a farmers' bank has been set up to supply low interest loans, and a community based health program is being run by the local BCC-CO group. The core staff in Marinduque are also exploring the latter as a possible expansion. The Isabela program also helps to provide legal assistance for human rights cases. But, the most important differences derive from the circumstances under which the Isabela BCC-CO program arose and continues to function. Isabela has long been a heavily militarized area where clashes between the army and local NPA units, who hold strong positions in the mountain ranges surrounding the province, are frequent. Local peasants often find themselves caught up in this struggle and face extreme physical and human rights abuses as a consequence.

Isabela is also a very large province with great tracts of fertile land upon which tobacco plantations, haciendas, exist that date back to Spanish rule and where huge estates have developed, based on

rice production, that employ large numbers of tenant farmers. Struggles between workers on the haciendas and the large rice estates and the ruling elite over wages and land have been a major focus of tension and division for decades. BCC-CO organizing has naturally focussed on this struggle in relevant areas of Isabela.

When I arrived in Isabela, in 1984, it was in the wake of the murders of two BCC-CO lay leaders who had attempted to organize unions among peasants hired as loggers of the Sierra Madre Mountains. The first BCC-CO lay leader I interviewed, in Manila, was an Isabela peasant who had managed to escape a similar fate by fleeing to Manila with his family. He had no idea when he would be able to return to his farm in Isabela. I also arrived shortly after the first military raid on a bishop's residence in the Philippines. The suspected guns and rebel priests that were sought were not found but "subversive" reading materials were confiscated.

The circumstances under which the BCC-CO program arose and operates in Isabela reflect those in many provinces around the country and contrast sharply with the relatively peaceful conditions in Marinduque. Marinduque is too small to sustain a resident NPA contingent and has no large land holdings worked by large groups of tenants. The main industry on the

island is the partly Canadian owned copper mine, Marcopper, which is a focus of BCC-CO organizing activities.

Upon inquiring about Marinduque among BCC activists in Manila I was told by three separate informants that while the island is relatively peaceful the people are "lazy" because they do not face immediate danger, and that the BCCs are also "not so active" because of the lack of daily threat. While the struggle of BCC participants in Marinduque against pollution from the copper mine has been far from passive, and the action taken by those involved proved to be anything but safe, the day to day level of physical threat and violence is indeed less high in Marinduque. This made Marinduque an excellent field site for the study of a potentially sensitive subject.

The focus of this thesis is on the BCC-CO program itself. More specifically on the role of ideology, religion, and symbolism in the movement. This focus brings different methodological challenges than those faced in more traditional anthropological studies of a local level community. In order to study the role of non-local ideology in this progressive movement, with an urban base but working for local communities, I felt it helpful to structure both my data collection and my thesis around the various levels at which, and

through which, the program operates. The movement is actually a largely top-down process and the roles of ideology and religion are different at different levels and for different people at each level.

I conducted my fieldwork between October of 1988 and January of 1990. I spent about three months in Manila, two before going to Marinduque and one upon return. At the national level I collected written materials from the two nation-wide BCC programs. I held long informal discussions and also conducted a few selected interviews with BCC program organizers. At the local level, in Marinduque, I distinguish between the diocesan level, or the towns, and the village level. Although I divided my time primarily between two towns and one village from the time of my arrival in Marinduque, in December of 1988, my emphasis was originally on the town and shifted more to the village in the final six months.

At the level of the towns I focussed my interviews and surveys on the clergy, the diocesan BCC-CO staff and the elite. I conducted a survey among the twelve parish priests and followed that up with selected interviews. I also conducted a survey and interviews among the six BCC-CO core staff. I conducted extensive interviews among the elite of one town. I attended monthly BCC-CO core staff evaluation meetings

and numerous BCC-CO seminars held for village participants. In order to achieve a sense of the socio-economic and political conditions on the island I collected official statistics. I also sought emic understandings of status and wealth differences, and of patronage, through extensive informal interviews.

In order to better understand the religious life of the towns I took part in as many religious celebrations as possible, public and private, and collected "souvenir programs" which are created to commemorate religious events. I also attempted to receive a sense of the less mainstream religious practices of the towns, such as the rituals of the poor, of various cultic groups, and of various protestant denominations. I attended religious practices of these various groups and conducted interviews among their members. Although I briefly review these less prominent religious activities in a survey of religiosity in Marinduque, I was not able to incorporate much of this material in the context of this thesis.

For general village level data on BCCs I conducted a diocesan survey among BCC participants from villages around Marinduque; this was distributed and collected for me by the BCC-CO core staff. My extensive field study was in one fishing village with a BCC-CO

program. This village is adversely effected by the tailing disposal system to sea of the Marcopper copper mine and its BCC participants have actively opposed the mine.

I conducted both household survey-type interviews for general information, and numerous targeted interviews among all BCC participants. I also took part in BCC activities of the village and in local religious practices. For a broader sense of village spirituality I interviewed healers, midwives, and religious specialists and sought information about the spirit world and about beliefs surrounding birth, death, procreation, food, etc. Finally, I gathered information about the history of Marcopper's operations in Marinduque and the struggle of various groups on the island against the mine.

In an attempt to protect the privacy of my informants I have adopted pseudonyms for most local level actors. Principle political and religious figures did not receive pseudonyms as their identity is all too well known. At times I also attributed certain sensitive statements to a fictional character with similar social characteristics; I also deleted the names of some informants to provide still better protection. Most names of towns and villages remained unchanged as they too are easily identifiable from my text.

A major methodological concern in this thesis has been to somehow represent and bridge the macro and micro level dimensions of the BCC-CO program. I have done this by taking a multi-level approach and by focussing on mediators between levels and degrees and processes of reproduction and transformation of the program at each level. The one regret I have had in adopting this structural approach is that the immensely rich ritual and cultural life I discovered in Marinduque does not receive the in-depth treatment it could have had in an intense, local level, contextual study. I plan to remedy this by further research in the near future.

Thesis Outline

The three national level chapters explore historical, political and cultural factors that play a role in shaping various expressions of Philippine liberation theology. These chapters examine the genesis of the two nation-wide BCC programs in the Philippines and compare aspects of their main ideological components.

In chapter two, I explore historical developments in the relations between the international Church, the Philippine Church and Philippine society,

which shaped Philippine liberation theologies and the development of two ideologically different BCC programs. In chapter three, I ask the question to what degree are the socio-political ideological formations of the two national Philippine BCC programs shaped by debates and concerns of the wider progressive political context they are part of in the Philippines? And, what are the underlying assumptions of the two programs, which derive from their socio-political positions, about local level peasant-elite relations? This question is important as these underlying assumptions shape program formation at the national level and practice at the local level.

In chapter four I ask, to what degree are the positions of the two BCC programs on Philippine culture and popular religiosity shaped by wider discussions about these issues by the intelligentsia at the national level? And, how do the underlying assumptions that accompany the two programs' perspectives on Philippine culture and popular religiosity effect their program development for the local level? As the BCC programs aim to ultimately transform local level power relations through the medium of reinterpreted religious symbols I provide some examples of these reinterpretations found in national level texts.

The four diocesan level chapters are concerned

with the reproduction and transformation of the BCC-CO program as it is mediated by the clergy in the towns of Marinduque. At this level, the main respondents to BCC-CO perspectives, and to attempts to change local religious practices in line with these perspectives, are the elite of the towns.

The thesis addresses several questions at this level. In chapter five, I address the question of whether the Marxist based social model that informs BCC-CO socio-political ideology and goals for social transformation is relevant to local level socio-economic and political relationships, and local, emic, understandings thereof. In chapter six, I reflect the new exegesis introduced by the BCC-CO program, and its underlying assumptions about peasant and elite religiosity, against local expressions of religiosity in the towns of Marinduque. I also explore the nature of relationships between the clergy and the elite and the poor of the towns.

In chapter seven, I ask to what degree are elements of the two main BCC-CO ideologies reproduced in the thinking, and reflected in the practices, of the main mediators of the program in the towns, the clergy? In chapter eight, I explore the ways in which the ideology and the practical aims of the BCC-CO program are transformed by being filtered through the medium of

the clergy and confronted by the expectations, traditions and religious experience of the towns' elites.

The three village level chapters are primarily concerned with the degree of reproduction and transformation of the BCC-CO program as it is mediated by trained laity to the villages of Marinduque. General survey information I gathered from BCC villages province-wide is further elucidated through an in-depth case study of a BCC in the village of Botilao. The principle struggle of the BCC-CO program in Marinduque, against a polluting copper mine, forms the backdrop to this village level investigation.

There are a number of critical questions I address at this level. Why, and how, are BCC-CO ideology and goals reproduced and transformed in the thinking and practices of the BCC-CO diocesan lay staff in Marinduque? To what degree do villagers, diocese-wide and especially in Botilao, adopt the central socio-political theory, the cultural assumptions and new religious exegesis of the BCC-CO program? What is the role of newly introduced BCC structures, practices and relationships in the village? How are these established? Who becomes a BCC member in the village? Are the aspirations and goals of villagers reflected in the BCC program? Does BCC organizing lead to

transformed social and religious consciousness? Does BCC organizing lead to social action in the way prescribed by the program? What are the factors of the program that promote social action by villagers? How is the program adopted, transformed and resisted at the village level?

NOTES

1. The Philippines is the only predominantly Christian country in Southeast Asia. Estimates put the number of Catholics at around 85%. Religious sisters (nuns) play an important and vigorous role in disseminating and supporting various BCC programs throughout the country. But as their considerable involvement in BCC programs, and their commitment to social change, is less structured, it is often overlooked in discussions about BCCs that tend to focus on the role of the institutional Church, especially the male hierarchy, or on the lay leaders. I have often thought that as a marginal group in the Catholic organization religious sisters may frequently be more "radical" and willing to take risks on behalf of the poor because they have less formal status to lose and because, as women, they can readily identify with other marginal groups in society.

2. Given its ultimate aims the BCC-CO program may be considered revolutionary, but I hesitate to label it as such, as revolutionary movements, especially those based on Marxist social theory, historically include a stage of armed uprising. This is not a goal of the BCC-CO movement, in fact, the use of force is generally considered unacceptable in the movement itself. There is, however, a lively debate among BCC-CO leaders about whether physical force is unacceptable in all circumstances, and there appears to be a general sympathy and understanding for the choice of this option by the guerrilla movement the New People's Army (NPA). The most advanced stage to be reached by a BCC in the BCC-CO movement is usually labeled "liberational" or "transformative" by BCC-CO leaders, as opposed to "revolutionary," and primarily indicates a radical change in the consciousness of BCC

participants that is primarily expressed in local social action and, less frequently, in action on national issues.

3. My choice of the BCC-CO program over the other nation-wide and Manila-centered Basic Ecclesiastical Communities (BEC) program had more to do with my ultimate choice of field site than with a specific preference for one program over the other for research or personal reasons. An important consideration that guided my search for a field site was the probable safety of myself and my informants. I found these conditions in a diocese that was overwhelmingly BCC-CO oriented.

4. Where I refer to Marxism throughout the thesis, commonly with terms such as "Marxist based," "Marxist inspired" or "rooted in Marxist thought," I am frequently indicating aspects of BCC-CO social analysis that are clearly influenced by or derived from Marxist theory. However, I do not mean to imply a high level of theoretical sophistication, nor do BCC-CO texts generally reflect a recognition of various and competing schools of Marxist thought. Rather, I am referring to what I term an "analytical shorthand" with respect to a few of the main tenets of Marxism, as outlined in this introduction, that informs BCC-CO perspectives.

My own, often qualified, evaluation of the role of Marxist ideas in BCC-CO program formation stems less from lack of esteem for Marxism as a powerful analytical theory and social critique than from my concern for the lack of fit between aspects of Marxist analysis and emic knowledge and practice. While anthropologists have focussed on the obvious theoretical problems this raises, these concerns take on an extra urgency in the context of an indigenous program that partially bases its local level practice, community organizing and consciousness raising, on Marxist categories and social analyses.

5. Scott's latest book (1990) explores the "hidden transcripts" that characterize the private lives of oppressed peoples. Scott's work adds an important dimension to studies of hegemony as he shows that behind public conduct there is a world of shared understandings and expressions that directly challenge the rule of the dominant. Scott also explores the conditions that might give rise to public expressions of previously hidden, but shared, sentiments.

6. While the BCC-CO movement is involved in the

organization of poor laborers in towns and cities, some of whom may only be there temporarily, as well as peasants in rural villages, I focus in this thesis on the effects of BCC-CO organizing on rural peasant communities. For the sake of clarity I define peasants, in this context, as rural cultivators and fishermen who produce primarily for their own consumption and to provide for daily needs but who must also generate additional funds for taxes or rents. These peasants may be small landowners and, or, tenants. Some of the points I make with regard to the effects of BCC-CO organizing on local communities do, however, apply to poor urban communities, as well as to rural ones.

7. Power in terms of physical force is also acknowledged by the BCC-CO movement, as a tool of the dominant to oppress the weak. BCC-CO program leaders do not categorically rule out the possible use of physical force by the dispossessed to gain social justice, as do the BEC movement's leaders. Individuals within the BCC-CO movement hold varying positions on this issue.

8. To illustrate these points I quote from a BCC-CO seminar booklet. The section I am taking these quotes from describes the methods the lay facilitator should use to guide seminar participants in understanding that communities are divided into five "systems": economic, political, social, religious, and educational. The next step for the facilitator is to order these. As the booklet notes:

To make a long story short, the participants should see that the political, educational, social and even the religious structures are dominated by the economic system. He who has power in economy, has power in politics, education, in the social and religious field of life. (BCC: A seminar Kit 1987:42)

This structural analysis is then drawn on the blackboard as a train with coaches representing the five social systems and the economic system in front as the engine. The people are then led, through a series of questions, to the recognition that those who have economic power dominate the other spheres as well. There is, however, hope for change as the participants are asked to consider the following:

What happens to the train if the wheel of one of the coaches no longer runs or it gets off the rails? The engine and the other coaches do not allow that. (...) These days it seems the

religious system is going in a "different direction." The economic system and its political and educational allies are against this. This is the present situation. (BCC: A seminar Kit 1987:44)

Further examples of the points I am making here, drawn from texts used in BCC-CO seminars, may be found in chapter nine.

9. Kahn (1985) describes the recent trend towards a more "positive" evaluation of non-class based peasant ideologies, which includes a re-evaluation of their potential to stimulate popular movements. As Kahn (1985:53) rightfully points out, there is increasing interest in the role peasants play in revolutionary movements and in how native, peasant ideologies may support social action by peasants. This literature forms part of the critique on the BCC-CO insistence on solely developing class consciousness along traditional Marxist lines. I clearly find myself sympathetic to the perspectives presented in the literature Kahn reviews. Although the ultimate effectiveness, in terms of long term change, of movements based on peasant ideologies may be debated, the same questions may, in fact, be raised with regard to Marxist popular movements. I feel that a lack of knowledge about local level understandings of the world destines a movement such as the BCC-CO movement not only to devalue local knowledge but also to be frustrated in attempts to influence local practices.

10. Patron-client relationships have undergone transformations in various parts of the Philippines (see Fegan (1978) for one example of this) and, of course, vary in the degree of bargaining power the two parties to the relationship have. These are factors that should, however, be analyzed on an individual basis. More often than not this form of relationship is dismissed out of hand as inherently oppressive or conservative.

11. Other important works that highlight aspects of Philippine nationalism are de la Costa's (1965) book of essays and Schumacher's (1991) recent book of essays on the awakening of Philippine nationalism in the second half of the nineteenth century.

12. This simple characterization does not answer the more complex questions of the relative roles of elites and peasants in these rebellions and the degrees to which their respective actions may be said to have

precipitated the rebellion (Scott 1977:295-296). Nor does it address the important question of actual motivation; in other words, whether peasants were motivated by ideological convictions held by the elites of the movement or acted in response to local pressures and "little-tradition" political perspectives. These questions must be answered by analyzing each case study individually.

13. As Adas (1979) has pointed out, there are a number of labels by which movements that may collectively be grouped under Wallace's (1956) term "revitalization" are known, including "'nativistic', 'millennial', 'messianic', 'nostalgic', 'sectarian', and 'revivalist'" (Adas 1979:xviii). It is not the place here to review the characteristics of each sub-category but La Barre (1971) has produced a comprehensive comparative study.

14. Scott also makes this point:

There is evidence that the meaning of independence at the base of many nationalist movements diverged markedly from its meaning to the intelligentsia who nominally led them. (Scott 1977 part II:241)

15. There are reflections of this type of motivational encouragement by leaders of various types of movements that require sacrifices on the parts of their participants. The Roman Catholic Church is accused by many liberation theologians of traditionally holding out the rewards of heaven to those who suffer on earth, thereby seeming to accept suffering as a human condition. Liberation theology, rather, preaches the need to transform economic conditions on earth to relieve unnecessary suffering here. In an interview I conducted with the Philippine activist Ed de la Torre, he pointed out the subtle irony of the fact that movements spawned by the ideology of liberation theology, among them many BCC movements, in fact demand great sacrifices from their followers, as these are often marginalized or even physically threatened in countries where their perceived left wing teachings are considered a challenge to established authorities. The reward held out to BCC activists, similar to that in millenarian movements, as well as in left wing movements, is a better society for future generations.

16. In the 1992 presidential elections Cardinal Sin directly appealed to Catholics not to vote for

candidates with past or present connections to the Marcos family. The growing network of rural BCCs throughout the country is seen by various political analysts as a formidable power base for the Church.

17. For the Philippines, Pertierra's work, entitled Religion, Politics, and Rationality in a Philippine Community, explores the historically changing relationship between religion, as an ideological system, "and its associated material interests and practices" (1988:1-2) in a local community. While Pertierra also includes "cultural factors" as a variable influencing religious choices, he does so from a point of view of "society as a system of culturally constructed material practices" (1988:3).

18 Other proponents of the first position include Bruneau (1982, 1984, 1986); Smith (1982); Sanders (1982) and Bamat (1983). Other proponents of the second position include Maduro (1982); Dodson (1979) and Dussel (1977).

19. It is not surprising, but somewhat ironic, that BCC-CO perspectives with regard to Marxist social analysis, to local culture and practices, and to popular religion, all reflect slightly dated Western academic positions.

20. Other critical discussions about the distinctions made between "great" and "little" religious traditions, and the use and descriptions of the term "folk Catholicism," may be found in Brown (1981) and Ginzburg (1980), quoted in Badone (1990).

21. I evoke Sahlins (1981) here because he primarily looked at change brought about by cultural influences from outside. He focussed on the dialectic between a people's cultural understandings - intentionality, interests, values, and related practices - and those presented to them in their encounter with foreigners. Despite Sahlins's one-sided focus on the intellectual and cultural responses to this essentially unequal and unavoidable encounter, Sahlins does present us with an interesting perspective on revolutionary change. Ortner notes that

in stressing changes of meaning as an essentially revolutionary process, he renders revolution itself less extraordinary (if no less dramatic, in its own way) than the standard models have it. (Ortner 1984:156)

It is in the first place these "changes of meaning" that the BCC-CO program consciously pursues. The exact mechanism, or conditions, that will move people who's consciousness has been transformed to challenge societal structures and relationships is less clearly defined by the program.

22. Exceptions are A. McCoy (1984) who describes the dramatic imprisonment of two foreign priests and lay leaders involved in organizing BCCs, and R. Youngblood's article in the Philippine journal Diliman Review on "Basic Christian Communities and the Church-State Conflict" (1985:vol.33:43-47). There are more academic works which mention BCCs within a wider focus on Church and state relations such as Shoemith's (1979) discussion on "Church and Martial Law in the Philippines: The Continuing Debate."

23. By not departing from an a priori macro-theoretical position I am opening myself up to criticism from researchers such as Gismondi who may argue that this case study, in which I attempt to take people's own explanations for their actions and motivations into consideration, obscures structural realities that in fact shape motivation and guide action and can lead to comprehensive and generalizable explanations. I would counter such an argument by stressing that only through listening to people's own understandings of their situation do everyday complexities and contradictions become apparent that may be obscured or artificially subsumed by an overarching theoretical paradigm.

THE NATIONAL LEVEL

The Church remains the only disciplined, nationwide body outside the direct control of the state. Its clergy operate a network of parishes, schools, colleges and other institutions which compete with government institutions in molding public opinion. Church sponsored social action programmes offer the only aboveground challenge to state control and church support has already proved effective in making mass protests by squatters.... (Shoesmith 1979:249)

For the bishops, priests, church lay workers and other Christians who started organizing Christian communities on the most basic level, the journey has been that of one long Exodus experience. BCC leaders and members have become victims of the modern-day Pharaohs on the national, provincial and local levels. Since BCCs have been organized, Filipinos have been added to the list of Christian martyrs. (...) BCCs have indeed become a threat to the mighty and the powerful, those who would look at this movement within the Church from the perspective of the National Security State Ideology. (...) To those earnestly searching for a more relevant faith-life, BCC is not only "Good News" but the best news the Church has ever proclaimed. (...) What sets BCC-CD apart from the Church's previous pastoral strategy is its clear and open stand for the Filipino people's struggle against all forms of oppression. It is in fact committed to giving back political rights to the people. The inherent power of this new movement comes from the fact that individuals, indeed whole communities, are willing to struggle and, if necessary, give their lives for their God-given rights. (Basic Christian Communities part I 1978:1-4)

What is now emerging as the most dangerous form of threat from the religious radicals is their creation of the so-called Basic Christian Communities (BCC) in both rural and urban areas. They are practically building an infrastructure of political power in the entire country. (Kintanar, Quarterly National Security Review, June 1979)

CHAPTER TWO: Catholic Social Action in the
Philippines: an Historical Overview

Introduction

This chapter traces the development of Catholic social action in the Philippines from the 1930s through the development of Basic Christian Communities starting in the early 1970s. (1) I examine how this historical development was informed by external factors, such as Church teachings emanating from Rome, and internal factors, such as the rise of secular progressive ideologies in the Philippines. I seek to determine how elements of this history of Catholic social action are reflected in the two nation-wide BCC movements. These BCC movements are the unique product of particularly Philippine historical, socio-economic and cultural realities as explored in the first three chapters of this thesis.

In brief, this chapter describes how Catholic action for social justice was initiated in the Philippines in the 1930s by the Jesuits, well before Vatican II and based on Church social teachings from the turn of the century. Until the mid-sixties, the

organizations and teachings of the Jesuits remained the dominant force in social justice work in the Philippines.

With Vatican II in the 1960s, the rise of communism as an active force in the Philippine political arena, and the general radicalization of society under martial law, a greater number of religious and secular, legal and illegal, groups were formed to organize the poor and to protest social injustice. The most radical of the Christian activist groups is the Christians for National Liberation, a member group of the banned National Democratic Front.

With the growing influence of Marxist tools of social analysis in Christian progressive movements the Church hierarchy became increasingly divided with respect to the issue of Catholic social action although these differences were temporarily set aside during the worst years of martial law abuses. The two nationally organized Basic Christian Communities programs that exist today reflect historical divisions in the Church and in society. The Jesuit-led Basic Ecclesiastical Communities (BEC) program is the more moderate while the Basic Christian Communities-Community Organizing (BCC-CO) program is more national democratic in orientation.

The Development of Socio-Economic Involvement in the Philippine Church

Socio-economic conditions in the Philippines had steadily deteriorated since the 19th century (McCoy and de Jesus 1982:6-18; Wurfel 1959:425), leading to abject poverty of the greatest number of her citizens; a reality that did not change significantly during the American period (1898-1945) and that continues to be true today. Resistance movements and popular uprisings against the Spanish regime that had started during the latter part of the 19th century, flared up again in the 1920s and 1930s; one of the more famous of these being the Sakdal movement.(2) In various ways these many uprisings gave expression to a desire for more economically equitable, but also more respectful and dignified relations between workers and elites. In 1930, the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) was founded.

The impact of changes with regard to social issues emanating from the Church in Rome (Rerum Novarum 1981) was initially very much delayed. Church historian Fr. Wilfredo Fabros notes that while Leo XIII's (1891) encyclical was

decidedly behind the times in comparison with contemporary ideas inspiring the labour movement in Europe....it would take about forty years more before the message of Leo XIII would be proclaimed by some members of the Philippine Church, a proclamation that coincided with the

rise of communism in the Philippines. (1988:15)

The Philippine Church "during the whole first quarter of the twentieth century was, in general, defensive and alienated from the mainstream of society" (Fabros 1988:15). To some degree the Church found itself under seige during the American period in which protestantism was introduced to the Philippines and the official separation of Church and State brought a measure of secularism and anti-clericalism (Fabros 1988:15). The Catholic Church still heavily identified itself with, and was very dependent on, the elite during this period, and "hypersensitive" Catholic politicians frowned upon Church involvement in, or pronouncements about, public affairs (Fabros 1988:17).

Perhaps somewhat ironically, it was the arrival of American Jesuits, in 1921, that eventually led to the first Church-led socio-economic activities in the Philippines in the 1930s, albeit by but a small contingent of active Catholics (Fabros 1988:16-17). In the 1930s the social encyclical Quadragesimo Anno (1931) provided guidelines for Catholic Social action. In 1932, the Jesuits founded La Ignaciana Retreat House that would sponsor and run many retreats for workers in the years to come (Fabros 1988:17). La Ignaciana has remained a very active retreat and conference centre and has maintained its significant social focus by

housing, among many other social organizations, the main national offices of the Jesuit-led BCC movement.

Also in 1932, Fr. Joseph Mulry, S.J., set out guidelines for Catholic Action aimed mainly at teaching, enlightenment and propaganda for social justice. These guidelines reflected, and in some cases went beyond, the positions typical of the Church's pre-war social involvement:

It is not, then, the intention of the Church to become identified with any economic theory or plan; nor to organize a political party to seige [sic] upon the State; nor to interfere with any social program to make the world a better and happier place to live in.... All we mean is that the Church's proper sphere is the supernatural, and so long as the sphere of the natural man is served in accord with the law of God, the natural will not be interfered within its endeavour to succeed. (Mulry quoted in Fabros 1988:18)

An apparent failure to realize that by not interfering with the social order one de facto aids in its recreation and lends it moral support was common at this time (Fabros 1988:18). Fr. Mulry involved students from the Jesuit-run Ateneo de Manila University in his enlightenment activities and started up the Social Justice Crusade (1936) (Fabros 1988:19). Fr. James Meany, S.J., started the Chesterton Evidence Guild in 1937, which went on to publicize, via pamphlets and radio, "Catholic principles on social justice" (Fabros 1988:19-20).

While it could be said that for the first time

the fundamental economic structures of the Philippines were being questioned by these few active Catholics, the aim of this involvement was purely conscientization which, it was thought, would eventually lead to "voluntary cooperation of Capital and Labour in the solutions of their mutual problems" (Fabros 1988:20). Catholic Action at this point was "strongly anti-socialist and anti-communist" in nature (Fabros 1988:20). It was with great optimism that the Social Justice Crusaders went about their self-appointed top-down propaganda work in the faith that Catholic elites, especially landowners, could be convinced "of the reasonability of their economic plan and its supporting social principles" and become active participants in a large-scale social reconstruction plan (Fabros 1988:25). So great was the faith of these Catholic activists in the good will of the elite that they deemed landowners, once "morally converted to place human above material values," to be better suited to carry out the needed social transformations than the government (Fabros 1988:26). It was not until 1940 that the Crusade threw its support behind then President Quezon's Social Justice Program (Fabros 1988:26).

From the onset of socio-economic concern by a handful of Catholic activists in the 1930s, until the outbreak of World War II, the Social Justice Crusade

may be said to have been characterized by: 1) great commitment and enthusiasm but "minimal involvement," teaching but not actively implementing what was taught; 2) being "restricted in its nature by the existing understanding of the role of the Church in socio-economic affairs," "conditioned by anti-communist and conservative teaching"; and, finally, 3) by being a minority movement in a Church largely occupied with traditional charity work for the poor and "fighting 'antiecclesiastical' legislation in the National Assembly" (Fabros 1988:27).

The Post-War Years

In 1946, the Philippines were officially granted independence by the United States although U.S. socio-economic and political involvement in the Philippines has remained prominent to this day. The post-war years marked the beginning of Catholic involvement with, and organization of, labour unions. The post-war economy was in a shambles and there was a marked increase in political unrest and uprisings. The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), which together with the Socialist Party of the Philippines (SPP) had led the famous Hukbalahap guerrilla movement against the Japanese in the countryside (see Kerkvliet

1979), was starting to organize peasants and workers into unions (Fabros 1988:29-30). But it was also during this period that a handful of Catholics became actively involved in labour organization, the most prominent and notable being Fr. Walter B. Hogan, S.J.

In 1947, Fr. Hogan formed the Institute of Social Order (ISO), based at the Jesuit-led Ateneo de Manila University, in order to put the papal social encyclicals into practice. This primarily entailed the "formation of labour union leaders and the organization of labour unions," but simultaneously reflected an openness to managers and employers in the hope of convincing them to take part in creating a new social order (Fabros 1988:32-35). In 1954, the functions of the ISO were expanded and clarified to create a centre of action and social studies in order to bring the necessary research and study to bear on social problems and solutions (Fabros 1988:33). Important developments in these years were the birth of the "Catholic-inspired" (Fabros 1988:38) Federation of Free Workers (FFW) in 1950, of which Fr. Hogan was the advisor; and, in 1953, the founding of Federation of Free Farmers (FFF) by Jeremias Montemayor and Fernando Esquerra. Montemayor had graduated from the Ateneo de Manila Law School and was a lecturer at the ISO, and he had met Esquerra at the labour management school of the ISO

(Fabros 1988:44-45). On the whole, however, Fabros notes that ISO was not very successful in changing the anti-union bias of most Catholic employers nor in "injecting a Catholic social consciousness into the labour union movement as a whole" (Fabros 1988:35).

With the demise of the "communist-influenced" (Fabros 1988:37) Congress of Labour Organization (CLO) in 1954, which was much admired by Fr. Hogan but was banned by the government for being "subversive,"

the business community turned its accusing finger to the FFW, which it branded as the number one enemy of the economy and its leaders as 'tools of the Kremlin'.... (Fabros 1988:38)

The principle of separation of Church and State was used to justify opposition to Church activities, and Fr. Hogan was "branded a 'communist,' an 'undesirable alien,' and was threatened with deportation" (Fabros 1988:39). In fact, however, the FFW, much like the FFF, was anti-communist in nature.

It was exactly this anti-communist nature of the FFF, which attempted to take over organizing peasants where the collapsed communist Huk movement had left off, that rendered it undemocratic as it did not allow peasants who had first been organized and influenced by communists during the Hukbalahap movement to fully take part in its leadership. This fact, together with the fact that the Church had long concentrated upon urban workers, as these are the ones

most discussed in the papal encyclicals, undermined the strength of the FFF among rural peasants (Fabros 1988:45). The anti-communist nature of the FFF, on the other hand, made it popular with then President Magsaysay who gave the organization his support. Although priests had no voting power in the FFF they were prominent in training seminars, in advising, "choosing the best local leaders, raising funds" and so forth, and so, were influential (Fabros 1988:50).

A number of bishops expressed sympathy for the labour involvements of some priests and Catholic laymen in the 1950s and the hierarchy as a whole came out with a few supportive statements with regard to labour issues, relying heavily upon the Roman encyclicals (Fabros 1988:50-52). Fabros points out that the main concerns of the hierarchy during this period, communism and social injustice due to the "greed of capitalism," were still mainly believed to be solvable through a restructuring of the social order brought about by bringing Christian morality to bear "on both capital and labour and to urge all Catholics ...to fulfill these demands and to join the struggle for a just social order" (Fabros 1988:52-53).

The official Catholic Action of the Philippines (CAP) movement of the early 1950s, was based on Pius XI's 1939 letter to the hierarchy, "Catholic Action is

never of the material order, but of the spiritual; not earthly order but heavenly; not political but religious" (Fabros 1988:59). It still emphasized charity as the main response to poverty, unlike the ISO, and had little lay involvement. CAP's focus was also shared by the country's Archbishop at that time, Rufino Cardinal Santos. A turning point for CAP occurred in 1955 through the influence of a few particularly active priests and lay leaders. The organization showed a "deepening of social awareness" during the First Asian Meeting for the Apostolate of the Laity, sponsored by CAP (Fabros 1988:65). The conference's stated commitment was

to take an active part in free unions of workers and employers...to promote action in manifold forms in order to organize the tillers of the soil for the effective safeguard of their legitimate interests.... (Quoted in Fabros 1988:65)

This new commitment was, however, soon challenged by a strike at the University of Santo Tomas that was led by the FFW (Fabros 1988:65).

In 1956, the University of Santo Tomas (UST), a Catholic institution, found itself facing a strike of its employees for better "wages, overtime, sick and vacation leaves" (Fabros 1988:66). This strike ultimately pitted the FFW and the ISO, which supported the FFW, against the UST management, the Church hierarchy, the papal nuncio to the Philippines

(Archbishop Vagnozzi), and against CAP, which sided with the hierarchy. The hierarchy made the strike into a moral issue stating that:

It is with great sadness that we have seen under attack during the past weeks even the sacred character of religious men to whom our Catholic Philippines owes such a debt of gratitude. (Fabros 1988:67)

In fact, the dispute boiled down to the question of whether it was "possible for a religious university or any religious institution to be unjust to its employees," and whether there should be any "unionization of employees in religious institutions" at all (Fabros 1988:71). Interestingly, some Jesuit institutions, such as the Ateneo de Manila and La Ignaciana, although they were connected with the ISO, were also reluctant to recognize unions (Fabros 1988:73). The hierarchy was now in direct contradiction with its pro-union pronouncements dating back to 1949 (Fabros 1988:73).

Eventually Archbishop Santos forbade Fr. Hogan to speak outside of Jesuit schools, which caused conflict between the Archbishop and the Society of Jesus (Fabros 1988:74). The Catholic newspaper the Sentinel stopped reporting on the FFW (Fabros 1988:76) and as the rural based FFF gradually became more radical, between the late 1950s and the late 1960s, it lost support from the bishops and the papal nuncio

(Fabros 1988:79). CAP remained more concerned with protecting the Church from harassment by congress than with wages that were being slashed (Fabros 1988:78-79), and it was only in 1970 that the hierarchy agreed to the unionization of religious employees (Fabros 1988:81).

An important development came with Pope John XXIII's "liberation of Christian social doctrine from a definite, universally valid social order" in his encyclical Mater et Magistra (1961) (Fabros 1988:83). This opened the way towards a more critical "evaluation of any social order, uncurtailed by presuppositions which claimed absolute objectivity, e.g., hierarchical society, inviolability of the right of property" (Fabros 1988:83). Together with a growing awareness of the unequal distribution of wealth, not only between people within one country but also between countries, an interest grew in "development" as a solution to social ills. As John XXIII understood it, development entailed action by "rich sectors of society or nations" (Fabros 1988:85) for poorer equivalents, and he warned in Pacem in Terris (1963) against the potential abuse of power by members of the elite by admonishing them to "avoid any intention of political domination" (Quoted in Fabros 1988:86) in their aid giving.

The emphasis on development in the 1950s was

also reflected in President Magsaysay's various community development programs. But, despite these efforts and those of various labour organizations in the 1950s, the rural situation remained desperate and these efforts "failed to reform radically the existing socio-economic structure in the Philippines" (Fabros 1988:91). The programs developed by the Church in the 1960s revolved mainly around the establishment of Credit Unions and a variety of small scale socio-economic projects (Fabros 1988:91-93).

There was a great perceived need for skills and leadership training to run community development schemes. The ISO was running seminars but in 1962 Cardinal Santos, apparently wishing to diminish the influence of the ISO, established the Asian Social Institute (ASI) under Fr. Francis Senden C.I.C.M. "to duplicate the work of the ISO so that after some time it would be able to take over the work of the latter" (Fabros 1988:94). ASI, however, developed into a "graduate school of economics and sociology" with strong research, and related, field project components. In 1965, Fr. Hogan sponsored the Priests' Institute of Social Action (PISA) which laid the theoretical groundwork for much of the early community development in the Philippines (Fabros 1988:95).

In 1966, the perceived need for an

organizational structure to inform, guide, and coordinate various socio-economic programs was filled by the establishment of the National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA), which then also became involved in the training of priests for social work (Fabros 1988:97-98). (3) In 1967 the Church hierarchy sponsored the National Congress for Rural Development to focus attention on the predicament of rural Filipinos and to seek solutions to their problems. Fabros notes that at this time it was possible to speak of an institutionalization of the socio-economic involvement of the Philippine Church for the first time (1988:100), but that the nature of the involvement was primarily top-down; the congress was a congress "for the farmers, it was not of the farmers" (1988:99). After Vatican II, in the 1960s, the Philippine hierarchy became increasingly vocal and united in its insistence that Catholics, especially the clergy, become actively involved in the transformation of the temporal order (Fabros 1988:102); focussing especially on the rural situation which was perceived to be the key Philippine problem (Fabros 1988:105). The sixties also saw renewed government interest in programs aimed at rural development (Agricultural Land Reform Code, August 1963) (Fabros 1988:100-101), as well as the re-establishment of the Communist Party under Jose Ma.

Sison in 1968, and the founding of its armed wing, the guerrilla New People's Army (NPA) in 1969.

Although some very striking examples of a new, "more radical," position on the part of some higher Church officials may be found in this period, social action on the whole remained non-confrontational in nature. In a pastoral letter of 1968, Bishop Bantigue railed against a system that entrusted "not only economic power but also political power and the cultural destiny of the country to a very small minority," which he further described as exploitative, oppressive, selfish, and corrupt (Fabros 1988:105). The Pastoral Letter on Social Awareness by the Philippine hierarchy, of the same year, states that unless the situation of the poor improved, "the only social order possible is that of the police state, where force alone constrains the desperation of men" (Fabros 1988:106). And the Rural Congress declared that:

We had full occasion to realize that unless the structure of power in the political, economic and cultural sphere is altered to allow full flourishing of the freedom and dignity of the individual, then we cannot expect the growth of a potent democracy... (Quoted in Fabros 1988:106-107)

In this period, solutions to poverty were mainly sought through "increased production" (Fabros 1988:107), through consciousness raising and skills development (Fabros 1988:112), through small-scale

socio-economic projects (Fabros 1988:117), and, to a much lesser extent, through organizing peasant groups in the belief that "organization would make the farmers and laborers equal to the government, employer, or landlord in the process of democratic dialogue or at the bargaining table" (Fabros 1988:109). Most Church people still felt that development should come about "as a cooperative effort, jointly participated in by the government, the farmers, the landowners, and the Church" (Fabros 1988:107), in the fervent belief that only such joint effort could bring about change peacefully. "[C]hange must occur...among all sectors of society if conflict was to be avoided" (Fabros 1988:113). Unfortunately, the nature and power of the state, which peasants must negotiate with, was not examined or analyzed (Fabros 1988:107), and the possibility of creating a "mass-based political party (e.g. Farmer's Party)" in order to allow peasants to participate directly in politics, was not yet considered (Fabros 1988:109). On the whole, the movement remained top-down,

socio-economic involvement of the Philippine Church in the midsixties was not only uncoordinated; it was directed from the parochial or diocesan social action centers and downward, not from the grassroots and upward. (Fabros 1988:119)

It aimed at "amelioration...without changing the structures which perpetuate these conditions" (Fabros

1988:125).

With the establishment of NASSA, as a strong organizational body meant to co-ordinate and aid socio-economic projects, an organization was developed that could lead the way in rethinking the shortcomings of "development" as a strategy. NASSA started out with great confidence and enthusiasm, stating in 1968 that the Church's social action program was one that "[n]o government or private agency could duplicate...in time to influence the deteriorating socio-economic Philippine conditions" (Fabros 1988:103). The key role of the priest was especially noted as priests maintained close contact with the people and had their trust; a trust many government and private agencies did not always enjoy. Priests were also qualified by training and experience to minister to the social needs of the people (Fabros 1988:103). Generally, the aim of NASSA was to bring about peaceful change by not merely raising the demands and expectations of the poor, which could lead to violence, but by simultaneously changing the attitudes of the wealthy. But within NASSA were also to be found some of the most critical analysts of Philippine social structures and of the likelihood that present efforts could bring about significant changes in these structures:

It is perhaps wishful thinking to expect those who have the power of life and death over the

peasants to relinquish this control and become philanthropists overnight; it is equally unrealistic to expect the peasants to accept their exploitation by the landlords without opposition, even violent opposition....To expect that a new society can be constructed, economic independence and social equality attained through the establishment of parish credit unions, cooperatives, cottage industries, piggeries, and better mechanics, is folly. All of these are necessary, but the heart of the problem is to form these people into dynamic organizations that can forcefully fight for the rights of their members on equal footing with the present power blocs. (NASSA Development Program 1968 quoted in Fabros 1988:108)

It was NASSA, among the Church organizations, that most strongly stressed the need for "mass organization" (Fabros 1988:108).

By the end of the 1960s there was a clear shift away from a tradition of Jesuit-led social action. While it is not an exaggeration to say that social action, especially as related to the Church, had, until the mid-sixties, been under the almost exclusive leadership of the Jesuits, Vatican II (1965) provided the inspiration and legitimation for other religious people, clergy, lay people, and organizations to tackle social problems head on. Political analyst Denis Murphy goes so far as to assert:

The founding of the National Secretariat of Social Action (NASSA) by the Philippine bishops in 1966 can be taken as the watershed between the Jesuit-dominated social action years, and the time other church people became more active in the field. (Murphy 1991:14)

Not only was the involvement with social issues

now being carried by a much larger base in the Philippine Church (4), but cross fertilization was also increasingly taking place between religious and secular progressive forces, the latter mainly drawing upon Marxist and Maoist social theory, in the struggles of the pre-martial law and martial law years. Fr. John J. Carroll, S.J., who had been involved in the ISO and now is involved in the Institute on Church and Social Issues based at the Ateneo de Manila University, notes that:

Concepts derived from the Latin American theology of liberation provided a bridge between the Maoists and some religious activists. Thus it appeared that the "reformist" approach of the Jesuit pioneers, the effort to bring about social change by means short of violent revolution, was being bypassed on the left. (1991:16)

By 1970, there were 2000 socio-economic projects in 400 out of 1,650 parishes nation-wide. Almost all "dealt primarily with the cooperative and non-conflictual aspects of community development" (Fabros 1988:127). It was, however, in the early 1970s that a significant shift in analysis became apparent among certain individuals and groups in the hierarchy, "some priests declared that the social problem was not primarily underdevelopment but maldevelopment" (Fabros 1988:154). There was, for some, a shift of emphasis, as expressed by Bishop Labayan for NASSA, "from poverty to oppression, from community development to community

organization, from the economic to the political. from development to liberation" (Quoted in Fabros 1988:160). There was also a shift from a model of the Church as leader, teacher, and organizer of social change to a model of the clergy as servants, in whatever capacity may be desired, "of the primary agents of liberation" which are the effected people themselves (Fabros 1988:152). Service was, for some, now seen as "not something prefabricated but something that evolved and would continually develop out of a dialogue of the gospel and the people's aspirations" (Fabros 1988:141).

There was a move from primarily economic concerns, to be remedied by development, to a recognition of the political roots of poverty and the need for the "destruction of structures of oppression and dependency" towards the "creation of a new order of human relations" (Fabros 1988:170). There was a simultaneous shift in perception that change must be brought about "not from the rich but from the poor sectors of society or nations" (Fabros 1988:170). Also, for perhaps the first time, the Church itself was openly recognized by some to have class status and to be "still basically a sacristan of the existing order" (Fabros 1988:150).

Fr. L. Jalandoni noted in 1972 that priests as

a class in society "are often vacillating in decision, and very concerned about losing our security...we really do not have much strength and power" unlike the poor who have "strength in number and power in their committed decision to overcome oppression" (Quoted in Fabros 1988:151). The obvious influence of Marxist analysis, which became more widespread in the 1970s, also became a source of conflict for the Philippine hierarchy:

More and more priests and laymen began to confront realistically the existing social order - some armed with the Marxist tools of social analysis - and to witness, denounce, preach, and assist toward the radical transformation of Philippine society in ways different from that of the hierarchy and seemingly independent of the direction exemplified by their superiors. (Fabros 1988:145)

From the 1970s on there has been a very definite split within the Philippine Church hierarchy between more progressive and more conservative bishops; a split that has continued despite a brief period from 1983 to the revolution of 1986 when the bishops at least projected a more united front against the Marcos regime. (5)

It is in this period of the 1970s that BCCs have their roots. The two nation-wide BCC movements that exist today, BCC-CO, rooted in NASSA, and BEC, rooted in the Jesuit tradition, continue to embody aspects of the various debates that characterized the

development of Catholic social action as described above.

As early as 1969, the Laymen's Association for Post-Vatican II Reforms (LAPVIIR) picketed the residence of Rufino Cardinal Santos in Manila to protest what they perceived to be the Church's inadequate response to injustice and corruption (Fabros 1988:128). In the same year, 35 S.V.D. Fathers (Divine Word Seminary) signed a lengthy declaration that not only denounced the Church for its "lack of Christian social responsibility" but included a long list of direct actions which should be taken immediately by the Church on such concrete issues as

informing tenants on Church lands of their right to become leaseholders as a preparation for landownership [and] ... guaranteeing just wages to employees of Church institutions.... (Fabros 1988:129)

This declaration was soon responded to by an affronted hierarchy that was becoming increasingly defensive, as well as increasingly divided. An open letter to Marcos in 1969, denouncing injustices and asking him to live up to his responsibility to right these injustices, identified a number of more progressive bishops in the hierarchy. The letter was signed by the bishops which were henceforth to be known as the "Magnificent Seven": Bishops Antonio Mabutas, Jesus Varela, Felix Perez, Antonio Fortich, Julio Xavier Labayan, William

Brasseur, C.I.C.M., and Godofredo Pedernal (Fabros 1988:135).

In 1968, Philippine Priests Inc. (PPI) had been created as a unionized organization of priests. (6) This organization began to flourish in 1970 when it held its first annual national convention at which hundreds of priests attended wearing laymen's clothes (Fabros 1988:147). This convention, and the two following it, saw a number of the most active participants give papers and speeches that were to become famous for their progressive content. Especially well known among these papers are: Fr. Ed de la Torre, S.V.D., The Role of the Priest in Social Reform (1970) and Church and Liberation in the Philippines (1972), Fr. Luis Jalandoni, The Role of the Priest in Political Liberation (1972) and Fr. Simplicio Sunpayco, S.J., The Developing Church of Mindanao (1972) (Fabros 1988:147-148). The social analysis used in the PPI reform proposals was

a conscious attempt to give up what they called a triumphal search for totally different Christian categories but instead, to submit to the analysis and concrete social and historical investigation of Marxism. (Fabros 1988:153)

An important distinction remained that the clergy rejected violence as a mode of social transformation (Fabros 1988:153).

Fr. Ed de la Torre, who was a chaplain of the

FFF in 1970, stated that, unlike "other serious-minded people in the Philippines...[who] have opted for direct destruction of the power structure by violence" (Quoted in Fabros 1988:153) he still believed in reform by socio-political organization. But, by 1972, Fr. de la Torre noted that, while he would "exhaust all peaceful means until you force me to use violence" (Quoted in Fabros 1988:153), ultimately the "degree of violence, would be determined both by the forces of liberation and the reaction of the forces of oppression to change" (Quoted in Fabros 1988:153). An important consequence of the acceptance of this fact, coupled with the role which progressive priests saw themselves playing as servants of the oppressed, was a potentially conflictual situation for clergy in which Christian values could be subsumed by socio-economic and political goals (Fabros 1988:150). By 1974, Fr. de la Torre was a wanted man; he was arrested that year and held for almost five years.

The dual issues raised at that time, the degree to which Marxist analysis should become dominant over possible Christian social perspectives, and the role which violence could or should play in social transformation, continue to have a central place in discussions about means and strategies for BCCs and continue to be a point of contention and divisiveness

among BCC theorists and practitioners.

While Bishop Francisco Claver, S.J., noted the need for "political clout" along with socio-economic projects, and Fr. Luis Jalandoni spoke of "political liberation" (Quoted in Fabros 1988:149), Fathers Ed Garcia, S.J., and Antonio Ledesma, S.J., founded the radical youth organization (Lakasdiwa) amidst increasing student activism. The students joined with the FFF to demonstrate against the oppression of farmers (Fabros 1988:158-159).

While the PPI and the Association of Major Religious Superiors of Men in the Philippines (AMRSMP), and of women (AMRSWP), supported the FFF and the FFW, the majority of the hierarchy was involved with, and supportive of, an initiative sponsored by a new organization called the Philippine Business for Social Progress Foundation (Fabros 1988:143). This initiative, a Conference of Bishops and Businessmen held in 1971, became a permanent organization that stressed non-conflictual solutions and co-operation between classes in development efforts (Fabros 1988:143-145). As Fabros notes of the Bishops Businessmen's Conference,

this alliance less than two months after the hierarchy pledged to be 'the Church of the poor,' provided a glimpse of what could be honestly expected of the bishops vis-a-vis the implementation of the tasks specified by the Asian Bishops' Conference. (Fabros 1988:143)

In 1970, at the first Asian Bishops Conference,

held in Manila, the Philippine hierarchy had stressed its role of servant of, and with, the poor in defence of their human rights: "we must in our way of life share something of their poverty" (Quoted in Fabros 1988:142). But while the hierarchy openly praised conscientious businessmen (1971) they commended the FFF and FFW only on the condition that they "do not violate the basic laws of justice and charity" (Quoted in Fabros 1988:144-145).

In the early 1970s, under the shadow of martial law (1972), and during the directorship of Bishop Labayan, NASSA became more radical in its social analysis and its proposed solutions, emphasizing active mass organizing and directed protests. Increasing numbers of clergy and religious sisters became directly involved with the explosively expanding FFF (Fabros 1988:160) as a way to serve the poor directly. In Mindanao especially, where the first regional unit of NASSA was set up, the diocesan social action centers became very active in the direct "promotion of farmers' and workers' unions" (Fabros 1988:161). After a long and rather slow start up period, it seemed that the forces of change within the Church were now poised at a major breakthrough that could transform the image of the Church into one of identification with, and direct social action in service of, the poor. Moreover, after

years of lagging behind, for the first time, developments in the Philippine Church "more or less coincided with those of the universal Church and other local Churches" (Fabros 1988:169).

The Martial Law Years

Martial law (1972-1983) brought about "depoliticization" in Philippine society (Wurfel 1988:211), as regular political channels such as parties and unions were "crushed or forced underground" (Wurfel 1988:212), their leaders often threatened, pursued, and jailed. This political climate led, on the one hand, to new support for left wing forces, often revolutionary and working underground, and to "an increased political role for religious forces and institutions" (Wurfel 1988:211). Political scientist David Wurfel notes that despite the fact that the Church was internally polarized, the combination of recent changes within the Church (toward human liberation as a central focus), and the imposition of martial law (which excluded many usual forms of political expression), led to a situation in which "religious institutions became important channels of political dissent in the Philippines, a spiritual cloak donned for activities with political consequences"

(Wurfel 1988:212).

Wurfel identifies three categories of opposition to the Marcos regime under martial law: "The reformists, the religious, and the revolutionary" (Wurfel 1988:204). This categorization is potentially misleading as it seems to posit an absolute distinction between secular political and religious forces. Within the overtly religious opposition one could further distinguish politically reformist and politically revolutionary forces. Within the secular political movements many activists are known to be Christians and to draw inspiration from this source. The reformist opposition under martial law, mainly a collection of elite individuals from former national parties, was internally disunited. The largest group, the United Democratic Opposition (UNIDO) was the party of Benigno (Ninoy) Aquino and Salvador Laurel. UNIDO relied on strong ties with the United States in the hope of ousting Marcos through elections. They did not condemn U.S. bases and "seldom talked of the need for social reform" (Wurfel 1988:210). The second largest group, centered around Jose Diokno and Lorenzo Tanada was, on the other hand, strongly nationalistic, opposed to the U.S. bases, committed to socio-economic change, and held the strongest ties with the left (Wurfel 1988:210). The final, and smallest group, led by Jovito

Salonga, shared with Diokno and Tanada a boycott response to "Marcos-directed electoral dramas," as well as an anti-bases and anti-U.S. multinationals stance (Wurfel 1988:210), but it was less aggressively anti-American, had a "less effective dialogue with the Left," and was less adamant about social reform, than the second group (Wurfel 1988:211). Wurfel maintains that by 1980 opposition leaders did not yet have much support from the economic elites (Wurfel 1988:211); a situation that was to change in the leadup to the 1986 revolution. And, with the exception of Aquino, most "would have had very feeble links to the masses without the assistance of progressive churchmen and women who were organizing peasants and workers" (Wurfel 1988:211).

Sharp increases in brutal violations of human rights under martial law galvanized the committed support for the people, and against the Marcos regime, of a large number of Church people who, until then, had still seen their role as primarily pastoral. The martial law years also saw divisions within the Church become more sharply defined, especially those differences concerning political and theological points of view (Wurfel 1988:216). Wurfel notes that progressive forces in the Church were opposed by "the economic interests of Church institutions, the social

class backgrounds of clergy, their educational experience, and pressures from the Vatican" (Wurfel 1988:216). (7) It was especially in NASSA and the AMRSP that the progressive bishops had influence and a voice. Consequently, the papal nuncio critiqued the AMRSP for "activities of a socio-political character" and the military accused both NASSA and the AMRSP of being subversive (Wurfel 1988:217).

As NASSA and some BCCs moved more in the direction of a Marxist model for social analysis, although not usually stated as such, they found themselves accused of being "infiltrated" and "used" by leftists, and even of channeling funds to the underground. In 1981, the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Bishops asked for stricter control over NASSA (Human Society 1982:12:32) (8) and a number of progressive NASSA board members "were replaced by conservative bishops to curtail NASSA's liberational thrust" (Kilusan 1984:21). The well known progressive bishop, Julio Labayan, who had for fifteen years headed NASSA, was one of those replaced. (9)

When speaking of "progressive" forces in the Church in the Philippines during the martial law years an important, though somewhat over-simplified, distinction may be made between those Church members whose perspectives on social change could be

characterized in political terms as being national democratic, popularly referred to as "nat dems," and those whose views coincided more with the political social democrats, known as "soc dems." (10) The more radical national democrats had their roots in the efforts to "organize the masses" of the sixties (Wurfel 1988:217). Although individuals often defy definition, a broad distinction may be made between these groups based upon their willingness ("nat dems"), or lack thereof ("soc dems"), to accept Marxist social theory and recommendations for revolutionary action in the face of social injustice.

While social democrats are more likely to advocate active non-violence, this is not an unconditional stance; in the heated struggle to remove Marcos from power they "did not deny themselves the use of violence" (Wurfel 1988:218) (see also Human Society 1982:12:5,34). In religious quarters the "soc dems" have traditionally been led by the Jesuits, while "nat dems" draw on a variety of secular, Marxist-inspired, intellectual and academic sources for their theoretical underpinning.

The Christians for National Liberation (CNL), which started in 1972 and was contributed to by Fr. Ed de la Torre, was one of the founding organizations (Pilipinas 1990:37) of the banned National Democratic

Front (NDF) that was organized by the Communist Party in 1973. (11) It is important to realize, however, that aside from the outlawed NDF there are also many legal organizations, including religious institutions, that hold a generally national democratic perspective on social issues. These may be sympathetic to the NDF, or even be in dialogue with the NDF, although they cannot do so openly.

Among social activists there was also an increasing number of Christian activists who "came into contact with the cadres of the CPP, and discovered that they were alumni of the same pre-martial law training programs" (Carroll 1987:18). The use of "structural analysis" provided a common language and a common vision on social analysis and transformation. Carroll notes that it was possible

to identify groups associated with the united front by the following three characteristics, when found together: an emphasis on sectoral organizing, i.e., organizing by occupational or socio-economic groups; an openness to the option of violence; and a strategy of politicizing every issue, i.e., relating every problem somehow to the U.S.-Marcos dictatorship....(1984a:19)

By the late 1970s, the NDF had incorporated many Church-related groups who now adopted the progressive ideology of the NDF so that "those elements of the Christian tradition which could not be easily integrated with this... were either reinterpreted or

pushed to the margin" (Carroll:1987:18).

Significant for Philippine religious activists was also a month long conference held in Baguio City, in 1975, at which Canon Francois Houtart of Louvain, France discussed the benefits of a structural and Marxist social analysis in identifying problems and devising relevant social action plans. (12)

Wurfel notes that it is hard to say to what degree CNL members were "conscious supporters" of the Communist Party but that "they would probably argue the compatibility of Christianity and Marxism" (1988:217). Indeed, if we re-examine the writings of the CNL we may conclude that this is so. At the 2nd National Congress of the CNL, in 1981, the CNL stated:

[W]e engage in ideological discussion, in a Christian-Marxist dialogue.... In this sense, it is not just the incarnation of Christianity that concerns us. We have a stake in the incarnation of Marxism in the efforts of Filipino communists to give it a national form. (Quoted in Bolasco 1987:89)

At their Third National Congress (1986), the CNL reaffirmed its intention to be a primarily Christian progressive organization. Bolasco notes that the effect of this position has been that "Marxists are now prepared to accept an organization of progressive Christians motivated just by their Christianity, without becoming Marxists" (Bolasco 1988:74). Recent publications by the CNL (1990;1991) confirm that a

meaningful dialogue between Christianity and Marxism is not only still considered possible but also desirable. While the CNL, as a member of the banned NDF, is still an illegal organization it may be said that some of its viewpoints and social theories are shared by members of legal Christian organizations, such as the BCC-CO program, which takes a more broad and general national democratic perspective.

Although the social democrats, unlike the national democrats, were generally anti-communist this fact did not make them less of a perceived threat to the Marcos regime. In 1974, "evidence of their underground organization was sufficiently strong that the military detained Father Jose Blanco, a Jesuit, for interrogation" (Wurfel 1988:218). In 1977, the United Democratic Socialist Party of the Philippines (NPDSPP) was formed, "reputedly" by another Jesuit, Fr. Romeo (Archie) Intengan (Wurfel 1988:218). Wurfel notes that the social democrats, who identified themselves with Christian Democratic movements in Europe and Latin America but were not absolutely opposed to the use of violence, were probably a smaller organization than their "more leftist competitors" (1988:218). Although there is reason to believe that by 1978 the national democrats "had practically taken over some key church structures and programs," the social democrats were

themselves not "without institutional power, especially among Jesuits, the most influential religious order" (Wurfel 1988:218).

Wurfel distinguishes three major sources of cleavage in the Roman Catholic Church, the "religious opposition" mentioned above, by the late 1970s: 1) between those who supported and those who opposed martial law (with so-called "moderates" not taking an overt position); 2) between those who did not rule out violence as a necessary evil in bringing about needed changes, and those who categorically opposed the use of violent means to achieve socio-economic ends; and, 3) between "anti-communists" and those sympathetic to "Marxist analysis" and aims (Wurfel 1988:218). The CNL would be situated on the left in all the above categories "the conservative bishops on the right, but groups in between varied according to issue" (Wurfel 1988:218). Whereas the national democratic clergy held that only a revolutionary solution could bring about human dignity and relief from oppression, the social democrats were more reform minded, "once Ferdinand Marcos had been removed," and more concerned with the preservation of the institutional Church in the process (Wurfel 1988:218-219).

Cardinal Sin, although a moderate and concerned with maintaining Church institutions, was sensitive to

progressive complaints and to the need to keep progressives from leaving the Church altogether. Until about 1979, Sin steered an uneasy course marked by "critical collaboration" with the Marcos regime but alternated with sharp criticisms and conflicts with the regime over abuses of Church persons and human rights violations. Marcos, for his part kept the Church on its qui vive by threatening to tax Church properties, to include Church lands in Land Reform policies, to liberalize divorce, and to prohibit foreigners from becoming actively involved in unions (Wurfel 1988:220-222).

This latter threat especially effected many priests and nuns who were members of religious orders. It is commonly believed that these religious orders tended to have a high percentage of very active and effective social organizers, as well as a higher percentage of foreign members. Fabros notes that in the 1960s the Mill Hill Missionaries, the Oblates, and the Maryknoll Fathers, were at the forefront of socio-economic and political organizing (Fabros 1988:120). The important role of the Jesuits in the Philippines is obvious. And Wurfel comments on the effectiveness of foreign priests and nuns in assisting unions in the 1970s (Wurfel 1988:220). (13)

The Turbulent Eighties

On January 17, 1981 Marcos lifted martial law, a move that "made no difference in the power of the regime over the people" (Wurfel 1988:248). The visit of Pope John Paul II, later in 1981, was an occasion of great significance as it was grasped by both the state and various Church groups as an important event through which to gain symbolic and moral support for their causes. The Christians for National Liberation (CNL), who celebrated their ninth anniversary on the day the Pope arrived, "reiterated that they were both Christians and revolutionaries" and renewed their "revolutionary pledge to participate in the national democratic revolution" (Human Society 1982:12:27). Although the Pope warned at times emphatically and sternly against violations of human dignity and basic human rights, he also asserted that the Church "'has no political ambitions' that her action is 'not political, economic, or technical'" (Quoted in Human Society 1982:12:26). On the whole, progressives were disappointed. "One radical nun complained, 'What does he think fighting for human rights is if not class struggle? He should stop giving us platitudes'" (Quoted in Wurfel 1988:261). At best, Church people felt they had "neither gained nor lost by [the Pope's] visit"

(Wurfel 1988:261), a position shared by the central committee of the Communist Party of the Philippines who "considered the Pope's visit and his pronouncements to be ambivalent" (Human Society 1982:12:27). While the Church insisted it was a "Church of the Poor," many pointed out that those surrounding the Pope on his visit were again the rich and powerful, not the farmers and laborers of the country; a definite symbolic advantage for Marcos and his ever present wife.

Nonetheless, relations between the state and the Church had been steadily deteriorating since about 1975 when the Marcos government became concerned about the potential of the Church to head an opposition political party. A leaked confidential report expressed the fear that the American CIA was backing the Church's social action programs and criticisms of the regime through agents among Jesuit priests and Maryknoll Missionaries (Shoesmith 1979:255). Within a few years time the Church had been confronted by three hostile reports: the so-called Banzar Plan (late seventies), the Kintanar Paper (June 1979) and, finally, with the Crisis Papers (May 1983). A significant quote from the Kintanar paper identifies BCCs as a key source of resistance to the Marcos government:

What is now emerging as the most dangerous form of the threat from the religious radicals is their creation of the so-called Basic Christian Communities (BCC) in both rural and urban areas.

They are practically building an infrastructure of political power in the entire country. (Quoted in Gaspar 1987: 60) (14)

A more insidious and perhaps lesser known source of attack on progressive elements in the Roman Catholic Church comes from religious forms of low-intensity conflict (LIC). Especially U.S. based right wing fundamentalist groups such as the Christian Anti-Communist Crusade (CACC) and the Heritage Foundation have been recently identified as waging a propaganda war against perceived leftist organizations within the Catholic Church:

The Task Force for Detainees in the Philippines, which was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, as well as other religious bodies in the Philippines have been attacked as 'communist fronts,' and these allegations have surfaced in respectable publications like the Washington Post. (Bello 1987:98)

The very active and effective Task Force for Detainees is organized under the AMRSP.

Other right wing groups that have been identified as involved in anti-progressive efforts include Christian Aid and the Campus Crusade for Christ (Goldenthal 1987). There are quite strongly based allegations that some of these fundamentalist organizations are directly supporting right wing, and religiously fanatical, vigilante groups that have become infamous for their bloody and brutal slayings of suspected leftists (Diamond 1990:183). Specifically the

CACC has been implicated, by the Philippine Council of Churches, in supporting paramilitary death squads throughout the Philippines (Diamond 1990:191). These vigilante groups, in turn, have been known to turn their bloody attention not only to secular progressives but especially also to members of Catholic progressive organizations such as BCC organizers. (15)

In February of 1983, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) showed a new found unity by, for the first time, unanimously condemning the Marcos regime for its political violence and for its blatant violations of human rights (CBCP Joint Pastoral Letter, Feb. 20, 1983). But the most important political and social turning point came later in 1983, with the brazen and brutal assassination of Benigno Aquino, Jr. on the tarmac of Manila International Airport on August 21.

Aquino, in a grave miscalculation of the political climate, had decided to end his exile in the United States in the hope of playing an active role in stimulating and leading what he perceived as potential forces of change in the Philippines. The country responded to this killing with an outrage, shock and horror that seems to have been finally released after years of enduring political killings and military murders. Massive anti-Marcos and pro-Aquino rallies

became a common occurrence in Manila, and throughout the country people wore yellow, the colour of Aquino's widow Cory, and flashed the Laban sign that stood for Aquino's party. More importantly, however, for the first time many individuals and groups that had not been openly against Marcos became politicized and public in their criticism. Of these the politically influential middle-class and economically significant business communities were the most important.

The dramatic social and political revolution that followed, in 1986, brought about a rearrangement of alliances and a shift away from a more progressive stance by some factions within society at large and within the Church. The revolution, often referred to as a "revolution of, and for, the middle-class," to a large degree placated middle-class opponents of the previous regime, at least in the first few years, as the middle-class turned their attention back to their traditional, left-wing, enemies. In time, however, signs of a growing discontentment reappeared, especially among the lower middle-class as they found that the meritocracy they had hoped for, which would allow them to advance based upon their access to academic training as a professional class, turned out to be a false hope. Many of the old patronage structures re-established themselves in the new

government. Also, a greater level of freedom of expression, combined with a carry-over of the progressive thrust started in the battle against Marcos, meant that at least some of the new generation of young elites were becoming politicized and critically aware of injustices in the country. The famous elite school, St. Scholastica, run by the St. Benedict sisters is an example of middle-class "drift to the left" as the formerly staid education for young ladies now includes "conscientization" and participation in protest marches (Mydans 1988:A14). The majority of the middle-class has, however, again distanced itself from the issues that concern the poor in the country.

The radical left experienced but a very brief period of honeymoon with the new administration, following an initial cease-fire with the rebels and the release from prison of all political prisoners, including the chairman of the CPP, Jose Maria Sison. While the National Democratic Front (NDF) was, for a time, divided over the question of whether to support the new regime or not, eventually more and more NDF members became disillusioned with the lack of movement on land reform, with the steady rise in human rights violations, and with Aquino's concessions to the military, including the backing of the hated vigilantes

to help fight communism. Aquino, on the other hand, became increasingly dependant on the military and subject to its demands as she faced consecutive coup attempts. On May 5, 1987 Aquino revived Republic Act 1700 that outlaws the Communist Party and penalizes membership therein.

In the elections of May 11, 1988 the left wing Alliance for New Politics (ANP) took part, with such famous left-wing leaders as Dante Buscayno and Horacio (Boy) Morales, but this election saw many ANP campaign workers "kidnapped and murdered" and led to a massive defeat for the left (Wurfel 1988:320). In the wake of this election some NDF and ANP leaders announced their disillusionment with the "democratic" process and supported a return to armed struggle.

Within the Church, the unprecedented unity between political progressives, conservatives, and moderates that had seemed to exist from about 1983 onwards also proved to have been of a temporary nature. Soon after the 1986 political turn over the first signs of differences of opinion became apparent as conservatives and moderates threw their support behind the new government and were willing to give it time to deal with the many ongoing human rights abuses and structural injustices in the country. Progressives within the Church eventually became internally divided

again, with social democrats maintaining a position of reconciliation and dialogue towards justice and peace and traditional national democrats becoming increasingly disillusioned, along with the NDF, and increasingly vocal and critical vis-a-vis the administration.

An example of the, at times, particularly acrimonious nature of the division between "nat dem" and "soc dem" progressives in the Church post-EDSA (1986 revolution) may be found in the controversy that was sparked by a 1988 article written by Bishop Francisco Claver, S.J., for NASSA, which he then headed. Bishop Claver's article appeared in Intersect, a newsletter of the Institute on Church and Social Issues at the Ateneo de Manila University. In this article, entitled "Beyond Conscientization: Refocusing Social Action Work in the Philippines," Bishop Claver argued that the 1986 revolution, while not bringing about utopia, had brought about a context of "freedom and democracy" that should "be by all means preserved" and should occasion a new and different approach to social action work than that which was called for in order to topple the dictatorship of Marcos (Claver 1988a:1). Bishop Claver advocated a return to the "traditional tasks of social action," to a commitment to a "non-violent way of working for justice," and to

"development" as a central thrust in the fight against poverty (Claver 1988a:13). He specifically rejected the commonly made distinction between "development" and "liberation" through which projects without an overt political component become referred to as "mere developmentalism."

In a 1988 interview I conducted with Fr. Sunpayco, S.J., who is himself involved in a nationwide BCC program in the Philippines, he noted in despair that Bishop Claver's name had become "mud" among some progressive Church groups as a result of his article in Intersect. In discussions I had with "nat dem" progressives within the Church in 1988-1989, a turning away seemed to be occurring with regard to NASSA, which was perceived as having come too much under the domination of conservative bishops. It was therefore perceived by these progressives as increasingly ineffectual in dealing with the structural problems continuing to face the people according to these progressive Catholic activists.

Differences in social perspectives of "nat dems" and "soc dems" are reflected in the two nationwide BCC programs in the Philippines: the more "nat dem" oriented Basic Christian Communities-Community Organizing (BCC-CO) program; and the Jesuit-led, more "soc dem" oriented, Basic Ecclesiastical Communities

(BEC) program. While in the face of a common enemy, Marcos, both programs seemed at times to have become ideologically united through the issuance of similar statements of intent, forms of action, and a common goal, the post-revolution years have brought their essential differences to the fore all the more severely.

BCCs : Reflections of a Church Divided

The Catholic Church in the Philippines has great potential to function as a political force through its influence over the "hearts and minds" of the people, some 85% of which are Roman Catholic, as I have indicated earlier. As of 1981, the Church ran some 286 kindergartens, 591 elementary schools, 921 high schools, 159 colleges, and 12 universities, as well as 21 radio and television stations, three national monthly magazines, "one newspaper in each of the three largest cities, not to mention an uncountable number of publications known as the Catholic Rural Mimeo Press" (Human Society 1982:12:18). With the recognition of social action as an integral part of the Church's duties, which led to the establishment of NASSA and Social Action Centers (SACs) in some 53 of the country's 67 dioceses, the Church became directly

involved with the operation of justice and peace commissions, research and documentation centers, hospitals, clinics, community-based health programs, and socio-economic projects (Kilusan 1984:15).

While it is true that through extensive networks, both national and international, and the creation of local level social action institutions, such as the BCCs, the "church is able to exercise direct political power and influence" (Kilusan 1984:15), other factors are of equal importance. These include the Church's high level of moral authority, its important association with historically embedded but continuously reinterpreted symbols that hold great significance in the everyday lives of many lowland Christians nation-wide, and its transcendental legitimation that is unmatched by any other organization. Some of these qualities, especially the structural and moral strengths of the Church have been recognized by various analysts (Kerkvliet 1990:272; Fabros 1988; Wurfel 1988; Shoesmith 1979:248-249; Youngblood 1990).

Wurfel notes that in "rural areas the growth of Basic Christian Communities (BCC) was of the greatest importance" and that by "the early 1980s the BCC movement had practically revolutionized the locus and purpose of church activity in several provinces"

(Wurfel 1988:261). He insists that the Church's new focus on the villages, and on such everyday problems as exploitation by multinationals and military abuses, allowed BCCs to become an important avenue for peasant protest (Wurfel 1988:261-262). Fabros goes so far as to insist that the "miracle of EDSA" could not have occurred had it not been for the years of intensive consciousness raising and politicizing of the masses by the Church through the BCCs (Fabros 1988:177). Youngblood (1990) also emphasizes the critical role of the Church and of BCCs in ousting the Marcos regime.

There has been a price to pay for these political and social successes. BCC lay leaders have been labeled as subversives for their organizing activities and suffered the often fatal consequences. While famous cases of BCC leaders who were "martyred" for their involvement with the poor made international headlines many others are remembered only within the organization and within their own communities. (16)

While most analysts comment on the potential of BCCs to effect local level power relations others, such as Mulder, insist that the Church can never form an effective challenge to existing power relations as it cannot directly take part in elections as a political party, and is internally divided with regard to its proper role in political affairs (1990:7). Indeed,

nationally organized Basic Christian Communities embody at one and the same time the powerful local level potential of the Church to organize and influence peasants and workers, and the internal divisions within the Church with regard to the proper role of the Church in promoting social justice.

Basic Christian Communities in the Philippines have their local roots in the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conferences (MSPC) that started in Davao City, Mindanao in 1971, under the directorship of Fr. Sunpayco, S.J. (17) The theme for practically all these conferences has been the building of Basic Christian Communities in Mindanao-Sulu based on the new directives derived from Vatican II. There was an important emphasis on lay participation right from the very start both with regard to the role of the lay person as a community organizer and, more importantly, with regard to the role of the lay person as an active participant in forming and giving shape to the local Church; both embodying and realizing the notion of "Church of the people."

While the first lay training seminars coming out of the MSPC were held in the towns, and attended by the traditional elite religious organizations, these sessions eventually moved into the outlying villages. Here were the beginnings of BCCs and those lay

participants who attended these early seminars were the first BCC members (Gaspar 1987:39). These trained lay leaders eventually staffed the Social Action Centers and other post-Vatican II parish programs, some becoming paid staff. The rise of lay involvement in the Church coincided with the declaration of martial law (1972) and an intensification of human rights abuses in the rural areas. Church lay leaders soon found themselves involved in issues of social justice.

The MSPC conferences, as the birth place of Philippine BCCs, were also the testing ground of various viewpoints within the hierarchy with regard to the proper role and place of the laity, and of BCCs, in the structures and the mission of the Church. By 1982, these differences had become so profound that after four conferences in which tensions steadily rose (1971, 1974, 1977, 1980) the bishops officially disassociated themselves from the MSPC, and in 1983 two MSPC conferences were held, one by a lay board and one by the bishops. The conference of the lay board received the theme "Genuine People's Participation Towards Total Human Liberation in Justice and Love"; that of the bishop's was given the theme "Individual and Social Reconciliation."

Gaspar outlines the turbulent history of these conferences and delineates four main areas of tension:

"the nature of the Church; exercise of ecclesiastical authority; faith; ideology" (1987:53). The traditional position that the existing structures and hierarchies within the Church remain unchanged was antithetical to the newer concern that the Church first and foremost be a liberating community in which all structures must be evaluated, and, if necessary, changed, so that the Church could best serve the poor and oppressed. The desired democratization of society's structures further implied a need to rethink the respective roles of the laity and the clergy. MSPC supporters strove for maximum lay participation, even in decision making that would effect the Church, as equals with the bishops and clergy. The bishops insisted that "faith must have the blessing of the Magisterium...[and] not be caught up into the political expressions of the times" (Gaspar 1987:56). The opposite view held that faith be seen in terms of the

salvific mission of Christ. Such faith finds its spirituality in the people's involvement in historical events which effect the social transformation of the world and thus foreshadow God's Kingdom. (Gaspar 1987:56)

The final drop in the controversy, however, was the issue of ideology. The bishops felt that the MSPC board and agencies had become infiltrated by leftists and that Marxist ideology, conceptual frameworks, and recommendations for action, were overtaking the

essential Christian values derived from the gospel and interpreted by the Church:

Class struggle is no means of building Christian community... No to Marxist-inspired Structural Analysis, i.e. in its materialistic determinism and orientation to violence and bloody revolution... The Church's deepest structural centre-life is geared towards the change of persons and hearts and not just structures. The most radical solution is conversion of hearts. But some 'radicals' just smile and sneer at this. Many times in MSPC's methodology they have preconceived purposes and let it appear as if this is also the people's purpose. Communists 'use' people to achieve their revolutionary ends. (MSPC Communications, 39, August 1982, pp.12-41, quoted in Gaspar 1987:57)

While the first BCCs, still largely pastoral and liturgical, were developing in the rural areas, urban NGOs (religious and secular) were adopting the largely non-ideological "Community Organizing" (CO) strategies of Saul Alinsky grafted onto Freire's more politicized concepts of "conscientization" to create informed communities motivated and able to take action upon their own behalf to tackle problems of poverty and oppression (Reed 1984:34). In 1977, after the third MSPC conference, the National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA) of the CBCP held its 9th National Convention. At this meeting the BCC and the CO approaches were merged to form BCC-CO. This program was then adopted and promoted by NASSA. In 1978, a National Consultation on BCC-CO was held in Cebu City at which the thrust of the program, to work for

economical and political justice for the poor, deprived and oppressed (PDOs), was formulated and regional BCC-CD committees were formed for Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao (Abellana and McAndrew 1987:73-74).

The nation-wide Basic Ecclesiastical Communities (BEC) program in the Philippines may also be traced back to the MSPC conferences. Fr. Simplicio Sunpayco, S.J., was the Executive Secretary of the MSPC. In 1974, at the second MSPC conference, he invited Fr. Galenzoga to discuss the Christian Communities program he had developed and named KRISKA (Inter-BEC Consultations 1988:5). Fr. Sunpayco had himself been promoting the Christian Communities Program (CCP) of the East Asian Pastoral Institute (EAPI). In 1975, Fr. Sunpayco developed his own KRISKA Introductory Seminar after gathering input from a variety of sources. Fr. Sunpayco's KRISKA program eventually evolved as a synthesis of a number of socio-pastoral programs. In the same year he became the Pastoral Apostolate Secretary of the Jesuits and staff member of the Training Program of La Ignaciana Apostolic Centre where he organized the national KRISKA office (Inter-BEC Consultations 1988:10).

In 1983, the name of the KRISKA program was changed to Basic Ecclesiastical Communities (BEC). The rationale given for this change of name is significant

as it points to the way the BEC program has consciously moved to distinguish itself from other BCC programs. In a discussion of BEC history, the authors write that in their development world-wide some BCCs became "tainted with Marxism and other ills" causing Pope Paul VI to issue Evangelii Nuntiandi in 1975 "giving corrections (No.58) and guidelines to BCC" (Inter-BEC Consultations 1988:69). In 1979, the Puebla Conference followed at which the need was stressed for BCCs to remain rooted in Church tradition; to remain ecclesiastical. In sympathy with this position, and "to counteract the ambiguities in the ideological loyalties of some BCC," (Inter-BEC Consultations 1988:11) the name Basic Ecclesiastical Communities was adopted (Inter-BEC Consultations 1988:70).

At the 1983 MSPC conference, the first after the bishops had formally dissociated themselves from the MSPC board, the bishops expressed their sympathy with the BEC program's principles by officially adopting this new name for Philippine BCCs (Inter-BEC Consultations 1988:70).

Conclusions

The central theme of this chapter has been that the history of Catholic social action in the Philippines, from the 1930s up to and including the development of Basic Christian Communities is characterized by a number of central tensions. These points of concern arose, or became the focus of debate, at various junctures along the historical road but none have been resolved to this day and, as we will see throughout this thesis, each still plays a role in current theoretical debates about Catholicism and social action at the national level and in attempts to put theory into practice through BCCs at various local levels.

These contested areas include: 1) whether local level activities should be focussed on development (education, socio-economic projects and skills enhancement), or on political action that strikes at the roots of poverty (some would abbreviate this argument to "development" versus "revolution"); 2) the possible role of the elite in social transformation; 3) the role and acceptability of violence in social change; 4) the tension between maintaining an essentially religious perspective on social justice (derived from Vatican II and the Gospel) or adopting a

secular social theory such as Marxism as the principal guide to organized action; and, 5) whether the new critical social analysis should also be applied in an objective appraisal of the structural role of the Roman Catholic Church as an institution in society.

This latter point not only refers to a recognition of the historical role of the Church as a conservative force, but also encompasses discussions about the degree to which Church structures should themselves be transformed to reflect democratic principles, as well as the difficult issue of whether the clergy should restrict themselves to teaching justice and reform or should actively take part, or allow themselves to be led, in transformative practices that may be directed by the poor themselves. The Church, as a world-wide institution, faces a formidable dilemma, namely, how to become relevant and respond to the everyday injustices of the oppressed in a Third World peripheral capitalist society, while maintaining internal and historical continuity as an institution partaking in that society. The question of whose perspective on action and change should be adopted, that of BCC organizers on behalf of the people, or that of the people themselves, also remains unresolved.

Another important fact that arises from the

historical data is that positions taken by the clergy on these contested issues may not be simply deduced by locating the clergy, as a whole, as members of a structural elite. Nor may the divisions that became apparent within the hierarchy over these issues be accounted for simply by analyzing the degree of power and prestige, or the structural position held within the hierarchy of various members of the clergy. While structural positions of power do appear to be somewhat correlated to a greater degree of conservative outlook (Youngblood 1982) they do not fully determine the social positions taken by members of the clergy. I would argue that the historical data shows that in some cases members of the clergy re-evaluated their own personal positions in the light of both historical events, such as martial law excesses, and personal experiences in trying to put theory into practice. The fact that bishops in similar structural positions of power may end up on opposite sides of the above issues of debate also attests to the role that personal experience and conviction plays. And, on the other hand, the influence of membership in a religious order can cause clergy spanning various socio-economic ranks to, nonetheless, develop a highly consistent political perspective in a particular context, such as the Jesuits do in the Philippines.

This brings me to a final point in concluding this chapter. It is clear that the same basic religious perspectives and religious sources of information may inspire some believers to become more politically "radical" and others to seek what may be considered more politically conservative solutions. Therefore, in studying the transformations that occur when the progressive religious interpretations of BCC programs are put into practice, as these trickle down to the local level, we must be prepared to bring both the realities of socio-economic interests, as well as of personal religious convictions of BCC mediators and target groups, to bear on our analysis. We must recognize that even among progressives the guiding social theory of the BCC-CO movement and a personally held religious conviction may at times be in conflict. An example of this is found in the complex relationships of members of the clergy involved in the BCC-CO movement and local level members of the elite. This example is further elaborated on in the diocesan level chapters of this thesis.

NOTES

1. Because I am writing this thesis partly for readers interested in religion and social transformation, I have to include an extensive review of recent Philippine Church history, specifically with regard to the social involvement of the Church in the

Philippines, for non-Philippinists. This task has been recently accomplished by Fabros (1988) in a "pioneering study" (Schumacher in Fabros 1988:vii). I also draw on Wurfel (1988), for a political backdrop, and on a handful of others. In this chapter I summarize the relevant parts of their analyses, in order to show how the development of BCCs is rooted in historical attempts by the local Church to give concrete shape to social involvement. Regional experts may want to skip this chapter.

2. For more information on peasant movements in the Philippines during this period see Huizer (1980), Ileta (1979), Kerkvliet (1979), and Sturtevant (1976).

3. Organizationally, NASSA falls under the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP). Its degree of independence from the bishops in action and direction has always been a matter of tension, and many feel that NASSA now is again firmly under the direction of the more conservative bishops.

4. It was the S.V.D. Fathers who, in 1969, openly chastised the Church for its failure to live up to its commitment to work for social justice. In an interview I had with Ed de la Torre (May 7, 1991) he joked that the prominence of members of the Divine Word Seminary (S.V.D.) in these years was the cause of jokes that there was a competition between the Jesuits and the S.V.D. Ed de la Torre himself was chaplain of the FFF and prominent in the establishment of the Philippine Priests Inc. (PPI) in 1968, as well as the founder of the illegal Christians for National Liberation (CNL) in 1972.

5. See R. Youngblood 1982.

6. According to the interview I had with Ed de la Torre (May 7, 1991) it is difficult to pinpoint the exact founder of the PPI. He attributes the fact that some scholars implicate him in the PPI's creation to the fact that he was an active member from the start.

7. The Catholic hierarchy is now composed of 2 cardinals, 12 archbishops, and 69 bishops (there are about 4,500 priests and 7,500 nuns) (Wurfel 1988:215). In 1979, there were 83 active bishops of whom 18% were cardinals and archbishops and 23% were prelate ordinaries and vicar apostolics. Out of 79 bishops classified by political outlook, 58% were conservative, 23% were moderate, and 19% were progressive (Youngblood 1982:35-36). The progressive bishops tended to be

younger, more recently consecrated, more often members of a religious order, and more often located in remote areas of the Philippines and away from the centers of power (Youngblood 1982:41-49). The ratio of progressive priests and nuns to conservative is usually considered to be higher than that of bishops (Wurfel 1988:217). This would, to some extent, account for the more progressive position of the Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines (AMRSP) vis-à-vis the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

8. Human Society is a pamphlet published by "Human Development Research and Documentation" located at the address of La Ignaciana Apostolic Centre. In the cover, the pamphlets identify their purpose as "to stimulate reflections and discussions on issues effecting man in society with the hope of inviting the readers to act in concert with others in defending and promoting human dignity and in transforming society." While the editions are numbered they frequently have no date.

9. In his farewell address Bishop Labayan lamented the "red scare" of the time:

The constant accusation of some people that NASSA and myself are leftist, that the organization is 'infiltrated' by Marxists and is funding the underground, has been for me, one of the saddest aspects of the last five years. I don't mind if such charges come from non-churchmen, from oppressors - that is to be expected. But coming from churchmen and my brother bishops, the charges are heartbreaking. (Labayan 1981:22)

Despite Bishop Labayan's departure the accusations against NASSA continued and under the Aquino administration constant investigations into the allocation of funds led to so much frustration that in 1987 the whole staff of NASSA quit in protest.

This event formed part of a larger concern of the Aquino government about how development funds from outside agencies to legal Philippine organizations were allocated once in the country. After a Dutch official of the NGO ICCO admitted that it was possible that some of the money sent to the labour movement KMU had ended up in the hands of the communist guerrillas (NRC Handelsblad May 19, 1990), a committee was formed by the Dutch government to investigate the uses of Dutch development money in the Philippines. The committee concluded, in 1991, that there was no hard evidence

that funds were being diverted to the underground resistance but the report strongly indicates that it considers this a very likely possibility and quotes the Philippines expert Wolters who asserted that some extreme left wing legal organizations do function as a front for illegal political activities (Filippijnen Bulletin March 1992).

10. A more complete discussion of the distinctions between various progressive people's organizations, cause oriented groups, and NGO's, as these exist in the Philippines today is supplied in the following chapter.

11. The member groups of the National Democratic Front are: Artista at Manunulat ng Sambayanan (Armas); Bagong Hukbong Bayan (BHB) (also known as the armed guerrilla movement the New People's Army); Christians for National Liberation (CNL); Cordillera People's Democratic Front (CBDF); Kabataang Makabayan (KM); Katipunan ng mga Gurong Makabayan (KAGUMA); Katipunan ng mga Samahang Manggagawa (KASAMA); Makabayang Kilusan ng Bagong Kababaihan (MAKIBAKA); Makabayang Samahang Pangkalusugan (MASAPA); Pambansang Kaisahan ng mga Magbubukid (PKM); Partido Kominista ng Pilipinas (PKP); Rebolusyonaryong Kongreso ng Kilusang Unyon (RKKU) (NDF pamphlet, no date).

12. In an interview I conducted with Ed de la Torre (May 7, 1991) he emphasized the significance of the Baguio conference in influencing the Christian left. Both the timing of this conference and its international character contributed to its impact.

13. My own research, in 1984, may shed some light on the role that may be played by foreign clergy of international orders as I conducted that research in a parish headed by the La Salette Fathers. These noted that their success in setting up an effective ECC structure was greatly aided by the financial assistance they were able to collect through members of the order outside of the Philippines, especially in France and in the United States. Interestingly, two of the most difficult parishes to run, because of the consistent clashes between the NFA and the military in a remote area, were run by Dutch Carmelites who persisted in organizing the people, protesting human rights abuses, and conducting a very progressive consciousness raising program. They also frequently solicited moral support from Dutch sympathizers who wrote letters to protest abuses.

14. The Banzar Plan, said to be named after a former

Bolivian President, is thought to have been the main document used by Latin American countries to crack down on "radical" elements in the Roman Catholic Church. The Kintanar Paper, named "Contemporary Religious Radicalism in the Philippines" (Quarterly National Security Review of the NDCP 1979), as well as the Crisis Papers (Communication Research Institute for Social and Ideological Studies, Manila 1983) give a detailed, if slanted, analysis of the history of the Church in the Philippines. The Crisis Papers concludes with recommendations strikingly like those in the Banzar Plan, namely, to support the moderate hierarchy, in the case of the Philippines by legislating security of the Church's material interests, while emphasizing the differences within the Church and attacking its more radical members.

15. For more information on Philippine death squads in general, and their connection to the religious right in specific, see: Death Squads in the Philippines by Delacruz, Jordan, Emmanuel eds. (1987); The Religious Right in the Philippines by Howard Goldenthal in CovertAction 29 (1987); Creating the Third Force: U.S. Sponsored Low Intensity Conflict in the Philippines by Walden Bello (1987); Spiritual Warfare: The Politics of the Christian Right by Sara Diamond (1990).

16. In 1980, in Kabankalan, Negros Occidental at least nine active lay BCC workers were murdered causing the Pope to make a special visit to the province during his 1981 visit to the Philippines. And in 1982, the now famous case of the military frame-up against two foreign priests and seven Filipino BCC workers, who had led protests against local abuses in Negros, became world news. See Alfred McCoy's Priests on Trial (1984) for more on this affair.

17. Bishop Claver puts the roots of Philippine BCCs somewhat earlier. He claims that the first BCC was launched in 1967 in Cagayan de Oro, Mindanao, taking its inspiration directly from Vatican II and prior to Medellin (1968) which spurred the development of BCCs in Latin America (Claver 1988b:26).

CHAPTER THREE: Basic Christian Communities in a Political Context: Religious NGOs.

Introduction

In the previous chapter I argued that the two nation-wide BCC programs reflect historically developed divisions in the Philippine Church with respect to Catholic social action. I also indicated that the existing differences between the BCC-CO program and the BEC program may be described from a political point of view by stating that they are, respectively, more national democratic and social democratic in nature. In this chapter I elaborate on the political influences on the two BCC programs at the national level whose philosophies are shaped by debates and concerns prevalent at the national level.

Progressive political influences on the two nation-wide BCC movements derive primarily from three interrelated sources: 1) other secular and religious politically progressive organizations and NGOs; 2) progressive academic texts that comment on the political scene in the Philippines and offer an intellectual perspective on social problems; and, 3)

various forms of liberation theology as interpreted by Philippine and Latin American scholars. The Marxist based social perspectives that are one characteristic of Philippine BCC movements derive both from secular intellectual sources and from liberation theology texts.

This chapter shows how the differing political inclinations of the two nation-wide BCC movements are reflected in their affiliations with other progressive organizations and in their preferences for particular intellectual political viewpoints and interpretations of liberation theology. Both movements express these latter preferences in their publications in which they also define themselves in opposition to each other. In these publications political viewpoints are commonly articulated and legitimized through the idiom of theological discourse.

Finally, this chapter explores the consequences of various progressive political and social perspectives on BCC program formation at the national level. Particularly important are the underlying assumptions about relations between peasants and members of the elite which are embedded in these political philosophies as these assumptions inform the development of BCC programs for the local level. Theoretically derived social understandings of the BCC

movements are compared with findings in recent local level research by social scientists.

BCCs as Christian NGOs in the Secular Progressive Context

The period of goodwill towards the new government and of hope for true political and economic reforms that followed the EDSA revolution in 1986 was all too quickly dissipated by reality. The Aquino years were characterized by a weak and internally divided government, an economy heavily burdened by foreign debt, loss of investments, high inflation rates, weak nationalism, strong regionalism, constant violent threats to political and social stability both from the left wing armed resistance movement (NPA) and right wing factions in the army (both of which became more frequent after the December 1989 coup attempt), and ongoing political intrigue and patronage leading to allegations of graft and corruption and compromises on socio-economic policy (such as land reform). It is, therefore, not an overstatement to claim that the nation found itself in an acute state of political and economic crisis. (1)

Furthermore, the continued presence of United States military bases and troops was increasingly viewed by progressive forces as a symbol of ongoing

foreign infringement on Philippine sovereignty as well as a concrete manifestation of U.S. imperialism. (2) The Aquino government's attempts to meet the dictates of the IMF and the World Bank, leading to an additional and very high burden on the already extremely weak Philippine economy, was seen by progressives as further evidence of the regime's subservience to the "instruments of neo-colonialism." Similarly, expanding import liberalization to suit wealthy nations was blamed for stunting indigenous production (Pilipinas 1990:9). Progressive publications point out that aside from the ongoing economic and political crises there is an added crisis of national identity and cultural cohesion and blame this situation on continued foreign involvement in the Philippines. (3)

While pre-1986 progressive coalition politics was formidably complex and often characterized by fragmentation and sectarianism (Abinales 1988), post-1986 progressive politics is no less so. In fact, the greater democratic space, that was first offered by the new government led to the proliferation of new progressive organizations. On the other hand, the new political situation, deemed to be a less oppressive one, led to a breaking apart of alliances between traditional social democrats and national democrats as the former chose to use the new situation to once again

pursue social change by more gradual means. A popular way of distinguishing between progressives is to characterize them as ranging in political colour from the "radical red" of the extreme left to the "milder yellow" of the more compromise minded reformists. (4)

A recent political "snapshot" published by a social democratic journal attempts to freeze frame the complex political picture. This chart includes: major political parties, political movements, sectoral organizations (urban poor, peasants, labour, youth); alliances based upon such issues as the U.S. bases, the debt crisis, and peace; as well as the underground movements. These groups are arranged from "extreme left" through "democratic left" to "democratic right" and "extreme right" (Philippine Political Update April 1990:7-11). (5)

The illegal underground and armed factions of the left are known as the NDF/CPF/NPA group. An extreme right wing solution is most strongly, and violently, represented on a national scale by various illegal factions in the army some of which are suspected to be supported by the deposed Marcos "clan" and their political allies in the Philippines and abroad. Right wing vigilante groups, often armed, form regional opposition against a variety of local organizations and individuals perceived as being left wing or

"subversive." This latter label forms a convenient excuse for authorities to threaten anyone perceived as interfering with the interests of local elites - even if this person is only a farmer fighting eviction from his legally held land to make way for a lucrative real estate project. BCCs, sometimes accused of being a front organization for underground left wing movements, have found themselves among these suspects as well and lay leaders especially have suffered the violent consequences. (6)

Philippine progressive organizations are often unpredictable in their ideological make-up, some sporting such unlikely titles as "YUPPEACE" (Young Professionals for Peace), and they are frequently unstable due to alliances, splits, and internal shifts of position on issues and methods. The intense level of activity and the continued expansion of NGO groups reflects not only a high degree of urban politicization but also serious divisions amongst progressive forces and a lack of consensus on goals and methods. Popularly this is expressed as the "struggle for the hearts and minds of the Philippine people." (7)

To illustrate the complexity of the political scene, the "democratic left," of the above mentioned chart, is often simply referred to as the social democrats (soc dems), but this group may be subdivided

to include democratic socialists (dem socs), and independent socialists each marking out a different political space. Fr. Romeo Intengan S.J., a democratic socialist, considered to be somewhat to the left of the social democrats, was once asked whether there is a difference between dem soc and soc dem. He answered that:

Strictly speaking social democracy is only a minimum program of the democratic socialist group where I belong....We refrain from calling ourselves Marxists, mainly for tactical reasons. We are Marxists in a certain qualified way. (Intengan 1988:143)

The quote shows the complexity of political thinking, as well as the caution with which people reveal their political positions in a society where political freedom is still limited. The quote also indicates that members of the "democratic left" tend to repudiate adherence to a Marxist perspective. Common points of debate among this group include the role of violence in social transformation, the impossibility of reconciliation between the classes, and the impossibility of a mixed economy as a final social stage.

Although the chart published by Philippine Political Update does not show the place of various religiously based organizations, it is possible to situate these on the chart based upon the political implications of their socio-theological orientations.

Religious organizations with politically progressive orientations are sometimes referred to as "God Dems." Religiously based organizations such as the National Priests and Religious Union (NAPRU), the Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace (EMJP), the Ecumenical Centre for Development (ECD), and the two nation-wide BCC programs are all examples of Christian progressive organizations.

Religiously based progressive NGOs, in so far as their social programs overlap with the concerns and efforts of secular progressive NGOs, receive input from these fellow organizations, are in frequent dialogue with them, and often share personnel, training seminars, conferences and demonstrations with them. The influence of secular progressive activists, social theories, and local level programs on religiously based NGOs, which are themselves mainly staffed by lay persons, is at least as great as the influence of theological theory or religious leaders on religious NGOs.

The BCC-CO and BEC programs may be described as religiously based NGOs in the sense that: they are nation-wide programs with interregional and regional offices that provide funding, technical assistance, and training to local level BCCs throughout the country; they apply for funding both from within the Philippines

and from abroad; they sponsor and aid local level socio-economic projects; and they have an over-arching philosophy on human development, empowerment, and social transformation. (8) The BCC-CO program, for example, is described as being

expected to answer the social, political, economic, and spiritual needs of man, and eventually would help pave the way for the total transformation of society towards the coming about of the "Reign of God"....(Kilusan 1984:22)

More concretely, the "Reign of God" is thought to be brought somewhat closer on the economic front by a program advocating land reform and the nationalization of all industries (Kilusan 1984:22).

The BCC-CO program openly shares key issues and perspectives on social change with left of center NGOs and issue based coalitions, some of which may be labeled as national democratic in orientation. These issues include the desire to see the U.S. bases removed (ABAKADA) and demilitarization and the protection of basic human rights (PAHRA, NMCL) as well as the desire to reject the dictates of the IMF/WB on debt repayments (FDC) and the desire to see a form of land reform that is more comprehensive than that offered by the government (CFAR). Among Church organizations the AMRSP is also a source of support and compatibility for the BCC-CO movement in terms of social perspective. The underground Christians for National Liberation (CNL)

are undoubtedly a source of inspiration as they represent a radical, but Christian, perspective on social change. There appears to be a high level of compatibility between the viewpoints of the CNL and of the BCC-CO.

On the other hand, Bolasco sees in the alliance between the hierarchy and the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference, as well as in the allocation of some Church resources and the marshalling of Church authority, an effort "to back a social-democratic movement" (Bolasco 1987:87-88). He includes in this effort the development of the BEC type of BCC program.

The BEC program shares philosophical compatibility with, for example, the secular BISIG group that forms a think-tank for socialist theory and practice. While BISIG is generally considered to be on the left most flank of the mainline social democratic factions, some would place it on the right of the national democratic camp (Magno 1988:91), it is composed of organizations with various ideological traditions. This makes BISIG a more acceptable dialogue partner for the proponents of the BEC program than the Marxist oriented national democratic organizations. Other progressive but "more or less moderate" organizations which the Jesuits were instrumental in helping to organize include the Philippine Ecumenical

Committee for Community Organization (PECCO) and the democratic socialist political organization KASAPI (Murphy 1991:14-15).

On the whole the BEC program takes a skeptical stance vis-a-vis "foreign ideologies" (PKP, Bible-sharing guide, December 4, 1988), by which is meant Marxist ideologies, insisting that

liberation is not just a matter of changing ideologies, political parties, or platforms of government. When we ousted the former leadership our situation hardly changed. (PKP, Bible-sharing guide, February 1989)

As indicated previously, the BCC-CO movement shares methods of community organizing and consciousness raising with other progressive organizations that have grassroots components. These methods are characterized by: a combination of the CO approach introduced by Saul Alinsky and the consciousness raising techniques of Freire; the development of what is often referred to as the "scientific tools of social/structural analysis"; the development of leadership skills at the local level; and the promotion of sectoral organizations. Indeed, leaders in politically quite different organizations sometimes share these methods because they participated in the same seminars and training courses for social action in the sixties and seventies. The primary and over-arching concern in their methods of organization

is to create empowered individuals and empowered communities that will be able to take action on their own behalf. It is hoped that with enough of such empowered communities working together to improve their own situation (the dominant perspective in the BEC), or to challenge the structures that oppress them (the dominant perspective in the BCC-CO), nation-wide social transformation will ensue.

Intellectual Influences Reflected in BCC Publications

Both nation-wide BCC programs publish and promote pamphlets and books that reflect their respective socio-political and theological perspectives. These publications also lend insight into the intellectual influences that help shape the perspectives of both movements. BCC-CO publications include: BCC-CO Notes, which is a forum for various authors on ideas and issues of relevance to the Philippine social situation and the struggle of the poor; mimeographed texts that set out the history and strategies of the BCC-CO program; and mimeographed reproductions of texts by other groups that the movement supports such as The Taskforce for Detainees, and the Promotion of Church People's Right (PCPR) movement. The BCC-CO offices in Manila also sell

literature, which was published elsewhere, that reflects concerns of the movement. Finally, the Nagliliiyab (The Burning Bush) series of Clarentian Publications, based at the University of the Philippines, publishes numerous booklets for the BCC-CO movement that review social and theological theory and practice. (9)

BEC publications include: Sambayanan, a mimeographed publication that reviews BEC news from around the country; the BEC Bible-sharing guide, which is mailed out to BECs; special publications such as, "Inter-BEC Consultations: How far have we gone?"; and a large number of mimeographed BEC seminar guides that set out BEC philosophy. There is, furthermore, a selection of related literature being sold at the BEC offices at La Ignaciana Apostolic Centre in Manila. The Human Society booklets are also published at this centre.

While the BEC publications are largely contributed to by Jesuit authors and moderate liberation theologians they also include pieces by secular analysts offering insights into political and social theory that are of interest to social democrats. Important intellectual influences reflected in BEC texts emanate from: Fr. Sunpayco, S.J., Fr. J.J. Carroll, S.J., Bishop Claver, S.J., Fr. C Arevalo,

S.J., Fr. A. Lambino, S.J., Fr. V. Gorospe, S.J., and Fr. J. Bernas, S.J. The BCC-CO program's publications draw upon a wide range of national democratic oriented religious and secular sources. Well known contributing authors include: Karl Gaspar, C.Ss.R., Professor Mario Bolasco, and Ed de la Torre.

Whereas BEC intellectual positions are supported by the theological traditions of the Ateneo de Manila think-tank, the BCC-CO program draws on the more radical intellectuals from, among other institutions, the secular University of the Philippines (UP) for its social and political theoretical foundation; authors such as Alex Magno and P. N. Abinales. There is also a link between UP and the AMRSP through the Education Forum. The AMRSP publishes progressive critiques on present educational materials and techniques. Renato Constantino, from UP, is one of the contributors (Mulder 1990: 85). Both BCC programs show great interest in current social and political theories and appear eager to buttress their theological positions, and especially their local level programming, with the authority of academic reasoning.

In their publications, the two BCC programs also refer to each other. To a degree they are shaped in opposition to each other. In a BEC publication the variations in BCCs is acknowledged, "even those who

profess to be involved in building BEC are often confused in the use of BCC and BEC" (Inter BEC Consultations 1988:12). This publication explains the orientation of the BEC movement as having solidified in the face of opposition from conservative forces in the Church:

Conservative members of the Church hierarchy were apprehensive of the BCC for fear of Communism encroaching into Christianity.... In 1983 MSPC V in Cotabato sort of officially adopted the name Basic Ecclesial Communities to stress the ecclesial qualities of these small communities. The added reason was to counteract the ambiguities in the ideological loyalties of some BCC. (Inter-BEC Consultations 1988:10-11)

Referring to these "other BCCs" this text notes that:

Some BCC got tainted with Marxism and other ills ... in their impatience for tangible results they relied more on Marxist strategies and neglected prayer, love for enemies, reconciliation and joy. These groups gave the impression of being communists. (Inter-BEC Consultations 1988:69)

A survey book of BCCs nation-wide, commissioned by the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference for Human Development and largely researched and contributed to by the Ateneo community, carefully notes that some "transformative" BCCs "adopted one of the existing ideological frameworks, very often, one in the socialist tradition" and "found themselves identified with and, sometimes, even committed to the political program of one or other of the ideologically driven

parties or 'movements'" (Church of the People, eds. 1988:xi). In response to such subtle allusions to its program a BCC-CO publication notes:

There have been many controversies surrounding the "liberational" or "transformative" type of BCC which incorporates the community-organizing approach. The advice to those who would have reservations about this model is this: spend at least one week with these living Christian communities. See for yourself if Christ is not present among these Filipino communities who have made Christ's example their own model of faith. (Apuan 1987:2)

Although the interregional BCC movements undoubtedly function as NGOs and articulate political positions that are recognizable in the Philippine context, this articulation is frequently expressed through the idiom of theological discourse. This theological discourse draws on concepts and positions set out in Vatican II and subsequent documents and in Latin American liberation theology. Liberation theology has been an important source of Marxist insights for Christian activists, and simultaneously provides examples of how Christianity and Marxism may be wed. But liberation theology also provides a medium through which Philippine Christian activists may articulate their differing political perspectives.

Liberation Theology in Philippine Christian Activism

It is, as yet, difficult to speak of a truly Philippine liberation theology. While many texts are being generated in the Philippines in which Christian symbols and narratives are being reinterpreted to articulate and support various "liberating" social philosophies they generally do not exhibit the same degree of exegetical elaboration and theological rigour as the now famous works of well known Latin American theologians. (10)

Bolasco hypothesizes that theological elaboration has "tended to take a back seat to the primarily political options that divided church people" (1986:109). He notes that "Philippine expressions of a 'theology of liberation' are more political in tone" (1986:110). Gaspar (1986) and Hechanova (1983), while agreeing that there has not been much systematic development of a Philippine liberation theology, see in various grassroots faith reflections such as poems, songs, and stories, the expressions of an ongoing and organic "theology of struggle." (11)

David Reed, who has worked with Paulo Freire, contends that in the Philippines in the seventies "the Theology of Liberation, helped establish firmer ideological foundations in many church-based agencies

and in "Basic Christian Communities" (Reed 1984:34). While the writings of Latin American liberation theologians undoubtedly addressed a need for firm ideological, yet Christian, underpinnings for the social action work being carried out by Philippine Christians, various interpretations and "homegrown" texts reflect the internal divisions within the progressive Christian sector.

Philippine liberation theology literature reflects a search for the Christian roots of social action but at the same time is often defending a particular ideological position against rival positions by debating with Christian organizations holding different political perspectives using theological, rather than directly political, discourse. So a particular point of view with regard to secular concerns such as the U.S. bases, the national debt, or even the desirability of supporting the underground armed resistance movement, becomes articulated through theological discourse.

A problem faced by Catholic activists who rely upon an indigenous form of the theology of liberation to support their actions is that, ultimately, the Church seeks to place limits upon the possible interpretations and seeks to impose its own form of orthodoxy upon this new theology. This is especially

true where the new liberational exegesis, which supports greater human participation and self determination in the secular arena, spills over from commenting on reform in the secular domain to advocating reform in the religious domain such as greater lay involvement in interpreting the word of God (grass roots theologies) and in determining the day to day decision making of local churches.

There is a constant tension within the post-Vatican II Church between giving meaning to the stated aim of being "Church of the people," including support for greater human participation and liberation in the secular sphere, and the need to maintain orthodoxy in ecclesial structures and in the relationships of people within these structures. Ultimately, it must be recognized that the Church as an institution is not in essence democratic and so it seeks to restrict and control the activities of organizations associated with it. On the whole members of the BEC organization tend to be more comfortable with this reality and more willing to accept its limitations than those in the BCC-CO movement.

In 1984, the Vatican issued a document called "Instruction on Certain Aspects of the 'Theology of Liberation.'" This document, which focusses on the effects of the influence of Marxism on theologies of

liberation, warns against translating Christian concepts and beliefs into Marxist ones. It sparked a lively debate among Filipino theologians and lay activists. This debate highlights the main issues underlying their differences. (12)

Generally, those religious activists who hold a more national democratic political perspective reject what they see as efforts of the Church to impose limitations on their ideological constructions. Some even feel that the "Instruction" has misunderstood liberation theology's uses of Marxism (Hechanova 1986). More reform minded progressives are more likely to accept the criticisms and to some degree feel vindicated and supported in their "anti-communism."

In response to the "Instruction" Professor Antonio B. Lambino, S.J., notes that the narrative gospel tradition of Christianity has always had a "dialogue partner" which provided the "world view" or "philosophy" that served to mediate the gospel story to the recipient culture (Lambino 1986:142). Lambino comments on the present effects, following on the heels of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas, of the "reinterpretation of the Christian faith through the choice of Marxism as dialogue partner" (Lambino 1986:142-143).

Together with other Filipino Church people,

many of whom regret what they perceive to be the reactionary tone of the "Instruction" (Danenberg 1986; Hechanova 1986;), Lambino applauds the positive effect of the Marxist dialectic between "appearance and reality" that has opened up a "self-critical hermeneutics" for the Church itself, which has often found itself structurally aligned with oppressive institutions and supportive of unjust socio-economic models. A critical review of this historical situation led to the redirection of the Church's social emphasis, summarized as "preferential option for the poor" (Lambino 1986:145-146).

Lambino also praises the emphasis on "praxis" and "social involvement" coming out of a dialogue with Marxism as opposed to the traditional ecclesiastical emphasis on "ideas and reason" (Lambino 1986:147-148). Finally, structural analysis has led to an understanding of structural injustice leading to a reinterpretation of the traditional concept of "sin" from one that is purely personal to one that includes the reality of sinful structures. This in turn has opened the way to a "more radical approach to social change" and to an emphasis on man as the "responsible agent of his own destiny" (Lambino 1986:148-149). Lambino describes the results of the dialogue with Marxism as an "advantage."

On the other hand, Lambino warns against what he calls the potentially negative effects of the dialogue with Marxism and thereby reflects the views of other moderate Filipino Church people (Bacani 1986; Carroll; Claver). Central to this warning is the fact that ultimately Marxism insists that man's emancipatory efforts must also rid him of faith in God (Lambino 1986:144). Lambino believes this position to be rooted in an "over-optimistic" view of man's ability to create heaven on earth, and to be one that negates the essential Christian understanding of personal sin which will always leave this world imperfect and the need for God's redemption a central human concern (Lambino 1986:149-151).

The progressive Bishop T. C. Bacani Jr., D.D., particularly takes up this point in his warnings against an overemphasis on structural analysis and the derived concept of "structural sin." Bacani insists that structural analysis must be accompanied by what he calls "cultural analysis," an argument also made by Claver (1984). He maintains that the economic poverty of Filipinos is not solely the result of

U.S. imperialism, or because of multinationals, or the dictations of the IMF and the World Bank.... There are some things within us that have served as allies of this [sic] oppressive forces (the kanya-kanya mentality, a lack of concern for the common good, the 'get-rich-quick' attitude, a certain fatalism, etc. (Bacani 1986:120-121). (13)

Of related interest is Lambino's concern that with Marxism as a dialogue partner there is a possibility that an "inversion of normative roles takes place, [in which] many central themes and symbols of Christianity are made vulnerable to a radically secular reinterpretation" (Lambino 1986:151). Lambino gives some interesting examples. He notes that the "revolutionary character" of the life of Jesus may take precedence over other aspects of his "personal history," that the only justifiable mission of the Church may become the one of transforming unjust structures, that sin may become only a "socio-historical" reality rather than a "personal-metaphysical" one, that "salvation history" may become synonymous with class-struggle, to the detriment of its traditional spiritual dimensions, and that the "biblical poor" may become one-sidedly interpreted as the "proletariat of Marx" (see the "Instruction" p. 24), all of which could lead to a "confusion of sociology with theology" (Lambino 1986:151-153).

It is, in fact, possible to identify the theological-sociological position of the author by the way in which Christianity's central themes are emphasized or interpreted. A particularly strong case in point is the work of Fr. Pedro V. Salgado, O.P., entitled "Christianity is Revolutionary" (1976). (14)

Noting that revolution is justified if it can free the oppressed poor, Salgado quotes Lenin who stated that "revolution needs a revolutionary theory" (Salgado 1976:iii). He then questions whether Christianity could fill this need (Salgado 1976:iv) and allows his book to argue that it could, and must, in order to meet the needs of many Filipino peasants whose lives and problems he illustrates and personalizes his book with.

Salgado argues that Christ can be a role model for activists, just as Marx and Che Guevara are (Salgado 1976:18), and that in coming to earth He "chose to be a member of the proletarian class" (Salgado 1976:21). Salgado insists on a revolutionary role for the Church which "should leave no stone unturned to fight the true source of poverty" (Salgado 1976:41). He evokes a new model of the Church and concludes:

The Church of God then is a people, and in as much as it is people it is revolutionary. To be revolutionary is a natural attribute of people. (Salgado 1976:43)

Salgado explains that:

History teaches that there has been as yet no society, wherein the privileged class had voluntarily given up wealth unjustly appropriated. To have this wealth equitatively [sic] shared according to God's wishes, there exists only one remedy - violence on the part of the poor. (Salgado 1976:88)

He insists that violence to liberate the people from the prison of poverty and the oppression of unjust

structures is justified within Christianity and supported biblically (Salgado 1976:89-93). Salgado further argues that violence has played a prominent role in the history of the Church itself (Salgado 1976:93-95). Even worship and the Catholic sacraments are re-examined for their biblical roots by Salgado and found to be revolutionary in essence (Salgado 1976:54-84).

Theological Positions Underlying Philippine BCCs

At Medellin, Columbia, in 1968, the Latin American bishops "took three basic options: for the poor, for human liberation and for grassroots communities" (Bolasco 1986:98-100). These themes inspire and underlie the development of both liberation theology and BCCs. But the interpretation of these themes also leads to a variety of different expressions and forms. The choice for human "liberation," according to Bolasco, was in opposition to the earlier program of "development," which necessitated involving the rich (a consensus model), was opposed to the use of violence, and was ultimately rejected as a failure. The emphasis on "liberation" in "mainstream" liberation theology (Bolasco 1986:98-103) is a clear preferential option to support members of the poorest and most oppressed

class, as the agents of transformation, and does not categorically reject the use of violence.

Bolasco notes that "The phrase 'option for the poor' has become the most controversial religious term since the Protestant Reformation's 'salvation through faith alone'" (1986:96). He argues that it poses a challenge to the traditional Church because it "calls into question its traditional political alliances" (Bolasco 1986:97), presents a clear "class option" (Bolasco 1986:101) based upon a conflictual understanding of society, and has "disturbing implications for a hierarchical set-up" (Bolasco 1986:98):

Because there is one world and one salvation history the transformation of the world is a task for all. The distinction between priest and layman disappears. Both are equally competent or incompetent in liberation praxis. (Bolasco 1986:102)

An alternative position to the one of "mainline liberation theology" is something Bolasco calls "ecclesiastical geopolitics" (following Comblin 1979) (Bolasco 1986:105). He notes that the main characteristics of this school of thought are an awareness that "political action must take place within the state and the existing political system" (Bolasco 1986:105) and that as "the BCC is a minority phenomenon.... it is only the institutional Church that can publicly stand up to the overbearing arrogance of

governments" (Bolasco 1986:108). Therefore, the Church must be concerned with its own security and survival. As members of this approach regret the loss of social unity and Christian brotherhood through class conflict, and subsequently do not advocate that the Church align itself totally with one side in this conflict, they consider the proper role of the Church to be one of offering support to lay people who are the appropriate agents of "all true movements of liberation" (Bolasco 1986:106). Adherents to this position often have a strong preference for non-violent solutions to social change. Bolasco argues that the basic elements of this alternative approach to liberation theology make up the papal policy that has come to be known as the "Polish thesis" as articulated by Ratzinger, Lopez-Trujillo and Baggio (1987:81 but written pre-revolution in 1985).

These two, broadly sketched, approaches to liberation theology are reflected in the Philippine situation. Generally speaking adherents of the BCC-CO movement opt for and support a more "radical" application of liberation theology (described by Bolasco as "mainline") and are sympathetic to the type of exegesis and symbolic reinterpretation presented by Salgado, described above. Followers of the Jesuit-led BEC movement, while also employing the medium of reinterpreted Christian symbols to express the new

theological perspectives of Vatican II, emphasize caution with regard to the unqualified adoption of "foreign ideologies" (the use of Marxist insights), as does the "Instruction." They support a non-violent role for the Church, and emphasize the necessity for all Christians (regardless of class) to be reconciled for justice. In the Philippines it could be argued that the Jesuits (with a few notable exceptions) have been the main proponents of the "Polish thesis" or, as they call it themselves, the "middle way."

During the opposition to Marcos, in the 1970s, many Church members were sympathetic to the concerns of the very strong and armed Marxist resistance movement in the Philippines. After 1986, some groups within the Church began seeking a way to draw back from this, in their view, too intimate relationship with Marxist organizations, aims and strategies without losing the critical concern for social justice as articulated by Vatican II (Bolasco 1988:59). Bolasco identifies the Jesuits Fr. John Carroll and Bishop Francisco Claver as the "main strategists" of this movement that picked up steam in 1984-85 (1987:84). (15)

In 1984, Fr. Bienvenido Nebres, Provincial of the Philippine Jesuit Province, established the Institute on Church and Social Issues (ICSI) with Fr. John J. Carroll as Director and Bishop Claver as

Associate Director (Carroll 1991:17). The purpose of the ICSI was to provide the "research, writing, and dissemination of positions on issues of the day," to provide the "intellectual backstopping," needed to support Jesuit social action efforts (Carroll 1991:17). The position that was promoted, and theoretically supported in the writings of this "Jesuit think-tank" was that of the "middle way" for the Church between the perceived ineffectual reformism of the "yellow" groups and the radical, possibly violent, ideological positions of the "red" forces. The literature coming out of this new institute provides a clear indication of the Jesuit social position which is also reflected in their BCC program. (16)

Carroll admits to various factors that limit the Church's ability to be a concerted front line force for radical social change. The "ambiguity" of Church doctrine with regard to the proper place and role of the Church in the secular order leads to a variety of interpretations, and so division. Structural factors such as the Church's "economic dependance on the elite; the vulnerability of its major institutions to attack by governments; [and] the social class origin of many priests and religious" make it difficult to totally identify with the poor (Carroll 1984a:4). There is also pressure from Rome and the Apostolic Nuncio in

the Philippines "to avoid the type of 'socio-political activity' which could lead to confrontations with the government or 'divisions within the Church'" (Carroll 1984a:5). (17) On the other hand, the Church as a whole has definitely moved in the direction of social action and so Carroll queries what is, and what should be, the position of the Church in this sphere and what sociological knowledge would help clarify this position?

Carroll draws on the opposing sociological positions of "integration theory" (society as organized around values shared by its members) and "coercion theory" (power structures within society promote values that will legitimate them) to point out why the Philippine bishops' vision of social change towards a more equitable society, which he believes is based on an "integration theory" perspective, is inadequate:

They see this reorganizing as coming about in response to the values themselves and through the collaborative effort of men of all social classes; and not, as orthodox Marxists would propose, through the exacerbation of class conflict to the point of revolution, in which the material basis of men's values would be radically restructured. (Carroll 1984a:13)

Carroll criticizes "the approach embodied in the bishops' statements," which implies that the present problems of social injustice are the result of deviations from society's moral norm. He claims their views are "not fully adequate either as an analysis of

the situation and guide to action, or as representative of Catholic social thought" (Carroll 1984a:14).

Carroll very clearly recognizes the reality of unequal power relations, of economic, political, and even religious and educational structures organized to protect the interests of a dominant elite, which makes true dialogue towards reconciliation, as proposed by the bishops, an unlikely prospect (Carroll 1984a:15). He also insists that the approach of the "yellow" stream - which seeks reform by getting the economic and political systems back on track, by assuring a free press, free elections and free judiciary without, however, considering the fundamental distribution of power and wealth in society - where "the nation's income.... tends to 'trickle upward' to the highest reaches of the social system" - is basically a middle-class and inadequate solution (Carroll 1984a:15-16).

On the other hand, Carroll considers the options presented by the "red" stream and rejects them as a guiding framework for the Church. Although he largely agrees with Marxists' analyses of social problems, he finds their solutions unacceptable because of their openness to the option of violence as a means of social transformation, and their dogmatic approach to ideology and to the eventual establishment of a Marxist state that would not allow individual freedom

for people in the "marketplace of ideas" or "over the forces that effect their lives" (Carroll 1984a:22).
(18)

Carroll suggests a role for the Church as "honest broker among contending groups at the local and the national levels" based on "a vision of man and society which is contradicted by the present reality, goes beyond that of the 'yellow' and is different from that of the 'red' (Carroll 1984a:23-26). He suggests that the Church take the position of the custodian of society's values by promoting and supporting organizations of rural and urban poor, by providing "legitimation, assistance, protection when required, and a voice to organizations and initiatives which promote what they see as basic values" (Carroll 1985:13). The Church would aim to protect the rights of the people to organize and exert pressure on unfair structures (Carroll 1984a:17), but it would be the lay people themselves who decide the aim and direction of their socio-political involvement, and the type of action needed to achieve their goals, and they would be the ones to carry their plans out. The Church, on the other hand, would use its access to the elite to promote "a positive response on the part of the power-holders to the pressure coming from below" (Carroll 1984a:17).

Not hiding his personal reservations, Bolasco notes that:

In one master stroke Jesuit strategy intends to soften the ultra-conservatism of some prelates and to exclude religious radicals. At the same time it affords a platform for moderating the fascist dictatorship even as it prepares the ground for the subversion of an eventual leftist regime. The serious political repercussions of this religious project on the liberation movement become clear in the proposal of an "honest broker" role for the Church on the one hand, and in a version of the Basic Christian Communities (BCCs) on the other. (Bolasco 1987:85-86) (19)

Bolasco sees in the "honest broker" role of the Church an effort to "diffuse tensions" and "prevent a radicalized Philippines" that may "in the long haul sacrifice the nationalist and democratic aspirations of the people" (Bolasco 1987:86). He also questions "how the bishops' concern for fundamental social change - what distinguishes them from the 'yellow' stream - can be translated into practice" (Bolasco 1987:86-87). The anti-communist and the anti-violence stance of the BEC movement is consistent with the middle-way position developed for the Church by Carroll and Claver (Bolasco 1987:87).

The 1991 edition of Intersect, published by the Institute on Church and Social Issues, was entirely devoted to an evaluation of the role of the Jesuit social apostolate in the Philippines. In it, an editorial called The Middle Way as the Only Way argues

that despite ongoing internal and external tensions the Jesuits will continue to chart a course characterized by "working among both the poor and the rich" (p.3). Bishop Bacani, D.D., praises the Jesuits for providing the "theological and scriptural basis for the Church's social apostolate" while avoiding "Leftist and Rightist ideological manipulation" (Bacani 1991:5).

Fr. Carroll, after listing the concrete social causes that Jesuits have been directly involved in since EDSA, admits that the results have not been encouraging as "in the past five years, the traditional social structure and social forces have reasserted themselves" (Carroll 1991:18). He asks therefore: "Have we reached the limits of reform? Is this as far as it leads?" (Carroll 1991:18). Fr. Carroll's answer is that although the rate of reform is disappointing there are no more acceptable alternatives and so he advocates the continued support of the clergy for the increasingly organized poor in the conviction that they are ultimately the only legitimate bearers of change: "only through their sustained and united efforts will true and lasting social change come about" (Carroll 1991:18). (20)

Basic Christian Communities for the Grassroots

An important factor that determines the kinds of local level Basic Christian Communities that are envisioned by the two national programs, is the theological-political position taken by these two programs. This perspective largely determines the kinds of programs developed for grassroots community building, the development of seminars and literature for use at the grassroots, the methods of community building and lay leadership development, notions of what a "community" is, how socio-economic projects ought to be developed, the content and aims of consciousness raising, the kinds of social action that is desirable, as well as the way in which religious practices should be redirected and public religious symbols reinterpreted in line with new insights on social apostolate.

Differences in perspective between the BCC-CO and BEC programs lead to different kinds of conscientization programs. The BCC-CO program teaches people how to chart and analyze their social, economic, political and cultural environment in order to uncover therein the hidden structures of inequality with the aim of being able to organize action for change of these structures. The BEC program insists that:

The start is with the basic human yearnings—life, responsibility, freedom, love, community. These yearnings are innate in every human being. What is needed is not survey but the means to awaken in them the basic yearnings. (Inter-BEC Consultations 1988:7)

While the BCC-CO program relies mainly on the "scientific tools of structural analysis" for an understanding of social problems, or "structural sin," the BEC program attempts to include in the calculation personal sin and personal attitudes and desires that may impede happiness. This is not to say that the BEC program does not recognize structural constraints or discuss these in educational programs at the local level, but the BEC program emphasizes the need for personal conversion along with the need for structural transformation warning that, "work for liberation in order that we may carry out our own personal motives is no liberation at all" (PKP Bible-sharing guide, February 1989).

Similarly, whereas for the BCC-CO program the goal of conscientization is to enable "awakened" people to directly challenge the structures that oppress them, the aim of BEC conscientization appears to be more open-ended. Through Bible-sharing people are asked to reflect on what oppresses them or hinders their ability to fulfill the above "yearnings" and they are asked to come to some decision about what they would like to do to remedy the situation. Whereas the BCC-CO movement

promotes the establishment of sectoral organizations or unions as appropriate products of conscientization, for the BEC program conscientization may lead to very personal actions such as reconciliation between groups or individuals in the village.

With regard to the role of faith there is a similar distinction. For the BCC-CO movement, faith itself must be analyzed in order to discern if it is "native" (relevant to the people's realities) or "foreign" (mystifying); whether it leads to the establishment of the "Kingdom of God" (characterized by an equitable distribution of power and resources) through true insights into the realities of everyday life or alienates people from these realities (Fransisco 1988:174). These are not the primary considerations with regard to faith in the BEC program in which

reflection guides provide the people with the doctrinal content of their formation. These are statements of what we accept in faith as Church teaching without much explanation from different systems of philosophy. (Inter-BEC Consultations 1988:8)

The reality of structural conflicts of interest in society is recognized by proponents of both programs, social analysis in both programs draws heavily on Marxist insights whether these are acknowledged as such or not (see Lambino and Carroll above). But the BCC-CO program does not eschew the

possible need for class-conflict to solve essential inequalities while the BEC program generally emphasizes reconciliation and directed efforts at involving the middle-class in the liberation of the poor; changing their "hearts" and thereby aiding the rich in their own Christian development.

Another difference between the two programs lies in the nature of the socio-economic projects that they promote and the methodologies they employ. While both programs solicit funding from agencies within the Philippines and abroad, especially in Europe, their intended uses for these funds differ greatly. The BCC-CO interregional, regional and even diocesan centers regularly develop elaborate proposals for funding that will support salaries for lay workers, seminars, and socio-economic projects. It is part of a local leaders training and job requirements to be able to apply for funding and to manage the distribution of salaries to local leaders, to fund seminars, meetings, and to manage the funding for socio-economic projects.

The BEC philosophy on socio-economic projects is such that the local BEC is expected to rely on whatever resources are available within the community itself to undertake projects that will improve the quality of life in the community. According to an interview I conducted with Fr. Sunpayco (November 7,

1988) this may entail something as simple as combining labour and resources to build a bamboo bridge across a stream. The main reason for this approach, according to Fr. Sunpayco, is to promote self-reliance and to teach people to rely on each other for help. Funding that is received is used primarily for the training of lay leaders, for the publication and mimeographing of literature, for the running of the main offices, and for financial support for full-time staff.

Both the BCC-CO and the BEC programs actively endorse the creation of links between BCCs and like-minded progressive organizations operating at either the national or local levels. The choice of progressive partner organizations to associate with is, of course, largely determined by the degree of ideological fit between the BCC program and the possible ally.

Perhaps one of the most interesting comparisons between the two programs is how they view the task of "community building" and the goals they set themselves therein. While differences in socio-political perspective and approach to social transformation discussed in this chapter provide the framework for an analysis of the differences envisioned in BCCs, there are also some significant similarities.

Both the BCC-CO and the BEC programs envision a community that is different from what already exists at

the local level. They envision progressive, "modern," communities in which a redirected faith will play a central role in changing how people view themselves, each other, and the forces that oppress them. Both programs envision the creation of structures and networks at this level that do not exist there otherwise, such as pastoral councils, sectoral organizations and Bible-sharing groups. These structures will play a central role in re-Christianization, in conscientization, in embodying the themes of equality and community solidarity that are central to BCC philosophy, and in providing empowered people a base from which to direct social action. (21)

While both movements are top-down in their orientation, developing ideology and programs at the national level, and both share elaborate organizational structures at all levels, there are differences in the degree of control exercised over orthodoxy and in the degree of "openness" of the programs to outside observers. While organizers at various levels in the BEC program undoubtedly attempt to exercise a measure of control over the theological-political content and activities of member groups, the methods of this control appear to be somewhat less formalized than they are in the BCC-CO movement. The BCC-CO movement has a much more rigid line-of-command type of structure where

local leaders refer back to Manila for advice and even permission for action.

The BEC program, while rejecting an "overly" national democratic perspective, is more eclectic in its social democratic ideological orientation than the BCC-CO program is and has fewer behavioral mechanisms in place to maintain orthodoxy of ideological content. The program, therefore, remains more readily open to interpretation and transformation at the local level. Some of the ways in which program orthodoxy is maintained in the BCC-CO program are further explored in the local level chapters of this thesis. (22)

Fr. Francisco, S.J., professor of theology at the Ateneo de Manila, notes that the BEC program is "worship-oriented" while "other" BCCs are centered around "community issues" (1988:183). He is indicating a difference in emphasis that is recognizable, but this distinction denies the very essence of both BCC programs which is that they combine faith with social action of some sort, and this relationship can only be mediated by a perspective on social issues, some form of social analysis. The following section examines the implications of the underlying assumptions that are embedded in the socio-political perspectives of the two BCC programs.

Peasants and Liberation: BCC Social Models and Social Science Research Findings

The famous "rebel" priest Fr. Ed de la Torre once expressed in summary form the issues this section is concerned with:

I thought of painting a crucifixion, with one hand open and the other clenched into a fist. I was influenced by a poster someone drew before martial law, of an open, begging hand gradually closing into a fist. This was one of the first posters I made in Camp Olivas. I thought how people are at the start - one hand open, begging for some relief from those above them, but clenched fists against each other, competing for what trickles down. At the end of the organizing process, the clenched fists are directed towards their proper target, upwards. The open hands receive each other as companions in a shared struggle. Back to the cross. The blood from the nailed hands brought to mind the persecuted Christians' message: "The blood of martyrs is the seed of the new Christians." It was a natural step to make the blood flow down to become red banners. (Gaspar 1986:33)

This remarkable reflection embodies a common way of thinking about the existing nature of Philippine peasant-elite relations and about relations between peasants. It also reflects the changed peasant consciousness and solidarity that is hoped for, especially in national democratic circles, and which is expected to be attained through "the organizing process." De la Torre's thoughts present a striking example of the use of Christian images (the cross, martyrdom) to illustrate and lend powerful emotive value to a social message. And they clearly allude to

the role that Marxism, "red banners," plays as an organizing theory, a frame of reference, but especially, as a symbol of hope for redemption in the future.

The above passage reflects the social perspective of the BCC-CO movement. The movement generally assumes a patron-client type social model for Philippine elite-peasant relations and seeks to redirect peasant alliances towards solidarity with their own class. This goal is sought by program activists through conscientization - "the equipping and enhancing of the ability to analyze and understand the social context in which the faith is being lived out" (BCC-CO Backgrounder). It involves linking a program of education and enlightenment to a liberating theology and creating the kinds of organizations that will aid the people to take action against their oppressors on their own behalf. This envisages the "creation of certain structures, leadership roles, tasks and functions, and machinery by which the community is run in a participatory and popular manner" (BCC-CO Backgrounder).

In 1984, David Reed was commissioned by La Ignaciana Apostolic centre, with funding from Misereor in Germany, to conduct an evaluation of community organizing in the Philippines. In his study Reed

critiques those movements, and here BEC is tacitly implied, that want to start from an empirical understanding of the problems (Reed 1984:72), using people's own perceptions and knowledge of social conditions as a starting point for action; the BEC's "basic yearnings" approach. Reed insists instead that class consciousness must be built (1984:65) for change to be effective noting that:

The history of the people's struggles around the world is replete with errors born from failing to use theory as a guide to social change. (Reed 1984:.64)

While promoters of the BEC movement do not emphasize the need for class consciousness, they too are interested in changing what they perceive to be existing peasant consciousness in order to encourage social transformation.

For the BEC movement the emphasis on consciousness raising tends to be less on illuminating exploitative economic relations that are historically and structurally responsible for social injustice than on illuminating cultural attitudes and behaviours that perpetuate these unjust relations. The "Kingdom of God" (described as "love, reconciliation and healing") is to be brought about through "a radical conversion, a profound change of mind and heart" (Inter-BEC Consultations 1988:78). A BEC text notes that ideally "conscientization is not simple agitation, people are

not categorized into oppressors or oppressed, sinners or sinned against, friend or enemy" (Inter-BEC Consultations 1988:82).

The movement's organizers also note that social analysis "is never value-free: we do it here from a perspective of faith!" (Inter-BEC Consultations 1988:79). The same text admonishes that social analysis must not be "dogmatic," for "economics is important but not determinant. Culture, religion, may be autonomous from it and perhaps even determinant" (Inter-BEC Consultations 1988:79).

Both BCC models lean heavily upon Marxist social insights to understand the historical and structural nature of poverty and oppression. This debt is acknowledged by BEC proponents such as Lambino and Carroll. Where the two programs differ significantly is in the solutions they propose to the existing problems. The BCC-CO program largely accepts the practical directives and calls for concerted social action which national democratic forces derive from Marxist theory. The BEC program seeks "alternative" solutions aimed less directly at economic and political realities than at cultural attitudes and mind sets that allow people both to exploit and to be exploited.

While the BCC-CO movement is also concerned with the cultural attitudes of peasants that allow them

to be exploited, these are largely seen as a by-product of economic conditions and therefore must be illuminated as such while peasants are organized for structural social action. The following chapter further explores BCC attitudes towards cultural traits and religious traditions.

Both the BCC-CO and the BEC models aim to present a challenge to existing local level social arrangements, such as those reflected in patron-clientage, and the mind sets that accompany them. Both movements direct their efforts at transforming peasants and villagers who are seen to be passively suffering injustice. Two key questions must now be asked. First of all, does the social model assumed in the BCC literature correspond with the results of local level research on peasant consciousness, relationships, and forms of social action conducted by anthropologists and other Philippinists? And, secondly, are the plans to transform peasant consciousness, relations and practices, which are proposed by the BCC programs, well adapted to local level realities and likely to find acceptance at the local level? With regard to this second question I specifically address the BCC-CO program, which is the focus of my local level case study.

In response to these questions a brief review

of the relevant academic literature is required. While "classical" studies of Philippine social relations stressed a social model in which the dominant social relations were vertical, dyadic, and "patron-client" in nature (Anderson 1970; Lande 1965; Scott 1972), even to the point of denying any relevance of social models based on class (Scott 1972) for the Philippines, later studies attempted to identify classes and did so, albeit with a good many qualifiers. A review of a few studies based in Central Luzon illuminates the complexity of this issue.

Wolters insists that on the basis of his research in Central Luzon the existence of classes must not be ignored even though they may not be organized as classes fur sich (1980:100) and Kerkvliet carefully notes that rather than to speak of class-consciousness he would say that "people in Bukiran, for example, are thoroughly conscious of classes," or "strata" and that they identify them on the basis of livelihood and standard of living (1980:32-33). Both authors comment on the essentially multifaceted nature of social relations in Philippine villages, including numerous ties that cut across classes and weaken them, as well as complexities within posited classes, and they claim these are the reasons why class action has not been more prominent. For this reason Wolters concludes that

although he would describe Philippine society as a class society that does not mean a classical Marxist model may be indiscriminantly employed (1980:84).

Kerkvliet's study is remarkable as he attempts to understand why the poor he studied showed so little anger about their impoverished condition and why there was so little social cohesion among them (1980:31). After identify 11 "classes" on the basis of livelihood, according to the distinctions people themselves made, Kerkvliet concludes that part of the answer is that the very complexity of classes itself does not encourage people, even those who share poverty, to see themselves as members of one group (1980:39). Conversely, he adds that "class complexity also makes it hard to identify oppressive classes" (1980:40).

The other two reasons Kerkvliet cites for a lack of class anger and cohesion are equally important to our discussion. Kerkvliet notes that the importance of the poor's ties to the better off (patron-clientage) ameliorate class anger and "obscure class distinctions" (1980:42). When asked, the poor tend to blame bad luck or their own follies, lack of education, lack of discipline, etc. for their relative poverty, and only rarely the wealthy, and even then not the wealthy as a class but singling out certain unjust individuals or families (1980:43-44). In fact, Kerkvliet claims to

have seen more cases of antagonism between members of lower classes than between members of lower and higher classes (1980:38). One is reminded of the conditions of "moral economy," often linked to a patron-client system. And Kerkvliet's descriptions of unanimity of social goals and values, call to mind possible "hegemonic domination," although Kerkvliet does not bring these terms to bear on his discussion here.

Ten years later Kerkvliet presents a much less harmonious image of inter-class relations in Central Luzon as he stresses that:

A major feature of everyday politics ... is cooperation and conflict among people in different classes and statuses The question is neither one of class awareness versus patron-client ties (as some scholars have suggested) nor one of whether people act according to class interests or according to vertical linkages. Both occur ... often for the same individuals. (1990:244-245)

In opposition to his earlier work Kerkvliet now stresses the fact that people do not subscribe to elite values, though they may pretend to (1990:260;262;263), and that they are in fact very aware of structural injustice and even directly lay blame for their precarious position at the feet of the rich (1990:269). Kerkvliet maintains that while the poor do try to hold on to some of the advantages of a relationship with the rich, in the face of encroaching capitalist economic relations which will leave them with even less room to

manoeuvre, he insists that they do so not out of traditionalism but for pragmatic reasons (1990:267). The conditions of a moral economy which made this option possible are, however, rapidly disappearing as the rich increasingly extract themselves from social relationships with their workers and no longer need to be concerned with the reciprocal benefits thereof (1990:267). Both a surplus of labour and absentee landlords have created new challenges for tenants. Kerkvliet discusses the prominence and the value of everyday acts of resistance as a safe and effective way that the people have to fight back in response to a deteriorating situation (1990:246-247).

Fegan (1978), like Wolters (1980), takes a strongly socio-historical approach to changing peasant-elite relations in Central Luzon. Fegan shows how population increase, without the possibility for a commensurate increase in land or possibilities to increase yield, created new landless peasant classes who had to take on any number of odd jobs to make ends meet and who often left the villages for the cities (1978:41). In fact, Fegan insists that this development has weakened class consciousness, which was greatest just before this stage when villagers were still relatively homogeneously tenants but already realizing the threat to their livelihood and that of their

children (Fegan 1978:41). In other words class consciousness existed briefly in Central Luzon and then was lost. Fegan notes that the tenancy issue and its high level of class consciousness is now playing in Isabela province where similar historical circumstances as those that occurred in Central Luzon now obtain.

Fegan critiques the view that peasant-elite relations were ever harmonious, even under the most ideal patron-client conditions, although he acknowledges that this is what many peasants will tell about the "good old days." Citing evidence from Roth (1975) and De Jesus (1973), who emphasize discontent and rebellion in the 19th century, he concludes that there will always have been competing ideologies (Fegan 1978:34). Wolters also insists that peasants have always been aware of competing interests and never been deluded by elite propaganda to the opposite effect (1980:100-101).

This brief literature review suffices to allow a few pertinent observations with regard to the questions posed above. Research has illuminated the essential complexity of social relations at the local level where historical and regional factors also play an important role. Certainly, neither the likelihood of finding classes fur sich should be taken for granted, nor the potential for creating them in the face of

complex emic social distinctions that are rooted in local realities.

Kerkvliet's studies also indicate local forms of social analysis that are expressed in flexible responses by peasants to changing relations with members of other status groups. Forms of resistance or conflict are tailored to emic evaluations of immediate situations and take security into consideration. A single consistent and overt response to a class as a whole, based on a theoretical model, is so far removed from what Kerkvliet and others have described as everyday peasant behaviour that this would appear to present a major challenge to the BCC-CO program. I discuss these issues at greater length in chapters five and nine where data from my local level research is brought to bear on these questions.

Finally, proponents of both BCC programs develop or adopt social analyses to reflect their theological convictions and/or in response to political debates and struggles occurring at the national level. There is, furthermore, considerable debate and concern about the compatibility of Christian theology and Marxist ideology (which to a degree masks essentially differing political perspectives) and about the compatibility of Christian social action and Marxist prescriptions for social action and intended goals. BCC

activists are also concerned with adopting modern and sophisticated social theories and draw on various secular intellectual sources for the latest analytical developments. All of these considerations appear paramount to the question of whether a particular theoretical model is suited to Philippine local level realities in an emic sense. If anything, this emic understanding appears to be rejected a priori as unsuitable for the project of social transformation.

Conclusions

To summarize, differences in political perspective between the BCC-CO program and the BEC program are shaped by ongoing debates among various progressives groups at the national level in Philippine society. The influence of other secular and religious progressive organizations and NGOs on the two nation-wide BCC movements is reflected in the tendency of the BCC-CO program to align itself with, and be informed by perspectives presented by national democratic groups and for BEC activists to seek support for an alternative perspective among the various social democratic options.

The political differentiation between the two programs is characterized by their debate over the

acceptance of Marxist social analyses and recommendations for social change and is reflected in the preferences of both movements for certain intellectual authors over others, and certain variations of liberation theology over others. The political differences between the two BCC movements are often expressed through the idiom of religious discourse and in the form of a debate about the compatibility of Marxism as a social theory and Christianity as a spiritual commitment.

While liberation theology is not merely a variant of Marxism, it in fact represents an ongoing struggle to present a new social perspective that is not simply reducible to its Marxist based components, in the debate between supporters of the BCC-CO and BEC programs it is the degree of acceptability of these Marxist based components of liberation theology that receives particular attention. This is not, in itself, surprising when one considers the wider political struggle going on in the Philippines; a struggle prominently participated in by armed Marxist guerrillas.

The degree of acceptance of aspects of Marxist social theory as a guiding philosophy reflects on the program formation of the BCC-CO and BEC movements at the national level, informs their assumptions about

peasant-elite relations at the local level, and determines the type of organizations (BCCs) they propose should be developed at the local level to promote social change. These decisions do not reflect the local level research which has been done to date by social scientists and does not take emic perspectives into account.

In this chapter I focussed on the progressive social and political agendas that inform BCC perspectives and program formation at the national level. This chapter has also set out some basic anomalies and potential problems which BCC programs may face in organizing at the local level, which I will address in later chapters on diocesan and village level BCC practices. In the following chapter I explore how prominent national level assumptions about cultural traits and religious beliefs of lowland Christianized Filipinos are reflected in the BCC programs.

NOTES

1. As of the middle of 1990 the Philippine Gross National Product showed a 1.1 % growth rate following the steady decline in GNP that had occurred since a brief rise just after the overthrow of the Marcos government (Liberation 1990:4; Filipinas 1990:9). The total Philippine national debt as of January 1, 1990 was 28.5 billion dollars which was 72.9 % of its GNP growth. This is one of the highest debt ratios of the "middle income" countries. While the Philippines paid 21 billion dollars on its national debt from 1984-1990 it owed 28.5 billion in 1990 while it only owed 25.4 billion in 1984 (Philippine International Forum Task

Force on Foreign Debt 1990). Aquino's controversial Letter of Intent (LOI) (1989), devised to increase revenue, decrease spending and generate additional funds for debt repayments most certainly hit the poor the hardest. The policy advocates increased costs for rice and basic utilities, higher indirect taxes, and decreases in government spending on social programs (Yap 1989:1-2). Finally, while foreign investments are down, the Philippines, as an oil importing country, is in constant need of foreign currency. It remains to be seen if the new government of President Ramos will be able to address these problems more effectively than the Aquino government did.

2. The prevalent violent threat posed by the left wing guerrilla movement, the NPA, is commonly cited by conservative forces as the reason for a strong military presence throughout the Philippines. Progressive groups maintain, however, that the United States is directly (as in the case of the December 1989 coup) as well as indirectly (low intensity conflict) intervening in internal Philippine affairs, especially in the battle against the left (Balita ng Malaya Pilipinas 1991) and thereby escalating the level of violence. In addition to the official Philippine army there are government sanctioned paramilitary troops (Citizens' Armed Forces Geographical Unit - CAGFU) and a wide variety of right wing vigilante groups and private armies. The overall level of violence in society, and the ongoing and flagrant abuses of human rights, was cause for an Amnesty International (AI) report in 1991. In this report AI notes that most of the politically motivated "disappearances" of people (there were 50 recorded missing people for 1990) involved individuals suspected to belong to the NPA, CCP, or to a legal organization that is considered a front for the NPA or CCP (FIDOC April 1991).

3. Much emphasis has been placed on understanding the political and socio-economic history that has led up to the present state of affairs by such well known analysts of Philippine society as (Wurfel, McCoy, and de Jesus). Much work has also been done on analyzing local level power relations, especially patron-clientage, (Scott, Kerkvliet) and its effects on national structures (Wolters). A more culturally based analysis is being formulated by, among others, Mulder (1990). Mulder sees in the frequently noted Filipinos' ambiguous and even negative feelings about their own cultural history and identity a reflection of the country's lack of national unity, a common "cultural discourse" (1990:7), and a dominant ideology. He blames

this lack of national identity partly on a cultural over-emphasis on "family centeredness" (as opposed to an interest in "res publica"), on an exploitative and outward looking ruling elite that has "no interest in building a vibrant, transcending national discourse that would articulate the Philippines as a nation with a purpose" (1990:6) and on a great tradition, based on American culture, that is not reflected in the little, local, tradition. The following chapter of this thesis focusses on theories of culture and nationalism in the Philippines and their effects on BCC social analysis.

4. As mentioned in the previous chapter yellow became the symbol of Aquino supporters after the murder of Benigno Aquino. As these tended to be people galvanized by the murder, rather than members of the ongoing left wing resistance, and more likely to be middle-class in their reform tendencies, their choice of yellow as a symbol is often juxtaposed to the red of the radical resistance.

5. A significant response to this scheme came from the side of the relatively new popular democrats (pop dems) in their journal Conjuncture (1990:6). The popular democrats are ideologically closely related to the national democrats but are more open to seeking and forming alliances with other progressive forces and give primacy to political work over armed struggle. Ed de la Torre is one of the founders of this movement. The greatest complaint made by the popular democrats is against the distinction between "extreme left" and "democratic left" implying that the extreme left is not democratic. But the article also questions the contents of some of the categories, such as the placement of the Aquino government under democratic right (implying it may better be placed under extreme right), and the popular democrats under the extreme left. The article also points out the inherent problems involved in attempting to "box" people and organizations when the true social and political dynamics often defy such classifications.

6. Mil Roekaerts notes that:

Basic communities which adopt a distinctly Marxist tone in the analysis of their situation and the role they themselves can play in bringing about reform are inevitably suspected of being tools in the hands of the communists. It is their autonomous, cell-like organization, impervious to infiltration by government agencies, that worries the government.

(Newsweek: February 23, 1981, quoted in Human Society 1982:12:19)

7. From a more critical perspective, there are allegations that with the Aquino government and renewed goodwill from foreign funding agencies, setting up bogus NGOs, through which to apply for foreign funds, became a "business" venture that at times was abused even by quite wealthy landlords.

8. The distinction is often made in the Philippines between NGOs and POs (People's Organizations) (Tordesillas 1988) and cause oriented groups. While individual BCCs at the local level may perhaps best be described as POs, the two national BCC programs have the characteristics of NGOs that lend assistance to semi-autonomous POs at the local level. BCCs that do not fall under the umbrella of the two national BCC programs would be categorized as POs. These BCCs often seek temporary assistance in program formation or for funding from a variety of Manila based secular or religious organizations such as the Lay Formation Institute (LFI).

9. In 1990, Clarentian Publications was banned from the Asian Catholic Bookfair held in Manila. Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin heads the private corporation that sponsored the event. The publishing company was told that its "mission statement" deviated from the guidelines set by the Asian Catholic Publishers, Inc. These guidelines exclude "books which question or put in doubt the authority of the Church, relegating it to the level of just another theological or philosophical opinion or system" (Philippine News and Features: September 1990). Other reasons to exclude books are if these have an underlying philosophy based on Marxism, or if they deal with "issues touching the Catholic Church from a merely sociological, psychological, political, or economic point of view" (Philippine News and Features: September 1990).

10. Especially well known are: Gustavo Gutierrez, J.L. Segundo, Pablo Richard, Leonardo Boff, Hugo Assman, Enrique Dussel.

11. Brother Karl M. Gaspar, C.Ss.R., has long been a Church worker and a human rights advocate. After two years of imprisonment under Marcos (1983-1985) he joined the Redemptorist Congregation (Basic Christian Communities 1987:35). Hechanova, C.Ss.R., was Chairman of the progressively oriented AMRSP for many years.

12. In brief, the "Instruction" warns against a social model that pits one group in society against the other fostering resentment rather than co-operation and Christian love and making class struggle the moving principle of history rather than God's plan for humanity. Such a model is considered to easily lead to violence in the struggle for social transformation.

13. Bacani's emphasis here on negative Filipino cultural values is the subject of the following chapter.

14. Fr. Salgado is a priest in the diocese of Isabela that supports a strong BCC-CO diocesan thrust. Other authors who reflect a perspective of Jesus as a revolutionary leader include: Brandon (1967), Rose (19867), Moore (1968), Elliott (1968) (cited in Guillemette 1987:6).

15. See Carroll 1984a; 1984b; 1984c; 1985; , 1987, 1991 and Claver 1983; 1984; 1985; 1986 for an elaboration of the theological-sociological position these churchmen take with regard to the role that the Church should play in social transformation in the Philippines.

16. Aside from Fr. Carroll and Bishop Claver other significant contributors to the development of a social apostolate independent from strictly Marxist positions are: Fr. Catalino Arevalo, S.J., Fr. Antonio Lambino, S.J., and Vitaliano Gorospe, S.J. (Bacani 1991:4).

17. Carroll identifies the fact that the Church does not reach a great number of people as another limitation on its ability to function as a force for change as the "popular religiosity of the people remains generally a conservative force" (Carroll 1984a:4).

18. Carroll also analyzes the effect on Church people of a close association with the left and concludes that their spirituality becomes unorthodox from a Christian perspective (Carroll 1984a:20-21).

19. The BCCs Bolasco refers to are those of the Basic Ecclesiastical Communities (BEC) program developed largely by Bishop Claver, S.J., and Fr. Sunpayco, S.J.

20. In an interview I conducted with Ed de la Torre on May 7, 1991 he discussed the Jesuit "third way" stance. Like other Philippine analysts I have spoken to he was bemused by the position the Jesuits in the Philippines had taken in comparison to the more radical position of

the Jesuits in Latin America. He offered that it may have something to do with the fact that the Philippine Jesuits have an American background whereas the Latin American Jesuits are more often from a European philosophical tradition. De la Torre felt that the liberal democratic education and world view of the American Jesuits as opposed to the more socialist traditions of the European Jesuits may go some way to explaining the contrasts.

21. There are any number of texts written under the auspices of the two national programs and by independent BCC practitioners on "how to build a BCC" and on what a BCC should end up looking like. An interesting text in this regard is the 14 step "Hints on Starting Basic Christian Communities" by Frs. Dangan, Gore, O'Brien (BEC Consultations 1984:92-93). Frs. Gore and O'Brien received international attention when they were jailed along with a number of their BCC lay leaders for alleged subversive activities.

22. I conducted an interview with the regional director of a large Dutch funding agency that has in the past funded both the BCC-CO and BEC programs (July 1990). He told me that the agency had received an exceptionally large request for funding from the BCC-CO office primarily to finance an expansion of paid personnel at all levels as well as the necessary office supplies these new people would be using. He explained that there was some reservation with regard to this request as the agency felt that the BCC-CO program was perhaps becoming too institutionalized and top heavy which might lead to a corresponding loss of flexibility within the organization. The concern was especially for the role of members of the grassroots communities and their input in determining structure and policy. In the opinion of the regional director of this funding agency the BEC program was still more organic and flexible in its organizational structure.

I experienced something of this difference myself while conducting fieldwork. At the national level, in Manila, I was welcomed by the personnel of the BEC offices and was readily granted access to relevant literature in their files. Interviews were conducted in an informal and relaxed manner. At the BCC-CO offices I was originally met with considerable suspicion, aggravated by the fact that I did not bring a formal letter of introduction from a trusted source. Discussions at the BCC-CO offices entailed more questions being asked of me than vice versa. Many of these questions were aimed at determining if I understood and supported the organization's ideological

position. Unlike in the case of the BEC movement, I had to have permission and support from Manila in order to talk to and be accepted by local BCC-CO leaders and they had to ask permission from Manila with regard to action they may wish to undertake with me. This rigidity was explained to me by BCC-CO staff as being a necessary precaution given the embattled position of the BCC-CO worker in the country where they are commonly labeled subversive and often the target of violence.

CHAPTER FOUR: Religion, Culture and National Identity

Introduction

In this chapter I explore the religious and cultural perspectives of the two nation-wide BCC programs in the light of broader discussions at the national level about popular religiosity and Filipino cultural traits and national identity. A number of commonly expressed beliefs about Philippine religiosity and culture are reviewed. Present popular perspectives are shown to be rooted in historical documents and ongoing academic traditions, and perpetuated in the popular presentation of these issues in the public arena and in public education. These popular viewpoints on Philippine religiosity and culture are reflected against more recent critical reviews thereof.

The BCC movements' perspectives on popular religiosity and culture are shown largely to reflect common and traditional biases; but the reasons therefore differ both from those of the mainstream and from each other. The viewpoints of the two nation-wide BCC movements on Philippine nationalism, culture and

religiosity are illuminated by reflecting them against the political perspectives of the two movements which were outlined in the previous chapter. Finally, examples are given of the way in which BCC texts suggest Filipino cultural characteristics and religiosity should be redirected and reinterpreted to reflect the programs' political and theological perspectives.

Expressions of Lowland Christian Religiosity

Organizers of Basic Christian Communities rely in their programming on what is widely accepted to be the powerful influence of ubiquitously expressed Christian religiosity in everyday life in the Philippines. Especially the poor in the villages and urban slums are often described, both in this BCC literature and elsewhere, as being "steeped" in a religious world view. In BCC pamphlets and texts indigenous religiosity is often written about as a valuable resource that may be tapped and that, if properly redirected, may serve as an essential ideological component and a powerful source of motivation for social action. The shared religious values, symbols and experiences of Filipino Christianized poor are, furthermore, considered

important in the effort to bring about large scale social change as they provide a basis for much sought after but often elusive unity and solidarity nationwide. BCC-CO organizers hope that redirected Philippine religiosity may provide a foundation that can give Christianized Filipinos in Luzon, the Visayas, and Mindanao a common language and philosophy through which to strive for social transformation.

Even the casual visitor to the Philippines cannot fail to take notice of the ubiquitous nature of Christian symbols. Schools, parks and other public places bear religious names, but also guest houses, movie theaters, gas stations, and roadside restaurants sport such unlikely names as "Santo Nino Gasoline" and "Three Kings Fast Food" indicating an intimate and personal relationship with these sacred guardians which anyone may claim. Holy images play a role in all aspects of everyday life both personal and commercial. Certain saints and images have come, for example, to be considered especially good in particular settings. Many businesses have an image of the Santo Nino, considered to be good for trade, and the image of Christ the King is thought to be best placed near the stairs of the house for protection.

The windshields of public transportation vehicles nation-wide are abundantly adorned with

religious paraphernalia to assure a safe journey; common items are rosaries, plaques (God Bless our Trip), neon colored stickers, and minute statues of Santo Nino, or Mary of Lourdes (complete with equally minute cave). In Manila, these are sold by a multitude of grim young street vendors who risk their own limbs in weaving through unpredictable traffic to sell these traveller's safeguards. Taxi drivers, stuck in wall to wall chaos, critically evaluate their present array of relics to decide if one more could be added. Or, with a surprisingly casual gesture, they may decide to discard a particular guardian that has become too severely blackened in the grease-filled air by replacing it with a bright new shiny image. The popular jeepneys which negotiate Philippine roads throughout the islands, when not named after a cult hero, "Rambo," or proudly relaying a family relationship "Three Sisters," are most often given religious banners. So a fellow anthropologist was able to witness "how the American inspired 'Repent, Jesus comes...' was overtaken by a run-away 'Santo Nino' with his mother 'Immaculate Conception' in hot pursuit" (Mulder 1987:4)!

Religious messages are, furthermore, present on larger than life billboards throughout Manila and along national highways, on T-shirts, in news stories and editorials, and as an integral part of almost all

public speeches, many of which start with a prayer led by a local or eminent Church official. In public, as well as in private discourse Christianity forms a ready paradigm that discussants refer to for analogies, to buttress arguments, or to make pronouncements on matters of morals or proper behaviour.

A visit to the homes of Catholics living in towns throughout the Philippines inevitably discloses a wealth of religious imagery. Middle-class families may own one or more life size, and often quite valuable, antique statues richly dressed in velvets and silks with gold trim. Poorer households will carefully adorn smaller and cheaper versions of the saints. A home will usually have a small altar at which candles are lit. In the case of wealthier families the "candle" may be a small, flickering, red, light bulb. Villagers do not usually own large statues but it would be a rare home indeed that is not adorned with large glossy religious images on often outdated commercial calendars. These calendars are freely distributed by members of the town's elite and prominently display the wealthy family's name and commercial establishment or professional occupation.

Processions in honour of a saint or for a particular Marian feast day are such a common form of public religious expression that it would be quite

unusual for a visitor to travel through lowland towns and not be swept along in the often informal and popular rituals. These processions commonly include a marching band, devotional candles, and a statue of the celebrated saint that is either carried or pulled along on a karosa. An extended stay, of a month, in any one town will most likely afford the visitor more than one such engaging experience.

A look within any one of the Roman Catholic churches in the Philippines will reveal devotees (mainly women) praying before their preferred images. They place flowers before the image and sometimes leave personal letters written to the guardian and intermediary to God, before lovingly touching the face or kissing the feet and departing again. For many of the women of the town this devotion forms part of their daily routine as they make their way to the market or to the river to launder the family's clothes. Travellers to the town, from its outlying villages, will also often take time from their business in the centro to enter the cool of the church and spend some time there in prayer. Daily masses, often at dawn, are well attended as are special masses for specific devotions. On Sundays it is not uncommon that three or more masses be held in the towns.

Less formalized aspects of Christianity also

prevail in Philippine everyday life. Miracles, healings, and special "signs" are things that almost all Filipino Christians can attest to having personally experienced at some point in their lives. Most people know of a sacred object, such as a statue or an amulet, that has supernatural powers and most believe in the concrete results of prayers.

The popular annual town and village fiesta in honour of a locality's patron saint is a festive and abundant display of religious and secular mix. Masses and religious processions are alternated by beauty pageants, parades, and singing contests. Public speeches held by elected officials in honour of the festivities rarely fail to imbue a political message with religious imagery.

Public political life in the Philippines is generally so closely intertwined with religious life that the official separation of Church and State, introduced during the American occupation in (1899-1945), is more a matter of formality and, sometimes, an expediency called upon by politicians in times of conflict between the Church and elected authorities. Officials nation-wide are careful to invite religious leaders to grace their public appearances with prayer implicitly legitimizing their political status. Public buildings such as town halls, and even army barracks,

are commonly blessed by a parish priest. Elected officials traditionally maintain close personal relationships with local clergy and are prominent figures in masses, processions, and other religious observances.

Nowhere is this admixture of religion and politics more remarkable, however, than at the national level. The Marcoses' relationship with the country's powerful archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin epitomized the degree to which the Church was, and is, seen as a significant force to be reckoned with in national politics. Marcos, who became Catholic when he married Imelda (Wurfel 1988:50), maintained a very prominent relationship and high level of communication with the Catholic leader throughout his presidency. Cardinal Sin, who maintained his relationship with the president to be one of "critical collaboration," became an increasingly vocal opponent as military aggression against Catholic clergy and establishments suspected of harboring subversive elements culminated, in 1974, in a massive military raid on a Catholic novitiate and a seminary. From then on, and with increasing vigour in the 1980s, Cardinal Sin spoke out against the regime's human rights violations (Wurfel 1988:219-220).

Finally, after massive fraud in the elections of February 1986, it was Cardinal Sin who appealed to

the people on the Catholic radio station Veritas, to support the military rebels, Juan Ponce-Enrile and Fidel (Eddie) Ramos, in their defiance of Marcos. Although the radio station was soon destroyed by Marcos's troops it is widely believed that it was the call of Cardinal Sin to the people that started the mass movement of Filipinos to the military camps Aquinaldo and Crame at EDSA where in four days they made history by peacefully resisting government tanks, aircraft, and weapons, shielded only by fellow Filipinos, religious statues, amulets, and prayers in the now famous show of "people power."

Of course, the strong connection between the official Church and national political life in the Philippines was revived with Aquino as president. Her personally devout Roman Catholicism was well known and was much propagated in the press, as was the strong relationship she maintained to influential members of the clergy such as Cardinal Sin. Furthermore, as the central figure in what is now commonly considered the "miracle of EDSA" (an interpretation Aquino herself endorsed and that has been sanctioned by the Church), Aquino was considered by many to be endowed with some of that mystical supernatural quality that is so much a part of Filipino religiosity and of charismatic leadership.

Marcos, aside from fostering a public link between himself and the Catholic Church early in his career and presenting himself as a devout Catholic, also encouraged an image of himself as being particularly blessed and in possession of powerful supernatural charms; the most famous of these being an amulet (anting-anting) that was supposedly lodged in his back and that allowed him to disappear at will and even restore the dead to life. A strong belief in such anting-anting that give the bearer supernatural powers, can heal, or just bring luck, is common among Filipinos of all social classes.

These prominent and ubiquitous public expressions of Catholicism, folk Catholicism, and animism (1) that play an important role in everyday life and in politics, have fueled numerous attempts by academics and others to reflect on the meaning and significance of religiosity in the lives of Filipinos. As activists in the BCC movements recognize the potential of religiosity to function as a tool of social mobilization, they express a keen interest in academic studies about Filipino religiosity and frequently incorporate research findings in their social analyses. BCC texts reflect both common academic and popular public views about Philippine religiosity. It is, therefore, important to critically review past

and present authoritative accounts with an eye for analytical content, style and bias.

The Continuing Legacy of Historical Tales

In an attempt to rethink commonly held notions about Philippine popular symbols, rituals, and beliefs, or, as he calls it "Philippine 'folk life,' 'folk society,' 'folk culture'" (1988:10), Jaime Biron-Polo traces and exposes the colonialist and imperialist roots that influence Philippine social science to this day. (2) Through exotic 17th century accounts by "travellers and adventurers," "travel narratives" by European missionaries, and "descriptive reports" by "conquistadores representing the Spanish King" a body of "knowledge" about the physical characteristics of the islands and both the physical and personality traits of its people was established (Polo 1988:10-13). Polo notes that where "indigenes" were discussed in these largely "depopulated landscapes" diverse populations tended to be lumped together as "homogeneous natives" and "exoticized" (Polo 1988:11). Polo argues that these descriptions were neither "natural nor neutral" but "ideological" because they "mystified the expansionist, capitalist character of the ethnographic travelogues" (Polo 1988:11). The

ideological underpinnings of this early body of knowledge are still often referred to in social science texts (Porio, Lynch, Hollnsteiner: 1978) and in educational textbooks which explain the Filipinos' present character through their cultural heritage.

In the 20th century, it is notable that especially priests cum social scientists have carried on the interest in Filipino popular culture and religiosity, for example, Fr. Richard Arens, S.V.D., Fr. Francis Lambert, C.I.C.M., and Fr. Frank Lynch, S.J. Polo correctly notes, however, that these newer ethnographic accounts, by clergy and non-clergy alike, remained essentially "ethnocentric" while presenting a static picture of "popular culture" within a variety of functionalist frameworks ("ritual as anxiety and catharsis," "ritual as social harmony and cohesion," "ritual as social documentation," "ritual as pedagogy") (1988:13-21). Polo, furthermore, insists that because many of these accounts are still guided by a "missionary zeal" they remain "expansionist" in nature (Polo 1988:13-14). Polo shows how these cultural accounts were able to achieve dominance in Philippine social science by noting the "significant social positions" held by their authors:

To recall a few: Fr. Richard Arens was then a noted sociologist in the academe; Robert Fox was chief of the Anthropology Division at the National Museum and Professorial lecturer of

Anthropology at the University of the Philippines; Fr. Francis Lambert, C.I.C.M. was Pro-Vicar, Apostolic Vicariate of the Mountain Province; Alfredo Pacyaya was Provincial Secretary of Bontoc, Mountain Province; Fr. Frank Lynch, S.J. founded and then served as the Director of the Institute of Philippine Culture. (1988:22)

Evidence of the continuing influence of these, now relatively dated, texts is the frequency with which they are re-issued. A booklet first published in the early sixties by the Institute of Philippine Culture (IPC) at the Ateneo de Manila University, Four Readings in Philippine Values, in which Lynch discusses "social acceptance," had by 1981 "undergone at least 8 printings and continues to top the 'best-seller' roster of IPC publications" (Lynch ed. 1981:xi). Further evidence may be found in the fact that such works from the late fifties and early sixties are still avidly quoted in cultural discussions today and the key concepts then developed still seem to find a large measure of acceptance, with virtually no revisions or replacements. Not only are these cultural concepts still accepted but there are also very few new, empirically based, studies of Philippine culture. Mulder, while lamenting the fact that so "preciously little is known about the culture of lowland Christianized Filipinos" (Mulder 1986:1), reflects upon what he calls the "still-born Ateneo approach that speculated about hiya, utang na loob, reciprocity, and

SIR" (Mulder 1986:2).

Key members of this "Ateneo school of interpretation" included Fr. Lynch, Fr. Bulatao, Hollnsteiner and Guthrie (Mulder 1987:8). Mulder, while praising the "heuristic value" of these analytic beginnings in social enquiry into the "life, culture, and psychology of lowland Christianized Filipinos" (1986:2) notes, however, that

the early interpretations of the Ateneo school are too general, lack situational specificity and cultural elaboration. (...) Where are the limits of Pakikisama, hiya, utang na loob, etc.? In what context do they operate and what is their situationally specific content? (1987:9-10)

These questions are now to some extent being addressed by the "secularized social scientists of the University of the Philippines" (Mulder 1986:2) while the IPC has left behind this cultural line of enquiry to concentrate on more applied and economic studies concerning such topics as land reform, for which the more generous research grants are available that the institution needed to rise above a near fatal financial crisis. (3)

While a major critique of the above mentioned studies that have been undertaken on Philippine lowland culture is that they present either an outsider's ethnocentric viewpoint and/or use theoretically static, functionalist frameworks, these studies, to the degree

that they are based upon empirical research, are still to be preferred over the reflections of such widely read academic "contemplatives" as Fr. Mercado, S.V.D., and Fr. J. Bulatao, S.J. Both Mercado and Bulatao's writings are often reprinted, and form the basis of a large body of literature on Philippine values, social psychology and popular religiosity. Both are also readily accessible to a larger public than purely the academic one, and both are very popular in a country where these issues are at the centre of countless seminars, workshops, newspaper editorials, and political debates. Their influence in giving shape to the concept of "folk Catholicism" in the Philippines has been great.

Bulatao's much quoted article "Split-Level Christianity" (1967) highlights a particular schizophrenia, to which he implies Filipino Christians are prone, in which their behaviour is divided between very laudable and moral practices, mainly based on Catholic principles (in the sense of great tradition), and very base conduct rooted in Filipino indigenous, pre-Christian, cultural norms and beliefs. This notion that Filipinos are actively operating on, or between, two distinct cognitive and moral levels constantly shifting behaviour and rationalization for behaviour between them, depending on the situation, is widely

used, but it is not substantiated by empirical research that seeks an emic point of view.

Rethinking Philippine Lowland Religiosity

Ongoing popular and scholarly traditions, or "tales," about Filipino culture and religiosity share a number of characteristics that must be reconsidered. The characteristics that I will focus on are the tendency to describe cultural traits of Filipinos in a manner that implies a high degree of homogeneity. A traditional reliance on functionalist theoretical frameworks may be responsible for this de-contextualized approach. Also, discussions about folk Catholicism reflect the usual biases that accompany a great tradition - little tradition framework. Folk Catholicism is described as anachronistic and is devalued with respect to great tradition Catholicism. Related to this is the tendency to describe cultural and religious traits as static, and, or, conservative and passive in nature. Scholars discussed below refute these characterizations.

While there is a surprising degree of homogeneity in the outward appearances of lowland Christian religious expressions, practices and symbols in towns throughout the Philippines (Mulder 1987), a

closer study of religious expressions in the country's villages, where 70% of Filipinos live (Oosterhout 1990:iv), readily reveals a very wide diversity in keeping with the great number of distinct ethnic and tribal backgrounds of Filipinos. Catholic practices in the villages are much more obviously effected by, and interwoven with, elements from the indigenous beliefs and rituals of the many and diverse cultural groups that populate the islands than those in urban areas. The nominally Catholic rituals, which are strongly influenced by Ilocano ancestral rites and healing practices, that I witnessed in a village in Isabela, Northern Luzon, were non-existent in Tagalog Marinduque, Southern Luzon. But the yearly round of Catholic rituals in the towns of both provinces showed many similarities.

McCoy's study of Western Visayan Catholic practices leads him to conclude that these are strongly based upon animist elements particular to that area which remain the "dominant religious experience of the region's peasantry" (McCoy 1982:164). Cullen (1970;1973) describes a Catholicism in Bukidnon province, Mindanao that is strongly influenced by traditional Bukidnon beliefs, and Fr. Jocano laments that the acceptance of Christianity by the people of central Panay, in the Visayas, did not bring about

substantial changes in the traditional belief system (Jocano 1971:44). (4) Too often, however, in sweeping discussions of "Filipino Catholicism" these regional differences, which are noted in important historical and village level studies, are underemphasized and subsumed by a larger picture of homogeneity that is based largely on the public expressions of the towns.

The non-Christian belief systems of various tribes and mountain peoples have received in-depth, contextualized, and sound empirical and theoretical treatment by anthropologists (Gibson on the Buid (1985), Rosaldo on the Ilongot (1978,1980), etc.). Unfortunately, the religious world views, the interpretations and meanings given by lowland Christianized Filipinos to their commonly described religious traditions, have been infrequently studied in depth, and the literature has tended to assume a much higher level of cultural homogeneity.

I maintain that despite the admittedly homogeneous appearance of religious expression in lowland towns, a closer study of the ascribed meanings, intentions, and beliefs underlying these practices would reveal differences in keeping with the historical and cultural diversity found throughout the Philippines. Another way to uncover this diversity is to delve into the "subculture" of the religiosity of

the towns. The less public rituals of poor townspeople have frequently developed unique traits. I describe this briefly for Marinduque in chapter six.

The term "folk Catholicism," in which the "folk" in many contexts indicates a diminishing of the more ideal "Catholic," is widely applied in the literature in such a way that it implies a basically Catholic experience or world view in which a number of anachronistic pre-Christian elements have survived. Criticism of this view, based upon empirical research, suggests that the world view of Filipinos remains essentially pre-Christian and that Christian elements, practices, symbols, and rituals have been partially adopted but imbued with native meaning.

From my experience I would be inclined to argue that in fact most Filipinos from all types of settings are "animists," from self-proclaimed atheists to highly trained and educated priests, though the particular type of animist beliefs or practices may differ in each case. By using the word "animist" here I do not mean to imply an evolutionary stage but a world view that has nothing to do with any particular historical scheme plotting the development of religious forms. In fact, I feel that animism is the most dominant and consistent characteristic of Philippine religiosity to which Catholicism is added on and adapted in various ways so

that in fact folk Catholicism, in this new definition, is the Catholicism of most nominally Catholic Filipinos not just remote villagers or the urban poor. This view has some support in existing literature.

McCoy speaks of a generally "ill-defined folk Catholicism" (1982:142) and maintains for his area of research it is not an appropriate term:

The term "folk Catholicism" has been used to describe the existing syncretism, but it is not an altogether accurate description if by "folk Catholicism" one means the survival of pagan influences in a rural Catholic faith. In the Western Visayas the reverse is true - a few Catholic practices such as Latin invocations, saints' images, and medallions have been incorporated into a pagan religion.... (1982:164)

Some liberal thinkers believe, with Espiritu and Hunt, that as "the pragmatic, utilitarian, scientific approach becomes more widespread, belief in the efficacy of pre-Christian practices will no doubt diminish" (1964:2). But if Mulder's experience is representative, and it coincides with my own findings, then the liberal prediction falls short:

I met (...) at least four university trained members participating in a single Banahaw mystical group. Almost everybody I came to know - mostly members of the urban middle class - believed in or experienced miracle cures, many of them possessing anting-anting (amulets) or more conventional Catholic relics and images to which they ascribed protective or luck bringing power. (1987:3)

Philippine Popular Religiosity and Resistance: A Developing Theme

Some of the more recent attempts to rethink Philippine cultural values and religiosity, as well as the theoretical frameworks that have been applied to their study, have come from literature examining the historical (Ileto 1979; McCoy 1982) and potential (Ileto 1979; Polo 1988; McAndrew 1987) roles of religious and other popular symbols and values in various peasant movements.

Ileto's book Pasyon and Revolution (1979;1989) represents an important attempt to find an indigenous theoretical framework through which to understand various peasant uprisings that originated in the Tagalog speaking region of Central Luzon from 1840 onwards. The book centers on the perspective of the "masses" (a term that Ileto uses rather loosely) that took part in them. In order to write a history "from below" (1989:1), Ileto sought both new categories, "conceptual tools, a grammar" (1979:3), as well as sources from below through which to understand the world of the rebelling peasants (1989:10). These sources included native songs, poems, and especially the Pasyon, a native poetic text about the life of Christ that for 150 years has been sung and repeated by heart by lowland Christians. Ileto considers this text a "mirror of the collective consciousness" (1989:13)

that the researcher may draw upon to understand the native mind. He also maintains that its rich language and symbolism provided a common language for the largely illiterate peasantry, as well as an alternative system of values and social relationships rooted in the story of the suffering and liberating Christ, through which the peasantry challenge the hegemony of their oppressors (1989:14-19). Ilete elaborately shows how the nativized Christian symbols in the Pasyon combined both indigenous values and nationalist symbols to provide a powerful source of imagery for peasants to rally around in subsequent resistance movements.

Ilete's insistence on taking the position of the peasants at face value (1989:5) is important. Ilete maintains that, in order to understand the position of the masses in these movements, one must understand that they sought a new world order characterized by "true brotherhood," rather than the type of economic improvements or national independence that the elites sought. Ilete critiques earlier studies of these peasant movements, such as Sturtevant's (1976) (Ilete 1989:6-8), for using theoretical frameworks that are overly concerned with a rational and elite perspective. In these frameworks peasants are viewed as "anti-modern" and Filipino "millenarian movements" are reduced to being a reaction to the "cultural gap"

between peasant traditional values and modern urban values. By seeking a relevant conceptual framework and analytical tools (literary source material from below) Ileta's work offers a fresh, more emic and dynamic, perspective on popular symbols, values, and world view.

What Ileta does to advance an emic perspective of the aims and aspirations of peasants and the role of nativized Christian symbols and values underlying peasant revolts in Central Luzon, McCoy (1982) does for the Western Visayas. His article offers an in-depth description and historical analysis of animist traditions of this region of the Philippines. McCoy shows that "pre-Hispanic religion in the Philippines conforms to the general pattern of Southeast Asian animism" (McCoy 1982:154) which itself is strongly influenced by Indian cultural concepts and beliefs. He maintains that these animist beliefs not only link Philippine peasant ideology to that of other Malay societies of Southeast Asia but that they have played a significant role in shaping peasant life:

Not only did these animist beliefs survive, they have continued to play a substantial, in some cases dominant, role in the mobilization of modern peasant movements. (McCoy 1982:142)

In the Philippine context McCoy points to the tendency of Roman Catholic proselytizing to lead to syncretism rather than to the elimination existing beliefs (McCoy 1982:155). A tendency that still largely

exists and that has been noted by more recent Catholic "missionaries" (Cullen 1973). (5) While McCoy acknowledges differing degrees of Christian influence on peasant ideology throughout the Philippines he maintains that for the second half of the twentieth century "Visayan animism had not merely survived as some atavistic curiosity, but in fact remained the dominant spiritual force in the Western Visayas" (McCoy 1982:164).

McCoy maintains that:

The failure to consider the influence of Visayan animism on the region's peasant political culture has produced considerable misunderstanding of the nature and aims of Philippine rural revolts. (1982:165)

He proceeds to re-examine various Visayan revolts against the Spanish and American regimes. McCoy takes into account significant traits of Visayan political culture, as exemplified by cult leaders and their followers, that were the result of "the confluence of the religious and the secular in traditional Visayan society" (McCoy 1982:165). Through this study McCoy paves the way for a historically specific, regionally and culturally contextualized, and dynamic approach to popular religiosity and beliefs that also lends itself to comparative research.

Jaime Biron-Polo, after reviewing and criticizing various cultural descriptions of the

Philippines from the 17th century to the present for their static, ethnocentric, and functionalist nature (see above), insists that it is time to rethink popular Philippine symbols and values by studying them as they emerge, interact with, and effect concrete historical realities (1988:25). By way of example, Polo turns his attention to a Binalayan fishing ritual native to Leyte in order to show how it contains "latent oppositional symbols" (1988:7) that, under the right circumstances, could provide the impetus for counter-hegemonic action. To add credence to his case Polo points to a rich history of popular revolts against the Spanish and the American regimes that took place in Leyte and Samar. These revolts were based upon "a popular Christian ethic...in which both ritual, magical and supernatural practices likewise coexisted" (Polo 1988:71).

Polo concludes that:

The fish corral ritual simultaneously speaks about two modes of social life: one has been aggressive, insistent - a social order where exclusivity, ownership and non ownership of fishery resources define a particular social relation and hierarchy. The other has been more pronounced and dominant - an informal manner of sharing resources, a more egalitarian practice of social exchange which undeniably has long been recognized and certainly awaits further reappropriation towards a complete fulfillment of an apparently latent longing for less rigid and more cooperative social ties in a community of fisherfolks. (1988:61)

Polo discusses at length the theoretical underpinnings for his assertion that latent symbols in

the fishing ritual may lead to oppositional action (1988:70-73). Unfortunately, in the actual discussion of the Binalayan fishing ritual the reader is left to wonder just "how and when 'latent longing' and 'latent oppositional symbols' may be translated into meaningful social action" (Coumans 1988:62), as the social dynamics and socio-economic context needed for such transformation are left largely undiscussed.

McAndrew (1987) also expresses his desire to re-examine popular religious symbols. He does so in a book of essays he has edited all of which are aimed at studying how quite disparate forms of religious expression, which are prevalent in the Philippines today, relate to the "problem of meaning encountered in what may be described as a peripheral capitalist society" (McAndrew 1987:1). Describing "liberation as a hegemonic process" (1987:45), McAndrew seeks to understand the answer to the following question: "In the struggle for cultural hegemony, what is the potential contribution of popular religious consciousness?" (1987:45).

McAndrew concludes that since Philippine history has shown millenarian movements based on animist traditions to be potent mobilizers of large masses of people against a variety of oppressors "indigenous religious tradition" should be seen "as an

embryonic expression of Philippine counter-consciousness" (1987:61). He furthermore takes an activist stance by advocating the political development of "latent revolutionary consciousness" in order to "provide the counter-culture for analyzing and transforming Philippine social realities" (McAndrew 1987:61).

Magno praises McAndrew's book for pioneering the study of "various religious traditions, as they are also bearers of political meaning and function" (1988:64) and for attempting to develop "a distinct sociology of folk religiosity in the Philippines" (1988:65), but notes that most of the contributions to the book unfortunately fall neatly back into a structural-functional form of analysis, "snapshots taken of monks, dreamers, preachers and rebels in their typical poses - frozen, lifeless, devoid of dialectics and barren of historical content" (1988:65).

Important in this review is Magno's call to seek a "useful analytical framework" for the study of popular religiosity, one that would "penetrate the shared meanings of cult discourse, deconstruct these systems of meaning, and reveal the dialectics of their formation in the life-world [of] social beings" (1988:65). Although Magno concludes that McAndrew's book ultimately fails to answer the question "how could

the masses transform existing varieties of religious praxis as weapons in the arena of symbols and meanings?" (1988:65), it is obvious from his review that McAndrew's book is a sign that the time is ripe to attempt to rethink popular culture and religiosity within the context of oppression and exploitation and that this project finds an eager audience among Filipino intelligentsia who expect much from it.

Philippine Culture in the Public Arena

As I show below, commonly held assumptions and frequently repeated beliefs about "Filipino culture" and "Filipino religiosity" are also reflected in BCC literature and pamphlets. These views obviously form part of the pamphlets' authors' cultural bricolage. Why they are reproduced by BCC activists will be further explored later on in this chapter, but it is equally important to understand how these perspectives historically became established, as I outlined in earlier parts of this chapter, and to examine the way in which these beliefs become public property as they are reproduced in the public arena through speeches and through the educational system.

Evaluating Filipino cultural and religious values in the context of personal and national identity

and development is a pastime that sparks many a discussion and that authorities of all kinds indulge in publicly, from the principal of a small rural elementary school, to leading politicians, Church leaders, social scientists, and media figures. An analysis of Filipino religious culture is especially prevalent when the discussion is aimed at reviewing, yet again, the social and economic problems facing the country in order to reveal the cultural or psychological roots of these problems, and to answer the question of what is needed to bring about the progress and modernity. Not uncommonly, in this context the ability of Filipinos to be "good" Christians is considered necessary for social progress and development. To be a good Christian means not to be steeped in superstition and traditional beliefs, and to be able to treat the strangers one encounters in the public arena equitably, or as one might family members and close friends. To a degree, such discussions are the pastime of "specialists" but through the educational system and other public forums viewpoints on these issues trickle down to reach a very wide audience. As a consequence, visitors to the Philippines may be surprised to hear even moderately educated Filipinos readily expounding on their own national character while linking various well-known national

traits to historical stages and cultures related to the country's developments.

While the discussion of the complex influences that are considered responsible for various Philippine national character traits is generally a popular topic, its treatment in the streets is most often casual. There is even a sense of humour and often self deprecating laughter that accompanies such ruminations. The discussion in progressive intellectual and political circles has an intense sense of urgency and even anger about it. There is an acute debate going on in these arenas about the desperate need to create a strong national state in order to regain control over economic, political, and military sovereignty and to further Philippine aims and needs over those of outside powers. Criteria deemed crucial in the creation of such an autonomous national state are: 1) the development of a strong sense of national identity and unity out of a situation that is now strongly regionalistic, 2) the stimulation of a sense of pride in things Filipino as opposed to the "outward looking" attitude that is most prevalent now. Accompanying both of these conditions is the perceived need to identify strong national, and native, symbols that will somehow allow Filipinos in the various cultural and ethnic regions of the country to identify with each other as Filipinos.

Simultaneously, there is a perceived need to remove those symbols that continue to remind Filipinos of their lack of sovereignty: the most common foci of animosity among progressives are undoubtedly the U.S. bases. (6)

Ironically, the characteristics that are most commonly considered typically Filipino receive much of the blame for the ills of the country. Moralists blame utang na loob and pakikisama for rampant corruption and the fiesta spirit for a lack of strict moral conduct, values, and work ethic. Developmentalists blame ningas cogon and the bahala na attitude, (as well as the fiesta spirit) for a lack of will power and drive needed to get ahead ("Filipinos are lazy"). Progressives blame endless superstitions (left over from the Malay heritage) and a passive world view inherited through years of Catholicism and colonialism for the people's lack of revolutionary spirit and faith in their own ability to bring about social change. When Philippine cultural values do receive positive attention they are often romanticized as somehow authentic and innocent, untouched by the passage of time or foreign corruptions. Recently, there has been a trend, especially among nationalists, to emphasize the apparently accepted list of native characteristics in a more positive light, as indigenous as opposed to

foreign, and some attempts have been made to reinterpret them as a source of social strength and cohesion or even of potential resistance to foreign interventions.

In an article entitled "Religious Psychology of the Filipino Rural Adult" (1977) Lourdes Quisumbing (7) combines, and vacillates between, many of the approaches described above to Filipino history, culture, and religiosity in a way that is common in such literature. Typically, she commences her paper with the question "what is a Filipino?" (Quisumbing 1977:12) and answers it with the usual references to the aboriginal negritos who were driven to the mountains by the immigrating Malaysians who are themselves "a synthesis of very many cultural influences: Hindu, Chinese, Persian, Siamese, Arabian, and others combined with his Malayan stock" (Quisumbing 1977:13). She notes that the Malayan temperament "friendly," "pliable," "oblique," remains with the Filipino despite 400 years of Spanish and American exposure (Quisumbing 1977:13). Ultimately, this line of reasoning leads to the query "if we have many values and traits common with other societies is there something uniquely Filipino?" (Quisumbing 1977:13). Quisumbing's own answer to this national dilemma epitomizes the general sense of a patchwork identity in

which, to the degree its components have become Filipinized, they have become somehow corrupted or diminished:

Filipinos for example are very good borrowers. (...) We borrowed from the Hindus, from the Chinese, from the Spaniards, from the Americans and what we have borrowed we have not returned, we have assimilated them all in our own way. We borrowed English but Filipinized it. We borrowed Christianity from the Spaniard but it has become folk Christianity. We borrowed democracy, American style, and tried to plant it here. But we sold our votes instead of using them. (1977:14)

In the course of her article Quisumbing draws on the views of Fr. Mercado about Filipino "world view," Fr. Lynch on "folk Catholicism" and Filipino values, and Fr. Senden on the "particularistic" nature of the Filipino (Quisumbing 1977:16). Where she discusses "Filipino natural religiosity" she falls temporarily into the "romantic" category of analysts seeking in Philippine values positive characteristics for nation building and development:

I am presenting to you my insight in my contacts with the poor, rural and oppressed Filipinos. Their religiosity puts us sophisticated people to shame. Their faith is strong, solid, and simple. (Quisumbing 1977:14)

Of cultural traits taken together she notes approvingly:

The Filipino core values and their accompanying values can be put together in the principle of harmony. (...) The Filipino considers harmony his greatest goal. He aims to harmonize with God, with nature, with people, and with himself. (Quisumbing 1977:19)

In his homily for the third anniversary of EDSA (February 25, 1989) Cardinal Sin discussed the "miracle of EDSA" from the point of view of Filipino values: "the miracle that was EDSA was, in large measure, the 'positivizing' of many negative strands in the Filipino character" (CBCP Monitor Jan.-Feb. 1989:23). Lamenting the return of many of the old problems after the revolution, and after asking "where has the miracle of EDSA gone?" Cardinal Sin concluded that:

It seems we have gone back to "Life as usual," to what we really are - a nation of easy-going people, rascals, mayayabang, thieves! tayo ang problema [people with problems]: It is we who are the trouble. (CBCP Monitor Jan.-Feb. 1989:23)

Similarly, when Cardinal Sin was conferred a doctorate by the University of the East (May 5, 1989), he was asked "do our Filipino values provide the basis for, or at least, help in building, strengthening, developing, and prospering the nation?" (Philippine Star May 8, 1989:6). He replied by citing a long list of the country's woes which ranged from unfair prices, peace and order problems, underemployment, poverty, and lack of justice, to the bad disposal of garbage and pollution (Sin 1989:6). He then continued by noting that:

Filipino values, in their existential reality, have been all the time operative in everything that our people have decided and done. What other conclusion can be gathered from these

premises other than the painful one that, as a matter of fact, our Filipino values have, not only not helped to build our nation, but, what is even more disheartening, have in large measure created the present unsatisfactory state of affairs? (Sin 1989:6)

In the extensive discussion that followed Sin addressed the question "why have our values failed us?" (Sin 1989:7) by walking through the familiar list of recognized values showing how they are at the heart of all the above problems. The obviously negative ones—manana, ningas cocoon, gaya-gaya, bahala na — with their usual interpretations, were trotted out and cursorily dealt with as "obvious" ills but then Sin continued with the usually more favorably interpreted utang na loob and pakikisama showing how these, in practice, underlie "corruption," "mismanagement of public affairs," and "nepotism." Sin determined that these traits remain "magnificent in private personal life but disastrous in the public order of the nation's life" (1989:7). Sin concluded his address by stating that Filipino culture is, as yet, "immature" and direly in need of "discipline" exemplified by the fact that like a "teenager":

Filipinos are, by and large, self-centered and irresponsible in their dealings with one another, driven to get ahead by any possible shortcut, that is, by taking every possible advantage of his fellows.
(Sin 1989:7)

The implication of imperfect Christian conduct paired

with social and economic underdevelopment is present here as well.

On the other hand, in his address to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines of July 1986, Italian Archbishop Bruno Torpigliani discussed the "blossoming of the fundamental values of the people" (Torpigliani 1986:1) in the EDSA revolution. While less common, Torpigliani's approach is an attempt to reverse the usual evaluations, to explore more positive possibilities. While such an approach does illustrate the semantically open nature of decontextualized cultural traits it does little to dispel the negative perspective it is trying to reverse.

In praise of "Filipino Christian culture" Torpigliani shows that utang na loob actually leads to a "kind of social security system that is basically Christian in Character" (1986:3) and so could lead to positive Christian communities if the people attempt to repay their debt of gratitude to God by helping their "little brethren" (Torpigliani 1986:4). Also, pakikisama, or the attempt by Filipinos to maintain smooth interpersonal relationships (SIR), is treated by Torpigliani with the greatest respect, especially when he notes that "impregnated by Christian motivation," pakikisama may lead to a "true Christian community" as

"there is an intrinsic kinship between the pakikisama spirit and the BCCs" (Torpigliani 1986:4). Even the often maligned bahala na attitude receives generous treatment by Torpigliani who interprets it as a true faith in God or bahala ang Diyos:

The uttering of this expression is not a manifestation of a fatalistic resignation, but an explicit act of real faith and full trust in the divine Providence. (Torpigliani 1986:5)

Finally, the fiesta spirit which is often equated with an immature and irresponsible attitude to life becomes in Torpigliani's optimistic hands akin to the liturgy which is above all a "celebration" (Torpigliani 1986:7) a "spirit of joy come to life" (Torpigliani 1986:8). Torpigliani even sees Filipino values as potentially underlying the "Promotion of Justice" in the Philippines (Torpigliani 1986:8).

In all of the above accounts an essentially fixed and apparently homogeneous representation of Filipino values, culture, and moral integrity, positive or negative, prevails. These accounts do not explore the historical origins of the ascribed values, they largely ignore the impact of structural social realities on people's behaviour, and do not recognize the dynamic and processual way in which people evaluate and respond to social pressures.

A more recent example that shows that the self-doubt and self-flagellation lives on is to be found in

the April 1991 speech of Jose V. Abueva, president of the University of the Philippines. Focussing on "Learning and Leadership for Social Transformation" Abueva lists the kinds of social changes that he feels are necessary in the Philippines. Included in this list is, once again, a summation of negative cultural values that need to be transformed (Abueva 1991:7).

Abueva incorporates contributions from three professors, of sociology, psychology, and economics, in his speech. Professor of sociology, Banzon-Bautista, discusses the necessity for "moral recovery" in the Philippines. She focusses on how "our traits as a people...facilitate or constrain economic development and nation building" (Banzon-Bautista 1991:11). She does attempt, however, to introduce structural and situational conditions in her evaluation of these traits. So, for example, she praises the Filipino trait of pakikipagkapwatao but laments that it is only practiced within the confines of the "family, the clan, and the political patron's group" (Banzon-Bautista 1991:12).

Banzon-Bautista suggests, albeit with some qualifications, that given political and economic structures "conducive to enhancing our positive cultural traits" changed behaviour, which is linked in her argument to national development, might be

possible. The example she gives, however, appears strangely inappropriate given the grave structural socio-economic problems facing the majority of the Filipino poor:

While I am not one to discount the role of culture or to subsume it's significance to structures, there have been instances when the unthinkable happened because we provided some structure. In the LRT (Light Railway Transit) for instance, people fall in line. So do they in areas like the UP [University of the Philippines] where a system of riding jeepneys was instituted. (Banzon-Bautista 1991:12)

Professor of Psychology, Carlota, also starts out with a strong statement about the importance of values in social transformation:

The central position in the process of social transformation should be accorded to the people, particularly their values and value system...the key to social transformation lies in the people and their values. (Carlota 1991:15)

While Carlota points out that values in and of themselves "can be used or abused" for good or for bad, her argument again tends towards the position that "many of the present ills...can be traced to our weaknesses as a people" (Carlota 1991:15). The three "values" she discusses as central to Filipinos, pakikipagkapwatao, "family solidarity," and "strong faith in God" are all shown to have negative aspects that hinder positive national development (Carlota 1991:15-16). To this list of at least sometimes positive values, she adds the "weaknesses" of "our lack

of discipline, and work ethic, our colonial mentality and our so-called 'crab mentality' [hiding from reality]" (Carlota 1991:16).

Carlota agrees with the Department of Education, Culture, and Sports (DECS), which she quotes, that for the necessary "moral recovery" values should be identified that need to be developed and strategies devised by which to implement their development. A list of six such values has been made up including "respect for human life," "patriotism," "social responsibility," "work ethic," "integrity," and "love of God" (Carlota 1991:16-17). Although Carlota does discuss the structural and personal psychological/developmental contexts in which values are developed, enforced, and recreated socially, the emphasis of her argument lies in the need to transform "negative" values and to develop "positive" ones (implying a static non-contextualized reality for values) as a prime condition for social transformation. Emphasizing personal over structural responsibility she says, "it is the people, after all, who have created various structures and social institutions and who breathe life into them" (Carlota 1991:15). (8)

Reproducing Cultural Stereotypes in Education

Polo (1988) has pointed to the negative influence of early functionalist, ethnocentric, and imperialist accounts of Filipino culture that found their way, sometimes through literal quotations, into later sociological and anthropological literature about Philippine values and religiosity (Lynch, Mercado). The cultural concepts developed in this academic literature then find their way into popular consciousness by being accepted and drawn upon in public speeches, writings, seminars and in the texts of various progressive organizations such as BCCs whose organizers eagerly seek authoritative social and cultural information upon which to base their programs. Another source of information about Filipino culture and religiosity is the educational system.

Prominent Philippine historian Renato Constantino and his wife (1966, 1975, 1978, 1984, 1986) continuously point to the role of (mis)education in public schools as an essential source of the continuing identity crisis, lack of pride in things Filipino, and a static, disconnected understanding of culture. Mulder has pointed out that:

On a national scale the idea of symbolic violence is perhaps best demonstrated in the case of the Philippines, because the country was colonized by cultural means not once, but twice.

(1990:85)

Mulder is referring to the cultural colonization by the Spanish through Catholicism and the cultural neo-colonial invasion by the Americans through the use of English and education. "American textbooks were used until well into the sixties," and, as Mulder points out, have not changed much since then (Mulder 1990:86).

Mulder agrees with Constantino (1966) that

the naive identification of Philippine with American interests is a result of a colonial education that made Filipinos good colonials while at the same time depriving them of their soul, that is, their history, culture and identity, instituting instead a sense of rootlessness, dependence and inferiority. (1990:86)

Teaching of "ethnic origins," "history," "national symbols," "religion," "society," and "values," is "ahistorical," "noncontextual," and, furthermore, partially relies on dubious sources for pre-Spanish historical content (Mulder 1990:87-89). The first grades teach the "interesting cocktail" of traits held by the Filipino by virtue of the blood mixture inherited through various culture contacts (linking traits to percentages of blood inherited from each contributing culture !) mainly to the effect that "all good things have been brought to the Philippines by strangers" (Mulder 1990:88-89). By the 5th grade negativism sets in through attempts to analyze the present state of the nation and to stimulate its young

citizens to bring about change. The children are taught that the Filipino is basically lazy (ningas cogon, manana) and easily corrupted; a "self-flagellation" that, Mulder notes, "increases while moving up the ladder of formal education" (Mulder 1990:94).

While the presentation of Philippine popular culture has suffered much at the hands of colonizers, various academic and intellectual authorities, and, not unrelated, at the hands of an educational system in dire need of review, there is a trend, especially among intellectual nationalists, towards critical re-examination of the cultural interpretations derived from these sources. This re-evaluation lays the groundwork for theoretical renewal and, more importantly, for the development of more realistic self-images.

The Tension between Cultural Indigenization and Political Contextualization in BCC Programs

BCC perspectives on Philippine cultural values, traits, and world view, similar to those on popular religiosity, largely reflect the negative evaluations that are still common in academic and public arenas. The BCC literature also reflects a tension, however, between these negative evaluations and nationalist desires to rediscover and honour indigenous culture.

This tension is reflected in two, often contradictory, terms that play a central role in putting ideas derived from Vatican II and liberation theology into practice in BCCs: "indigenization" and "contextualization."

The need to "indigenize" Catholic practice and theology has been officially recognized in Rome, and various local bishops' conferences "have urged the development of theologies based on the traditions and culture of the people" (Mercado 1977:59-60). Indigenization became a popular concern in the Philippines in the 1960s, simultaneously with developments surrounding the second Vatican Council. Most commonly, efforts to indigenize resulted in adaptations in the liturgy of the mass; rice cakes might be substituted for bread, and indigenous songs for Latin ones etc.

A tendency that arose from discussions about the need to root Catholic faith in the local traditions and beliefs of its geographically widespread community, has been to romanticize the innate and "natural" religiosity of the Filipino peasant. A more recent trend, among progressive Christians, has been to incorporate the pastoral concern with indigenization in a strong nationalistic program in which "native" religiosity is held up as having been oppressed and historically devalued with respect to "foreign" beliefs

and therefore must now be rediscovered and reinstated with pride. Ileta's work was even the focus of a publication used by BCCs that proudly hailed the ability of Filipino peasants to be the orchestrators of their own reinterpreted and essentially dynamic religious symbols and revolutionary theory (Alay Kapwa 1982:26-35).

More commonly, however, native religiosity and values are portrayed as "tainted" by the influence of the colonizers:

Did we not tend to romanticize the attitudes of our people, without being critical enough of these attitudes? Were we aware enough of the long history (marked by colonialism) that led to the development of these attitudes? (Verberne 1977:46)

Especially where indigenous religiosity is considered in the same context as efforts towards political and economic transformation through "conscientization" and a new liberating exegesis, native beliefs and practices are often described as incompatible:

Fortunately, the problem of religion especially among the lower strata of the Philippines is not so much the absence of faith as its proper articulation. God is still very much alive in the hearts of the people. However, the expressions of their faith derived for the most part from the language of foreign cultures and of times past have tended to divorce their faith from present realities. (BCC I 1987:19)

The contradiction between the desire to honour traditional "indigenous" faith and its perceived

incompatibility with a liberating theology is often striking. Gaspar praises the fact that "native wisdom has survived" in spite of years of "evangelization with a First World perspective" (Gaspar 1986:16). "Fortunately, Filipinos still have native religiosity. It is only now that we are re-discovering the richness of popular religiosity" (Gaspar 1986:15). But later, in the same publication, Gaspar derides many of the popular and much loved images of Christ in the Philippines as being too "meek" or "resigned" to support a struggle for liberation (Gaspar 1986:34). The lessons to be learned from Ileta's (1979) work seem to be lost again.

The general literature on the role of popular religiosity in the context of liberation theology is quite substantive and continues to grow. Popular religiosity has been described as a "challenge" (Francisco 1989) but also as an outright "problem" (Galilea 1988). Cook, writing about liberation theology, notes that

a genuinely Christian evangelization ... will take the valid elements in popular religiosity as its point of departure rather than ignore them, gloss over them, or manipulate them. (1985:140)

The questions beg to be asked: who will determine what is "valid," based on what criteria, and since a "point of departure" implies an intended destination will

popular religiosity not be subject to "manipulation" in order to get there?

BCCs that emphasize consciousness raising do so on the basis of a clearly defined social analysis and political agenda. The aim of conscientization for the BCC-CO program is to "educate" the poor about the realities of global political and economic conditions which impact on local political and economic relations in the belief that a raised awareness is the first step towards concerted and direct action against local forces of oppression: "with their new consciousness and new values, the people now confront the powers that be" (BCC-CO Evaluation 1984:16).

The conscientization seminars introduced to the local level through BCCs are further supported by liberating interpretations of Christian symbols and narratives. Given the intended aims of the program, both the people's indigenous interpretations of their everyday reality and their indigenous religious interpretations are deficient. Indigenization, in the sense of adapting Catholicism to the people's existing religious practices, beliefs and values is incompatible with the BCC-CO program as these indigenous beliefs are considered to be contributing to the people's oppression and so are themselves in need of liberation and transformation.

Where an interest in indigenization is motivated by an intense nationalism the situation is equally problematic. A common grievance of nationalists is the continued presence of outward signs of domination. In the religious arena a clear example is the prevalence of religious statues that resemble caucasian Westerners. A solution that has been suggested is to dress statues in native clothing. The Virgin Mary may be dressed as a peasant woman reflecting both cultural indigenization and the preferential option for the poor. While the statue would undoubtedly better reflect everyday indigenous life and current theological trends, it would also surely disrupt the traditional relationship between the image and its worshippers. While the image may have been foreign in appearance, the religious response to it by everyday worshippers is native. This indigenous and native response would be disturbed.

In the BCC-CO literature, the word "indigenization" has been largely replaced by the word "contextualization" and has received a subtle but significant shift of meaning. Contextualization, as it is used in this literature, has come to mean adapting liturgy, catechism, religious practices and symbols to the underlying and often hidden realities of peasant existence, meaning their structural exploitation and

oppression. In other words not the people's expressed or perceived reality should be the basis of religious indigenization but their actual reality as known by the BCC initiated through social analysis:

Prior to the BCC-CO most of the people in the areas now associated with the program lacked social awareness and social commitment. Their world consisted only of themselves, their families and their small communities. Yet, even with respect to this micro world, their knowledge was in many ways unscientific and therefore could not provide them with adequate theoretical basis for scientific transformation. In fact, they were contented with their lack of awareness concerning the bigger communities and the macro levels. (BCC-CO Evaluation 1984:11)
(9)

This 1984 BCC-CO evaluation text is a prime example of the way in which sociological and other academic literature becomes popularized and selectively utilized in BCC publications. The family-centered characterization in the above quote is backed up by calling on the works of sociologists (BCC-CO Evaluation 1984:12). According to this text the BCC-CO program has "helped these people rid themselves of their false consciousness and lack-of-consciousness which they had long had" (BCC-CO Evaluation 1984:12). It also freed them from an imposed "culture of insecurity" (encouraged by the "U.S.-Marcos dictatorship") which actively promoted among the people such values and desires as

kanya-kanya, hiya, smooth interpersonal relationships, utang na loob, pakikisama, ningas

kugon, bahala na, suwerte, kompadre system, etc. They had been taught to prefer paternalism and not to complain against authoritarianism. They had a superordinate valuation of Uncle Sam and of imported products. (BCC-CO Evaluation 1984:13)

As the above passages indicate, a negative evaluation of popular religiosity is pored with a similar view regarding Philippine culture in the BCC-CO literature:

The weaknesses on both the sociological and faith levels are similar. The people tend to be passive, very dependent on the priest or the barrio [village] captain, and this is quite the opposite of the fullest development of the human potential of each members [sic] which is our vision for the BCC. (Purcell 1987:65)

These negatively perceived cultural traits are especially popular with BEC sympathizers who prefer to emphasize these as a focus of attention rather than structural causes:

There are some things within us that have served as allies of this [sic] oppressive forces (the kanya-kanya mentality, a lack of concern for the common good, the "get-rich-quick" attitude, a certain fatalism, etc.) And structural analysis does not bring out these cultural lacks which....will result in the perpetuation or worsening of our condition even with a change of masters at the helm! (Bacani 1986:121)

Traditional religious practices and observances are also thoroughly criticized by BEC texts:

Is it right to buy expensive flowers and jewelled clothes for the statues of Mary, yet neglecting our obligation to bring Christ to others by sharing our resources to them? (...) Our devotion to Mary, therefore, should not end in merely reciting the rosary or the novenas, or in carrying her statues in pompous processions.

(PKP December 12, 1989; December 26, 1989)

In general, BCC texts often describe Filipinos as being "magical" or "superstitious" implying backwardness which is not in line with the quite rational, and often identified as "scientific" (BCC Seminar Kit 1987:7), principles of social analysis leading to transformative social action. Therefore, the people must be reminded that "sacraments are not superstitious rites saving us from the wrath of God" (Dangal et al. 1987:71). And they must be warned against putting their faith in religious objects:

For many people the Sto. Nino is not so much a symbol for authentic faith in Christ. People have reduced it to a mere object of superstition, charm or luck. (PKP January 15, 1989)

The committed BCC activists have their work cut out for them :

how [do we] effect both internal conversion of the masses (cultural) and external changes (politico-economic) without which no genuine social transformation could take place? Concretely, how do we remedy the religio-cultural inadequacies enumerated above.... (BCC I 1987:16)

The main differences between the BCC-CO texts and the BEC texts, with regard to their evaluations of Philippine cultural and religious character, lie in the reasons they give for why traditional values, beliefs and practices are not considered acceptable. The BCC-CO texts lean somewhat more to an explanation that points

out the "conservative" or "bourgeois" nature of these symbols; the fact that they are essentially pacifying, static, and furthermore, mystify or hide the realities of structural inequality, in other words that they do not lend themselves well to transformative revolutionary action. "In a culture that puts prime importance to values like utang na loob (debt of gratitude), it has not been easy to make our people more conscious of imperialism" (Gaspar 1986:11).

While BEC texts do at times also point these things out they tend more readily to evaluate traditional Christian symbols and values from a theological perspective as exemplifying an outdated, pre-Vatican II theology. Rather than religious expressions based on individualistic aims and needs the people's devotions should promote Christian loving and brotherhood to work towards a better existence for all, a sharing of "talents and resources" (FKP December 1988). The shortcomings in Filipino values are, in the BEC literature, that they reflect individualism and apathy which does not reflect the socially oriented post-Vatican II spirit. Whereas a kanya-kanya attitude in the BCC-CO text aligns one with the forces of oppression, in the BEC literature it primarily makes one a bad Christian lacking in the essential element of Christian charity without which the "Kingdom of God"

cannot be built.

To conclude, both the BEC and BCC-CO programs essentially devalue popular religion and culture despite occasional signs of appreciation and ambiguity stemming from nationalist yearnings. While much of the BCC literature conveys an implicit awareness that there is a power in popular religiosity that may be tapped to stimulate social action, and it sometimes reflects a nationalist pride in indigenous culture, the literature on the whole is contradictory as it remains essentially mired down in traditional critiques of Philippine popular religiosity and culture.

Both movements present religious traditions and cultural traits in a homogeneous fashion. The nationalist hope of building a nation-wide movement based on powerful and shared religious experiences that will not only serve as motivation for social transformation but will also unite Filipinos may be responsible for decontextualized descriptions of cultural behaviour.

Both movements also present existing cultural and religious traditions as static, passive, and individualistic. Despite literature that points to the latent potential of religious and other cultural traditions to provide the language for oppositional action BCC-CO activists insist on the need to

reinterpret existing religious symbols, rituals, and narratives so that they may embody progressive social analyses. Cultural characteristics are seen as rooted in colonialism and contributing to the ongoing oppression of the people and are, therefore, also in need of transformation. BEC organizers want to redirect religiosity towards community service in line with Vatican II teachings and to "positivize" cultural characteristics, which are perceived as selfish and uncharitable.

Folk Catholicism is also largely devalued by both movements, but again, for slightly different reasons. While ECC-CO activists feel folk Catholicism does not provide a modern and scientific response to everyday problems, BEC organizers are concerned that its tenets are not orthodox and not in line with Church teachings.

The question remains why recent, more "positive," re-evaluations of traditional culture and religiosity have not had a greater impact on BCC approaches. The literature of the two movements is probably influenced by the negative assumptions that characterize the educational system and the public arena. However, BCC activists at the national level, especially those formulating social theses and theological justifications for the movements, tend to be intellectuals who are interested in, and aware of,

developments in academic theory. Yet both BCC-CO and BEC activists reproduce traditional "knowledge" about the deficits of Filipino "religiosity" and Filipino "culture" each from their own social and theological perspectives.

Ironically, both in the case of the BEC movement and for the BCC-CO movement the answer may be linked to the political niches the respective movements have carved out for themselves, and in opposition to each other. As I described in previous chapters, historical influences and national level political contexts have shaped two nation-wide movements that have come to largely distinguish themselves from each other by the degree to which they adhere to a Marxist social thesis.

BCC-CO proponents are unlikely to consider building a social program based on existing local level knowledge and traditions given the ideological insights of Marxism that label the existing culture of the poor as false-consciousness and supportive of oppression:

We uncover the hidden forces at work in human life and society which, without analysis, remain hidden from our day-to-day consciousness. We begin to understand the social order in which we live; the structures, the classes, the relationships, the contradictions. We discover the oppressive dynamics that cause poverty and powerlessness, and the dynamics for liberating action for change. (Gaspar 1986:9)

On the other hand, BEC organizers, while

equally concerned with the need to transform society towards greater social justice, are wary of structural analysis and the divisive conclusions that may be drawn from this approach. In seeking an alternative, or at least additional, source of ongoing social inequality and suffering upon which to focus attention, existing cultural practices and religious traditions have come under scrutiny. For the BEC movement the traditional understandings of "Filipino" cultural characteristics and popular religiosity have become the focus of efforts to transform social communities through more "positive," community oriented, cultural values and more altruistic religious practices.

Both movements have been successful in manipulating broadly based existing prejudices against popular culture and religiosity in their respective theoretical paradigms.

Reinterpreting Christian Symbols for Social Action

Given the general dissatisfaction among social activists with existing cultural and religious symbols a common topic of debate is how these symbols can best be transformed to support social change. In a 1987 forum on "Marxism in the Philippines," held at the University of the Philippines, the role of Christian

symbols, as tools to promote social activism, was raised repeatedly in a way that is highly reminiscent of similar discussions among BCC activists at the national level.

Fr. Intengan, S.J., reflected upon existing "traditional" religiosity noting that "traditional religion is a very ambivalent or ambiguous reality"; he advocated a "traditional religion, purified in its liberating aspect, and transformed into a vehicle to accommodate liberation" as the proper goal to be struggled for at "the popular level: its parishes, its basic Christian communities" (Intengan 1988:136). (10) Bolasco insisted that a "materialistic interpretation of religion must have to ask concretely what the material effect of symbols is" (1988:136). He pointed to the fact that through ritual "religion does not only grab your heart and mind, it also regiments your body" (1988:136). This, for Bolasco, is the "material impact of symbols and of religion" (1988:136).

Bolasco alludes to the role that ritual plays in internalising and concretizing for participants the meanings carried by the symbols in the ritual. Material effects, not directly discussed by Bolasco, would be reflected in the everyday actions of ritual participants based upon their acceptance of these symbolic meanings. While "knowledge" gained in the

sacred sphere does not necessarily determine or guide action in the secular arena, shared meanings from the sacred sphere may be called upon to negotiate conflicts in everyday life.

Bolasco describes the connection between symbols and social or material consequences as a more or less direct, if not unproblematic, one. For him the problem is of a practical nature; whether to construe whole new symbols for society or reinterpret existing ones. So he asserts:

The question is what do you do with previously received symbolic capital? You just check [sic] them away, and so "we will create a complete new symbolism." The problem is nobody understands it, so I think the proper area is a struggle for the liberative interpretation of the existing symbols. Symbols are not created overnight. The fact that they have become symbols, rituals, is precisely because they have become a tradition that not only capture [sic] the minds of the people, they have also regulated their bodies. And this is what I think analysis should not miss about symbols. It is not a matter of putting one image after another but of making your whole body respond properly to a given image. And I think that is where the struggle is. (Bolasco 1988:144)

In such national level debates about appropriate progressive religious symbols or symbolic interpretations the EDSA revolution is often discussed as an ambiguous case in point. At EDSA no one could escape the ubiquitous and powerful presence of a multitude of religious symbols. Especially statues of Mary and of the Sto. Niño were prominent in the hands

of the people. The symbolic wealth of this historical occurrence, its powerful religious overtones linked to an event of great social and political significance, offers an abundance of interpretive material. For many Christian activists, however, there seems to be a sense of disappointment that the symbols that supported and motivated the people during the four days at EDSA were very traditional ones. Intengan notes that:

the religious symbols employed in the mobilization -- the crucifix, the images of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the rosary, the Lord's Prayer -- as well as the manner in which these were employed, evoked certain cultural resonances of unsuspected power. (1988:132)

Ed de la Torre expressed regret at the fact that the symbols at this radical event were again traditional ones and felt that for this reason it was all the easier for the Church to eventually co-opt the people's movement and anchor it firmly in traditional practice by overseeing the erection of a immense towering statue of Mary (Our Lady of EDSA) at the sight of the people's revolution. (11) Cardinal Sin, together with Cory Aquino, officiated at the inauguration of the statue upon the third anniversary of EDSA.

The sense that there is a need for symbolic renewal, or at least for symbolic reinterpretation, away from traditional, middle-class and colonial religious images and symbols, is a dominant feature of religious progressive texts, including BCC texts

produced at the national level. Among the many religious symbols that are given new contextual significance two of the most common are "Jesus" and "the cross." The differing socio-theological perspectives taken by the two nation-wide BCC programs find their reflection in the new semiology.

Whereas in a BEC text the "cross" may be described more generally as the weight of poverty bearing down on the people (the people by inference becoming the innocent Christ), texts sympathetic to the BCC-CO approach will tend to define the people's cross more specifically and in more structural terms as being "Transnational Corporations" and "Economic corruption" (Promotion of Church People's Rights 1982:2). Both interpretations are far removed from the more traditional interpretation that emphasized the cross as the weight of the personal sins of all mankind that Jesus must bear to make redemption possible.

For Filipinos particularly, the cross has traditionally been presented by the clergy as a symbol of Christ's sacrifice that allowed them to move from a state of "pagan" sin to one of salvation through the grateful intervention of "holy" foreigners. The new image of the cross becomes something that may be identified as sins external to the individual, as was the case for Jesus, and against which a concrete

struggle must be undertaken:

The theology of struggle empowers the people to take up the cross. But unlike the domesticating symbol of the past, the cross is seen as a symbol of struggle. It is at the heart of praxis calling people forth to take their destiny into their hands. (Gaspar 1986:26)

The image of Jesus is also subject to review. Progressive texts that emphasize the plight of the poor and just Son of God at the hands of the potentate Pilate, present a powerful source of identification and comfort for the oppressed poor. The poor are often explicitly identified with Jesus in order to stress their lack of guilt for their situation and their structural position of oppression.

There is, however, an articulate element in the Philippine religious progressive movement that is not content to allow comfort in being associated with the just, but persecuted, Jesus to become the dominant emotion. This movement is characterized by the drive to replace the extremely popular, but predominantly passive, images of Jesus with more "revolutionary" ones:

What kind of human face of Christ is needed in the Philippine situation today? Is it the "cute" one of the Sto. Nino cult? The "sweet" one of the sacred Heart? The "resigned" one of the Nazareno? What about the Jesus of Nazareth who called the poor blessed and hurled woes on the rich? The man who got angry and took up a whip at the temple? Who denounced the authorities and even broke laws and customs? (Gaspar 1986:34)

This "activist" image of Christ is further enhanced by drawing it into the local context:

Christ was the worker-organizer who was killed without due process for his trade union organizing activities. Christ was the peasant leader who was tortured and brutally murdered because of his involvement in the struggle for genuine land reform. Christ was the Filipino people crucified, with the three nails symbolizing the three basic problems of the country -- feudalism, imperialism, bureaucrat capitalism. (Gaspar 1986:34-35)

In addition to endowing well known Christian symbols with new "liberating" meanings, progressive religious activists have recourse to the Bible as a source of inspiration and affirmation of their exegesis. It is in fact an interesting development in Roman Catholicism that the Bible has come to the fore again to play an important role in liberation theology, and in BCCs, as a tool in consciousness raising sessions which are often structured around Bible readings.

The "Kingdom of God," referred to in Luke 6:20-26, is a central and very powerful symbol for liberation theology. The Kingdom of God is the symbol for an ideal state characterized by justice, equality, truth, lack of sin, and liberation from all forms of oppression. At the same time it is powerful as a condition which Christians are continuously admonished to take responsibility for bringing about. They must,

as Christ did, struggle within the realities of their "real-life situation" to recognize the forces hindering the Kingdom and oppose these in order to bring about the Kingdom of God, and so find themselves in the empowered position of being co-creators with Christ. (12)

Another powerful Biblical symbol for liberation theologians and Christian activists is the account of the flight to freedom of the Israelites, from their slavery in Egypt, in the Old Testament book of Exodus. Graham refers to it as "liberation theology's main biblical paradigm" and a "literary expression ... of a people's politico-religious liberation experience" (1986:17). In literature on liberation theology and in BCC seminars and consciousness raising guides the Exodus is perhaps the most commonly referred to biblical "mirror" for the liberational struggle of the Filipino people. Gaspar notes that "the February event [EDSA] made the Exodus a creation of the struggling Filipino people of this day and age" (1986:7). In the New Testament the Beatitudes are often emphasized for their references to God's concern for the poor.

Although teaching the "Exodus event" and the Beatitudes is a significant part of the educational package of most BCCs, at the grass roots level the Passion of Christ remains a more accessible and well

known biblical account from which to draw symbols that may be endowed with transformative meaning. Gaspar notes that there is a special warmth among those involved in the Theology of Struggle for "biblical faith" as its "concern for total salvation is not just for the life-after-death but also during the life-after-birth" (1986:15).

The role of reinterpreted Christian symbols and selective biblical narratives in BCC texts designed to be used by lay leaders in initiating and implementing BCC programs at the local level is very pronounced. All texts, from those explaining the underlying principles of the new exegesis to those explaining how, and why, to set up a socio-economic project, a union, or a demonstration, rely heavily on reinterpreted Christian symbols and selections of Bible texts to support and direct activities at the local level. Examples of this may be found in the BCC-CO Seminar Kit which provides a "formation program designed to highlight a certain perspective towards God, the human person, the Church and society" (1987:vi).

In chapter nine of the village level section of this thesis I review the various texts used in BCC-CC formation at the local level and elaborate on the role of reinterpreted religious and cultural symbols used therein. Given the extended discussion in the past

three chapters about the differences in the approaches of the two nation-wide BCC movements, an interesting characteristic of this literature is that it presents new interpretations of Christian symbols and themes in an authoritative manner that does not in any way reflect or discuss the variety of positions at the national level, and the related alternative interpretations that do in fact exist. In the hands of a capable lay leader the new interpretations of, for example, Bible passages appear to derive unmediated from the text, while they receive legitimation from the authority of the trained leader.

Conclusions

A generally negative evaluation of Filipino culture and Filipino religiosity forms part of the cultural bricolage that national level theorists of the two nation-wide BCC movements draw on. The literature of the two BCC movements largely reproduces these negative stereotypes which are rooted in historical and academic texts and are commonly expressed and reinforced in public forums and in the educational system.

Progressive nationalism has also influenced BCC theorists but they commonly choose to emphasize its

critiques of foreign influences rather than its attempts to induce pride in Filipino "native" religiosity and culture. Similarly, the emphasis on "indigenization," which is endorsed by the Roman Catholic Church, opened the door towards a more positive re-evaluation of native religious experience. But the tendency in the BCC-CO movement has been not to seek an emic understanding of religious experience but, rather, to direct programs at the "hidden realities" of peasant existence, to "contextualize."

While the reasons for the continued devaluation of Filipino culture and religiosity differ for the two BCC programs, in both cases this tendency is rooted in the political and social perspectives chosen by the two programs and outlined in previous chapters. Given the perceived need to "positivize" cultural values and religious beliefs, both programs promote the reinterpretation of religious symbols, narratives and practices and the transformation of Filipino cultural values.

This chapter concludes the national level chapters in which I have presented various formative influences on the two nation-wide BCC movements: the historical development of ongoing debates among Catholics rising out of the evolution of Catholic social action in the Philippines; the influence of key

political divisions and debates at the national level; and, ongoing assumptions about Philippine culture and religiosity that are perpetuated by intellectual and nationalist elites and in popular arenas. In the upcoming local level chapters I will demonstrate how these formative influences effect ECC-CO practice in the towns and villages of Marinduque.

NOTES

1. Philippine scholars Schumacher (1984) and McCoy (1982) do not define their use of the term "animism" but I use it quite broadly to describe beliefs in spirits (non-human entities), as well as in powers that may reside in objects or natural phenomena (also known as animatism). I maintain that these beliefs are common to most Filipinos, can exist independently of Christian beliefs and are often syncretically combined with Catholic beliefs.
2. Jaime Biron-Polo is a social scientist who teaches at the University of the Philippines. He is also a social activist involved in grass roots struggles for social transformation.
3. This information is based upon personal discussions I had with members of the IPC while I was a Visiting Research Associate there, 1988-1989.
4. Schumacher distinguishes "syncretism" and "legitimate folk Catholicism" (1984:251) of which the latter describes a situation in which "certain folk elements, either encouraged or at least tolerated by the Church, are integrated into what is fundamentally a Catholic belief and value system" (1984:251). Schumacher maintains that the above mentioned studies are examples of syncretism not folk Catholicism (1984:271-272). But McCoy, while noting the exceptional nature of the Visayan case he describes, insists that "it is no doubt true that elements of the animist faith have survived in various forms throughout the Philippines" (McCoy 1982:164).

5. There is reason to believe, however, that such a "lenient" approach to native beliefs is now undergoing change. First of all, proselytizing protestant fundamentalist groups tend to take a more hard line attitude to conversion which includes attempting to eradicate non-Christian beliefs, as well as "inappropriate" cultural and social behaviour. But the changes in the Roman Catholic Church following Vatican II also point to a change in approach to native beliefs and practices. More priests are regularly visiting villages and drawing villagers into the mainstream of Catholic life. And now, within the context of liberation theology, there is greater emphasis on actively changing existing beliefs and practices, or "liberating" peasants of "outdated" modes of thinking and acting.

6. A striking example of the powerful emotions such discussions on national identity engender comes from a conference I attended in Amsterdam on Philippine Studies (April 1991). The panel discussion on the topic of "Culture, Language and Identity" was dominated by an urgent discussion on the topic of the desirability of forging a national identity and the need for a strong nation state. This discussion somehow took on an intensity that went beyond the usual academic tone that characterized most other discussions. During the final panel on research cooperation between Europe and the Philippines an uncommonly heated, and ironically divisive, debate broke out among attending Filipino scholars that centered on the question of the validity and role of foreign researchers engaging in Philippine Studies.

7. Dr. Lourdes Quisumbing was Dean of the Graduate School of Education at De La Salle University in Manila in 1977. She commonly lectures on the topic of Philippine culture.

8. The degree to which the perspectives of the intellectual elite concerning Philippine culture, which I have outlined here, dominate the discussion at the national level is further exemplified in the way these perspectives are readily adopted by outside observers of the Philippines. The journalist James Fallows' observations provide a good example. Fallows, who at the time of writing his 1987 article "A Damaged Culture" for The Atlantic Monthly had visited the Philippines twice, tries to make sense of the poverty of the Philippines within the Southeast Asian context and of the great disparity between rich and poor within

the country. The informants Fallows quotes in his article are bankers, economists, government officials, and businessmen. Fallows concludes that "the basic explanation" for Philippine problems "seems to be culture" (1987:50-51; also 56). Fallows' use of culture as a concept is ambiguous (he insists that Philippine problems "can't be [the result of] any inherent defect in the people: outside this culture they thrive" (1987:56 emphasis provided in text)) and his discussion on the passivity of Filipinos (1987:57) and their lack of nationalism (1987:56) is contradicted by evidence he provides in other parts of his article. But the point I wish to make here is the remarkable predominance of the cultural argument as an explanatory framework for Philippine problems at the national level.

9. This quote not only highlights the negative evaluation of local knowledge that is evident in BCC-CO texts, but also the esteemed position of the "scientific." In an interview I had with Ed de la Torre in May of 1991, he reflected on the popularity of the word "scientific" to describe the tools of social analysis in the BCC-CO literature. He mused that it seemed that "science" has come to take the place of an earlier paradigm based on "revelation." While striving to be scientific may derive from Western influences generally, and from social science texts more specifically (the obsession of many Western social theorists with being considered scientific has only relatively recently started to be examined), it seems somewhat ironic that a program so against Western influences in the Philippines should be so enamoured with the notion of a scientific way to approach social transformation.

10. Fr. Intengan is well known as one of the more "radical" members of the Jesuit order.

11. From an interview I conducted with Ed de la Torre on May 7, 1991.

12. See George Pixley God's Kingdom 1981 Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, on this topic with respect to liberation theology - (cited in Helen Graham, 1986).

THE DIOCESAN LEVEL

The Isle of Marinduque is a tiny spectral diadem incrustated majestically by the God Almighty and embellished on the Terrestrial Crown of His own Creation. This glorified topaz Isle gem possesses extraordinary brilliancy; the most incomparable supernatural elegance with its superb radiancy which emits from the Tiara of Universal Recognition of the highest magnitude dazzling the magnified august beholder and greatly puzzling the discriminating admirer due to its magnificence characteristic of the delicate handiwork of the Creator. (...) This book which you have the opportunity to peruse must be read conscientiously and pensively to see the true perspective of the magical splendor of its deeper sparkling meaning, and to fully appreciate the valueless justification of the naked Truth of Morionism and comprehend the sanctifying moral virtue of the reason why the venerable Morion is devotedly grateful to the Creator for the Salvation of his Soul in his avowal to the purpose which the Author desires to convey.

CELSO L. PRECLARO

EX-GOVERNOR OF MARINDUQUE

(Foreword to a native history text: 1963)

In ancient times, there was a Tagalog-speaking settlement in Southern Luzon ruled by a king who was rich and powerful, and revered as he was feared. He was Datu Batumbacal, so-named for he had a heart of stone and steel. He ruled from its capital, Balayan, where he lived with his daughter Marin, a maiden worshipped for her beauty. Suitors came from faraway kingdoms to court her, but only three of noble birth persisted.... Princess Marin was unmoved by their entreaties. One day, the legend goes, the Datu's daughter was enchanted by the songs of Garduke, a poet, who sang praises to beauty and to nature. (...) The knowledge of their secret meeting angered Datu Batumbacal who ordered the beheading of Garduke. This decision prompted Mutya Marin and Duke to escape in a boat. They sailed out into the sea and headed for Tayabas Bay. Her father's soldiers and her three suitors pursued them. When their escape seemed futile, Marin and Duke asked their servants to tie them together and cast them into the depths of the sea. And so the Legend goes that from the sea emerged a heart-shaped island named Marinduque, a tribute to the ill-fated lovers. (The Legend of Marinduque: Souvenir Program for Lent, 1987)

A Brief Introduction to Marinduque

Whether first arriving in Marinduque via boat from the busy harbour city of Lucena in Quezon province, or making the short hop south by plane from the noisy frenzy that is Manila, the arrival in Marinduque cannot but be an unexpected pleasure of the most thoroughly enjoyable kind. Even after many trips back and forth to Manila I never failed to marvel at the sight of the lush green beauty of this mountainous little island as the small plane neared Marinduque's outer islets bringing the tiny white sails of numerous fishing boats into view. Skirting the tall palms lining Marinduque's empty beaches the plane hugs the coastline for a while on its way to the airport. Upon descent the palms seem to brush the bottom of the plane and wisps of smoke from copra fires can be seen reaching up. In a final swoop the plane skims over rice fields to land on the one strip runway that has been hurriedly cleared of wandering pigs, drying rice and children crossing to the village on the other side.

The island air always delighted me with its sweetness. The peacefulness, in which the only sound might be the rustling of tall palms, and cool sea breezes made Marinduque an ever welcome relief from wherever I was coming from. Despite the island's considerable charms Marinduque has not yet received the attention from tourists that other islands, such as neighboring Mindoro, enjoy. There is, as yet, no year-round tourist industry and not many commercial places for a visitor to stay. Marinduque's beaches belong primarily to her fishermen and her many off-shore islands are largely unexplored by visitors.

The visitor to Marinduque soon becomes aware of the prominent role that religiosity plays in the lives of Marinduquenos. Public expressions of religiosity, such as processions, are common and the characteristic ringing of church bells both marks the passage of time and informs the people of weddings and funerals. Catholicism not only forms an essential backdrop to everyday public life, especially in the towns, but also plays a large role in the private lives of Marinduquenos.

Spirituality is, however, by no means restricted to Catholic and folk Catholic expressions. In addition to a number of very active fundamentalist and protestant groups, there are also native spiritual cults in Marinduque. Some of these are based off the island and have a nation-wide following, such as the Philippine Benevolent Missionary Association, the APO, and the Rizalists, but there are also smaller spiritual cults centered around local charismatic leaders. And,

almost every village has a local healer who relies not only on knowledge of herbs and physical cures but draws on spiritual sources for aid in diagnosis and treatment. It is fair to say that the spiritual plays a very large role in the lives of Marinduquenos both in the towns and the villages.

The initial impression Marinduque makes of being a natural paradise is marred by the fact that most Marinduquenos live in poverty and by the pollution of one of the island's bays by the Marcopper mining company. While most Marinduquenos are poor, even by Philippine standards, some of the members of Marinduque's elite are wealthy, not only compared to other elites of the Philippines, but even by Western standards.

It is in this socio-economic and religious context that the social teachings of Vatican II and the version of liberation theology provided by the BCC-CO program present to Marinduquenos a new, and potentially transformative, relationship between religiosity and the struggle for social justice. The following two sections of this thesis explore the effects of BCC-CO ideas and practices on townspeople and villagers in Marinduque. The main theme of these sections is how, and why, the national level perspectives of the program are reproduced and transformed as they are mediated to the people by the clergy and lay leaders of Marinduque. Some of the issues I examine are the dynamics between mediators and recipients of BCC-CO ideas and practices, the effects of local cultural expectations, knowledge and practices on the program, and ways in which the program is resisted or indigenized.

CHAPTER FIVE: Socio-economic and Political Structures and Relationships in Marinduque

Introduction

In this chapter I first provide basic socio-economic statistics for the province of Marinduque, supplemented by a discussion about the existing political structures in Marinduque.

Next, I explore the socio-economic and political relations of various social groups in Marinduque. There are sections that outline the socio-economic characteristics of existing social groups, and how they relate, and there are sections that offer emic perspectives on wealth and status and on patronage. This data is reflected against a conception of class as employed by the BCC-CO movement.

The chapter also provides a discussion about aspects of peasant resistance and forms of negotiation in Marinduque. This data is reflected against the notion of organized resistance employed by the BCC-CO movement. Case examples illustrate aspects of negotiation and resistance.

A discussion about emic understandings of power

in Marinduque follows. This data is reflected against the primarily economically based notion of power adopted in BCC-CO analyses.

Socio-Economic Statistics

Marinduque is one of eleven provinces that make up Region IV; the so-called Southern Tagalog Region. (1) At 959.2 square kilometers, (95,920 ha.) this small island province makes up only 2% of the total acreage of Region IV. (2) Region IV is generally considered to have great development potential, as it surrounds Manila. In fact, the average income of rural families in the Philippines is 21,875 pesos per year and the average for Region IV is 29,985 pesos. But Marinduque has the second to lowest average family income of the region; at 18,330 pesos per year, second only to Romblon where the average family has 15,856 pesos per year to spend (1985 Family Income and Expenditures Survey). (3) Furthermore, in Marinduque 48.9% of a total of 36,608 families make less than 10,000 pesos a year, they have but 19.2 % of the total income, while 10.1% of the families earn more than 40,000 pesos a year or 41.5% of the total income. Of this latter group 5.5% earn 30.3% of the total income of the province. These families earn more than 60,000 pesos per year and

have an average income of 100,533 pesos per year (1985 Family Income and Expenditures Survey). These are the elites of Marinduque. The average income of village families in Marinduque is 10,207 pesos per year (JICA March 1989:3-59).

Marinduque consists of six municipalities; six towns and 218 villages. With 173,700 people in 1980, Marinduque had 2.8% of the population of Region IV (Philippine Statistical Yearbook 1987). Members of the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), working in Marinduque in 1989 (see footnote 2), estimate that the population increased to 205,781 in 1989 leading to a population density of 212 people per sq.km. (JICA August 1989:4). The Japanese team estimates the growth rate to be about 1.9% between 1980 and 2010 (JICA Interim Report 1989:47). In 1987, there were 123,000 Marinduquenos over the age of 15; the labour force was 76,000 of which 65,000 were employed and 11,000 unemployed. These figures put labour force participation at 61.8% and unemployment at 14.5% (JICA August 1989:4), showing the unemployment rate in Marinduque to be the highest of Region IV (Integrated Survey of Households, NCSO, October 1988). (4) For a breakdown of employment status by sex, urban (towns), and rural (villages) see Appendix I:1.

The greatest number of workers, 59.0%, are

employed in the primary sector (crop production, fishery, others); mainly (48.4%) in crop production. Fishing is largely a subsistence activity with low yields, as the equipment and methods are traditional. The secondary sector (mining, manufacturing, utilities and construction) employs 15.4% of the workers. Of these, Marcopper Mining employed 6.7% in 1980. This percentage was based on 3,060 employees in 1980. The figure has actually gone down to only 1,082 as of January 1989 (JICA March 1989:3-70). Given the size of the mine the number of employed is surprisingly small. The mine supplied 13.39% of the copper produced in the Philippines between 1984-1987, as well as substantial amounts of gold and silver, valued at almost 3 billion pesos over this period (JICA March 1989:3-73). The tertiary sector (commerce, transportation, services, others) employs 25.6% of the workers (see Appendix I:2). (5)

From 1955-1985, agriculture consistently contributed more than 25% of the gross domestic product (GDP) in the Philippines and employed the single largest group in the work force (IBON 1988:23). For 1985, it was estimated that 46% of the national labour force was employed in agriculture (IBON 1988:20). While agricultural productivity in terms of gross domestic product has shown a positive average growth of 2.9% a

year from 1983 to 1985, industry declined by 8.2% on average annually (IBON 1988:23). Between 1965 and 1985, the agricultural sector contributed an average of 56% of all export earnings, but that was down from its 87% average prior to 1965, "due to depressed prices and lower demand for agricultural exports in the world market" (IBON 1988:23). In 1987, agriculture still contributed 28.7% of the GDP (JICA March 1989:2-4).

In Marinduque, all but 18% of the total land (95,920 ha.) is developed and/or planted to crops (JICA August 1989:4). The two main crops are coconut (33,200 harvested ha.) and rice (10,894 harvested ha.), followed by banana, corn, mungbean, mango, papaya, and citrus (see Appendix I:3). The rice crop breaks down into roughly equal amounts of rain fed and upland rice crops and about 900 ha. of irrigated rice (JICA August 1989:5). The most economically important crops are coconut followed by rice and corn (JICA August 1989:4). The average farm has a concentration of coconuts with some rice and diversified crops, animal husbandry and fruit cultivation (JICA August 1989:5).

While only 5% of the coconuts are consumed, with the rest forming a cash crop in the form of copra, rice is a staple food. (JICA August 1989:3-13). For this reason, an important economic indicator is the level of self-sufficiency in rice. While rice

production in Marinduque has decreased, demand has increased as has the amount of rice imported from other provinces (see Appendix I:4). For the level of self-sufficiency in other important resources see the charts depicting the in and out flow of commodities from Marinduque's two main commercial harbors (Appendix I:5).

In 1980, Marinduque counted 16,395 farms covering 44,555 ha. Of these farms, 9,492 were fully owned; 2,657 were partly owned; and 3,816 were tenanted or leased (Census of Agriculture 1980). The average farm size was 2.72 ha. in 1980; this is down from an average farm size of 3.57 ha. in 1971 (JICA March 1989:3-53). The average farm size in Marinduque in 1980, was slightly lower than the national average for that year of 2.8 ha. (IBON 1988:14). While the number of farms increased between 1971 and 1980 by 34.0%, agricultural land only expanded by 2.4%, indicating that possible expansion is nearing its limits (JICA March 1989:3-53). Of the 2.72 ha. of the average Marinduque farm in 1980, 2.38 ha. was under crops while the rest was idle land, land under pasture, and forest (Census of Agriculture 1980).

There was also an increase in the number of tenants in Marinduque, as opposed to owners, from 1971 to 1980. While 74% of the farms were in the hands of

owners in 1971, in 1980 50% of the farms were fully owned while the number of tenanted farms had increased by 11% (JICA March 1989:3-53). On average, in the six municipalities of Marinduque, the sharing arrangement between tenant and landowner with regard to rice works out to 69% for the tenant and 31% for the landlord (JICA August 1989:B-5), and for coconut its 35% for the tenant and 65% for the landlord (JICA March 1989:3;59). Nationally, in 1985, only 15% of the total agricultural labour force were owner-cultivators, 20% were tenants or leaseholders (similar to Marinduque), and 50% were wage earning farm workers (most of which are seasonal or contractual workers) (IBON 1988:20-21).

There are a number of factors, both natural and man-made, that may help explain the relative poverty of Marinduque, both within Region IV and relative to national levels. First of all, while the islanders rely heavily upon agriculture for their income the landscape of Marinduque presents limitations. Only about 10% is made up of flatland, coastal and alluvial plains; the rest consists of rolling hills and the mountains of two ranges, one of which includes a dormant volcano of 1157 meters height which takes up about 50 sq.km., or 5%, of the total land area. See Appendix I:6 for a breakdown of slope degrees and relative acreage. According to the JICA report the land with a slope of less than 18

degrees is already fully used as agricultural land (JICA 1989:Interim Report). The steeper areas are mainly utilized for copra and kainqin farming. (6)

Marinduque is hit by at least one typhoon that does damage each year. In 1987, Marinduque was particularly hard hit by typhoons Herminq, in August, and Sisangq, in November. The damage to personal property was considerable; the massive Boac cathedral was severely damaged. But the lasting damage has been to the coconut trees. The coconut harvest went from 20,403 tons in 1987, to 2,103 tons in 1988. It is not expected that the trees will fully recover until 1992. In the village of Botilao, the first harvest since 1987 was held while I was there in 1989. An additional problem with many of the coconut trees in Marinduque is their age. Many of the trees are about 50 years old and need to be replaced but the expense is prohibitive as it takes about 7-8 years before the new trees become productive.

The yields of other key crops such as rice and corn are also sub-standard. The harvest of palay is 1.5 ton per ha. but the national average is 2.5 ton per ha.; corn yields are .626 ton/ha compared to 1.0 ton/ha nationally (JICA August 1989:3-12; March 1989:3-51). (7) There are few operational irrigation facilities. The quality of the crops tends to be poor because of

uneven drying conditions, poor storage (usually in people's homes) and a lack of post-harvest food processing facilities on the island. For example, there are 19 registered copra buyers in Marinduque but these ship the copra to processing units in Lucena City, Quezon Province (JICA March 1989:3-55).

Another related problem is the lack of suitable infra-structure. While the road density, at .69 km/sq.km., is higher than the national average, 90% of the farm to market roads are dirt, winding, steep, and/or not passable in the rainy season (JICA August 1989:8). Furthermore, many villages in the interior, and very mountainous, regions of the island are not yet connected to the road system; people from these villages either walk or ride horseback. Private motorized vehicles are reserved for the well to do. In fact, 50% of all motorized vehicles in the province are jeepneys for public transportation.

Other important infrastructural problems leading to bad health, low quality of life, and low economic development include problems with water supplies, electrification, and communications. According to the JICA report the water supply in Marinduque is insufficient. Seventy-five percent of the water supplied to the towns comes in old and leaking distribution pipes and 55% of village water is supplied

through deep or shallow wells (JICA August 1989:8). About 8% of the villages obtain water from shallow wells, 47% from deep wells and 40% of the villages are in difficult areas where water supply is problematic (JICA August 1989:3).

While all six towns have, quite recently, received electricity, there are frequent "brown outs" due to rains or winds and only 75% of the villages have electricity (JICA Interim Report 1989:90). There is no public telephone system but there are post offices, and telegraph offices, and commercial telephone services. The latter, consisting of small buildings with a few phones and a large waiting rooms, exist only in Boac and Mogpog, and only Boac offers long distance services off the island. (8)

With regard to health, Marinduque suffers many of the same health problems that are common in rural areas in the Philippines in general. (9) And, although the island boasts two hospitals, eight rural health units, 41 village health stations (for 218 villages), and 51 health centers, it is still common for villagers to die never having received official medical aid.

A final note on the economic problems of the island. One of the consequences of high unemployment, low levels of salaries, and lack of opportunities outside of the agricultural sector, is that, as is the

case throughout the Philippines, many able bodied and/or educated young people are leaving the island to seek work either in Manila and other Philippine cities, or abroad.

Political Structures: A Tale of Two Towns

Marinduque became an independent political district when the island gained independence as a province in 1920. The present political structures at provincial (panlalawigan), town (bayan), and village (barangay) levels are shown on diagrams i, ii, and iii in Appendix I. Although both the towns of Santa Cruz and Boac claim a long history of prominence dating back to the earliest Spanish settlements, and Santa Cruz is now generally considered to be the larger and economically more affluent of the two towns, Boac became the capital. (10)

By the 1950s, there was a clearly defined clan rivalry between the most prominent extended family from Boac, commonly labeled "the lowlands," and the most prominent family from Santa Cruz, often referred to as "the mountains." This rivalry was so heated that at times it became a life threatening undertaking for members of the Boac clan, or their allies, to venture towards Santa Cruz. The mountainous access routes to

Santa Cruz were guarded by armed men and in one particular shoot out, frequently recalled by people both from Santa Cruz and from Boac, a member of the Boac clan was shot dead in the main street of Santa Cruz where his body remained until nightfall when a band of family members from Boac finally made a raid to recover the remains. These types of rivalries between families, usually accompanied by the build-up of private armies, were not uncommon throughout the Philippines before martial law. Some clearly see this pattern re-emerging through the use of CAF-GUs.

Local elections, which to this day inevitably pit candidates for, and supporters of, the two important families against each other, were especially tense and violent before martial law. Even today, although private armies no longer play a major role, the perceived threat of violence continues to play a role in local elections as people fear that armed "goons," or possibly CAF-GUs, will pressure them to vote a certain way. It could be argued, however, that currently the threat of losing favour and jobs controlled by the two powerful families is the greater long term concern among voters.

From 1958 to the declaration of martial law in 1972, a patriarch of the Santa Cruz clan, Francisco Lecaroz was the assemblyman for Marinduque to the

National Assembly or Batasang Pambansa. From 1963 to 1967, a member of his extended family, Celso Preclaro, was governor of Marinduque followed in 1968, until 1987, by Francisco's brother Aristeo Lecaroz. After the lifting of martial law on January 17, 1981, Mrs. Carmencita O. Reyes, whose husband is a patriarch of Boac's most prominent family and served under Marcos as Commissioner for Immigration and Deportation for many years, was the new assemblywoman. Her brother-in-law, Luisito Reyes, had become the vice-governor under Aristeo Lecaroz in 1980. While both the Lecaroz and the Reyes families were very close to the Marcos clan throughout martial law their personal rivalry nevertheless remained strong. (11)

In the crucial 1986 presidential elections, the Santa Cruz based Lecaroz clan, relatively weakened within Marinduque, threw its support behind Corazon Aquino while the Boac based Reyes clan, with few exceptions, remained staunch and very public supporters of Marcos. Aquino won the elections in Marinduque by a margin of 5,717 votes, out of a total of 74,645 votes cast. The breakdown of the votes per municipality is significant and likely shows the importance of the influence of the two powerful families of Boac and Santa Cruz on the voting behaviour not only of the constituents of their respective municipalities but on

the municipalities under their "spheres of influence" as well (see Appendix I:iv). (12) While the difference between the number of votes for Aquino and for Marcos in the municipalities of Mogpog, Torrijos, Buenavista, and Gasan, is the greatest in Torrijos (2,652 votes) and the least in Buenavista, Mogpog, and Gasan (less than 1000 votes), the differences in Boac and Santa Cruz are significant at 6,006 and 9,614 respectively. (13) The voting records also show the effects of the two powerful clans on neighboring towns falling under their sphere of influence. While Gasan and Buenavista are generally considered to fall under neighboring Boac's influence and showed a slightly higher amount of votes for Marcos, Torrijos, bordering Santa Cruz, voted predominantly for Aquino. Mogpog, situated between Boac and Santa Cruz showed a slight majority for Aquino.

After the revolution, Aquino appointed Officers in Charge (OIC) to provincial positions until new elections could be held. Of the provincial political positions in Marinduque, only Aristeo Lecaroz, as governor, was not replaced by an OIC: apparently in recognition of the staunch support of the Lecaroz family for Aquino's presidential bid. (14)

On March 11, 1987, after the abolition of the old Batasang Pambansa and the creation of a new constitution, congressional elections were held. In

Marinduque, these elections pitted Carmencita Reyes against Auror Lecaroz, the wife of former assemblyman Francisco Lecaroz. (15) Mrs. Reyes found herself in the difficult position of having backed the loser, Marcos, in the presidential election. She could not run under the old Marcos party but neither could she so quickly switch to the Aquino party; although this type of party switching as a matter of expediency is common it would have roused greater than usual cynicism in this case. Reyes ran as an independent candidate and it is perhaps an attestation of her political dexterity and influence that she won.

On January 18, 1988, local elections were held nation-wide. Luisito Reyes, the brother-in-law of Congresswoman Reyes, ran for governor against the Lecaroz-backed candidate Daniel L. Bocobo. (16) Although Reyes was declared the winner the validity of this election was greatly contested and by the time I arrived in Marinduque in December of 1988, the provincial statistics office in Boac had not yet filled in the names of the governor and vice-governor on their chart showing locally elected officials. (17)

In conversations I had with Mrs. Reyes about the economic underdevelopment of Marinduque she inevitably blamed the fact that so little had been done, for example to develop the infra-structure of the

province, on the long period of dominance of the Lecaroz family in politics. (18) When asked about her own terms as assemblywoman and congresswoman she noted that having to work with then Governor Lecaroz had consistently crippled her ability to act for Marinduque and that she only felt able to do so now that her brother-in-law had become governor.

Until recently, the powerful families of both Boac and Santa Cruz, indeed most of the island's elites, have consistently supported the continued operation of the island's only large industry: Marcopper Mining Corporation. They have done so despite ongoing and increasingly vocal environmental complaints and relatively few overall advantages attributable to the mine's operations. The mine employs only very few Marinduquenos, especially in higher positions. Marcopper has only recently started to supply the island with the benefits of electricity. And, Marcopper has been exempted from paying taxes, including local taxes, since martial law. (19) In terms of obvious benefits, the Lecaroz family and friends of the municipality of Santa Cruz, where the mine is located, have enjoyed considerable financial privileges over the twenty years of the mine's operation.

The Lecaroz family has held the exclusive rights to run the lucrative bus services that bring

loads of shift workers from Santa Cruz town to the mine site high in the mountains via Marcopper's private road. Members and friends of the Lecaroz family have been hired to oversee large engineering contracts, and the present mayor of Santa Cruz, a Lecaroz candidate, runs the quicklime factory that supplies the mine. As the town's major political family, and the elite friends of the Lecaroz family, have had good reason to support the mine it has been particularly difficult for the poor fishermen of the villages most effected by the mine's waste disposal into the sea to protest against the mine's continued operations.

While the Church and a small group of concerned citizens of Santa Cruz have consistently protested the environmental consequences of the mine's operations, Marinduque's main elite political factions, both from Boac and Santa Cruz, have held firm in their support of the mine and condemnation of "radical" Church members.

In 1989, a unique set of circumstances saw a sudden turn around on the part of Congresswoman Reyes with regard to the mine issue. These circumstances caused her to align, at least temporarily, with the Church and against her long time political rivals in opposition to the mine. While the circumstances leading up to this remarkable turn of events are complex, they are to a degree rooted in the old political

factionalism and rivalry that has for so long determined the political scene on Marinduque. (20)

Socio-Economic and Political Relations

In academic discussions about local level political and socio-economic relations in the Philippine context a number of issues have played a central role. Important among these, and commonly debated, are issues of patronage and class; to what degree do socio-economic classes exist and function as such, to what degree are they effected or undermined by various types of patronage (21), to what degree does class-consciousness exist, and how does it inform action?

In chapter three, I discussed the relevance of such academic debates by regional specialists for an evaluation of the suitability and potential for local level success of the BCC-CO program, as the program's political perspective relies on Marxist social categories and analyses. Here, I want to address the issue of class in the context of emic interpretations of social relations and their expression in daily forms of negotiation and resistance. A comparison of emic social perceptions and aspects of the BCC-CO social thesis may afford us insight into the relevance of BCC-

CO theoretical concepts for the activist, as tools of social analysis, and, more importantly, as an ideology meant to inspire and motivate peasants to take social action.

The following section briefly outlines a few broad socio-economic and political categories in a descriptive fashion as points of reference for the reader in upcoming discussions. It is not my intention here to resolve the analytical questions of class or class consciousness but rather to show how emic socio-economic classifications are characterized by fluidity and are negotiated, based on factors that are themselves not fixed, and therefore include factors not usually included in determining class categories.

It is possible to divide the population of Marinduque into various broad categories based on socio-economic and political resources and established prestige or status. While the subgroups of people listed in each of these categories are recognizable as such to Marinduquenos, my broad categories do not reflect a local way of thinking about social divisions. I discuss this issue at greater length in the next section of this chapter.

As noted above, 5% of Marinduquenos may be classified broadly as the island's elite based on income. These elite families are based in the towns of

Marinduque's six municipalities. Less than 1% of this elite group could be called the "super elites" of Marinduque. These super elites are based mainly in Boac and Santa Cruz, and include members of the two main political clans on the island. While all members of the elite live enviable and opulent lifestyles by the standards of the majority of Marinduquenos, the super elites maintain lifestyles based on resources which make them wealthy even by Western standards. These super elites dominate political life on Marinduque and have very strong connections to national level political life. Their resources stem from land and businesses which are not restricted to Marinduque.

For purposes of distinction, the less wealthy and prestigious members of Marinduque's elite could be labeled as "middle-elites." Members of the middle-elite are quite closely related to each other and to the island's few most prominent families. (22) Members of this group are usually practicing professionals, doctors, engineers and lawyers and/or big businessmen and are prime candidates for local political positions, such as provincial board member, or mayor. Like the super elites, they often own houses in Manila as well as on the island and divide their time between the two places. Many also have strong family connections with landed immigrants in the United States and Canada and

are themselves "greencard holders."

A much larger and considerably less wealthy group, also based in the town, consists of small businessmen, shop keepers, and teachers or government employees. It is not uncommon for people in this group to seek income from more than one source in order to make ends meet. This group usually has only remote kinship links, if any, with members of the elite group. (23) They are less likely to seek political office although they may help run the campaigns of other candidates. Members of this group distinguish themselves from peasants and laborers by virtue of their steady income, capital assets, education, or by virtue of the fact that they hold an "office" job. Their actual income levels range greatly, however, with the lower end possibly earning less than some farmers and fishermen.

The next broad category we may identify is that of laborers and peasants in the towns and the villages. Many laborers do not hold steady jobs but will take whatever manual or agricultural labour they can find. Some become specialized in fixing motor vehicles or in sewing. Women may become maids for members of either of the categories listed above. Men may become house servants or drivers. Jeepney drivers, if they have steady employment, are at the upper end of this group.

Jeepney owners already belong to the previous category even if they have to drive the jeepney themselves.

Within this category we may again distinguish levels and degrees of socio-economic status and political prominence, such as may be gained in village elections. Differences are partially based on ownership of productive capital goods, such as land, or a motorized fishing boat, and property, such as a house, but also depend on the number and kinds of social relationships, both vertical and horizontal, that one can rely on. Of late, an increasing source of economic differentiation among peasant families is based on whether they count among their number a member working in Manila or, even better, abroad. Funds from such a source can make a very great difference in the daily standard of living of a family and increase the likelihood, through sponsored education or capital goods acquisitions, of a better future for family members.

The two most prominent families, Reyes and Lecaroz, are by no means distinct when one considers the marital alliances among extended family members. It is common for members of the elite from Marinduque families to seek other Marinduqueno elites as marriage partners although this is by no means a rule. Mrs. Reyes is, in fact, from mainland Luzon although she now

frequently and publicly stresses her commitment to, and love for, Marinduque. (24) On such a small island where practical and perhaps political and economic considerations, if not marriage rules, have occasioned a very high degree of inter-relatedness, and where most members of the Marinduque elite can trace familial links to other elite Marinduquenos, it is obvious that the distinction between the two main factional families is based as much on politics as it is on kinship.

While inter-relatedness in Marinduque is generally high, this is especially the case among the elite as they form a relatively small sub-group. This creates an interesting situation in which some members of the elite may choose alliance with one or the other political family and subsequently emphasize either their blood or their alliance links to that clan over those they hold to the other clan. In at least one case that I am aware of, a provincial board member, who lives in Santa Cruz but whose husband is a lawyer in Boac, has successfully switched alliance from Lecaroz to Reyes as the political power of the latter increased. This relatively smooth flexibility only appears to exist, however, for quite remote extended family members as in this case.

In another case, a prominent member of the middle-elite of Boac, who was originally from Torrijos

and closely related to the Lecaroz family, married a Boac woman from a prestigious family that is closely related to the Reyes family. The husband chose alliance with Reyes based on his marriage but also, according to him, based on his personal preference for Reyes. Subsequent tension between this man and the Lecaroz family has been great.

In a third case, a provincial board member, considered a nephew of Aristeo and Francisco Lecaroz and living in Santa Cruz, broke with his uncles for political reasons and joined the Reyes faction. This move caused considerable friction in his relations with immediate members of the Lecaroz family, especially those who are politically most active, but it is also viewed with a degree of distrust and some disdain by members of the Reyes faction who tend to see the move as political opportunism.

While the degree of inter-relatedness among the families of peasants and laborers who live in close proximity is also high in Marinduque, it appears that members of the elite are more aware of, and better able to trace, their family ties back over many generations. This is not surprising as they comprise a smaller group and tend to have more written records to aid them than does the general population. On the other hand, observations showed me that while most village families

could generally only recall two or three generations back in time, they were able to identify horizontal ties to third and even fourth cousins and immediately sought such relationships upon meeting a new person. (25)

Despite the relative isolation of Marinduque, as an island, it is not presently uncommon for villagers to be married to non-Marinduquenos. From my village study it appears that both outside men and women marry into island families but the majority of outsiders marrying in are men. The main criteria appears to be the availability of land. Men who marry in marry women from families with land that they can work on and possibly inherit.

The other family ties which play an important role in the lives of peasants are those which may be established to wealthier families in town. In some cases the same last name suffices to suppose a relationship even if the exact connection is no longer known. In other cases the ties are quite well known and acknowledged by members of the more prosperous family. It is not uncommon for elite families in town to have a special relationship with one particular village, often referred to as "our barrio." This usually refers to the ownership of land and possibly to tenant relationships in that village but may also refer to acknowledged

family ties. While these ties occasion a responsibility on the part of the elite members they also will be drawn upon by the elite during elections or when help is needed for a feast. (26)

If a blood or affinal relationship to the "better off" cannot be established then the traditional means of creating ceremonial kinship ties may be employed; the most common method is Godparenthood. A child may have multiple sets of Godparents. Sometimes one set will be close relatives such as aunts and uncles while the other set is a newly created tie to a wealthy family. Slightly more tenuous ties are created when the wealthy are asked to act as "sponsors" at weddings. While this relationship does connote a lifelong tie with the married couple, much as Godparenthood does with regard to the baptised child, the implication of "becoming kin" is less strongly developed.

Indigenous Socio-Economic Categories and Interpretations

In an attempt to arrive at indigenous ways of evaluating wealth and status I discovered the following five commonly used descriptive categories ranging from very poor to very rich: napakahirap, mahirap, hindi gaanong mahirap, maykaya, mayaman. (27)

In brief, napakahirap means extremely poor. Such a person has almost no possessions, lives hand to mouth, might often have to beg for food or shelter, has no wealthy connections, and no steady employment. In the village such a person will not likely starve to death, as others will help with food or housing, but a simple illness or other setback might be deadly. Mahirap means poor, while hindi gaanong mahirap is often translated as "not exactly poor" or as "can manage." The distinction between these two categories is made not only on the basis of material possessions but often also on the basis of some other possible advantage such as social ties, which can be accessed in times of crisis, or relatively prestigious work, such as that of a teacher. A peasant farmer making the same amount of money per year as a village teacher is more likely to be thought of as poor because of the physical hardship and status perception of his labour. If a comparison is made between a farmer and a teacher in the town, of comparable earnings, than the place of residence of the farmer, the village, is also of significance in placing him in the poor category.

Maykaya and mayaman both describe positions of wealth. These are translated, respectively, as "there are means" and "there is wealth." While members of both these categories are considered to be very well off a

distinction between them is commonly made based on whether a person is considered to be making an effort for their wealth, in other words engaged in any obvious work (which does not include politics). Someone who is mayaman is often described as someone who does not work.

Relating these indigenous terms to the broad categories I sketched above, one could say that the elite would all be labeled by Marinduquenos as maykaya or mayaman. The townspeople listed in my second broad category above may rank anywhere from mahirap to maykaya, depending on a number of factors I outline below, with hindi qaanong mahirap being the most common classification. Peasants and laborers would normally rank from napakahirap to hindi qaanong mahirap with mahirap being the most common classification. In order to discover how Marinduquenos distinguish social status I frequently asked townspeople and villagers to rank each other or people I knew well.

The process of placing someone in one of the above categories gave evidence to the great many factors informants took into consideration in making this decision. Disagreement easily arose among informants about the relative importance of these distinguishing factors and about the influence of a person's own perceived ranking on their evaluation. I

discovered that when two informants set out to place a third party into this scheme, five factors, consistently (but not exclusively), played an important role: perceived material wealth, social ties, occupation, political position, and residence in town or village. The inter-relationship and relative weight of these five factors is extremely complex. Lengthy discussions about where to place someone, especially within the three middle classifications, commonly erupted in which possessions were weighed up against social ties or type of work. In the case of one woman under discussion my informants disagreed about whether she was hindi gaanong mahirap or maykaya. One of the factors used to argue that she was maykaya was the fact that she "has one [offspring] abroad." But this argument was immediately modified by the information from another informant that this child abroad was "hiding and hiding" meaning not in possession of legitimate papers and so but a tenuous source of material support.

The self-perception of the position of the evaluator also played a role. In group discussions informants would often disagree about where others in the group had placed themselves in these categories. Most commonly accused were those whom others felt had under-ranked themselves. The accused's assets would

soon be listed with gusto in an attempt to force them to accept a higher ranking.

Important distinctions were also made by my informants between the relatively poor of the village and those of the town. Villagers tended to evaluate the poor of the town as better off than themselves and, similarly, people of the town tended to consider villagers as generally poorer. This may have something to do with the fact that those who live in the town are generally thought not to work the land whereas it is known that those who live in the village survive primarily from farming and fishing. Although the salary of some lowly placed government employees may be equal to, or even less than, that of a village peasant the prestige and the comparative ease of the "office" job places them in a higher ranking. (28)

Patronage

Just as people's perceptions of hierarchical degrees of well being are based upon much more than material possessions alone and are characterized by fluidity, so "patronage" is a complex relationship. A patron-client relationship, sometimes established through distant kinship, may centre around labour relations, politics, or religious traditions, and

commonly all three. But once established, a patron-client relationship may be called upon by either party for different purposes than those upon which it was originally based. The relationship appears most often to be a continuously negotiated one in Marinduque.

The attitudes, expectations, values, and behaviours that characterize patronage relationships are rooted in a great number of other everyday dyadic relationships. For example, the long term relationship of parent to child, the relationship between friends, or the relationship of a poor person appealing to a previously unknown doctor for free treatment based on need alone. Knowledge from non-patronage relationships is readily brought into informal negotiations in an established patron-client relationship. Conversely, people may sometimes invoke patronage attitudes and behaviours where no established reciprocal, usually unequal, relationship exists. In Marinduque, perhaps the most all encompassing example of patronage responsibilities, attitudes, and behaviour, which are invoked where no formal relationship exists, is that of the island's congresswoman.

News of the whereabouts of the ultimate patron, Congresswoman Reyes, whether she is in Marinduque or in Manila, is commonly passed around the towns of Marinduque with great accuracy through word of mouth.

It is commonplace for her to arrive at one of her houses around the island, before a planned event in that area, to find a small crowd of waiting peasants. One by one she engages them in extensive rounds of questions, usually receiving very indirect answers, to ascertain what it is they are asking for. Throughout this process, and even after she has achieved a sense of what the request is for, she will direct very personal questions at the petitioner; "how old are you?", "where are you from?" (which village), "who are your parents?", "why are you asking me for help?" These questions and more are answered in barely audible voices with downcast eyes, hands clenched, and an emphasis on the polite po at the end of each utterance. Often, Mrs. Reyes will ask about the health of someone in the peasant's village or give other signs of being familiar with the person's family and circumstances. At times she will chide someone on having reached the point where they needed to turn to her for aid. In the case of someone asking her for help in receiving a particular job she will question the petitioner as though she were conducting a job interview. The effect of these sessions is not only the impression that she is very much involved in the people's lives but also that she is in control of events and relationships around the island; that nothing escapes her. (29)

On the other hand, there seems to be very little that people will not approach Mrs. Reyes for in the way of aid. It is not uncommon for her to arrive at her house in Manila, after a dawn flight, to find Marinduquenos waiting for her. Although it may be hours before she will see them, when she does she will hear everything from requests to settle disputes to pleas for money. One woman told me that Marinduquenos who travel to Manila for weddings, funerals or other occasions may find themselves without the necessary funds for the return trip, via bus and boat, back home; she had herself been in that position. Mrs. Reyes apparently regularly supplies the funds to return such travellers to their homes, though never without a stern reprimand.

On the other end of the scale, patronage relationships exist between families separated in levels of poverty only by the distinction between napakahirap and hindi gaanong mahirap. One case I was familiar with involved a couple who were both teachers. They were childless, had a small tract of land, about one hectare, part of which was planted for peanuts, and a small sturdy house made of wood (as opposed to the cheaper bamboo) with a concrete foundation. Although the couple felt they could ill afford children, as both had to work full time to make ends meet, they would

probably have been classified by Marinduquenos as hindi gaanong mahirap because of their profession and steady income. On the teachers' land was a very small, two room, bamboo hut in which a family of six lived. This family, whose members were not related to the teachers, survived by working the land for the teachers and by subsistence fishing. They also were learning to breed goats for sale as part of a BCC-CO socio-economic project. The woman had become a BCC leader. The children in this family could not afford the clothes and books needed to go to school and their diet often consisted only of whatever fish may have been caught plus perhaps some root crops. This family would be classified as napakahirap.

The relationship between these two families was one which seemed to hold more benefits for the poorer of the two than for the teachers. The poor family could turn to the teachers for help with any crisis that may come along, shelter in a typhoon, funeral costs, medicine, etc. (although not without limit), but the economic advantage of their work on the teachers' land was peripheral to the survival of the teachers. The personal relationship between these two families was not characterized by social differentiation or distance. In a sense, they behaved as neighbors would. The poor woman felt that the teachers were allies of

hers and "good."

In discussions with many peasants about their relationships with the "higher ups," as well as with fellow villagers, neighbors or family members, the words "good" and "not good" were the most common descriptive terms used to introduce me to their overall opinion. The ensuing discussion, should my informant be willing to pursue the topic, would centre on expectations and values which were either met, in the case of "good" person, or not. "Good" may be said either with emphasis, or with a slight shrug, which seems not so much to negate the statement as to imply that the goodness is nothing out of the ordinary or is well within the range of expected behaviour. "Not good," on the other hand, is almost always accompanied by a very disdainful tone of voice, a slight shake of the head and averted eyes; as though the topic is distinctly distasteful. While the expectations people hold of their neighbors and of elite patrons differs in each case, a failure to meet these expectations is commonly expressed in terms of a failure to be a proper tao or a good Christian.

From the above sections it is clear that notions of "class," based on shared experiences due to a common mode of production, or labour, do not exist as such in popular consciousness. Differences in wealth

and status are weighed and determined based on many factors, not all of which are related to labour or to personal material wealth. A farmer who has relatives abroad is commonly ranked higher in well being than one who does not.

While formal long term patron-client relationships based on land are not as common in Marinduque as in some other provinces, patronage permeates a very wide range of relationships and appears more to be a value, an attitude, a way of relating, than a formal contract. Patronage exists even between members of groups that, from an etic perspective, may be labeled a class. Patronage is, furthermore, from an emic perspective a positive and sought after form of relationship. From an emic point of view the question of whether patronage undermines group solidarity is not an issue of concern. BCC-CO attempts to redirect social relations away from the vertical and dyadic ties often focus on patronage as a specific social problem, neglecting to take its pervasive, intra-class, nature into consideration, nor its emic status as a positive social relationship.

Resistance and Negotiation

Peasant resistance has been a significant topic of research in the Philippines where socio-economic inequalities are recognized to be extreme and the ability of the poor to sustain themselves has steadily eroded in almost all geographic regions and economic sectors since the end of the 18th century. On the whole, this research has centered on organized and open forms of resistance, both legal, such as unions and progressive NGOs, and "illegal" such as the various historic uprisings against the Spanish and American regimes, the Hukbalahap movement, and the more recent resistance by armed guerrilla movements, especially the New People's Army (NPA). (30) Important considerations in this research have been the roles of class-consciousness and of patronage ties in peasant commitment to organized resistance.

A welcome addition to the resistance literature is the recent book by Kerkvliet (1990) that focusses more on diverse and adaptable forms of resistance—covert, spontaneous, and/or unorganized—that exist within an ever changing social system that exhibits characteristics of both class and of patronage but is not fully accounted for by either theoretical concept unproblematically. Kerkvliet's study may be placed in

the tradition of Scott (1976; 1977a; 1977b; 1985; 1987) and of E.P. Thompson (1966; 1971; 1978). Although the historical and socio-economic circumstances presented in Kerkvliet's study of a Central Luzon village differ significantly from those of Marinduque, Kerkvliet's perspective on conflict and resistance presents a much more relevant basis for comparison with Marinduque than most other Philippine peasant resistance studies.

Marinduque is somewhat unique in the Philippine context as it is one of the few provinces that does not have a resident NPA contingent. The island is also free of other common problems related to violence in the Philippines. Marinduque is not plagued by roving resident bandits, the island experienced a relatively peaceful occupation under the Japanese, and it is not subject to the battles between landlords and tenants that are common in other areas which have large land holdings worked by large tenant groups. Referring to these "blessings" the elite of Marinduque have cultivated an ideology of peacefulness and often relate this condition to the patronage of the Lady of Biglang Awa. (31) The people are accustomed to being told how lucky they are to live in peaceful Marinduque and that they should count their blessings. There is a sense that an acknowledgement of peacefulness is meant to simultaneously imply a lack of problems such as

poverty, social injustice, or political corruption.

It is true that the turbulent and often violent clashes which occur in other regions between workers and members of the elite they are dependant upon, are not common in Marinduque. Fegan (1978) especially stressed the importance of a large group of oppressed people doing more or less the same work for the development of class consciousness and class based mass action. As outlined above, in Marinduque many peasants are small land owners or part tenants part land owners. Many engage in independent subsistence activities such as fishing and many hold a number of jobs at once to get by. Land holdings worked by tenants are relatively small and are worked by small numbers of tenants.

As the main cash crop planted on the few larger estates is copra, and the years since the typhoon (1987) have seen almost no harvests, there is an added lack of engagement between tenants and landlords on these few, potentially volatile, properties now coming under review of the government's Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP). On these lands tenants have been basically left to fend for themselves after the typhoon and often appeal to landlords for financial assistance or for other jobs to do for survival. To a large degree, these tenants must seek alternative sources of income and become less involved with the landlord. One

large landowner told me he allowed his tenants to consume whatever coconuts they did harvest and to plant subsistence crops on his land for survival until such time as the cash crop recovered.

The peaceful character of Marinduque is itself somewhat of a illusion, clung to and accentuated in the context of a very violent social environment. Marinduque Province lies sandwiched between the provinces of Quezon, southern mainland Luzon, to the east and the island province of Oriental Mindoro to the west. Both provinces are very well known for their strong NPA contingents and frequent violent clashes with the Philippine Army. A lack of desire on the part of peasants to organize formally for resistance is often attributed to the fact that peasants cannot afford to lose their socio-economic ties with wealthier patrons. But the fear of violent repercussions is also a very real threat in the Philippines.

During army sweeps of NPA strongholds in these border provinces, Marinduque is often put under so-called "double red alert." (32) Inevitably barricades are placed on the roads leading to the town halls of Boac and Santa Cruz, there are increased military patrols and for a few weeks the island is rife with rumours of NPA sightings or arrests. The military and members of the local elite use such scares to argue the

continued need of the paramilitary Civil Armed Forces-Geographical Units (CAF-GU) which have come under considerable critique by Philippine progressives for being little more than the private armies of the elite, re-emerging in a new form. Contrary to the threat perceived by the military and the elite the people often joke that Marinduque serves as the R&R (rest and relaxation) province for the NPA. (33) There seems to be little doubt that NPA members, individually or in small groups, at times visit the island and stay for some time without causing serious problems. (34)

Quezon province, considered to be generally a more violent place than Marinduque, is also the perceived source of pirates, thieves, and hit men. In fact, houses in coastal villages have been known to be targeted by thieves in fast motorized boats. The coastal village of Botilao includes a number of small off-shore islands. On one of these, Hakupan Island, a family had started an ice storage facility for fish. Fishermen from nearby villages brought their fish to this facility and then buyers from Quezon province would cross in motorized boats to buy large quantities of the fish. This business proved to be very profitable until the Botilao family was attacked by pirates while overnighiting on Hakupan. They were tied up, beaten, and robbed but allowed to live. Needless to say they have

closed the business down since then.

While I was in Marinduque there was a spate of raids by "foreigners" on houses along the coast near Santa Cruz. Eventually, the military announced that they knew who the perpetrators, from Quezon province, were. Not long thereafter a badly burned body was discovered in the garbage dump near Santa Cruz. It was one of the alleged robbers. People generally accepted that the army was responsible and most people I spoke with felt justice had been done and that the courts would be ineffective in dealing with such a case.

Perhaps the most feared of the possible imported forms of violence believed to come from Quezon province is the fear of hit men. In a country where violence is endemic, poverty widespread, and guns readily available the adage "life is cheap" may be taken quite literally. I was often told by villagers of their fear of being targeted by an anonymous hired gunman from Quezon for reasons ranging from a dispute over a woman, or money, to political dissent. I was told such gunmen could be hired for as little as 100 pesos.

While in Santa Cruz, I missed witnessing the knifing murder of a man by minutes. As one of the first to chance upon the scene I was told by a friend, who had been talking to the victim, that he had a chance to

see the assailants face although the attackers head was covered by a towel. My friend was adamant that the attacker was not from Marinduque because he had never seen him before. The case was never resolved. (35)

It is the threat of such readily available and anonymous violence that is often cited by peasants as a reason they would not dream of taking an election bribe and then vote for another candidate. While the ongoing threat of violence as a result of clan rivalries and private armies has decreased from its heyday in the 1950's, local elections are still perceived as a time of increased volatility and possible violence. Key politicians often employ bands of "bodyguards" and armed CAF-GUs, which are locals from Marinduque, are known to have allegiances, sometimes based on kin relations, with the politicians.

The ever looming threat of violence in situations of conflict was most recently brought into sharp relief in the battle by fishermen and the Church against Marcopper in 1988. As the struggle intensified numerous activists received death threats including the parish priest and the fishermen involved in the court case against the mine; as a consequence the activists fled their homes and parish for about a month.

While it is certainly true that most Marinduque peasants will tend to avoid open and organized

confrontation, such as that proposed by the BCC-CO program, in order not to jeopardize their socio-economic relationships with influential members of the elite, the threat of physical violence, which always presents itself as a potential consequence of resistance, must not be overlooked, even on relatively peaceful Marinduque.

The acts described as "everyday forms of resistance" by poor people to oppression and exploitation and so convincingly detailed by Scott (1985) and further illustrated by Kerkvliet (1990) for a Central Luzon village, are recognizable in Marinduque as well. Foot dragging, lying, stealing, and gossip, are traits of tenants, servants, and hired hands that are often complained about by members of the elite. I was able to witness mild examples of this kind of behaviour and sometimes picked up verbal evidence of these acts in the village. In an attempt to explain the causes of poverty to me the wealthy readily cited these traits of peasants, as well as the other commonly "known" facts about the poor such as that they are lazy, drink too much, and gamble or otherwise waste the money they do have.

Only a relatively small number of Marinduquenos are in a permanent, full-time, formal patron-client relationship. More often, poor peasants and laborers

will find themselves temporarily or partially in the service of a member of the elite. It is difficult to determine when acts of "resistance" may be considered resistance to long term oppression by a particular individual, generalized rebellion against the injustice of great differences in wealth in society, or responses to poverty.

Poor Marinduquenos tend to describe their unorganized and usually covert actions vis-a-vis the elite as either a direct response to poverty (i.e. stealing) or a specific response to perceived ill treatment by a particular wealthy person (i.e. gossip). In either case they argue that the target can easily afford the loss, or is so powerful that they will not be effected much. What Scott calls acts of resistance of peasants vis-a-vis the wealthy appear to be responses of the poor rooted in need or frustration, or both, and embody a recognition that these acts will not change the status quo.

From discussions I had with poor Marinduquenos it is clear that they do at times reflect on differences of wealth and power as being inherently unjust. They do not appear to want to tackle this problem as such, however, but rather use it to justify actions against the wealthy when these are provoked by ill treatment or when hardship demands them. Also,

while the fact of extreme poverty next to extreme wealth is commented on and examined, not all wealthy people are considered a priori as unjust. Some are described as "good" and some as "not good," but even the good are not exempt from becoming the target of poor people's responses to poverty.

As Scott has pointed out, negotiation forms another key aspect of relations between the wealthy and the poor. Peasants are constantly negotiating rights and needs with each other as well as with the "higher ups" whether this be in established patron-client relationships or by approaching members of the elite they consider accessible and whom they can appeal to in specific cases. The process of negotiation involves an appeal to values and traditions that are at least nominally held by both parties. This appeal may be based on kinship, no matter how distant, or, in the case of a politician, on the fact that the peasant is a faithful supporter. In the last resort, a request for assistance may even be made to a less accessible member of the elite purely on moral grounds. In Marinduque, negotiation and resistance are two sides of the same coin.

There is indeed evidence that certain moral values are shared, at least nominally, by the wealthy and the poor. In one of the towns of Marinduque there

was a wealthy doctor who received a lot of criticism from the residents of a village I visited. This doctor was the centre of many discussions in the village in which his attitude towards poor patients was severely judged and found wanting. I was told of the time a poor man had approached this doctor bleeding from multiple stab wounds and was coldly questioned by the doctor as to whether he would be able to pay his medical bill. The patient was eventually turned away. Later, by coincidence, the name of this doctor came up in a discussion I had with another young doctor in another town. The latter spontaneously shared his own criticism of the hardnosed attitude of the former doctor with me: "If you are a doctor you have to help the people even if they cannot pay."

Fegan (1978) argues that once the elite no longer need a satisfactory long term relationship with the poor in order to make a living, the poor will have a much smaller bargaining chip and will fall prey to ever greater abuse as the elite simply ignore appeals to shared values. The socio-economic situation Fegan describes largely exists today in Marinduque as there are few formal long term patron-client relationships. Perhaps the fact that the island community is so small and news travels so quickly causes "reputation" to still hold a degree of importance to the wealthy who

live in Marinduque, if only for political reasons. This being the case they may still be coerced, if necessary, into socially acceptable behaviour.

To conclude, contrary to the popular notion embedded in BCC-CO theory that the poor are passive in the face of their poverty and oppression and do not respond or take action on their own behalf, Marinduquenos do respond with the typical forms of peasant action outlined by Scott and others. Their responses are calculated to maximize their own short term benefit while minimizing negative consequences and therefore are based on local evaluations and knowledge. The BCC-CO exclusive focus on organized, overt social action contradicts forms of resistance preferred by peasants.

Furthermore, peasant responses to the elite are complex. On one level, and in private discourse, the poor may remark generally upon the unfairness of great differences in wealth. But on the level of daily practice they frequently adjust their actions to the specifics of a particular dyadic relationship with a wealthy person, and may even decide that that person is "good." On yet another level, even this "good" wealthy person may find him or herself the target of, for example, theft if the poor person is in need, and this act will be justified by noting that the rich can

afford the loss. The labelling of members of the elite as "good" or "bad," and the justifications given for theft, help to assert among the poor the common values peasants want the wealthy to respect, but they do not undermine the effort to seek personal ties and vertical linkages.

So BCC-CO attempts to direct peasant anger directly against the wealthy as a class are likely to find positive responses on the level of general discourse, such as in seminars. But on the level of action, personal evaluations of the relationship a poor person has with a wealthy person come into play and may hinder such direct action.

Case Examples

The following cases of a laborer's family in Santa Cruz town and a peasant family in the village of San Jose, both illustrate some of the complexities of relationships "up" and "down" and how these are negotiated and understood. Both subjects are active BCC members. Both cases show how the two individuals discussed have improved their situations, one by pursuing beneficial social ties to the "higher ups," and one by having family members abroad.

In both cases it becomes apparent that BCC

goals of class solidarity and class based social action could significantly complicate these people's lives. In the second case, of a village family, we see a fisherman who continues to seek relations "up" in the town while being newly in the position of being a possible patron in the village to poorer villagers and simultaneously a central member of a BCC that includes these poorer villagers. This case illuminates the internal differentiation of wealth and status that may obtain within a BCC group despite shared village life, peasant status, and possibly shared labour activities.

Marilou Ricafranca

Marilou was born and raised in Manila. She met her husband Richard when they both worked for a taxi company: he as a driver, she as a dispatcher. Richard was from Santa Cruz. When they married he brought his bride back to Marinduque where he found employment at Marcopper as a shift work driver of the huge dump trucks which remove the ore-containing rubble from the open pit mine site. Marilou often reminisces about their courtship. She laughs as she tells how Domasco brought vast amounts of cooked foods and a live pig to Manila by boat and bus for her mother.

While Domasco's family owns a small farm in one

of the villages of Santa Cruz they are certainly not well to do. Marilou's family lives in extremely poor conditions in Santa Ana Manila. Domasco has some elementary education and Marilou started high school but was not able to complete her schooling for economic reasons. They now have a small, two room, dwelling in Santa Cruz town. The floor of their living area is concrete but the second room is raised on poles and has a bamboo floor. This is where the whole family sleeps. The walls of the living area are made of plywood and the roof, made of reed, leaks in many places. Marilou has placed sheets of plastic over these spots but the problem is spreading more quickly than she can come up with new plastic solutions.

The house is lit by two naked bulbs that hang from cords directly tapped into the outside power supply. There is an open sewer running along one outside wall of the house so the family built a small enclosure over this sewer to serve as a washing area and toilet with all wastes going directly into the sewer. There is one pipe with a faucet that supplies water to the inside of the house. Beneath this faucet Marilou has a rusty basin. This is her kitchen. She does all her cooking over a charcoal fire inside the main home as her "outside kitchen" construction collapsed and there are no funds at the moment to

replace it.

Marilou has artfully decorated the interior of her home, to make it cozy, with whatever materials she could lay her hands on. Her plain plywood walls are covered with bright gauze curtains, her concrete floor with a large square of plastic floor tiling. She loves stuffed animals and has augmented her small purchased collection with handmade copies. A rolling cart, auspiciously placed, surprises the visitor with a wealth of canned and packaged food stuffs. In fact, this gathering of empty containers has been painstakingly collected, cleaned, and displayed over the course of many years.

Marilou and Domasco own a small plot of land on a mountainside which can only be reached through a demanding hike. As Domasco has a heart condition they rarely go there anymore and Marilou tells of the squatters that have moved in to live off of their land. Of five children the couple received over the years four are girls. Only the youngest, Nina, is still at home attending elementary school. The other children are living with Marilou's mother in Manila where two daughters are attending university, one is working in a department store, and the son is trying to learn the trade of mechanic from an uncle. "Our son is our problem," Marilou sighs. Renato is a very slow learner

and Marilou and Richard have decided that he will have to inherit the house and the small plot of land from which to make a living.

The tiny two room "apartment," in an overpopulated and poor section of Manila known as Santa Ana, houses, besides Marilou's children and mother, her bachelor brother who supplies most of the funds needed to keep the household running. The apartment is located in a back ally on the third floor of a large, visibly decaying, wooden building. Wooden steps, starting in the bright outdoor light of the alleyway, lead steeply upwards into blinding darkness. On the right is a door to the apartment, which must always be artificially lit as there are no windows to the outside world. The only opening, made in one wall for air, leads to the dark stairwell and so must be kept closed at night for safety. A thin sheet of plywood separates the apartment from those surrounding it, or, to paraphrase a Philippine author: separates one person's breathing from his neighbor's.

Despite the fact that her husband's salary is entirely eaten up each month in paying their own monthly bills, trying to keep the two daughters in university, and in helping out with the food and rent bills of the place in Manila, and despite the fact that they have incurred many debts over the years through

not quite being able to cover payments and in taking care of unexpected expenses, Marilou describes herself as hindi gaanong mahirap. She explains that this label is appropriate because her husband has a steady income so that they can do some planning. They also receive some benefits, such as help with health care, from Marcopper.

Because of the Marcopper job, Marilou can be a full time housekeeper which is considered quite a luxury. In fact, Marilou's friends often comment on how lucky she is that her husband works for Marcopper and that she can just sit around the house all day! Other friends say she should use her time to make more money. Marilou did once try to open a hair care salon but it was not successful.

In justifying the socio-economic position she allots herself Marilou stresses the social status that she has achieved in Santa Cruz through her good relations with the "higher ups." When Marilou arrived in Marinduque she quickly assessed her position as an outsider and decided that she would have to make an extra effort to forge ties, and to, "be liked, because I know no one here. Who will help me if I am sick? I will die here now. I have to make friends, also for my children, so that they will be helped."

Marilou's efforts at forging ties and

relationships are quite naturally directed at social equals but she has also actively sought connections with the elite of Santa Cruz. Her sunny and positive disposition, as well as her ability to quickly assess others' needs and her willingness to provide a wide variety of services for these elites for no immediate return did eventually afford her access to their homes. Marilou freely offers her help with feasts and celebrations and finds various ways to make herself, first useful, and eventually indispensable.

Marilou's demeanour and body language around her female elite "friends" is remarkable. While she is normally an outgoing person, she becomes positively vibrant in their company. She is extremely cheerful and good humored, usually in marked contradistinction to the wealthier lady who will often be somewhat surly and withdrawn. She knows how to strike a cord of intimacy and seem easygoing without ever being disrespectful or overstepping the delicate boundaries of the unequal relationship. Although she does push at those boundaries, and seeks ever greater intimacy, she is constantly watchful for signs of disapproval.

All the while, Marilou is attentive to her hosts needs, bringing pillows, pouring coffee, or even fanning the wealthy woman while keeping up a steady stream of amusing chatter. Around male elites she is

more deferential but she will still attempt to establish a joking relationship, to make them laugh, if at all possible. All in all she comes across as a harmless and amusing accessory as well as a useful source of information, good cheer, and flattery.

When I was with her, Marilou would use that opportunity to tell me all about the accomplishments, status, and possessions, of her elite friend in the most glowing terms as her friend listened on; often these would be facts Marilou had already recounted to me in private, along with inside details as to how these assets had been accumulated, scandals in the family, etc. In long discussions with Marilou privately, and in accompanying her on visits to her elite friends, I was able to gain insight into the variations in the private and the public discourse that characterizes such unequal relationships.

Marilou has also always been active in traditional Church organizations and has had personally close relationships with at least the last two parish priests. A sign of her close relationship with the present priest is that she can enter the convento in search of him right up to the door of his private rooms. She is invited to private gatherings of his family who live in other towns, and regularly invites him to join in celebrations at her home. Marilou also

became involved in the BCC program in Santa Cruz.

Of all her ties with members of the elite the most significant relationship to Marilou is the one she was able to establish with Congresswoman Reyes. During the first congressional elections after the revolution of 1986 Marilou took a chance and offered to be a local campaign manager for Mrs. Reyes in Santa Cruz. Her husband was horrified that his wife was openly siding with the Reyes family in generally hostile Santa Cruz and warned of the dire consequences should Mrs. Reyes lose. But Marilou let her instincts guide her and she still tells with pride how this effort on her part established a relationship in which: "I can now always go to her, she cannot deny me." While Marilou has at times asked for direct financial aid, the more significant help she can rely on is in finding jobs for her children. A letter of reference from the congresswoman is a valuable asset.

The congresswoman also paid for a small concrete patio in front of Marilou's home, and for her son's morion costume when he was advised to make a promise, a panata, to take part in the moriones festival each year in order to cure his asthma.

It is not at all surprising that I should have ended up at Marilou's house, sleeping beside her and her daughter on the bamboo floor of her home for the

first five nights I spent in Santa Cruz. The parish priest directed me to her and she made every effort to help me make contacts and become established. Although I later moved into a private room across the street, arranged by Marilou, she continued to cook for me when I was in the town and to assist me in all ways she could.

On the whole, Marilou's husband has had very mixed feelings about her social exploits. He is himself a very shy man and very much in awe of the "higher ups." (36) He is also extremely worried that his wife will overstep her social boundaries and bring down the wrath of powerful members of the elite. But even more, perhaps, he is worried about negative reactions from social equals brought about by his wife's social successes. He is constantly telling her that she should just stay at home and then there will be no cause for jealousy or gossip.

Examples of clashes with equals brought about by Marilou's close relationships with members of the elite, and even with me, are numerous. Marilou would often complain of hostility due to jealousy and at times the rumours would become so vicious that her husband would insist she modify her behaviour. A common attempt by social equals to undermine her position with the parish priest would involve scandalous rumours of

"inappropriate behaviour" between them. (37) Marilou's most common response, one she would often deliver personally to the offender, would be: "You can not tell me anything! You are not the one to feed my family!" The underlying theme of indebtedness, or lack thereof, which is so common in Philippine relations, is obvious here. However, while Marilou has less to lose in her relationships with equals in her neighborhood, she is extremely sensitive to such tensions and is relieved when the relationship becomes normalized again. Where it does not, she refers to the offender as her "enemy" and avoids all interaction with her.

The Miciano Family

The Miciano family lives in the Santa Cruz village of San Jose. (38) They own one of only two partially concrete houses in the village. (39) The existence of a concrete house in a generally very poor village frequently points to funds coming in for the family from abroad, or at least from Manila. Mr. Miciano has a number of brothers working and living abroad. Mrs. Miciano is a teacher in the village elementary school. The couple have five young children of which three live at home. The elder two have gone to Boac to live with their grandparents and attend the

private elementary school run by the sisters of the congregation Religious of the Virgin Mary (R.V.M.).

Eduardo Miciano used to be a full time fisherman but with the support of his brothers and the steady income from his wife's job he has transformed himself into a village businessman. Eduardo now raises piglets for sale on a concrete area behind the house, runs a small sari sari store from the house, and has become a local middleman, "buy and sell," for copra. The Miciano house is at the end of a long and extremely difficult to negotiate dirt road from town. Much of the rest of the village lies well beyond the end of the road and in the mountains above and so can only be reached by foot or by boat. In order to get quick and ready cash for their copra harvest the people bring their copra to Eduardo, often by boat after lugging full sacks down from the mountain to the sea. Eduardo stores the copra in a concrete enclosure. He furthers the drying process by spreading the copra out daily, on the same concrete enclosure that houses the pigs, and, if he can, he waits for the prices to rise. From Eduardo's home the copra is eventually loaded onto jeepneys for the trip into town where it is sold to another middleman.

Within the village, the Miciano family are considered wealthy. Although from the perspective of

many town's people they would be labeled as hindi gaanong mahirap, at least partly because they live in a remote village, within the village itself they are labeled as: "already maykaya." It is clear that people use this term in a relative way as few would equate the Miciano family with the maykaya in the town.

Typically, the Micianos themselves deny being maykaya. It is not uncommon for people to downplay or even deny their wealth. Often this is done by making the comparison with those that would be considered maykaya in the town or even by referring to Western standards. So, the Micianos have told me that they are actually mahirap because they live in a poor, isolated, village. The Micianos' resistance against taking a perspective that is in keeping with their immediate environment is deliberate. People who are relatively better off than their neighbors are commonly very evasive about their financial situation and will claim many debts, or financial hardships, to play down their relative affluence. Especially in the close community of the village greater wealth, which is generally associated with greater social responsibility, can lead to strained social relationships. Perhaps the lack of social and physical barriers in the village, which the wealthy of the town do enjoy, and the social and economic dependance of neighbors and fellow villagers

on each other makes it more difficult for the relatively better off of the village to ignore the claims made on them by others.

The Micianos are involved in a great many complex relationships with "higher ups" outside the village, both in Santa Cruz and in Boac. They also maintain relationships with their fellow villagers who are generally less well off. (40) The complex social balancing acts which the Micianos must perform give some insight into the kinds of choices people make in their relationships with those of lesser or greater status.

In general, the Micianos have always attempted to remain in the favour of political and socio-economic elites and have actively sought ties with them. They carefully support both the Reyes and Lecaroz political factions, partly because Mr. Miciano's roots in Boac demand loyalty there while they feel they cannot afford to turn against Santa Cruz politicians, but also as a general insurance policy. Mrs. Miciano told me that in elections they always "split the vote." By that she means that she and her husband each vote for one of the two contending candidates. In this way they can never be accused of being partisan. The Micianos have also always actively sought links with economic elites, for example through carefully chosen Godparents for their

children. Mr. Miciano was an elected member of the barangay council. A position that is said to be difficult to attain without support from municipal politicians.

The relationship of the Micianos to their fellow villagers in San Jose is a delicate one. Because of their position of relative affluence they are often approached for loans. There is a definite, but mostly unspoken, sense that they should be willing to extend such loans based purely on the need of their fellow villagers. In reality, however, they could not always expect to see this money returned. One way the Micianos get around the delicate nature of such a situation is to extend the loan with much generosity emphasizing friendship towards the recipient and de-emphasizing arrangements for repayment. This is done in the knowledge that the borrower relies on them to buy his or her copra. When the time comes Mr. Miciano will have great freedom of choice as to how much he will pay the debtor for his or her copra.

Another common arrangement that may follow from a request for money is that Mr. Miciano will ask the recipient to "pawn" whatever land he may own in return for the loan. This arrangement has the advantage for the recipient that he can ask for more money than he could otherwise dare to request. It has the distinct

disadvantage that the recipient of the money loses ownership of the fruits of his land. While the land officially continues to belong to the original owner, in practice few people manage to raise the funds to ever recover the use of their land.

In San Jose such pawning arrangements are common, with the result that the effective productivity of the land accumulates in the hands of a few families, of which the Micianos are one. While I was in San Jose I witnessed a case of resistance to this unequal accumulation of wealth. Mr. Miciano had been asked to extend a loan, as a favour, to a fellow villager. He refused to do so, however, unless the recipient would agree to a pawning arrangement. Mr. Miciano had his sights on this piece of land and was excited at the prospects of receiving the rights to its use. The neighbor, however, declined this proposal emphasizing the friendly, rather than the business, side of the request. Mr. Miciano held firm, however, and eventually the disgruntled neighbor left. A few days later Mr. Miciano was greatly annoyed when he found out that the neighbor had gone to town to make the very same deal he had offered him with a member of the elite in Santa Cruz. Mr. Miciano not only regretted the loss of the land, which lay between two other pieces he already had control over, but also perceived this move as a

personal insult.

The would-be borrower apparently felt that Miciano was blatantly disregarding the valid appeals he was making to neighborliness and friendship for the sake of greater financial gain. The fact that the neighbor subsequently went to a member of the elite in the town with the same offer may be seen as an act of resistance, following on failed negotiation, to the greater inequality Miciano's control of the land would have created between them.

Local Level Notions of Power

BCC-CO social analysis is based on a class model that locates "power" in the hands of socio-economic and political elites. The goal of the BCC-CO program is to "empower" the poor by raising their consciousness about their own oppression and by organizing them to fight for justice against the structures, institutions, and individuals that oppress them. In Marinduque, for example, against unfair landlords and against the copper mine Marcopper. Empowerment entails, then, a transferal of economic and political power from the elite to the poor. This raises the question of whether the conceptualization of power reflected in BCC-CO literature corresponds with local

level emic conceptions of power.

Local level notions of power, both among elites and peasants, are multifaceted. Power is known to reside in certain objects, as well as being derived through possessions. Power is also believed to reside in certain people, as well as being something people can exercise over each other. There is power to be gained in the participation in certain practices, and power is exercised in a wide variety of relationships. Power may be spiritually, materially, or culturally based; sometimes these categories overlap. Furthermore, in people's descriptions of, and approaches to, spiritual power I did not sense that they perceive this form of power to be reducible to material aims, or rooted in material relations; it exists regardless of human aspirations and goals. (41)

Traditional local level responses to perceived forms of power include a range of behaviours that show considerable overlap from one type of power to another. Responses include attempts at co-option, manipulation, control, appropriation, avoidance, or covert undermining. What is rarely seen is direct organized and communal opposition to a source of power based on a theoretical rejection of the underlying basis for that power, such as is proposed by the BCC-CO program.

Spiritual power may be divided into that

accorded Christian objects, specialists such as priests, and practices, and that accorded non-Christian objects, "beings," specialists such as healers, and practices. Dominant responses to forms of spiritual power range from attempts to co-opt, to manipulate, to control, to appropriate, or to avoid it. There is also a whole set of behaviours that reflects an attempt to establish a relationship with a source of spiritual power, to engage with this power through ritualized forms of adulation and affection.

From an emic point of view spiritual power has an existence, a reality, as a force in the world quite outside and aside from human relations although it may impact on people's lives, often in unpredictable ways, for good or for bad. Certain forms of this spiritual power are more accessible to humans and may be manipulated by specialists to their advantage over other people.

By culturally based power I am specifically referring to the power many Filipinos accord the people's and products of Western culture. This is a power that is especially difficult to define; it is very much wrapped up in the longings and expectations of local people and may lead to rather puzzling situations. Even for those people who came to know me well, my association with the West convinced them that

I had the power to solve very intimate personal, and relationship, problems as well as the ability to explain to them the workings of highly technical equipment that I was totally unfamiliar with. Typical responses to the power of objects or individuals associated with the West include attempts to appropriate, control, to be associated with, or to emulate Western products and lifestyles. From an etic point of view this "cultural" source of power may easily be shown to be rooted in historical relations of colonial domination. And, certainly for the BCC-CO leaders, it is a source of power that they see as contributing to the ongoing subjugation and domination of Filipinos by Westerners, or by their own elite, who are able to appropriate the symbols and status of Westerners and often prefer to identify with them. But from an emic point of view the association with symbols of Western culture is a resource that is readily accessible to all and can, if only fleetingly and imperfectly transform everyday lives.

From an emic point of view power is also related to economic wealth and positions of authority. This materially based power of local elites is, however, further enhanced by coinciding with other forms of power such as the ownership and stewardship of the most important religious statues of each town, and

of the island as a whole (as I will show in chapter eight) and by the association of these elite families with the West through family members in the States or through "green card" status. The challenge which BCC activists face in trying to change peasant consciousness of power relations to the forms they seek are therefore formidable, for there are few communalities or linkages between BCC concepts and indigenous conceptions of power in popular culture or in popular forms of social action and resistance.

Conclusions

A review of socio-economic statistics shows that there is great disparity between rich and poor in Marinduque. A review of political structures and practices shows that the wealthy do control the political agenda with money, influence, and threats of violence. It is not unreasonable to speak of social injustice in the economic sphere and a lack of democratic principles in political practice. There is, furthermore, a false, or "mystifying," ideology of peacefulness that is encouraged by members of the elite and that belies the injustices of poverty and lack of democratic political participation.

However, an understanding of poverty based on a

model of class is not likely to motivate poor Marinduquenos to take class based social action as emic conceptions and everyday practices associated with status and wealth are negotiated and characterized by fluidity, they are not established purely on the basis of economic variables. BCC-CO attempts to establish class solidarity by discouraging patron-client relationships face a serious challenge given the pervasive nature of patronage relationships even within social classes and the positive cultural evaluation of patronage from an emic perspective. BCC-CO goals of organized resistance are, furthermore, at odds with local preferences for covert resistance and negotiation. Finally, BCC-CO conceptualizations of power do not correspond with emic understandings of power.

The ways in which BCC-CO activists overcome these stumbling blocks, to the extent that they do, as well as the ways in which the program is transformed by local level practices and knowledge will be further explored in chapters below.

NOTES

1. The Philippines is subdivided into administrative regions that are commonly units of statistical reporting and economic development planning.
2. The majority of the socio-economic statistics used in this section have been compiled from various official census and statistics offices in Manila and

Marinduque by a team of researchers from the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). I was fortunate enough to share part of my time on Marinduque with this team of scientists who were evaluating the island for potential development projects. Although I had already started to gather this statistical data myself I decided to dedicate myself to the qualitative side of my research and make grateful use of the JICA reports, when they became available, for the background information presented here. Where data is directly the result of original research conducted by the JICA team this is acknowledged as such. Otherwise official sources are given in the text and Appendix as these sources are more readily available to other researchers. I note, however, that this data is also cited from the JICA reports. For comparable national statistics I made use of a 1988 IBON publication: Land Reform in the Philippines. While this section largely reflects official government statistics there are significant discrepancies between some of the results recorded here and the results of socio-economic survey commissioned by the Church of Marinduque. For more on this see chapter 7.

3. The value of the peso in 1991 was 26 pesos to the U.S. dollar.

4. Slight discrepancies between JICA figures and those of NCSO are probably due to the rounding off of figures.

5. Note that these statistics were taken for 1980. In 1980 the number of people 15 years and over was 96,304. The labour force counted 55,856 people of which 45,654 were employed and 10,202 were unemployed. While the number of employed grew by almost 20,000 between 1980 and 1987 the distribution of employment activities has in all likelihood remained comparable.

6. There are a number of creative and lucrative possible solutions to the problem of Marinduque's landscape. Crops such as coffee can be grown on steep inclines, and it is economically viable. While a number of these possibilities are being experimentally tested, large scale production is not yet planned.

7. The JICA team suggests that reasons for the poor yields include insufficient use of fertilizers, pesticides, and insecticides. These products are, however, expensive and not readily available. The team also notes problems such as manual harvesting, and poor soil conservation and land use (JICA August 1989:11).

8. Marcopper also privately offers long distance phone and telegram facilities.

9. The two leading causes of infant mortality in Marinduque are bronchial pneumonia and diarrhea which accounted for 109 and 22 deaths, respectively, per 1,000 live births in 1987. The top five causes of illness are, in order of occurrence: diarrhea, pneumonia, measles, tuberculosis, and bronchitis. Together these illnesses effected 3,181 people out of a population of 100,000 in 1987. The leading cause of mortality on the island is pneumonia which killed 305 people out of a population of 100,000 in 1987. These statistics derive from the Provincial Health Office.

10. From discussions I had with Boac residents it would seem that the influence of then Governor Pedro Madrigal, from Boac, played an important role in achieving capital status for Boac. Governor Madrigal negotiated the independence of Marinduque.

11. Mrs. Reyes was one of Imelda Marcos's famous band of female companions better known as her "blue ladies."

12. The 1986 election statistics were supplied by Edmundo S. Miranda, Provincial Election Supervisor.

13. The total amount of voters in Boac and Santa Cruz is, of course, also greater, but taking relative differences into account there is a much greater imbalance between votes cast for Aquino and for Marcos in these two towns.

14. I was told by a local government employee that Lecaroz was one of only two governors nation-wide who was not replaced by Aquino but I have been unable to confirm this information.

15. A third candidate was Ricardo G. Nepomuceno.

16. A third candidate in this case was Salvador B. Jamilla.

17. While I was in the field the votes were recounted and Reyes again declared the winner although the controversy remained. At least some more "radical" Church activists I spoke to were highly skeptical of the results and seemed to prefer Bocobo if only to break up the political "dynasty" of the Reyes family.

18. Allegations of graft and corruption and of

political power serving personal interests are commonly thrown back and forth between members of the two leading clans and are also a frequent topic of debate among the people.

19. Another important factor is that highly placed members of the two major families were aware of their friend Marcos's involvement in the mine. Perhaps also, the allure of the local complex of this large Canadian based company, outfitted with bowling alleys, basketball and tennis courts, a swimming pool and even a golf course and private airport holds some attraction for the elites of a small, otherwise underdeveloped, province.

20. The history of the Marcopper mine in Marinduque, and of the struggle of the local Church against its alleged pollution, are important as this issue is one of the central concerns of the BCC program in Marinduque. This issue will be more extensively dealt with in the village level chapters, especially chapter ten.

21. Carl H. Lande pointed out the pervasive character of dyadic relationships in the Philippines in 1965. When such relationships take place between socially, politically and economically unequal participants they are commonly called patron-client relationships. The argument that patronage is a reason why Philippine peasants do not try to collectively change structures or institutions is still commonly made but this argument neglects to consider the important role of dyadic relations between equals as pointed out by Lande:

The heavy reliance placed upon dyadic relationships, both vertical and horizontal (i.e. between unequals and equals), and the relatively slight use made of organised groups capable of pursuing common goals helps to explain the strong emphasis in the Philippines on the pursuit of particular rewards ... and the relatively slight interest in the achievement of categorical goals, such as general legislation. (Lande 1965:2)

I, furthermore, argue in this chapter that patronage is a pervasive relationship that takes place even between members of the same "class" who are only minimally differentiated in wealth and status.

22. Members of the middle-elite also include a small

number of newcomers to Marinduque, who, if they stay, are likely to marry into middle-elite families. Another important group in the middle-elite are the Chinese who are less likely to be related to the island's non-Chinese middle-elites.

23. Members of this group will likely seek affiliation with members of the elite through ritual kinship, for example through Godparenthood.

24. While island endogamy is by no means strictly adhered to in marriage alliances among the rich or the poor, there does seem to be a preference for this type of alliance, especially among the wealthy where assets and political alliances may play a role. It appears, however, to have been a more important consideration one generation ago than it is today. A well known story about the present governor is that he was once in love with a Spanish woman. Normally this would be considered an excellent match but his family pressured him to marry a woman from Marinduque instead.

In interviews among both the rich and the poor in which I asked whether island endogamy was a rule this was denied, and practice bears this out. At the same time I was told that it is "good" if the partners are both Marinduquenos because the two families will know each other very well indicating that there is an emphasis on compatibility between the families and on socio-economic and possibly political concerns.

25. I more or less stumbled upon this fact as my research assistant, Glenda, came from Santa Rosa, a remote but neighboring village to San Jose. The connection between the two villages is a couple of hours walk over rough mountain trails. The people of San Jose inevitably spent considerable time upon first meeting Glenda, and learning that she was from Santa Rosa, in tracing possible connections between themselves and her. Such a search started with an inquiry into who her parents and their siblings were. More often than not these investigations ended with a look of joy and recognition flooding the inquisitor's face accompanied by a cry: "we are cousins !" I came to expect this outcome as it became apparent that the process of "linkage" would go on until a connection could be established that would afford Glenda a more intimate position both in the village and with the particular person we were getting to know. I found myself not only fascinated with this process but also happy to let it run its course no matter how long it may take because friendships and interviews were thereafter much facilitated.

26. When a relationship exists between an elite family and a particular village exists this may be further expressed through the donation of a religious statue to that village. Such a donation may also be used to create a link where none existed. This statue may be a religious image particularly favoured by the elite family and may become the patron for the whole village. This was the case for the village of Dating Bayan, which received a statue of Fatima from Mrs. Lecaroz.

27. These categories are based on informal discussions, with town laborers and village peasants rather than on a systematic and thorough investigation of this topic. I did not explore these categories with members of the elite.

28. Having established the fact that these indigenous classifications are in essence negotiated terms, and established in relation to the classifier, it may seem incongruent that I at times use these terms as fixed referents. When I do so it is in an effort to orient the reader and in the knowledge that in fact these terms are fluid within certain bounds and open to debate.

29. Although no formal patron-client relationship exists, Mrs. Reyes expects that her beneficiaries will reciprocate in votes. In fact, some of the questions she asks petitioners may be aimed at ascertaining if they come from a loyal family or village.

30. Huizer 1980, Kerkvliet 1979, Wolters 1984, Wurfel 1988 and others.

31. This important Marinduque religious patron is elaborated on in the following chapter. It was explained to me that there is no resident NPA faction on Marinduque because the island is too small to afford it refuge. Another, perhaps significant, aspect contributing to the relatively peaceful character of Marinduque is a demographical one. Marinduque is not a frontier region such as Mindanao or Isabela province are and has a highly homogeneous and stable population of Tagalog speaking people with no indigenous tribal groups.

32. In the year I was on the island I experienced such alerts about four times. The odd thing was that there never seemed to be a single red alert !

33. I was told by one member of the island's elite that

the army is loath to act upon these isolated cases of guerrilla presence, when they are aware of them, so as not to invite retaliatory attention from the NPA. I mention barricades I witnessed before the town halls of Boac and Santa Cruz, other towns may well be similarly guarded.

34. While I was staying in a fishing village there was a scare when a small group of unknown and armed men arrived by boat in the daytime. The immediate fear among villagers was that these men were pirate-bandits come to size up the village for imminent attack. Apparently one of the villagers asked the intruders for identification papers which they did not have. As the suspected pirates left again, peacefully, and no further repercussions followed it was assumed that the men were members of the NPA. It seemed to be the more reassuring scenario to the people.

35. During a brief return visit to Marinduque, in 1991, I was told that the murderer had turned out to be a man living just down the road from the murder site. He died of natural causes before being sentenced.

36. Marilou organized a despedida, a going away party, for me in her home before I left the island. I more or less jokingly invited the island's governor not expecting him to attend in such a humble dwelling. When he did suddenly appear at the door and joined the party Marilou was thrilled but her husband was mortified; for many days to come he talked about the shame and embarrassment of entertaining the governor in such inadequate surroundings.

37. Similar rumours, involving others than Marilou, were also the result of elite resistance to the parish priest whom they considered too radical. Gossip is clearly not only a peasant form of resistance.

38. San Jose is one of the villages along Calancan Bay that is worst effected by the Marcopper mine disposal system into the bay.

39. The other concrete home is owned by the former fish dealers from Hakupan Island who stopped their business after they were raided by pirates.

40. There will be greater elaboration on these relationships in the village level chapters.

41. For more on this topic see Coumans (1992).

CHAPTER SIX: Religious History, Traditions and Relationships in Marinduque

This chapter starts with a brief history of the Christianization of Marinduque in which I introduce the varied mixture of Christian influences and traditions that have contributed to the rich and vibrant religious practices that exist in the towns and villages of Marinduque today. The religious traditions brought to Marinduque by successive waves of Catholic orders and secular priests are reflected in a wide variety of modern religious practices. New practices were historically unevenly adopted around the island and the processes of indigenization and reinterpretation, by which Marinduquenos make new traditions relevant to their lives, started even as new practices were being introduced. In addition to the often unique interpretations of various extant Catholic traditions, Marinduque religiosity is characterized by an unproblematic coexistence of Christian and non-Christian, or animistic, beliefs and by various degrees of syncretism.

This chapter examines the form that religious traditions take in the everyday lives of Marinduquenos

today in order to understand how these traditions reflect and legitimate socio-economic and political inequalities. Traditional elite and peasant forms of religious expression, and spheres of religious influence, are reviewed. Also, the traditional relationships between the elite and the poor in the shared religious practices of the town are examined, as well as the traditional relationships between the clergy and the elite and the clergy and the poor. Finally, a few extended examples are given of elite dominance in religious expression in the towns.

Traditionally, both wealthy and poor Marinduquenos have enjoyed a large measure of freedom of expression with regard to their religious practices, to the point of creating religious traditions that are unique to Marinduque. The clergy have tended not to interfere with popular religious expressions and have accommodated and legitimized some newly emerging ritual variations by taking part when asked. With the realization that some of the religious traditions of the towns have come to reflect and reinforce socio-economic and political inequalities local Church leaders now want to step in and play a more active role in shaping and re-directing religious expression to reflect both Vatican II and perspectives from liberation theology: this has been called the "re-

Christianization" of Marinduque. By taking this position the clergy are not only actively evaluating and criticizing existing traditions but they are also creating new roles for themselves as instigators of new religious and symbolic expressions.

Catholic History and Legacies

The successful expedition of Miguel Lopez de Legazpi, which arrived in Cebu in 1565 following on the "discovery" of the Philippines by Magellan in 1521, brought the first missionaries to the Philippines in the way of Augustinian friars from Mexico (Schumacher 1987:13). (1) On Legazpi's first attempt to reach Manila from Panay, in the Visayas, his armada is thought to have briefly sought refuge from a storm on Marinduque, where the Augustinian Fray Diego de Herrera was the first to plant a Christian cross in 1571. (2)

Although the Augustinians remained one of the "major Catholic orders responsible for the Christianization of the Philippines" (Pertierra 1988:20), other orders soon followed: "the Franciscans in 1578, the Jesuits in 1581, the Dominicans in 1587, and finally the Recolectos in 1606" (Schumacher 1987:17). It was the Franciscan Fray Esteban Ortiz who,

by planting another cross in 1579, started the task of "Christianization" on Marinduque (de Huerta 1865: 596-597). (3)

By 1580, the first visita was established in Marinduque by the Franciscans under the name Monserrat de Marinduque, present day Boac (de Huerta 1865). (4) The year 1609 saw the creation of the visitas of San Juan de Marinduque, now Santa Cruz, and San Bernardo de Marinduque, now Gasan (de Huerta 1865). (5) Later the three Marinduque visitas each received resident Franciscan priests, starting with Monserrat in 1594. This same year the Philippines was partitioned between the existing religious orders (Sitoy 1985:232). The Franciscans retained the care of Marinduque until they ceded the administration of the island to the Archbishop of Manila in 1613. (6) A secular priest was next stationed in Boac. When he died, the Jesuits were asked by Archbishop Miguel Garcia Serrano to temporarily take over the pastoral care of Marinduque. In 1621, this became a permanent arrangement and the Jesuits formally founded the towns of Boac, Santa Cruz, and Gasan (de la Costa 1961:375). The Jesuits started the construction of permanent churches in these three towns of Marinduque. These were all fortress churches with tall surrounding walls built on high ground to offer protection from raiding Moros. (7) W.H. Scott

cites Galvano (1731) who describes Moro joangas as boats having 200 oarsmen to a side in addition to 100 men-at-arms. In 1754, four such joangas, reported to be carrying 500 Moros each, are said to have attacked Fort Gazang, Marinduque (Scott 1985:79). Also, some time in the 18th century, possibly the case mentioned above, an attack of Moros is thought by the people of Marinduque to have been directed at the Boac cathedral. It was this attack that is believed to have been thwarted by the sudden and miraculous intervention of Mary the Blessed Virgin who is still honored as the patron saint of Marinduque as Ina ng Biglang Awa (Mother of Sudden Mercy).

In 1767, the Jesuits were formally expelled from Spain and the Spanish dominions by King Charles III. (8) This news reached Manila in 1768 (de la Costa 1961:582-583). At that time there were three Jesuits stationed in Marinduque. (9) According to de la Costa, "Filipino and mestizo secular priests took their places in the fifteen parishes of southern Luzon and Marinduque administered by the Society" (de la Costa 1961:588). It was not until 1864, when Isabel II entrusted Boac to the Augustinian Recollects, that a religious Order was once again active in Marinduque. (10)

A significant occurrence in the religious

history of Marinduque is thought by Marinduquenos to have taken place in 1807, the date on which the now immensely popular and characteristic moriones tradition is said to have been introduced to Mogpog by the "Mexican father" Padre Dionisio Santiago. (11) The Moriones tradition, centered on the Christian legend of the Roman soldier Longinus, has a number of possible roots. In addition to possible Mexican, Latin American, or South American, folk Catholic and ritual origins, there are native texts which may have given rise to, or at least encouraged the continued practice of what is now known as the moriones tradition. The earliest version of a native poetic text narrating the passion and death of Jesus is the Tagalog one by Gaspar Aquino de Belen dating back to 1703. In this text the figure of Longinus already plays an important role (Javellana 1988:13). Although this text "ceased to circulate" when the Jesuits were expelled from the Philippines (1763) it lives on in the now widely popular editions of the 1814 Casaysayan nang Pasiong Mahal Tagalog pasyon (Javellana 1988:13). Javellana says of de Belen's work:

His creative task of weaving together strands of Christian tradition to create a poem comprehensible to his Tagalog compatriotas shows the assimilation of the Christian message in a context greatly different from Catholic Europe. His poem also paves the way for the Casaysayan. (Javellana 1988:13)

The 1814 Casaysayan, which lives on in various versions

today, also elaborates on the story of Longinus. The present day enactment of this text during Holy Week in Boac, however, shows signs of many later influences as well.

In 1910, Marinduque became part of the diocese of Lipa and in 1950, Marinduque was transferred to the diocese of Lucena, Quezon province. Finally, in 1978, Marinduque became an independent diocese, known as the diocese of Boac, and its present bishop, Rafael M. Lim, D.D., a native of Boac, became the first bishop. Marinduque now counts 12 parishes that all have their own diocesan pastors. There are Catholic kindergartens, elementary schools, high schools and one college, Immaculate Conception College in Boac run by the Religious of the Virgin Mary (R.V.M.) sisters.

From early Spanish accounts we receive an impression not only of native political and economic life but also of what cultural and spiritual life was like at the time of contact with the Spanish invaders. These texts vividly depict the reactions of native Filipinos, Visayans and Tagalogs, to the process of Christianization. Some of the native approaches to Catholic traditions and beliefs described in these texts, especially regarding the way the people are said to have indigenized Catholic perspectives, are strikingly familiar to me from my research among

Marinduquenos. (12)

One of the main factors that has been mentioned by way of explanation for syncretism is that a "proper" indoctrination was hampered by the lack of sufficient clergy to cover the colonized territory. For some, this explanation is still considered relevant today. Insufficiency of religious personnel is a frequently heard complaint and a common reason given for the lack of "proper" Catholic understanding and practice of the people today (e.g. Schumacher 1984:252).

Another historical explanation for syncretism is based on the argument that 17th, 18th and 19th century European Catholicism contained many elements that were easily incorporated, or translated, into existing native Filipino animistic traditions and beliefs. In other words, it was not too difficult for the natives to adapt to new but in some ways familiar practices and beliefs while interpreting these in traditional ways. Indeed there seems to be some evidence that this process was unconsciously encouraged by missionaries who themselves saw in Filipino spiritual beliefs and practices elements that they "recognized." McCoy (1982) argues that early missionaries reinterpreted certain native beliefs and thereby legitimized these by, for example, employing their own "magical" rituals towards the eradication of

what the natives perceived of as evil spirits and the missionaries "recognized" as Satan. (13) The argument could be made that early European Catholicism and the European spiritual world view of that time contained many elements that were easily incorporated and reinterpreted into an essentially non-Christian spiritual world view. This may still be the case. There is evidence that the Catholicism of Marinduquenos, elites and peasants alike, is still characterized by syncretism and to some degree exists alongside clearly animistic beliefs. (14)

Catholicism and the New Diocese

With the arrival, in 1978, of Bishop Lim as Marinduque's first bishop many of the traditional pastoral patterns, structural arrangements, approaches to Church and social issues, and, importantly, relationships of the clergy with the people of Marinduque were to undergo quite radical changes. One could say that Bishop Lim has ushered in the latest of a long history of religious transformations and new perspectives in Marinduque. In his drive to "re-christianize" Marinduque (Lim: Diocesan Survey 1981), in accordance with the directives and insights of Vatican II, Bishop Lim initiated an interest in BCCs as

a pastoral and liberational strategy, and eventually led the clergy in an endorsement of the BCC-CO program for the whole diocese. (15)

A commitment on the part of the clergy to embody and to live out the perspectives and teachings of Vatican II, further influenced by the particular Philippine brand of liberation theology that came in with the BCC-CO program, has led to transformations in nearly all areas of religious life touched by the clergy or by the lay leaders of the BCC-CO program. These changes are uneven, however, both in outward form and in the degree to which the ideology behind these transformations has been internalized by affected Marinduquenos. The outcome of intended changes is influenced by, among other things: 1) personal interpretations, preferences, and abilities of individual implementors, 2) the degree of overt or hidden resistance activists encounter, and 3) the way in which the new ideas and structures are incorporated into the existing world views and social aims of Marinduquenos.

Taking the above factors into consideration, outcomes have not surprisingly been unexpected at times. On the whole, it is fair to say that the process of re-Christianization through BCCs has been characterized by some significant successes, by the

implementors' own standards, and by some painful contradictions and seemingly inexorable obstacles that are themselves not always fully understood by the activists. (16)

It is mainly the task of the BCC-CO lay leaders to implement the program in the villages, after an introduction by the parish priest, so that they are the main organizers who experience the responses of peasants and laborers. The clergy mainly present the new ideas of Vatican II and the liberational directions and perspectives of the BCC-CO program in the towns. As we will see, while large numbers of peasants and laborers take part in religious activities in the towns, it is members of the elite in the towns who are most immediately effected by the proposed changes, and who respond most prominently.

In the following sections of this chapter I briefly outline elite religious activities and traditional areas of religious dominance, as well as their traditional relations with the clergy. It will become clear that in the towns there is a high propensity for conflict between traditional elite religious interpretations, traditions, and beliefs and the new perspectives promoted by the clergy of Marinduque. The following two chapters further explore elite religiosity and elite resistance to the proposed

changes introduced by the clergy.

Catholicism and the Elite

The elite of the towns have traditionally dominated public religious organizations and structures based in the town. One such traditionally elite religious domain is that of the "mandated organizations." These are Church-based organizations such as the Knights of Columbus, The Legion of Mary, the Adoracion Nocturna, the Cursillo movement, and the Catholic Women's League. These organizations, which all have a particular religious mandate, often have a hierarchical set of lay elite officers and some have a social mandate as well. This social mandate is typically characterized by pre-Vatican II social activities such as charitable works for the poor. Members of the elite are also characteristically the head or "president" of organized religious devotions, such as the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Leadership of such a devotion may be based on ownership of the main statue of the devotion.

With the greater emphasis given to lay involvement in the Church, after Vatican II, parish pastoral councils were set up in the towns as a way to involve lay leaders in Church activities and decisions.

Only recently have moves been made to create village pastoral councils. In the towns, the pastoral councils have inevitably been dominated by members of the local elite, often the same people who are active in the mandated organizations.

Another area of traditional elite dominance in Church affairs is in the sphere of religious rituals and feasts. In many religious feasts and processions the statues of celebrated saints are a key element and focal point of the activities. These almost life size and eerily human looking statues, are usually passed on from generation to generation in the families of the elite; many are antiques of considerable value. These statues are considered sacred and many of them, especially the very old ones, are known to be miraculous.

The ownership of a statue obligates the holder to provide for the saint's upkeep, which includes richly embroidered and clothed garments and a well-protected environment, often a wood and glass case. Owners are the primary worshipers, burning devotional candles and saying prayers throughout the year, and once a year providing for a suitable celebration on the saint's feast day. This means providing and decorating a karosa for the transportation of the statue through the streets of the town, providing candles for the

faithful followers, and a meal for other members of the elite of the town and possibly for all devotees of the statue and the workers who helped with the preparations. These workers are usually tenants and employees of the statue's owner.

In addition to playing a central role in feast days centered on a particular saint and statue, members of the elite are also prominent in organizing such public feasts as Christmas, New Year's, Easter, the festivities of the Mayflower, and the town fiesta. In Boac, a hermana and hermano are appointed each year from among the elite. Starting on New Year's day they oversee the proper execution of all the town's religious and semi-religious festivals and are responsible for the cleanliness of the priest's clothes, the linens of the church, the inside of the church, and the church grounds. The other towns have similar institutions. Often these elite members will also attempt to carry out a special project during their tenure for which they will be remembered. It is generally known to be of absolute necessity that the hermana and hermano be financially very well to do as the post demands time and considerable financial "sacrifices."

A number of special feast days, such as the Mayflower, the moriones, and town fiestas, occasion the

printing of a "souvenir program." Standard features of these printed booklets are: the obligatory history of the feast, which is usually written by a local scholar; a program of events and participants, with pictures if possible; a predominant number of pages containing advertisements and "messages" to the public from those who can afford them (17); and a number of pages at the front with messages to Marinduquenos from "important people," traditionally politicians, the clergy and the elite patrons overseeing the festivities.

Members of the elite also act as religious patrons by, for example, sponsoring the traditional pasyon readings in their homes. The readers are, almost without exception, poor peasants, mostly elderly women, who come and sing the pasyon in the homes of the elite upon request. The only material reward the singers may expect is to be fed and given drinks, usually coffee. The singing of the pasyon, as well as the sponsoring of the event by the elite, is often a panata, or religious vow, both sets of participants have made.

An important characteristic of both elite and peasant religious expression in Marinduque is the high degree of autonomy both groups enjoy in creating and shaping traditions. Both the poor and the elite are free to start new ritual traditions and to do so is not uncommon. An example is the popular perdon ritual of

Santa Cruz that was started by a well-to-do couple in the 1970s (see footnote 24 for a brief description). While rituals invented by the poor frequently take place without involving local clergy, the elite usually try to involve clergy in some way, often by incorporating a mass in the ritual. Traditionally the clergy have accommodated local religious traditions, old and new. They have enhanced them by taking part in the activities or by celebrating a mass.

Religious traditions in which the elite play a prominent role frequently reflect elite values and interests. An interesting example is the hermanahan in Boac, mentioned above. In 1989, I observed, as on New Year's day the outgoing hermana and hermano handed over their responsibilities to the incoming pair in an elaborate ceremony. Both couples were dressed in formal attire, the ladies wore floor length gowns of chiffon and lace, the men wore the formal barong Tagalog. The outgoing hermana and hermano also wore long ceremonial ribbons with large medals around their necks. The outgoing hermana, wearing the sparkling tiara that symbolized her reign as hermana, looked quite regal. As we arrived at the church a marching band that had been waiting there enthusiastically started to play familiar and upbeat tunes like Swanee River!

Corsages were pinned on the former and new

hermanas and the already large crowd continued to grow in anticipation of the mass. Jeepneys arrived carrying the small statues that would belong to the new hermana and hermano for the year of their incumbency. For the hermana an image of Mary and one of her mother St. Anne; for the hermano two images of the Sto. Nino, one holding a sword and one holding the world. The past year's hermana told me that these images are part of the "reward" for being hermana or hermano. And, she explained that the statues are miraculous and will bring good fortune to the home they grace.

Before the mass a line of well dressed past hermanas and hermanos formed in pairs for a short procession into the church where they were prominently seated in the front rows. Many of this elite group are related to each other. The statues to be received, as well as the hermana and hermano's sparkling crowns were prominently placed at the front of the church during the mass. Just before the communion the incumbent and the new hermana and hermano stood up at the front of the church and, to great applause from the congregation, they were formally thanked by the priest for their past, and future, work. He shook their hands and then removed the ribbons and medals from the former hermana and hermano and placed them around the necks of the new couple. Immediately after the communion and

before the end of the mass, the priest formally crowned the new hermana and the new hermano as they kneeled at the alter before him.

Outside the church, in the heat of a tropical morning, the marching band had been waiting for this moment. As the people flooded out of the church the glowing new hermana and hermano greeted the crowds with bright smiles and sparkling crowns. The band struck up a lively tune as the hermana and hermano made their way to the head of the crowd and led a procession of joy and celebration through the town to the house of the new hermano for the first stage of the feasting. As we arrived a huge firework arrangement was set off and continued to fire away as selected quests entered the home. The family of the hermano had slaughtered a cow and there was food in great abundance.

Later in the day the guests moved to the house of the new hermana for continued feasting. The band had been hired to stay with the new hermana and hermano all day. Still later, the statues were formally welcomed to their new homes with prayers. The new hermana sighed that now the hard work of running the religious events of the town would begin.

Typically, there are specific hermanas and hermanos for various events and feasts throughout the year, although in Boac the primary couple are largely

in charge. The supporting roles that the clergy play in a ritual such as this, is one of the concerns of religious leaders and BCC-CO activists. In Santa Cruz, for example, the priest has tried to "reform" the practice somewhat by replacing the rhinestone crowns with more symbolic, and less regal, paper ones.

The Elite and the Clergy

Members of the local elite of Marinduque have traditionally enjoyed a close relationship with the island's Catholic clergy. Traditionally, the clergy have been the sons of wealthy families and, like the elite, they are to this day well educated and cosmopolitan. Members of the elite and the clergy also share structural characteristics. Both reside in the island's towns and have traditionally regarded the villages as economic and spiritual satellites. The residences and the buildings, of local representatives of the Church and of the political and economic elites, the churches and town halls, equally dominate the other physical structures in the towns in sheer size and grandeur. The most impressive and historically significant church structures are to be found in the most prominent political and economic towns of Boac and Santa Cruz. Both the island's political elite and the

clergy are organized in hierarchical structures leading up to, respectively, the congressman/woman and the bishop. Both of these hierarchies, furthermore, link members to organizations at regional and national levels.

Participation in extra-island structures causes both members of the local elite and the clergy to be, to some degree, outward looking, and occasions regular travel off the island to national centres, in Manila. Here, members of both groups also have residences and may meet again. The mystique of such off-island connections and mobility for Marinduquenos is evident as the coming and going of members of the local political and economic elite, and of the clergy, are frequently commented on. With the advent of air travel, distinctions are also made between trips by boat or by plane. Members of the elite holding provincial level political positions and the bishop are expected to travel by air, air travel by local priests or lesser bureaucrats is sometimes remarked upon as somewhat presumptuous or extravagant.

There is an undeniable but largely unexplicit "pairing" of political and religious personnel in the minds of many Marinduquenos. The key figures of the two main sources of authority on the island are considered equal in status although their authority stems from

different sources and, traditionally at least, has covered different areas of expertise. In status the congresswoman is considered comparable to the bishop and parish priests are equated with the mayors of the towns.

The reality of these comparisons is reflected in the similarly deferential way Marinduquenos speak about, and interact with, these two kinds of authority figures. The implied equality of status between the political and economic elite and the clergy is further concretely expressed in a number of ways. For example, in the souvenir programs of important public events messages to the people by the clergy and the politicians appear together prominently in the front of the books. Joint seating arrangements at public events also signify an equality of status between the political and economic elite and the clergy.

Aside from these public signs of equality personal relationships between local political and economic elite and the clergy have traditionally been very strong and have further enhanced the notion of status equality. It is common for members of the clergy to be invited to take lunch or supper at the homes of elite families; to be present at personal family celebrations such as birthdays; or to be asked to come to the home of a member of the elite for personal

consultation on a problem. Likewise, if the local Church is in need of financial support the clergy will commonly turn to the elite by making a personal visit to an elite family's home. Both in the public arena and in private life the island's elite have encouraged and welcomed a close relationship and a show of unity with religious leaders and in return have treated the clergy as equals.

With the new direction the Church has been taking there are signs that these traditionally close relationships between the clergy and the elite are changing, as are the ways in which the clergy are perceived by the poor. By seeking a less formal and a more accessible relationship with "ordinary" Marinduquenos the clergy is now considered less elite by these Marinduquenos. Also, there is a conscious effort being made by the clergy to bring more poor young men into the priesthood. As religious leaders begin to confront the elite on various political and economic issues the limitations of their power is also becoming apparent. The moral status of the clergy remains high in the perceptions of most Marinduquenos even as their elite status and secular power are being re-evaluated. In interviews in which I asked villagers whom they were more likely to believe, a politician or a priest, the answer was always "a priest."

Members of the elite have traditionally received appeals for financial assistance from the Church and have generally responded to these appeals with a sense of duty and pride. The clergy may traditionally appeal for direct financial assistance from the local elite themselves or may ask them to use their considerable fund raising skills, influence, and contacts among other members of the elite around the island, in the national capital and even abroad, to raise funds for large projects such as renovations of Church property or the building of new residences for the clergy.

Members of the local elite are particularly sensitive to financial requests from the clergy as they see themselves as pillars of the society and as closely linked to its moral institutions. Because of their traditional role as supporters of the Church the elite feel that the physical state of the religious buildings in their town not only reflects their own Christian commitment but also their financial means, ability as effective organizers and fund raisers, and ability to access and influence a wide social network in the local community and abroad.

Competition between members of the elite of Boac and Santa Cruz is sometimes expressed through comparisons of, for example, the relative grandeur of

town fiestas, the number of statues each town has in its Good Friday procession, and the ability of each town to stage a successful moriones festival. The appearance of the religious structures of each town is an important ongoing basis for comparison as the churches are the most visible communal buildings, aside from the town halls, and represent the communities' spiritual commitment.

Members of the elite have traditionally, albeit unofficially, had considerable influence over the choice of clergy that would serve their community. This was most dramatically illustrated when Marinduque became an independent diocese and was to receive her first bishop. The choice appears to have been between Bishop Perlas, whose roots are in Santa Cruz, and Bishop Lim, who hails from Boac. The island's congresswoman once complained to me about the way Bishop Lim insists on "overstepping" his boundaries by preaching politics from the pulpit. She told me that when the choice between Perlas and Lim had to be made many members of the island's elite had favoured Perlas, who was seen to be more moderate than the proven "radical" Lim. But, she sighed, "my relatives from Boac insisted to me that the bishop should be a native of Boac." It is difficult to ascertain to what degree the congresswoman's implied influence did indeed effect the

ultimate outcome, but a somewhat bitter conversation with Bishop Perlas's relatives in Santa Cruz confirmed her perceived influence in determining the choice of bishop for Marinduque. Stories of priests rejected, boycotted, and even run out of town by members of the local elite abound. (18) The most dramatic case I was told about was of a priest who so annoyed members of the elite of his parish that they staged a protest in the downtown area at which an effigy of the priest was burned! The priest was replaced in the parish. In response to my attempts to find out why the priest was so disliked I was only told that "he was rude."

Because of concern expressed in Vatican II for "indigenizing" the faith, diocesan priests have, since Bishop Lim, mainly been natives of Marinduque. Also, under the influence of the Vatican II concern that the Church be a "Church of the poor," there has been an attempt to choose candidates for the priesthood from among the faithful of poor villages. Traditionally, candidates for the priesthood came from well-to-do families who could afford to pay for long years of expensive study. Now, an appeal is commonly made to members of the island's elite to "sponsor" or "adopt" a candidate for the priesthood. Often a member of the elite from a specific town is approached by the would be seminarian's family, or by a member of the local

clergy, and asked to take on part of the financial burden of a candidate from one of that town's villages. Members of the provincial level political elite may be approached in every case of needed support.

Obviously, the clergy and the seminarian run a risk of unspoken expectations, and of barely concealed "strings," attached to such a system. Just as in cases of economic patronage between the elite from the town and clients from the villages, religious patrons, those who sponsor religious events, may be expected to anticipate loyalty and a sense of utang na loob from the poorer, village based, proteges who would be priests. While organizing a personal celebration for the early evening, a well-to-do couple decided, on the spur of the moment, that a mass would enhance the event. A servant was dispatched to summon the local priest to come say a personal mass at the residence of the celebrating family. It was late in the day and I raised the possibility that the priest would not be able to make plans on such short notice. I was immediately reassured by the good natured host who expressed amusement at my concern; the priest would most definitely come for, as he pointed out in a booming voice, "he is ours !" My host was referring to the fact that he and his wife had been primarily responsible for supporting this priest through his

studies; the priest came. It would be nearly impossible to imagine a similar scenario if a poor peasant had made the request. (19)

From the above descriptions of traditional elite prominence in, and through, religious structures and practices of the town, and their traditionally close relationship with the clergy, it is obvious that the elite are very much effected by the shift in official Church emphasis away from association with the elite and towards solidarity with the poor.

The introduction of a more politically critical Church, concerned with social justice and with transforming traditional religious structures, practices, and relations to reflect Vatican II insights, has caused considerable tension between the political and economic elite of the towns and the local clergy. Members of the elite often express dissatisfaction with the "pro-poor," perceived as "anti-rich," perspectives espoused by the clergy. They comment on a lack of gratitude, and even an attitude of "biting the hand that feeds them," on the part of the clergy. There is a clear appeal on the part of the elite, who have traditionally functioned as religious patrons, to traditional values such as utang-na-loob and to the rules of patron-clientage that bind the loyalties of clients, in this case the clergy, to their

patrons.

On the side of the clergy of Marinduque there is also a sense of conflict and contradiction about their relations with the elite. As "Church of the poor," and especially in aiming to reflect the notion of the Church as the people rather than as the hierarchy or the physical structures, the local clergy recognize the contradiction in approaching members of the local elite as a prime financial resource for funding of seminarians and for restoring and building churches. While funding for social and socio-economic programs increasingly comes from national and international NGOs and government programs, money for restorations or building projects continues to represent a clear area of conflict.

Catholicism and the Peasantry

The following brief outline focusses on the involvement of the peasantry in the central religious rituals of the town and discusses traditional peasant relations, with regard to religion, with the elite and with the clergy. Other aspects of peasant religious traditions, practices, and beliefs will be discussed in more depth in the upcoming chapters on the village.

As we will see, peasant participation in key

public rituals, as well as in more private devotions, is largely divided by sex. Women, especially elderly women, dominate in most religious spheres of activity, especially those of an ongoing year-round nature, but there are also specifically male dominated religious activities.

For Marinduque's peasants and laborers in the towns traditional Catholicism is not generally a means by which to gain or display public prominence. (20) But local folk-religious specialists do develop within poor communities and they do hold esteemed positions within these communities. Such religious specialists provide a range of services from performing Catholic rituals, such as baptism (buhos) in the absence of a priest, to making use of elements of Catholic ritual and ritual objects to perform a variety of necessary practices such as physical healing, helping someone who has been possessed by spirits, and serving as a spiritual body guard. Usually, these religious specialists minister solely to other local peasants or laborers, often as an alternative to the expensive services of professionals such as a medical doctor. But in some cases the services of poor spiritual specialists may be required by a member of the elite, especially when the religious specialist has built up a powerful, often island-wide, reputation and especially in health cases that a

medical professional does not appear to be able to cure.

Many wealthy Marinduquenos believe that the poor have greater access to traditional spiritual powers, rituals and cures than do the wealthy. It is also accepted that devout poor believers are readily heard and responded to by God and the saints. There are numerous examples that bear out this latter belief. In Boac the most famous example revolves around the miraculous cure of a poor blind woman who took up a special devotion to the island's patron saint the Virgin of Biglang Awa. Justina Manubay started her devotion at age 35 in 1897. (21) She became a common sight as she daily made her way up the hillside leading to the Boac cathedral, where a statue of the Biglang Awa had been placed in a stone niche. At age 60 Justina's daily prayers were rewarded by the miraculous restoration of her sight. This event occasioned the beginning of a wide-spread devotion to the Lady of Biglang Awa that now draws pilgrims from far beyond the island.

Poor believers in the towns, especially elderly women, tend to be members of devotions to various saints while wealthier members hold the positions of hermana or president of the devotion. Devotees wear the standard simple outfits that symbolize their devotion

to all masses they attend and in processions. (22) They frequently carry the novena booklet for the chosen saint and repeatedly pray from this softly, even during the mass. They also spend considerable time praying in front of the statue of the saint, if it is displayed in the church. These devotions are commonly passed down from mother to daughter. (23)

Poor believers from both the village and the town play an important role in the maintenance of various rituals and practices valued by the community as a whole. Tenants and servants commonly assist with preparations when their patron's statue is the centerpoint of a saint's feast day. Women usually decorate the karosa and men pull it throughout the procession. Women also prepare and serve food for the feasting at the home of the statue's owner after the procession.

There is often a group of mostly elderly and poor women in the town who know the old rituals; the songs, the texts, and the "actions." These religious specialists, known as batikan, are active throughout the year leading private rituals for members of the elite and non-elite alike, often in people's homes but also sometimes in the church when it is not in use for a mass. The batikan are specialists in the singing of the pasyon, the insipit, the putong the santa cruzan,

and in saying the prayers for the dead, among other things. (24) Members of this specialist group usually also assist the hermana in her activities in the town. In Boac there is a team of poorer women, not all are batikan, who yearly take it upon themselves to help out the appointed hermana in fulfilling the more menial of her many duties; keeping the church clean, preparing food for festive events and so on, for the year of the hermana's tenure.

The religious specialists referred to as batikan are commonly asked to come to the homes of the wealthy to perform the traditional pasyon singing each year. The pasyon text is, as Ilete (1979) so aptly showed, the great popular Christian tradition of lowland Catholics; Marinduquenos are no exception. The pasyon is one of the main religious practices of poor Catholics both in the towns and in the villages but in the towns the batikan are more likely to perform it under the sponsorship of an elite patron while in the villages they are more likely to perform it for themselves and other villagers.

There is a strong penitential tradition in Marinduque, possibly dating back to the time when the Franciscan Missionaries were in Marinduque as these are "well-known for their penitential discipline" (Oliverio 1981:16). The most public of the penitents are the poor

peasants and laborers from the villages and the towns. The Holy Week leading up to Easter is well known throughout the Philippines for its processions in which penitents of various kinds take part. The Good Friday procession is especially famous for the penitents that walk along with the many statues of Holy Week and the central karosa carrying the "dead body" of Christ. These penitents have usually made a panata or a vow to God to endure a particular penance for one or more years - often seven. This promise is typically made in thanksgiving for a favour received, to ask for better health, or for other favours in the future. In the town of Gasan numerous usually elderly and poor women dress in long black garments. Walking barefoot and holding a candle they sport a very large mass of green foliage on their heads. Other common penitents include men carrying heavy wooden crosses, people walking barefoot, and the flagellantes.

The flagellantes, especially numerous in Boac, Gasan, and Mogpog are all men, many of whom are quite young. They start their penance at twelve noon on Good Friday. At the same time another penitent playing Jesus is traditionally hung on a cross at the end of a long, colorful and dramatic Via Crucis through the town. The flagellantes meet in graveyards where they make a series of thin slices on each other's bodies with sharp

knives or razor blades; usually on the upper chest, upper back, the thighs, calves, and upper and lower arms. The wounds are then beaten with a hand made implement. This implement consists of a number of thin bamboo sticks held together by twine. One stick is held by the flagellante and the others are swung rhythmically back and forth over the open skin creating a large bloody spot. The men generally stand quite still in the glare of the noonday sun so that the only sound is the swish and clatter of hundreds of bamboo sticks as they arc droplets of blood through the air and land again on numbed flesh. The stench of human blood is overpowering as one nears the graveyard and enduring it undoubtedly adds to the sacrifice made by the men.

Most of the men continue this ritual until about five o'clock in the afternoon when they start to move down to the sea. In the fading light of the sun setting over the water each man stands still looking out over the sea until he, quite suddenly, casts the bamboo implement out to sea and walks into the salt water to wash off his blood in the slowly pinkening waves. Some of these flagellantes will, however, re-beat their wounds in the Good Friday procession later that evening or will wait to wash until after the procession. (25)

The Holy Week is made particularly spectacular in Marinduque, especially in the towns of Boac, Mogpog and Gasan, through the moriones tradition. The moriones (26) are mostly men and boys, again mainly from the poorer sectors of society, who wear costumes that identify them as Roman centurions of the time of Christ. These costumes typically include flowing wine red capes and spectacular wooden masks that are characterized by pink faces with huge eyes, big noses and mustaches or beards. Above the wooden face may be a centurions helmet (the most common sight in Boac now), or a towering elaboration of flowers, bright tinsel and coloured paper on a bamboo structure (more common in Mogpog and probably more traditional). The predominant colours of the costumes are burgandy and yellow. Strangely, given the historical context, the capes often have large yellow crosses on the back. Moriones roam the streets of the town during Holy Week and are supposed to keep their masks down, enduring the heat and discomfort this entails, and keeping their identities secret. (27) To be a morion is another possible panata that is most commonly carried out by poorer Catholics.

Another common form of penitence that is, again, public and mostly participated in by peasants and laborers, is the tradition of the novicios and

novicias. These are, respectively, male and female penitents, both young and old, who elect to spend the entire Lenten season together as a community in service to the Church, in prayer, and in study. They wear a distinctive uniform by which they are recognized as novicios or novicias and they take part in all religious activities and masses leading up to and including Holy Week. This tradition, according to Fr. Oliverio, is probably directly rooted in the penitential practices of Franciscan Third Orders as these existed during the time of the Franciscan missionaries in Marinduque.

Unlike the elite, who have access to and hold the spiritually powerful statues that relate to the yearly cycle of devotions and rituals of local Catholic tradition, the poor often possess only glossy images of the Sto. Nino and Mary. Often these images top commercial calenders handed out for free by wealthy businessmen of the town and often these images compete on the walls of bamboo huts with bikini clad Caucasian models on similar calenders. Other sacred items of the poor include tiny replicas of religious figures, crucifixes and rosaries, and a wide variety of bright glossy stickers representing popular religious images and texts. These latter are commonly stuck on transportation vehicles to help ensure a safe journey.

The smaller, often plastic, statues of Jesus, Mary and the saints are, nonetheless, considered spiritually powerful. Moreover, the people have given various images specialized spheres in which they are considered particularly useful. So the image of the Santo Nino is especially good for business and is kept in a store or market stall while the image of Christ the King is good for in the house, especially by the stairs. Each of these images has spiritual power, according to the people, but none of these images are deemed to possess the degree of power of the life-like statues that live with the elite in their beautiful homes. Not only are these statues known as the Sacred Heart, or the Mater Dolorosa of the municipality, and their owners referred to as, for example, "the Pinedas who have the Fatima," but these antique statues are further enhanced in power as they have been prayed to by large numbers of people over a long period of time.

(28)

One might wonder how the poor respond to the obvious status differentiation between the wealthy and the poor in the religious traditions of the towns. On the whole, the poor do not seem to question the division of labour that allocates prominent and prestigious public positions to the wealthy and "religious worker," penitent, or participant status to

the poor. This division in the religious sphere reflects similar distinctions in political and economic realms and probably seems quite "natural" to the poor.

While peasants generally seem to accept their roles in the prominent religious affairs in the towns there often appears to be greater resentment to marginalization by the middle group of townspeople I described in the previous chapter; shopkeepers, teachers, lower government employees, etc. These sometimes complain about the extravagance and outward show that accompanies the role of the elite in religious affairs. These people also commonly would like very much to be an important hermana in the town.

Responses of the poor to religious marginalization in the towns takes on various forms. 1) The poor may join alternative Catholic ritual communities centered on old images of the principal saints. While these, often wooden, images are usually less impressive in size than those of the elite they are nonetheless considered powerful due to their age and the intensity of the collective devotion to them. These communities are called unionans. One elderly woman told me that they used to be called padikan, which means "glued" because of their tight knit nature. Membership in the unionan is passed on from generation to generation and both men and women participate.

Unionans may be based in towns or villages and draw mainly poor members from both. 2) The poor may seek expertise and prominence in alternative spiritual realms and organizations that contain Catholic elements but are not sanctioned by the Church. Examples of these are Rizalist cults, the Philippine Benevolent Missionary Association, the APO and other local cult movements. 3) The poor may join protestant sects that are proliferating in Marinduque. 4) And, finally, the poor may respond to perceived injustices by typical everyday forms of peasant resistance as I identified these as functioning in the economic realm. By the latter I mean such acts as not showing up to perform traditional duties, such as pulling the karosa, or gossiping and complaining that the traditional offerings of food and drink that accompany the pasyon singing are inadequate or stingy, or complaining about the qualities of a particular hermana and comparing her to past hermanas or, another frequent form of resistance, participating in rumours about missing funds under the hermana or hermano's care.

A final typical form of resistance by the poor involves rumours and gossip that draw the moral qualities of various religious patrons into question. This latter, as well as the charge of misappropriating funds, are also the most common charges that start to

circulate when a community becomes dissatisfied with a particular priest. Especially as priests become more critical of the traditional role of the elite, in the light of Vatican II, these tactics have ceased to be solely the tools of peasants and have become the main strategies of the elite against clergy they deem to be hostile to their interests. But elite resistance may become rebellion and may have concrete repercussions for the clergy, such as the forced removal of a priest from a parish, as indicated earlier.

Peasant Relationships with the Elite and with the Clergy

From the above we can see that the elite and the peasants who are involved in public and semi-public religious rituals in the towns, such as pasyon readings and prayers for the dead, sometimes share a symbiotic, if unequal, relationship. The elite provide funding and sacred objects, the statues, and the poor provide ritual expertise and the willingness to perform spiritual services for the elite that at the same time are a form of panata for themselves. The poor are able to manipulate or control the conditions of this exchange to some degree by the threat of non-participation or by spreading embarrassing complaints about bad treatment by a member of the elite. The

elite, for their part, can also use public ritual life as a vehicle of resistance to changes proposed by the clergy on behalf of the poor by refusing to lend their statues to a ritual or by withholding necessary funds.

More and more the essentially unequal nature of public religious participation, in which the elite play prominent and public roles and the poor serve as largely unrecognized and unrewarded religious vassals, has become a focus of concern for modern clergy who see in this arrangement a reflection, and a spiritual legitimation, of unequal power relations between the elite and the poor in political and economic domains.

The clergy of Marinduque would like to assure that essential rituals better reflect the new "poor centered" focus of the Church, or at least not serve as a spiritual means of further expression and legitimation of elite power. Not only would the clergy of Marinduque like to see greater participation by the poor in traditionally elite activities such as in parish pastoral councils and as hermana, but they would also like to see that essential religious symbols better reflect the everyday reality of the poor. For example, it has been suggested that instead of having statues dressed like queens they should be dressed like a poor Filipina peasant woman.

The traditional relations of the clergy to the

poor have also come under scrutiny. Traditionally the clergy, based in the towns, rarely if ever visited the villages; the notable exception being on the occasion of the village fiesta. For many poor Filipinos, especially those living in the villages, their only contact with a priest is at their baptisms, weddings, and funerals. Even poor Catholics in the towns, who are able to attend masses regularly, do not usually seek much personal contact with the clergy. A poor person approaching a priest, usually for material help or, less often, for guidance with a personal problem, traditionally does so with the same embarrassment, shame, and deference with which he or she approaches other members of the elite.

Within the last ten years efforts have been made by the Marinduque clergy to alter these traditional relations by, for example, actively going to the villages and spending nights in the homes of poor people, by setting up village pastoral councils and initiating BCCs, by preaching the solidarity of the Church with the poor from the pulpit, and by wearing everyday clothes when not saying mass. According to one of the BCC-CD lay leaders this does help because when the priests used to go to the villages in traditional dress they "would be like Jesus going to the barrio."

Despite these changes, most poor people still

behave towards the clergy as they do towards other elites. This is especially evident in the villages but more so among people not involved in BCCs or village pastoral councils. Deferential behaviour has also not changed much yet in the towns for those not directly involved in the new avenues the Church has opened up for the poor of the towns. Importantly, where poor people have become involved through BCCs or pastoral councils they are less intimidated and more comfortable around the clergy and even around the bishop.

To the degree that the clergy, in their struggle to promote equality and social justice, have been able to change key religious symbols, rituals, and roles in the towns, the responses from the poor have been mixed. Many feel strongly about their traditions and do not like to see these changed. Others, especially those involved in BCCs, are more open to such changes, perhaps because they are invited into the process of change, encouraged as agents of change, and given extensive background into the reasons for the need to change existing traditions. More on the topic of elite responses to proposed changes in religious traditions follows in chapter eight.

Examples of Elite Dominance over the Religious and Cultural Life of the Towns

The following two sections further illustrate the way in which the elite have traditionally dominated prestigious religious traditions and have used these to control the production and reproduction of a public image of Marinduque traditions, cultural and religious values, and their own relations with the clergy, that legitimizes the elite as a group and perpetuates the status quo in socio-economic relations.

The first example shows how members of the elite appropriated a mainly peasant controlled ritual when it became a source of interest, and possible revenues, from Manila. The second example illustrates how the popular "souvenir programs" that accompany religious events are used as a forum of elite ideology.

Appropriation of Peasant Expressions of Catholicism by the Elite

There are a number of poignant examples that illustrate how members of the elite sometimes take over a particular ritual or devotion that had belonged primarily to the realm of peasant public expressions of Catholicism. The first example is drawn from the rituals and traditions of Holy Week in Marinduque.

As described above, public displays of penance tend to belong to the realm of peasant expressions of Catholicism in Marinduque. For many years the traditions surrounding the moriones in Boac, Mogpog, and Gasan and the Via Crucis, with its accompanying tales of "real" crucifixions around Marinduque, were primarily peasant affairs. (29) Some time in the late fifties and early sixties, however, the elaborate and unique rituals of the Marinduque Holy Week started to receive public interest from Manila. (30)

I was often told by peasants and members of the elite alike how very different the moriones tradition in Boac used to be, even twenty to thirty years ago, compared to how it is now conducted. Two important members of the elite, Congresswoman Reyes from Boac, and Francisco Preclaro from St. Cruz, on behalf of his late father who was once Governor of Marinduque and had lived in Boac, both claim proud responsibility for having "reformed" the original tradition so that it could become the major tourist attraction, and compliment to the island's capital, that it is today. This reform included restructuring the once wild and unpredictable ritual in such a way that time tables of events could be made and the action would all take place where it could be readily observed. This meant changing the traditional date of the culminating event

of the moriones ritual, the pugutan, and it meant setting some standards for costumes and behaviour, as well as numerous technical "improvements" such as the introduction of sound systems. The tradition was named the Moriones Festival and banners with pictures of moriones now line the streets of Boac during Holy Week.

(31)

The island's congresswoman told me of her attempts to encourage the moriones to indeed keep their heavy, hot masks down over their faces at all times while in public, in accordance with the official explanation accompanying the moriones, namely that they are acting out a solemn panata, and in accordance with the traditional secrecy surrounding the identities of the moriones. To achieve this end Mrs. Reyes recently attempted to introduce a medal and a solemn distribution ceremony for all moriones who met her requirements. She expressed great disappointment, however, at the lack of enthusiasm that had been shown for her awards.

The story of the legendary Roman soldier Longinus, on which the moriones tradition is centered, is fit into the more common and widespread enactments of the pasyon known as sinakulo or, as in Marinduque, kalbaryuhan. (32) The kalbaryuhan is again a tradition that is most commonly, and often spontaneously, carried

out by, usually elderly, peasants in their villages and towns or for members of the elite if so required. Tiongson (1976) witnessed a spontaneous version of the kalbaryuhan in Boac sometime prior to 1976. He describes it as follow:

In Boac, on Holy Thursday and Good Friday, toothless men and grey-haired women act out the pasyon episodes in large gardens or public squares fenced off for this purpose, to a footloose audience of docile farmers, disputatious old men and bored adolescents. In the temptation of Eve, an old man in everyday clothes chants the lines of the devil while holding on to a caimito branch (the tree of Paradise) with his left hand and brandishing a bamboo snake with his right. Three men "crowned" with balanggots or leaf hats casually approach and kneel in front of a woman cuddling a doll wrapped in a shawl, in reenactment of the adoration of the Magi. (Tiongson quoted in Javellana 1988:6)

This description very much resembles the type of pasyon enactment I witnessed in the village of San Jose.

With the focus on Boac as a tourist location for Holy Week, the kalbaryuhan has grown to a full fledged stage production with elaborate lighting, sets, and sound technology. The actors no longer speak the famous lines from the pasyon to the now enormous crowd of locals and visitors, including camera crews from Manila; these are now broadcast over a sound system and the actors "lip-sync" the words.

Another significant change lies in the choice of actors. The actors of the kalbaryuhan are the same who take part in the Via Crucis; a climactic enactment

in the traditional kalbaryuhan. Whereas the actors of the kalbaryuhan and the Via Crucis were traditionally elderly peasants and laborers who had made a panata to take part in this grueling ritual they have now been replaced in the prestigious new performance by members of the local elite and government employees. Moreover, these new actors are carefully chosen for their physical attractiveness and are generally much younger than the traditional actors were. (33)

The island's congresswoman boasts of having played a large role in the changes. She told me that she could not deny that the town's "usual Jesus Christ," a laborer who had made a panata to act the role, was a fabulous actor and, especially in the Via Crucis, seemed to have captured the imaginations of the people with his intense performances over many years. But, she felt that he was not a very photogenic character, which has become important as camera crews now regularly come from Manila to record the yearly ritual. Mrs. Reyes explained that the former "Christ" was rather small, getting old, and "very dark," not a handsome Christ figure she thought. Mrs. Reyes had him replaced by a kinsman of hers, a good looking young man from a well to do Boac family. (34)

The present enactment of the kalbaryuhan strangely reflects aspects of a number of modern and

secular cultural expressions such as beauty pageants; the actress who plays Pilate's wife, Claudia, wears the typical elaborate, flounced, and sequined gowns and latest hair styles that are popular at beauty contests. But the most striking aspect of the modernized kalbaryuhan is the recorded dialogue used in the enactment; the tone and the dramatic use of voice reflects that of Tagalog movies! This is especially true in the scenes where Claudia and Pilate argue over Longinus and the innocence of Christ, and in the scenes which depict the budding love of Claudia for Longinus. These scenes receive exaggerated elaboration in this version of the kalbaryuhan. (35)

Another area in which members of the elite have appropriated a religious activity that was probably for a long time primarily a devotion of the poor, at least in its most public manifestation, is the devotion to the island's patron saint Our Lady of Biglang Awa. Originally, the image of the Biglang Awa stood in a stone niche built into the fortress walls of the Boac cathedral. It is recognized that with the miracle of sight that was returned to the elderly Justina Manubay (also known as Tandang Usti) in 1918, the devotion became more widespread and popular. A member of the elite, writing in the 1983 souvenir program for the feast day of the Biglang Awa, notes:

This devotion to Our Blessed Mother which was started in 1897 by a very simple blind woman, Tandang Usti, whose sight was miraculously restored in 1918 at the age of 60, spread through the years and across the seas. (Souvenir Program 1983)

In 1938, a shrine was constructed for the statue as the devotion continued to attract pilgrims from around the island and from further afield. This project necessitated the organizational and financial resources of concerned members of the elite. The parish priest of Boac in 1983, notes in that year's souvenir program that this early shrine was constructed with the help of "the Association" indicating that the present Biglang Awa Association was already in existence in 1938. A list of Hermanas of the Association, also supplied in the 1983 souvenir program, contains the names of many members of elite families from Boac and of provincial level politicians dating back to 1942. More recently, a very elaborate and prominently placed new shrine was constructed for the famous image under the supervision of the treasurer of the Association, a well-known elite woman from Boac, who was helped by generous donations from her husband and other members of the elite.

Such domination and appropriation by the elite of important areas of public religious life of the community is a concern for the clergy and lay leaders

of the BCC-CO program who display a constant vigilance in anticipation of the co-optation of the BCC-CO program itself by the elite.

The Creation, Recreation, and Transformation of Marinduque Culture and History in Souvenir Programs

Another example of the dominance of the elite in Marinduque religious and cultural life is to be found in the popular souvenir programs. It is really only in these souvenir programs that perspectives on the history, culture, and values of Marinduquenos are created, recreated, and transformed in fixed form with great regularity. (36) Souvenir programs traditionally accompany all of Marinduque's main religious traditions of the towns. The brief introductory sections in these programs commonly outline Marinduque history, and the history of the tradition being celebrated. The programs also discuss elements of culture, values, and religious traditions and are always written by members of the local elite; teachers, politicians, academically trained people or self-taught "scholars," and so reflect elite perspectives.

In the 1983 edition of the souvenir program for the feast of the Biglang Awa, the story of the first appearance of the Lady of Biglang Awa is told. Then, the story is told of the first recorded miraculous cure

of the poor peasant woman Justina Manubay. Next, under the heading "The Outstanding Favours Received" the story is recounted of Mrs. Asuncion B. Vda. de Madrigal, of a prominent family, who was almost lost at sea while trying to cross to Marinduque in 1942; she was serving as the hermana of the Biqlang Awa in that year. It was the last day of the novena to the saint and her presence would be required for the festivities that follow the novena. In frightful weather conditions she led prayers to the patron saint of Marinduque; the boat and passengers were saved while other vessels were lost that day. As the story goes, her family continued to enjoy special protection in the years to come with various other "outstanding favours" taking place. This was recorded by Fr. Menorca and Miss Belen L. Cordero, M.A.

An addition to the list of "outstanding favours" was added by the treasurer of the Association in 1983. She records how the incumbent hermana for 1983 had survived two very dangerous operations. During the first of these, a heart operation in the United States, she had been declared dead for five minutes. During the second successful operation, which occurred in the year of her incumbency, the hermana was able to bring a small replica of the Biqlang Awa statue with her into the operating room. It is a common tradition that

hermanas receive a small statue to keep with them for the term of their incumbency. This statue is often also thought to be miraculous. The Association's secretary concludes that there are more such stories of "outstanding favours" to be found among the faithful members of the Biglang Awa Association.

While there is no overt denial of favors to non-elites, it is obvious that the stories that are being gathered, recorded and presented publicly by members of the elite (since poor Justina's miracle) are all of Mary's special interventions on the behalf of the well-to-do who serve her faithfully in their Association and build elaborate shrines for her image.

In addition to brief histories of the island and its traditions, the souvenir programs also contain messages from dignitaries to the people of the celebrating town, or to all Marinduquenos. These messages, accompanied by a picture of the author, are usually from the local priest, the bishop, the mayor, governor, congressman/woman, and the relevant hermanas. Depending upon the significance of the event, other dignitaries may also include an address. A 1989 souvenir program to mark the restoration of the Boac cathedral, after devastating typhoons in 1987, included an address by President Corazon Aquino.

These brief addresses usually contain a

discussion of the significance for all Marinduquenos of the feast being celebrated. In these discussions the authors refer to shared traits and common aims of all Marinduquenos and in doing so they create and recreate the public ideology of these presumed shared values and common goals. This public cultural and social image is further sanctioned by being linked to, or rooted in, popular religious traditions, practices and beliefs. The souvenir program referred to above provides us with some examples although these may be found in any souvenir program one would choose to browse through.

One of the most commonly referred to features of Marinduque, which is advanced by members of the elite and peasants alike, is the relative peacefulness of the island province. This trait, which is commonly linked to something in the character of Marinduquenos and to the benevolent care of their religious patrons, is frequently referred to in the addresses. Then mayor of Boac, Remedios F. Festin, notes:

We, the people of Marinduque has [sic] reason to rejoice, because She always showers us with peace and tranquility in our everyday life. Precisely, our province has been considered the most peaceful in the entire Philippine archipelago. We owe all of these blessings from [sic] Our Lady of Biglang-Awa. (Festin 1983)

Long time commissioner, under Marcos, of the important post of Immigration and Deportation, Edmundo M. Reyes, husband of the present congresswoman and a

native of Boac, notes the blessings bestowed upon the town through the intercession of its patroness with the Lord. He assures the citizens that:

The people of Boac are enjoying a level of wellbeing that stands in sharp contrast to the conditions of adversity and uncertainty that prevail in many places in the country. (Reyes, E. 1983)

The wife of the former commissioner, then Assemblywoman Carmencita O. Reyes, stresses the economic advantages bestowed upon the people of Boac through their patroness:

The celebration of the feast day of Our Virgin of Biglang Awa, is an occasion for congratulations, for this beautiful town indubitably has made significant strides, in the course of the past years, in terms of social and economic development. At a time of considerable economic adversity in many places in the country, Boac has managed to maintain a fairly viable economy. There has been steady social growth in the community. (...) It is to be hoped that, through the unremitting guidance and inspiration of Boac's patron saint, the Virgin of Biglang-Awa, the community may continue to grow and develop in the finest Christian tradition. We owe her eternal, fervent devotion for the blessings that have been showered on us through her spiritual intercession. (Reyes, C. 1983)

Then Governor of Marinduque, Aristeo M. Lecaroz, also stresses the need of the people to be grateful:

Marinduquenos ought to heed the message that they are close to the heart of the Blessed Virgin and should always be conscious of and grateful for, her continuing patronage and intercession. (Lecaroz, A. 1983)

It is in the addresses of the clergy of Marinduque, and especially of the bishop, that we may

discern a developing criticism of elite activities and a commitment to the perspectives of Vatican II. In the souvenir program then parish priest of Boac, Fr. Angelito Leal, addresses the need for change:

This is also an occasion for me to commend the members of the Association for disciplining themselves by cutting their expenses for sumptuous meals every time we celebrate the feast of our Lady. Now, the constitution of the Association of our Lady of Biglang Awa indicates that it will raise substantial fund [sic] and disburse it for charitable and benevolent causes especially for deserving seminarians. (Leal 1983)

This statement is interesting as it shows that the traditional elite extravagance associated with the feast of the Biglang Awa has been de-legitimized by the clergy. The new intention of the Association, to collect funds for charity and for seminarians, is praised by Fr. Leal but in fact this goal reproduces traditional pre-Vatican II roles of the elite vis-a-vis the poor and the Church.

I found such contradictions and mixtures of pre- and post-Vatican II perspectives to be common in the daily practice and statements of the clergy. In many ways the practice of the Church is not as yet consistent with its stated emphasis on Vatican II perspectives and directives. I elaborate both on contradictions in Church practice and on elite resistance to changes in the following two chapters.

Conclusions

This chapter does not do justice to the detail and particulars of the individual religious traditions that I briefly review; it does not even provide a complete overview of religious activities and rituals in Marinduque towns. But it does indicate a great richness of religious expression and an intensity and commitment to religious participation by both the wealthy and the poor. Part of this spontaneous involvement in religious activities may be due to the fact that Marinduquenos, both wealthy and poor, have traditionally had a high degree of freedom to create and shape their own religious traditions. It may be assumed then, that these traditions have come to reflect the various needs and values of the faithful.

It is clear from this chapter that the elite hold the most prominent positions in the major public religious practices of the towns. These practices have been historically shaped to both reflect and enhance the superior socio-economic and political status of the elite and frequently embody a symbolic legitimation of the privileged positions of the elite. Popular religious practices, however, also reflect more general cultural traditions, such as an emphasis on feasting, and values, such as family centeredness.

Non-elites do not hold prominent positions in the major religious rituals and practices of the towns. Nor can they use these practices to enhance their social standing as they are excluded from key roles. The role of the poor in major religious rituals is primarily that of participant or worker-servant. As such, the poor are highly visible in important expressions of public religious life of the towns. They are faithful members of devotions and participants in processions and novena masses, as well as more festive events such as the town fiesta. The active involvement of the poor in the ritual life of the towns demonstrates the importance of recognizing the motivational power of religious experience itself, as well as its potential to be manipulated in support of material goals.

The poor in the towns have also developed elaborate alternative and parallel religious organizations, such as unionans, and specialized religious practices which they dominate, such as performing the pasyon. To the degree that the poor offer their specialized religious services to the elite, or offer their labour in religious rituals such as processions and to help the hermana in her duties, they apply some of the same critical standards of negotiation that they do in offering economic or

political services. They also apply many of the same forms of resistance in cases in which they feel they have been wrongly treated in the arrangement. But, for the poor an essential aspect of these relationships is that they provide an outlet for their own personal and religious reasons for serving, often a panata. Perhaps for this reason poor Marinduquenos, especially those not involved in BCCs tend to oppose proposed changes to time honored religious traditions and practices.

The role of the clergy, from the perspective of the elite, has traditionally been that of honored and respected religious specialist. Priests have traditionally offered private services to members of the elite and lent spiritual legitimacy to their elaborate, and often quite unorthodox or even unique, religious traditions. The present trend of the local Church is towards regaining control of religious expression both in the name of orthodoxy and in order to reshape religious practices to reflect the socially engaged and critical teachings of Vatican II. The clergy have clearly been inspired by the unambiguous message of Vatican II to seek a more active role in shaping and leading religious expression rather than accomodating local Catholics. This new approach places the local clergy on a direct collision course with members of the local elite indicating in part how and

why BCC-CO initiatives may be challenged and undergo transformations at the level of the towns.

Finally, this chapter focussed primarily on the way elite religious practices reflect and support their privileged socio-economic and political positions. It is this aspect of elite religiosity that the BCC-CO activists are concerned about and wish to address. In chapter eight I elaborate on the religious experience of members of Marinduque's elite. The desire of the elite to participate in religious life for personal and spiritual reasons challenges BCC-CO activists as much as elite resistance to change for material reasons does.

NOTES

1. Magellan's voyage ended in his death at the hands of natives on the island of Mactan off the coast of Cebu. A subsequent voyage, headed by Villalabos (1542-1546), brought priests and chaplains, four of whom were Augustinians, but was unsuccessful in its mission to colonize the Philippines (de la Costa 1965:46-53).

2. I have not been able to confirm this scenario which has been put forth by Saturnino Rogelio, a teacher from Santa Cruz, Marinduque, in an unpublished and poorly referenced text. What is known is that the Augustinian Diego de Herrera was with Legazpi on his 1564 trip from Mexico to Cebu (Schumacher 1987:23) and that he accompanied Legazpi from the Visayas to Manila, which was formally occupied by Legazpi in 1571 (Scott, W.H. 1985:4).

An already well established Chinese and Moro trade route, between the Visayas and Manila, passed between Mindoro and Marinduque. While still in the Visayas Legazpi learned much about the importance of Manila for Chinese trade from Chinese travellers, and he learned

about Muslim penetrations in the area from the convert Juan Mahomat (Sitoy 1985:154). When Legazpi decided to send Salcedo and Goyti directly to the Manila Bay area in 1570 the route between Mindoro and Marinduque was the one used (Sitoy 1985:157). On April 16, 1571, when Legazpi himself for the first time took an expedition to Manila, he followed basically the same route (Sitoy 1985:168). It is also known that Legazpi stopped on Mindoro for some two weeks (Sitoy 1985:168). There are many reports of sudden typhoons and treacherous currents in this region that have destroyed ships or forced them to land (Schurz 1985:182-183), sometimes on Marinduque. The scenario described by Rogelio is therefore, not an implausible one.

3. Marinduque is thought to have had the Tagalog name Malindig, Malinding (de la Costa 1961:375), or Malinduk (Sitoy 1985:237) which at some time became hispanicized into Marinduque. Another theory is that Marinduque comes from the Spanish Mare Unduque, an appropriate title for the small island (Rogelio 1989). In any case the island is already referred to as Marinduque by Chirino (1604) who landed there in 1590.

4. Visitas are settlements with a chapel, but no resident priest, that are visited by a priest periodically (Schumacher 1987:409). De la Costa (1961) describes visitas in the Tagalog area as villages which were periodically visited by priests from a base in a town; in this case the priests were Jesuit. This pastoral method was contradicted by the practice of Jesuit priests in the Visayas who advocated such a role for secular priests but not for religious Orders which they felt should be less directly involved with any one particular community. While this issue was hotly debated in 1624, in practice the Tagalog system prevailed (de la Costa 1961:265-270).

5. Sitoy notes that by 1586 the Franciscans had some forty-three towns under their care in the southern Tagalog region including two on Marinduque (Sitoy 1985:237-238). I am not sure which the other town, aside from Boac, would have been. As early as 1590 Marinduque and Mindoro fell under the territory of the Jesuit mission station in the province of Balayan and were probably visited sporadically from there (Chirino visited Marinduque in 1590) but, according to Sitoy, until 1591 Jesuits were only to "survey the field" rather than to take up residence in mission stations for missionary activities.

6. Sitoy comments on the "impermanence" that

characterized the early work of the Franciscans in the Philippines (1985:230). He notes their stronger attraction to China and other places in mainland Asia (1985:238) and paraphrases a Franciscan historian:

the Franciscans were accustomed to their books, the quietude of their cells, and their spiritual exercises, and lacked, as was their natural condition, the gift of teaching. Thus many of the early Franciscans (...) not surprisingly hesitated to accept the spiritual charge over the Filipinos (a strange people whose acquaintance they had only recently made) and over the administration of the sacraments. (Sitoy 1985:231)

7. In 1625, a Jesuit missionary stationed on Marinduque, Juan de las Misas, was sailing between Marinduque and Tayabas when he found himself the victim of a Moro, Camucones, attack. He became the first Jesuit missionary in the Philippines to lose his life in a Moro ambush (de la Costa 1961:321).

8. While the historical events that led up to this expulsion are complex and go beyond the scope of this work a brief summary may be given. Underlying the expulsion was a general tension between the Spanish State and the Spanish Church, and especially against the religious Orders which were difficult to control. These tensions led to "increasing state opposition against the religious Orders, culminating in the expulsion of the Jesuits from all Spanish territories" (Schreurs 1989:270). The ultimate aim was to give control of parishes to secular (diocesan) priests directly under the control of state appointed bishops (Schreurs 1989:270). While the Jesuits suffered the most extreme consequences, other Orders suppressed in Spain also found it more difficult to operate in the Philippines. Schumacher notes that:

The prime target was the Society of Jesus, which, because of its traditional attachment to the Holy See and its markedly international character (many of the Philippine Jesuits were non-Spaniards), was least susceptible to regal control. (1987:201)

An important consequence of the general suppression of the Orders was the "mass-production of Filipino secular priests" (Schreurs 1989:270).

9. The three Jesuits were: Francisco Polo, superior,

missionary at Boac; Bartolome Avellan, missionary at Santa Cruz de Napo; Valerio Noguerra, missionary (de la Costa 1961:604).

10. It was not until the defeat of Napoleon and the restoration of the old regime in Spain (1815) that religious Orders were re-established. The Orders were now, once again, able to send replacements for their "depleted ranks" in the Philippines (Schumacher 1987:215). There can be no doubt that the intervening period was important in the development of Filipino clergy and the development of the nationalist movement. But it is also true that due to lack of training many of the parishes taken over or established by Filipino priests declined or were lost. This was especially significant in Mindanao where hard fought gains that had been made against the Moros there were once again lost. In 1826, a decree was made "to restore to the friars all that was taken from them in the eighteenth century" (Schumacher 1987:215). This was later followed by a decree of 1849 that directly deprived Filipino secular clergy of parishes that had never "belonged" to them (Schumacher 1987:216-217). This move was a direct result of the growing distrust and concern about burgeoning nationalism among Filipino clergy, especially in the archbishopric of Manila. In 1859, the Jesuits were given charge of parishes in Mindanao that had belonged to the Augustinian Recolectos, and in return the Recolectos were given former Jesuit territories including territories in the crucial archbishopric of Manila which contained Marinduque. These acts proved significant in the development of Filipino nationalism. For more on this period see Schumacher (1987:193-292).

11. This is the account to be found in a number of "souvenir programs" relating the cultural traditions of Marinduque. I have not, as yet, been able to trace the validity of this date nor the background of Padre Dionisio. In 1807, Marinduque was supposedly in the care of native and mestizo clergy so I am not sure what the reference to the "Mexican" father means. More on the moriones tradition follows in this chapter.

12. Schumacher appears to argue that from roughly the middle of the 17th century until 1770 the rigorous approach of the early missionaries had led to a level of Christianization among practically all lowland Filipinos of Luzon and the Visayas that was characterized by a high degree of orthodoxy and negligible remnants of "animist beliefs and superstitions" (1984:256). He quotes the Augustinian

missionary Fr. Mozo, writing in 1760, to this effect:

Among the Christian peoples one scarcely finds any trace of these superstitions any longer, so diligently have the religious worked to extirpate them. For they have been able to banish them so completely in so short a time, even though in our Europe and even in our own Spain, after so many centuries, one can still find traces of paganism.... (Schumacher 1984:256)

Schumacher partly attributes the present evidence of syncretism in Philippine Catholicism to the decline in evangelization due to the policies of Charles III discussed above (Schumacher 1984:257), as well as to an increase in slave-raiding between 1768 and 1800 that made the islands unsafe to navigate (Schumacher 1984:261), and to the loss of the Philippines by Spain in 1898 accompanied by a decrease in the number of priests. In other words, Schumacher argues not that Christianization towards orthodoxy was poor over many centuries but that it deteriorated from an exceptional beginning.

I would argue, however, that texts dating from 1650-1770 do give evidence of syncretism among converts (see de la Costa 1961; chapter nineteen) and that it is, furthermore, of great importance to understand the underlying interpretations people themselves give to nominally Catholic practices in order to truly assess orthodoxy. This can not be done from texts discussing participation in practice alone. Present day research into people's motivations for partaking in orthodox Catholic rituals support my argument.

13. Another, rather intriguing, argument for the lack of eradication of pre-Catholic beliefs has more recently arisen out of comparisons between Catholic and Protestant approaches to evangelization. Cullen discusses the response of the Bukidnon of Mindanao to Catholicism, fundamentalist Protestantism, and secret societies. He concludes that of the three Roman Catholicism least disturbed indigenous "cultural patterns": "Roman Catholicism among the Bukidnon, tending as it has to date to be syncretistic, has failed to change the Bukidnon's world view basically" (Cullen 1973:12).

Cullen points to differences in enforcement as a factor. In his discussion Cullen notes that unlike the Catholic evangelizers, the Protestants insist on complete abandonment of all things connected with animistic worship and greatly regulate external

behaviour (Cullen 1973:6). According to Cullen this leads to less syncretism although he concludes that animistic beliefs and "unacceptable" behaviour persist in more or less hidden forms (Cullen 1973:7).

14. I want to stress here that both members of the elite and peasants alike accept orthodox Catholic beliefs and doctrines while sharing a belief in an animistic world of engkanto, duwende, and other non-human "beings." They also both exhibit behaviours and express beliefs that may be described as syncretistic or, as the BCC literature often calls these tendencies, "superstitious." I stress that these syncretistic traits are shared by members of the elite and the poor as the BCC literature often fingers "peasant superstitions" as one factor in peasants' continued susceptibility to oppression.

Furthermore, I do not advocate a "split-Christianity" analytical approach, as proposed by Bulatao, to simultaneously held Catholic and non-Christian spiritual beliefs as these "world views" are only analytically separated by the theorist and not experienced as such by participants of the culture, rendering such dualisms meaningless in understanding the spiritual world view of lowland Filipinos.

15. Only one priest, Fr. Mantala held fast to the BEC approach that was initially introduced in Marinduque.

16. There are, of course, other factors that cause the outcome of efforts by BCC-CO staff and the clergy to be other than desired or expected, such as simply lack of sufficient funds to run programs and logistical problems such as the distance of villages from town centers. But, perhaps more pertinent is the question of whether, and to what degree, the taught material is truly accepted and internalized with the same degree of personal fervour and commitment that traditional religious beliefs and practices engender.

17. A full page may cost 1000 pesos, a half page 600, and a quarter page 300. These souvenir programs, especially a collection of them over a number of years, provide a wonderful introduction to the town for a newly arrived anthropologist, a who's who, and an initial insight into possible relative positions of status and wealth! More on these souvenir programs follows below.

18. More on the topic of tension between priests and members of the elite follows in the next two chapters.

19. As a final note on this story; as the host's wife helped the priest prepare for the mass she joked with him that maybe he had already said his three masses for that day. Without waiting for a response she added with a laugh: "Well never mind, you can just say two tomorrow."

20. There is, however, quite a strong aspiration among the poor to hold such prestigious positions as hermana/o.

21. The details in this account come from a souvenir program created for the feast day of the Biglang Awa in 1983. This account was written by Fr. Lorenzo Menorca and Belen L. Cordero, M.A. The story has been recounted to me by various inhabitants of Boac and varies slightly in each telling.

22. The devotional clothing is symbolic in the sense that the colours are believed to represent certain characteristics of the chosen saint. The standard outfit is a simple dress with a cord around the waist. Both the colour of the dress and of the cord have symbolic significance.

23. The devotions tend to be dominated by female followers, both wealthy and poor, who are quite visible in their worship. The mandated organizations, dominated by the wealthy, tend to have greater male involvement. They also tend to be more private in their worship but more public in carrying out their self appointed civic duties.

24. The putong is thought by Marinduquenos to be a ritual that is unique to the island. This ritual involves a number of singers, who are batikan. They perform a long text with intricate motions before a central person who is seated. The highlight of the performance, which unfolds in stages, is the "crowning" of the celebrant. The central figure in the performance may also be a religious statue. There are a great number of textual putong traditions around the island varying sometimes from one village to the next. Often putong versions are passed on orally and have no written record. The text is suffused with Christian religious imagery and basically wishes the celebrant long life, health and prosperity. The ritual is currently performed for visitors, for birthdays, to seek healing, for dignitaries, and to celebrate and honour a saint.

The insipit is a ritual performed in Santa Cruz during Holy Week. The statue of the Mater Dolorosa is

central to this performance. The batikan are seated before the statue and sing a long text that is partly Tagalog and partly based on Latin. A small number of wind instruments accompany the final and climactic part of the singing, the Stabat Mater.

The Santa Cruzan is a ritual honoring the Holy Cross which is performed by the batikan. The cross forms the centre of this ritual. Singers, who also dance before a cross in repetitive stylized motions, perform a long text that discusses various attributes and characteristics of the cross and relates these to the history of Christ's crucifixion. With each stage of the song the aspect of the cross that is sung about is added to a cross which slowly takes shape in this manner. This process is referred to by the performers as "building the cross."

The perdon is a relatively new ritual that was started in the 1976 by a wealthy couple. It is performed in Santa Cruz and centers on three statues: one of Mary, one of the Santo Nino and one of the crucified Christ. Every Friday at seven p.m. the statues are transferred in a solemn procession of singing devotees from the house of the family that had them for one week to a new host family. Prayers are said at each house and songs that are specific to the ritual are sung. The ritual centers on forgiveness of personal sins. The oil that accompanies the statues is believed to have miraculous and healing powers.

25. Fr. Oliverio has noted that the number of bamboo sticks in the beating instrument may represent the number of years a penitent has promised to take part in the ritual, known as the antipo. One stick is more loosely attached so that it will be removed in the course of the ritual. This signifies the lessening of the number of years left in which the participant must carry out his panata. Fr. Oliverio also feels that for some flagellantes their reason to carry out the ritual is to atone for sins committed. The lessening of the sticks may then also symbolize the reduction of sin through sacrifice.

26. The term moriones is probably derived from the Spanish word for helmet: morrion (Roces 1961).

27. The costumes and masks in Boac seem to have developed in ever greater uniformity and conformity to the notion of a Spanish looking, or at least Caucasian, centurion. The costumes in Gasan, where there is a vibrant cottage industry of carved and brightly painted parrots and fish for export, include headgear that represent large wooden fish and bees. In Mogpog there

is a wide range of costumes including medusas, images of death, priests and American soldiers. The atmosphere in Mogpog is decidedly more carnivalesque, as fun is poked at each character. It was here that I also saw the most female participants although still a minority. It was also in Mogpog that I saw most of the bamboo and flower headdresses that are thought to be more traditional than the centurion's helmet.

28. There appears to be a similar sense that an image gains power as it is prayed over in Naipaul's descriptions of the endowment of life and power to lifeless Hindu idols in India through the chanting of a particular mantra fifty million times (Naipaul 1979:13-14).

29. It is not an uncommon phenomena in the Philippines for men to allow themselves to be truly nailed to a wooden cross at the climax of the public Via Crucis that re-enacts Christ's way to the cross. Apparently, the nails are usually applied only to the hands while the feet cling to a small jutting piece of wood. The year I was in Marinduque tales emerged after Holy Week of a "real" crucifixion having occurred in the Marinduque town of Torrijos. I was also told, by various people, that there had been a man in Gasan who had allowed himself to be nailed through the hands to a cross every year for a number of years. A young Marinduque doctor, who was discussing this fact with me, told me that he had information from the doctor of Gasan that men who wish to undergo a "real" crucifixion sometimes go to doctors to have their hands pre-pierced for the occasion. The wound later heals to be relatively easily reopened the following year.

30. In the late fifties a team of observers headed by Dean Alejandro R. Roces of Far Eastern University in Manila headed for Marinduque to study the rituals that were, until then, relatively unknown outside of the island. This group included Mr. Jorma Kaukonen, labour attache of the U.S. embassy; Mr. Floro Mercene of the Philippine Tourist and Travel Bureau; and Mr. Pedro de Leon, Secretary of the Vice-President of the University of the Philippines (Roces 1961:255).

31. The 1987 souvenir program for the Moriones Festival in Boac opens with a statement from the Hon. Jose Antonio U. Gonzalez, Secretary of the Department of Tourism, in which he praises the Marinduquenos' efforts to perpetuate the morion tradition.

32. The word kalbaryuhan is thought to be derived from

the biblical Calvary.

33. The reasons traditional kalbaryuhan actors are usually older men and women is that these traditionally dominate religious matters in peasant communities and, also, because they must have memorized the entire pasyon text over many years of chanting it in order to be able to act out the parts without needing to refer to the book.

34. In fact the congresswoman told me that in order to persuade the former "Jesus Christ" to give up the position she had to secure him a job overseas! The new "Christ" also made a panata when he took on the position.

35. As is often the case in evolving traditions of this sort it is very difficult to trace with certainty the roots of the scenes in the Boac kalbaryuhan. Longinus is referred to in the most commonly used pasyon text, the 1882 edition, Casaysayang nang Pasiong Mahal ni Jesucristong Panginoon Natin na Sucat Ipaq-Alab nang Puso nang Sinomang Babasa. He is found in verses 2081;2162-2170;2193;2196-2238 of Javellana's (1988) discussion of this pasyon text. But "Claudia," pilate's wife, is, in this edition of the pasyon, referred to only as Procle (verse 1609). The implied romance between Pilot's wife and Longinus is also not to be found in this version. There remains the possibility that these scenes may have come from the other main textual family of editions, namely the 1826 and 1873 texts. Javellana's (1988) references to the main differences between these text families does not discuss the role of Longinus or of Pilot's wife. Other possibilities are that these scenes come from other than Tagalog pasyons; Marinduque may have been influenced by Visayan texts due to her geographical location. Or, the scenes may be derived from the Christian legend of Longinus, or, perhaps the most likely given other links with modern secular drama, simply from the creative imaginations of the most recent Marinduque creators of the kalbaryuhan.

36. Although the distribution of the programs is usually limited to those who advertise in them, or are members of associations, in other words, to members of the elite of the towns, they are spread more widely than that and read by many interested Marinduqueños. I have found copies of these programs in quite remote villages. The histories and cultural information in them are also used in classrooms in the towns and the villages.

CHAPTER SEVEN: BCC-CO Ideology and Practice at the
Diocesan Level: Reproduction and
Transformation

Introduction

In this chapter I first evaluate the degree to which the main ideas that underpin the BCC-CO movement at the national level are reflected by the clergy, and to a lesser extent by the BCC-CO lay staff, at the diocesan level in Marinduque. (1) I then set out the main avenues through which these new ideas are conveyed to the townspeople and, finally, I provide examples that illustrate attempts to put the new exegesis into practice. Both with respect to ideology and to practice this chapter reflects on degrees of reproduction and transformation of BCC-CO perspectives from the national to the diocesan level and offers possible reasons why the program undergoes transformations at the diocesan level.

In order to evaluate the degree of transfer of BCC-CO perspectives from the national to the diocesan level I analyzed BCC-CO texts that were available in Marinduque and probed the opinions of local BCC

mediators through a questionnaire and targeted interviews among the clergy and lay staff.

I begin this chapter with an analysis of the 1981 "Diocesan Survey," conducted under the auspices of the diocese to evaluate the economic, political, social, cultural, and religious situation of the people and to determine how these areas of their lives are perceived by the respondents themselves. This survey was to facilitate a contextualized "re-Christianization" of Marinduque. Then, I review the 1986 "BCC-CO Luzon Retrospect and Prospect" in which the Marinduque lay staff evaluate the main problems facing Marinduquenos and the successes and set backs of the BCC-CO program up to that date. At this point various BCC structures and practices had been put in place. Finally, in my own 1989 questionnaire and interviews of the clergy and BCC-CO staff I further explored issues raised in these local sources.

A "Scientific" Approach to Christian Liberation

After Marinduque became an independent diocese, in 1978, Bishop Lim gathered the Boac diocesan clergy together in a first annual retreat to discuss and plot the future course of evangelization work in the new diocese. They decided to focus "the task of the church

of Marinduque on the re-christianization of its people" (Lim; Diocesan Survey 1981; underline in text). In Bishop Lim's words

the people of Marinduque need a more contextualized evangelization, i.e., an evangelization that reads from faith the Marinduque socio-economic, political, and cultural situation.... To fully build up the local church, she must engage in a dialogue of life with its people, especially the poor, deprived and oppressed, and commit herself to their integral human development and Christian liberation, and encourage and acknowledge the active participation of the emerging laymen. (Lim 1981)

The "contextualized evangelization" referred to in this text is an important indication of the type of approach that is being proposed. The word "contextualized" as opposed to "indigenized" is commonly used in BCC-CO literature. What is most often meant is an evangelization that critically analyzes and responds to the underlying inequalities or structural abuses inherent in a given social context, as discernable by the initiated to the BCC-CO program, as opposed to an evangelization that adapts to indigenous knowledge and practices.

In addition to an interest in discerning the "actual" context of life in Marinduque, Bishop Lim also expresses a desire to "get the people's own perception of themselves and of reality" (Lim 1981). In order to achieve these goals a diocesan survey was conducted in

1980, financially supported by MISSIO in Germany, the results of which were published in 1981. The survey made use of quota sampling with 1000 respondents, distributed proportionally per parish, out of a total population of 173,725. The survey concentrated on socio-demographic data and on "the respondents' observations on certain daily life situations and some elements of their faith experiences" (Diocesan Survey 1981:4). (2)

During the retreat, in 1978, a decision was also made that priests should immerse themselves in the villages thereby moving out from the "poblacion" based convent ministry" and "reaching out to the plains and hinterlands of their parishes" in a process known as barrio babad apostolate (Diocesan Survey 1981:3). A year later, the first pastoral management workshop-seminar for parish leaders was held in Santa Cruz, Marinduque. At this seminar the "re-Christianization" of Marinduque was expressed as the "Christian liberation of all its people from oppression and domination of evil in all its forms" (Diocesan Survey 1981:4). This statement embodies a recognition of "structural sin" in addition to the more traditional focus on "personal sin." This is a common emphasis in liberation theology, as discussed in the national level chapters. Concrete "action programs" and new pastoral

structures were decided upon in order to attain this liberational goal. They took the form of BCCs and of pastoral councils for the towns and, for the first time, for the villages. (Diocesan Survey 1981:4). Both of these newly created pastoral structures rely heavily on lay participation, another emphasis of Vatican II and liberation theology.

Both the questions, as well as the possible answers supplied on the diocesan survey questionnaires are revealing. The framing of the forty-one questions, and the selection of possible answers for respondents to choose between, reflect aspects of post-Vatican II perspectives and themes in Philippine liberation theology, as well as biases and assumptions inherent in progressive Catholic movements in the Philippines; especially where the survey explores the people's cultural/religious experience and their political/economic strategies. The way the survey results are analyzed further affords insights into the perspectives of the researchers and the degree to which national level concerns and perspectives have been preserved in moving to the diocesan level.

One of the characteristics of the BCC-CO approach to consciousness raising is to encourage community members to critically evaluate the economic, political, social, cultural and religious structures

that make up their social environment. This exercise usually starts with the identification of concrete problems in each of these discrete categories and is supposed to end with the recognition that these problems are related and rooted in economic structural inequalities which are perpetuated and supported by the other categories. I elaborate on this BCC-CO educational process in the village level chapters, especially chapter nine. The diocesan survey reflects this strategy.

Interestingly, while the respondents had no difficulty identifying their economic problems, only 4.6% responded with "No problem" and "No answer", the percentages of people who claimed to have "No answer" or "No problem" to questions about problems in political, social, religious, and cultural categories were very high; 60.6% on average (Diocesan Survey 1981:37-39). This is an extraordinarily high percentage of "No answer" and "No problem" responses given the responses to the survey as a whole. (3) Importantly, the survey takers' explanations for these results centre on "socio-cultural alienation" and a "culture of silence" characteristic of the poor, deprived and the oppressed" as reasons for the "low level of consciousness or awareness of the respondents" (Diocesan Survey 1981:8). These explanations do not,

however, explain the ready responses to questions about economic problems. The language used in the survey to analyze a lack of response is clearly rooted in BCC-CO social theories about "false consciousness" and "alienation."

On the whole, the results that the researchers found in their data were interpreted to confirm progressive pre-suppositions and attitudes about popular religiosity and cultural traits in the Philippines. The researchers write that, "respondents are steeped in traditional folk Catholicism" and that their "customs and practices" are "an interwovenness of primitive religious beliefs, Christian rites, and the natives' way of life" (Diocesan Survey 1981:6). These perceived religious attitudes are subtly critiqued from a perspective of faith as a force that should lead to social responsibility and action. The authors of the survey write that for the majority

faith is lived out through "group or personal recitation of the rosary, novena, performance of panata (promises), reception of the sacraments and by suffering and sacrifices." ... As a whole living out the faith is strongly sacraments-and-rituals-oriented rather than a dynamic encounter with God which would impel him [the believer] to struggle over the cares, problems, and challenges of everyday life both for himself and for others, trusting all the way that man's cause is God's cause. (Diocesan Survey 1981:6)

This quote clearly shows how "traditional" faith, beliefs, and practices are not only undervalued

when compared to the new liberational exegesis but are, furthermore, considered somehow unrelated to, or unhelpful in, daily practice and social struggles for justice. This view ignores that "traditional" religious interpretations are often shared with the elite and called upon by peasants in negotiating fair treatment in a moral economy sense, but also, as Iletto (1979) has shown, these traditional interpretations may in cases of extreme tension be reinterpreted to form the basis of a powerful liberational movement. The image of "traditional" faith and beliefs as essentially static, unchanging, and unresponsive to people's needs as perceived by the BCC-CO perspective is a common one among progressive Christians.

Another criticism in the survey, from the point of view of the need for communal action towards social change, comes in the analysis of family relationships which are perceived to be inward looking and "particularistic." This attitude is described as especially negative because it extends to the fields of politics and economics which are considered rooted in values related to family relations:

While those on the top strive to get and have more for the interests of their families, the majority who are experiencing massive poverty fail to be united for any collective endeavour because their primary concern is to-each-his-own family survival first. It would do well if evangelization through the family start with a refinement of this key value system namely, to

expand this family solidarity towards an accommodation of the national welfare and to move out from a small-group centeredness towards concerted action for a greater good. (Diocesan Survey 1981:9) (4)

The final "mission statement" that came out of the diocesan research project reflects both the BCC-CO movement's general perspective on requirements for social change and its bias against "traditional" Filipino values. This statement, which laid out the foundations for the next five years of evangelization in Marinduque, reiterated the themes of re-Christianization and the need to redirect Filipino values by identifying the "root problem" of the diocese thus:

Individualism prevails in the Christian Community of the Diocese of Boac because of the weak foundation of its Christian life and because of an environment with a wrong sense of values. (Diocesan Survey 1981:49, underline mine)

In the text, these "wrong" values are alternately ascribed to general peasant backwardness and "traditionalism" or to the more insidious malevolent forces inherent in an unequal social system that can only be maintained by successfully deluding its exploited members. The degree of direct responsibility of the elite, that is, conscious and intended delusion of the masses by the elite, is often left ambiguous. Depending on the context, the "system" may be blamed for ongoing injustices or, especially

when direct action is required, the elite who benefit from the system may be held responsible as a group or class.

There is a notable and tenacious ambiguity in this and other similar texts where the blame for ongoing social injustice is alternately placed on structural inequalities that are supported by mystifying ideology or on peasants themselves because of their traditional and "negative" cultural values; sometimes both are blamed simultaneously.

The Development of Structures for Social Action

With the conclusions drawn from the results of the diocesan survey, and the commitment to a BCC approach to renewed evangelization, or re-Christianization in Marinduque, program facilitators were invited to come from Manila to give seminars about the BCC method and philosophy. Many, now active, BCC leaders can still remember what they describe as the stimulating lectures Fr. Sunpayco, S.J., gave in Marinduque. As early as 1980, a number of potential lay leaders, who were later to become BCC-CO core group members for the diocese, had gone to La Ignaciana Apostolic Centre in Manila for training in the KRISKA form of BCC, later called BEC, under the leadership of

the Jesuit Frs. Sunpayco and Blanco.

In 1982, Bishop Lim suggested that the diocese as a whole adopt the BCC-CO approach to community organizing and "re-christianization." This was accepted by most of the parish priests with the notable exception of Fr. Mantala who had started using the KRIKA/BEC approach in Gasan, found it to be successful, and later carried on with this approach in Santa Cruz. By 1986, sectoral organization, a characteristic of the BCC-CO approach at that time, led to the formation of two diocesan federations under the guidance of the diocesan BCC-CO staff: the Federation of Farmers and Fishermen and the Federation of Women. (5)

In 1986, following upon the first Luzon BCC-CO Convention of 1985, the Luzon BCC-CO secretariat published an overview of the program in Luzon with contributions from various provinces. This overview starts with the observation that despite the dramatic change of government, many of the old problems continue to exist in Luzon. Economically, Luzon is described as basically "feudal" with "'tiny bubbles' of capitalism"; politically, as inherently unstable due to continuing poverty; and culturally as,

still a curious mixture of influences from a colonial and foreign culture - notably American, the culture of the rich and the middle class and the various regional traits.(...)In the realm of religion, the people still draw very heavily on the resources of folk religiosity [sic] which

is largely influenced by animism and traditional Catholicism. (The Luzon BCC-CO Retrospect & Prospect 1986:2)

The contribution from the diocese of Boac to this 1986 Luzon BCC-CO review lends insight into the analysis made by BCC-CO core staff members of the key problems they face in their attempts to organize the people along the lines they have set out. The BCC leaders write:

In the socio political sphere, there are dominant problems existing: (1) lack of unity and people's participation, (2) unfair treatment of the poor by the rich, and (3) prevalence of vice. The low level of consciousness or awareness and cultural value[s] as fatalism, bahala na, ningas cogon, individualism, family centeredness, utang na loob, and others, are barriers to development and organizing. (The Luzon BCC-CO Retrospect & Prospect 1986:17)

These points reflect the program's strong emphasis on the need for organized collective action in order to redress structural inequalities. This statement also alludes to the perceived problem of peasant delusion about their own socio-economic circumstances; an integral assumption underlying the BCC-CO program. And, finally, this statement reflects the assumption that existing Filipino cultural values are not conducive to the kinds of organizing needed for social action towards change.

The integrity of the underlying ideologies and strategies of the BCC-CO program appears to have been readily adopted and well preserved in moving from the

national to the diocesan level, at least by the most active clergy and BCC-CO core members in Marinduque. This conclusion is further borne out in the interviews and surveys I conducted among parish priests and diocesan BCC-CO core staff members (see below in this chapter); in the content of the monthly meetings the BCC-CO core staff hold; and, in the seminars the core staff prepare for potential BCC members. (6) While on the whole, BCC-CO national level theories and approaches seem to be well incorporated into the thinking and planning of diocesan level staff there is also some evidence of the effects of daily practice and personal, local, and cultural knowledge, and perhaps of unconsciously held pre-Vatican II attitudes and beliefs on these newer theories. This will be discussed in greater depth below.

What has also been preserved in transition from the national level to the local level is the apparent contradiction between maintaining an ideology of an essentially grass roots movement while setting out elaborate organizational schemes aimed at creating the very community and conscientized peasantry deemed necessary for a very particular kind of social action and social change. The Marinduque organizers wrote in 1986:

Convinced of our belief that the grassroots have the capacity to solve their problems and build

their own Christian Community, we started the BCC-CO program in three parishes by training core groups from sectors of farmers/fishermen from the critical areas (land and pollution issue). (The Luzon BCC-CO Retrospect & Prospect 1986:19)

The four point strategy adopted to organize communities starts with the "integration in the area of a full time community organizer" (The Luzon BCC-CO Retrospect & Prospect 1986:19). The following phase consists of "conscientization" and "analysis of local, [and] national situation, thus making them aware of their problems and needs, their power and responsibilities" (The Luzon BCC-CO Retrospect & Prospect 1986:19). The third phase, "Organization/Mobilization" emphasizes "people's participation in decision making, planning, implementation and monitoring" (The Luzon BCC-CO Retrospect & Prospect 1986:19). And, the final phase consists of "strengthening the organization towards restructuring of community structures thus enhancing the democratic process of answering community/diocesan needs" (The Luzon BCC-CO Retrospect & Prospect 1986:19).

The results, recorded by the BCC-CO staff in 1986, consisted of 25 trained core groups (BCCs) made up of about 15 members each - farmers, fishermen and women. These core groups had, according to the report, already entered into successful dialogue with relevant

parties regarding such issues as land. Eventually, socio-economic projects were also launched among the core groups as a way to augment personal income and to help meet community needs; especially to help finance the costs of attending meetings and seminars at the diocesan level (The Luzon BCC-CO Retrospect & Prospect 1986:21). (7)

By 1989, BCC-CO had become the main organizational and ideological approach underlying evangelization efforts in all of the diocese's 12 parishes but the one where the BEC approach was used. The Federation of Farmers and Fishermen had about 150 members from five villages of four parishes by 1989, and the Federation of Women had about 500 members.

Opinions of Parish Priests and BCC-CO Lay Staff in Marinduque

While the role of the parish priest in initiating and sustaining the progress of BCCs in the villages is of great importance, the priests are still based in the towns and are the main source of "renewal," the main mediators of the new exegesis, in the towns. The parish priests also, traditionally, have a close relationship with the elite of the towns which is something the BCC-CO lay staff, who usually come from the villages, do not have. The following sections

explore the degree of reproduction and transformation of BCC-CO perspectives on social analysis, traditional values and religiosity, and on the process of building BCCs, by analyzing the statements of parish priests and BCC-CO core staff. The emphasis in this chapter is on the clergy and the opinions of the BCC-CO staff will be expanded upon in chapter nine. The data in the following sections comes from a survey and follow-up interviews I held with priests and BCC-CO lay staff in 1989. Eight of Marinduque's 12 parish priests completed the questionnaire I circulated to them. I conducted follow-up interviews with three of them. The sections are organized around the most prominent themes that ran through the survey and interview responses.

On the whole, the following sections show a high degree of concurrence in the answers of the clergy; answers that, furthermore, largely reflect views and approaches to social analysis taken by the BCC-CO program. This latter is especially true for some of the clergy such as Frs. Jimenez, Mantala and Malaylay. It is not enough to say that these members of the clergy are particularly active, because some of the other parish priests are also very committed to the upliftment of the poorest members of their parishes, but these other priests' answers show more anomalies and inconsistencies with respect to BCC-CO perspectives

that appear at times to be rooted in pre-Vatican II perspectives.

It is important to realize that the often predictable answers given by the clergy to questions about what the main political, economic, social, religious and cultural problems facing the people are, result not only from the clergy having been similarly "conscientized" in structural social analysis through BCC seminars, but also derive from a wider, typically progressive, set of responses to such questions in society. This wider social field that similarly addresses Philippine problems is exemplified by, for example, the progressive media. (8)

The characteristic ^{finger} fingering of "negative" Philippine values, as a contributing factor in the people's repression, is also not unique to the program but is a common perspective passed on by such conservative institutions as the educational system that continues to chastise the people for their "negative" cultural values. These wider societal sources of influence are, as we have seen, reflected in BCC programs at the national level.

The Role of Clergy and Lay Leaders in re-Christianization

The parish priests of Marinduque play a pivotal role in the implementation and consolidation of BCC programs in the villages and the towns and in efforts to bring about the sorts of changes in attitudes and behaviours, in both the wealthy and the poor, that they have agreed with the bishop are necessary. The priests are themselves well aware of their key position. In response to the survey I distributed among the parish priests of Marinduque, Fr. Mantala says:

The BCC is basically a new idea, the success of which depends on the motivational and organizational know how of the initiator, the priest. (priests' survey 1989) (9)

The role of the clergy is also recognized by the BCC-CO lay staff. The co-ordinator of the BCC-CO core staff, Adelaida, notes that:

Most people are priests and bishops centered. The people will not follow you without their support (...) we can do without the active support from the priest but it is not good if he is against. (interview 1989)

And, while Adelaida insists that the BCC workers are happiest to work within the structures of the Church she also offers this practical aspect of the union between lay BCC-CO leaders and the hierarchy:

Most funding agencies give only when there is a signature from the hierarchy (...) we need the endorsement of Church people (...) We need the

hierarchy both culturally and financially.
(interview 1989)

On the whole, Adelaida insists, however, that most of the priests of Marinduque's 12 parishes accept the BCC-CO program and that where they are not so supportive they are at least not against, so that the BCC leaders can work independently. The exception to this rule is Fr. Mantala, who directly opposes the BCC-CO approach and prefers the BEC organization. In his words:

I find this [BEC] a pastorally effective means of organizing my people with the word of God—the Bible and the Holy Eucharist as the centre of the Christian Community. (priests' survey 1989)

In an interview with me Fr. Mantala reflected on the fact that he would soon be moved to another parish in the regular "shuffle" of priests at which time BCC-CO would probably become the main program in the parish. He noted that: "The problem with BCC-CO is that it emphasizes issues while BEC puts first the word of God."

One of the BCC-CO core staff explained that when Fr. Mantala first started in the municipality of Santa Cruz, in 1984, he worked well with the two BCC-CO core leaders stationed in the village of Botilao there and,

everything was o.k. But by and by he did not want to entertain [meet with] them and missed appointments so they [BCC-CO core workers] had no support. He [Fr. Mantala] also wanted total control. They [BCC-CO core workers] had to use

PKP [the BEC bible-sharing guide] and to tell him everything they will do. He also did not let people from his parish go out to seminars in Manila etc. because he did not want the BCC-CO program - said its not what God wants. So now they just do not ask him anymore so Ka Linda [Erlinda Erondo from Botilao] went to Cebu [for the BCC-CO inter-regional conference in 1989]. (interview 1989) (10)

A Faith in BCCs

On the whole, the eight parish priests who shared their concerns about their parishes with me expressed great confidence in the ability of BCC organizing to address these issues. When asked whether they endorse BCCs as a pastoral strategy they all resoundingly replied "yes." So too, they all answered "yes" to the question of whether BCCs address the primary problems of their parishes. But when asked whether there are problems in the parishes that BCCs cannot address, five of the eight respondents named a range of problems they see as particularly difficult to solve.

Fr. Mantala, explains that he is still "beginning with conscientization of the people" and notes that the BCCs in Santa Cruz parish are still in the "embryonic stage," nonetheless he regards the program with great promise:

I find it to be [a] very effective instrument of fulfilling the mission of liberating evangelization...because BCC believes in

people's ability/power to liberate themselves from any de-humanizing structure/situations. BCC uses democratic processes. BCC aims at the total human development of people. People become articulate about their human rights - people become organized. (priests' survey 1989)

Fr. Muni also sees potential power in BCC organization:

It is intended for and adapted to the needs of the deprived and poor section of our parish which compose the majority of our people. Their number and organization make them powerful to attain their end....They become aware of their capability to act and achieve. (priests' survey 1989)

But, Fr. Muni sees as a problem in his parish the fact that some BCC lay leaders, once trained, are "leaving the parish for greener pasture" (priests' survey 1989).

Fr. Paras, who feels his job is to facilitate "conscientization and awareness of the Basic Christian Communities to their human dignity, total human development or liberation according to the plan of God," responds to the question of whether BCCs can address the primary problems of the parish with a resounding

Yes ! We can be socially developed. A political will could be arrived at. Livelihood programs may help a lot to their basic needs. Christian values could find meaning in their daily life. (priests' survey 1989)

Fr. Paras's concerns about problems the program cannot solve are more practical in nature such as the devastation of typhoons and the lack of material

resources to support the lay leaders.

Fr. Jimenez notes that:

The BCC's in this parish are still in the conscientization stage. There need[s] to be a re-awakening of the positive qualities such as [a] sense of justice and fairness, love for life, freedom and community. (priests' survey 1989)

Fr. Jimenez feels that BCCs will allow the people to

have critical awareness to the situation of the parish. The people can have self-analysis, as well as situation analysis. The[y] will be able to discern and their human dignity will be awakened and they will develop and have loving concern for one another. (priests' survey 1989)

Fr. Malaylay, the parish priest of Boac and also the Social Action Director for the diocese, feels the BCCs of Boac are still in an "initiating stage-sustaining stage," but he sees great potential in the movement:

Because through the BCCs we are awakening, empowering, and organizing the grassroots which constitute the majority of our local church in taking an active role in the mission of the church for their total salvation (=total human development) and that of others. They have been [made] critically aware of their situation. They have owned their problems. They want a change in their life situation. They know they are and must be the primary agents of this change. And so depending on their current awareness of the situation and organizational capacity and strength they have embarked on livelihood projects such as corn production, pig raising, small fishing, artificial reefing and value-formation/ religious formation such as weekly Bible sharing and recollections. (priests' survey 1989)

Fr. Lapiona, who feels that the BCCs in his parish are more at a "liturgical" and "developmental"

stage than at a "liberational" stage at the moment, nonetheless, feels BCCs are "the most powerful pastoral strategy since this is a people-concerted-effort tactic in dealing [with] problems that beset...the people of God" (priests' survey 1989). But a problem that Fr. Lapiona does not see easily resolved by BCCs is "the problem on national security" (priests' survey 1989).

Fr. Rejano notes that the BCCs of his parish are "at the stage of awakening and mobilization" (priests' survey 1989). He explains that "the agenda in the PKP [Bible-sharing] in all area[s] is about the people's awareness of their own problems in life" (Fr. Rejano: priests' survey 1989). Fr. Rejano feels that the people's "awareness of the situation and unity" are successes of the program but it is obvious that these do not lead automatically to the desired social changes as he counts under failures of the BCC in his parish the ability "to be strong in terms of fighting pollution and economic and political problems" (priests' survey 1989).

Fr. de los Santos, the parish priest of the mining town Marcopper, in the municipality of Santa Cruz, compares the BCCs in his parish to "a plant with its roots beginning to take hold on the soil" (priests' survey 1989). He notes the particular problem he faces with the fact that the mine workers constitute a

largely transient population "because their presence is connected with the work" which is not beneficial in creating BCCs.

Philippine Historical-Cultural Values

Philippine cultural values never failed to be spontaneously discussed in exchanges I had with members of the clergy and BCC-CD lay leaders; almost without exception they were discussed in a negative light. Philippine cultural values that are commented on specifically as being unacceptable, or unhelpful, in moving towards liberational social change cover a wide range of perceived behaviours and attitudes. Fr. Malaylay sums it up when he responds to a question about the "primary problems" facing his parishioners with the answer a "wrong sense of values" (priests' survey 1989). (11)

Fr. Malaylay, furthermore, considers Philippine historical-cultural values, along with the people's socio-economic conditions, and their rootedness in patron-client type relationships with the elite, as the three main stumbling blocks to building Basic Christian Communities:

These top three stumbling blocks are deeply rooted in the physical and the psychological and mental being of a person/sector/community so that in the process of transforming the being of

a person/sector/community into what it should become, these are the three basic things that are most difficult to handle. (priests' survey 1989)

While this answer indicates a concern both for dynamic socio-economic relationships and for cultural values, these two "causes" of poverty are too often not analytically related to each other. Values are often presented as static, non-contextual, and received from the past. Even the so-called "patron-client" mentality is described as a received attitude typical of the poor rather than as something rooted in practice. The way to change these negative values is often presented as simply through awareness that they are not helpful in social transformation.

In the survey I conducted among the diocesan priests I asked them to rank 16 issues in order of importance with regard to the degree to which these issues could be said to be stumbling blocks in forming BCCs. (12) Of the seven priests who undertook this task, four placed "Philippine historical-cultural values" within the top 5 stumbling blocks with two choosing first place and one second place. Of the BCC-CO core leaders I asked to perform a similar task only two completed the task but both placed "Philippine historical-cultural values" first among a list of 14 possible stumbling blocks to building BCCs.

BCC-CO lay leader Pedro considers Philippine values a major stumbling block to building BCCs because he sees the attitudes and habits of the poor, which he finds unhelpful to social change, as "rooted" in these cultural values. But, Pedro goes a step further by placing the blame for the maintenance of "negative" cultural values on those who benefit from the status quo; values are "supported and strengthened by people who want to abuse the system" (BCC-CO staff survey 1989). The following three sections elaborate on values and attitudes that received the most attention in the survey and in interview responses.

Patron-clientage

The people are said to suffer from a "patron-client mentality" that is characterized by a sense of utang na loob or debt of gratitude and dependency upon the elite. Fr. Muni notes that the "poor are politically submissive to the rich" (priests' survey 1989). Fr. Paras explains that "any gift accepted from anybody or any help given to them [the poor] would mean not going against the donor or giver even [if] their [the receiver's] rights are trampled upon" (priests' survey 1989). (13) Fr. Jimenez adds, "the people are not as interested in issues during an election as they

are in who is paying them the most or whether it is their relative [who is running]" (priests' survey 1989). Fr. de los Santos, who identifies cultural values as the number one stumbling block to building BCCs and patron-client relationships as second, takes a historical perspective on the relationship between patrons and clients in Marinduque. He notes that:

Islanders who for a long time live[d] independently and thrive[d] in abundance has the tendency to become indifferent when working for others sensing to be working as slaves under a strict master. (priests' survey 1989)

Jamilla notes of peasants, that,

being overseers of the land owned [by those] who live in town they often follow the dictates of the landowners. Some overseers who do not know how to budget expenses often depend on what they can borrow from their landlords. (priests' survey 1989)

Fr. de los Santos, furthermore, does not limit his discussion of patronage in Marinduque to cases related to economic dependance but also decries political patronage:

Politicians, especially of higher ranks, that is those who want to run for national positions, and at present also those who are running for provincial posts are trying to be in connivance with those who are already in their position—especially national[ly], and if necessary with greater national political affiliation or party. In this case, a good intentioned candidate will [be] no match for a seasoned and professional politician who of course is in the material side of the coin for his goal and purpose first, not the welfare of his constituents. (priests' survey 1989) (14)

Individualism and Family-Centeredness

Another issue that surfaced in the surveys is a general perception that pits the solidarity of a similarly deprived people against what is perceived to be the prevalent tendency of Filipinos to identify primarily with small, familial, cliques. To express this type of behaviour, and attitude, words such as "family-centered," "personalism," kanya-kanya, pakikisama, "individualism," and "lack of unity" are used with great frequency.

Fr. Muni links the perceived negative trait of "family centeredness" to a whole series of other evils when he states that the Filipino is "too family-centered which leads to over protectiveness, individualism, complacency and indolence" (priests' survey 1989). Fr. Rejano notes that one factor that weakens BCC attempts to create group solidarity is that "blood is thicker than water" (priests' survey 1989). Fr. Paras blames some of the failures of BCCs on "selfishness" (priests' survey 1989). Fr. Lapiona concentrates his criticism on the "family-centeredness" of the elite:

Family centered structure, more so extended family, caused distance especially [of] rich families from another poor families i.e. family individualism. (priests' survey 1989)

Adelaida, the co-ordinator of the BCC-CO core

staff, notes that the "division" of the people is one of the main problems in her organizing area (BCC-CO staff survey 1989). She explains that BCC-CO workers have to be very careful in introducing socio-economic projects to villagers so that these will not breed further "individualism." She stresses that project proposals for funding of an individual must show how the project will benefit the whole community, for example by providing cheaper fish, and that the project should be jointly monitored and managed by other BCC-CO members in the community (Adelaida: interview 1989). Pedro, another BCC-CO core staff member, also cites "individualism" as one of the key problems in his organizing area. He offers as a solution the administering of BCC-CO seminars that emphasize the importance of unity (BCC-CO staff survey 1989).

Fr. Jimenez, who counted Philippine historical-cultural values as the number one stumbling block to creating BCCs, speaks of "extreme personalism," and notes that the people are "only interested in their own advancement, prestige and economic comfort" (interview 1989). Jimenez offers numerous cultural examples of what he labels as the kanya-kanya syndrome. For example, he notes that after the mass the people all pray separately to themselves to the same saints. As a further illustration, Jimenez recounts that mourners

will not bring a coffin into the church until the coffin from the previous funeral party has left. Also, he explains, the people do not like multiple-couple marriage ceremonies but would prefer a ceremony for only one couple if possible. Jimenez both frowns on these behaviours, which to him indicate overly individualistic and even anti-social feelings, and he attempts to change them by, for example, insisting that people bring a second coffin into the church while the coffin from the previous funeral mass is still there.

Passivity

In ordering the main stumbling blocks to building BCCs from one to sixteen, four out of the seven priests who undertook this task placed "A hesitation on the side of the people to organize formally against injustices or oppression" among the top five stumbling blocks, and two cited it as the number one impediment to building BCCs. The reasons offered to explain why people may not wish to organize formally to fight for their rights lend insight into another range of labels for peasants that are often summarized by the saying that peasants are "passive."

Fr. Rejano, who gave "A hesitation...." a number one ranking offers a number of possible reasons

for this perceived behaviour and illustrates these reasons with examples from the struggle against the copper mine. He partially blames the priests' lack of skills to motivate and organize the people (his number two stumbling block) for inaction against the copper mine:

They [the priests] lack motivational organizational skills because its concrete in the rallies against pollution and injustice that they [the people] are still divided. (priests' survey 1989)

But Fr. Rejano also points to reasons rooted in the people themselves for their lack of interest in organizing for their rights. He notes generally that a lack of involvement is "because of the attitudes of the majority i.e. indifference" but more specifically he points to a fear of repercussions:

Because of fear in [for] their relatives and in laws having [a] position in the biggest corporation of being jobless. Because of political struggle. (priests' survey 1989)

Fr. Paras, who also gave "A hesitation...." a number one ranking, clarifies his choice by stating that it is "because of the colonial mentality [that] they are afraid to rally for rights against any oppressor" (priests' survey 1989). He also cites ningas cogon as a problem for the BCCs and this term, which is commonly used to describe Filipinos, specifically refers to a lack of interest or concern.

Fr. Jimenez, who placed "A hesitation...." as

third choice and Philippine historical-cultural values first as stumbling blocks to building BCCs, sees a connection between the two. He notes that "some people hesitate to organize formally against injustices because of their values" (priests' survey 1989). Adelaida, the BCC-CO core leaders' co-ordinator, appears to agree with this perspective. While she placed Philippine historical-cultural values as the number one hindrance in building BCCs, her example of such a Philippine value is one that leads to passivity:

Old belief is really hard to change because it is the old tradition of the people and they cannot forget it at once. eg. Not to act because this is the will of God. (BCC-CO staff survey 1989).

When Fr. Malaylay listed a number of "problems" facing his parish many of the terms he used in one way or another signified, described, or explained, "passivity" of the people: "culture of silence, complacency, fatalism,...., wrong sense of values, colonial mentality" (priests' survey 1989).

In an interview with Fr. Jimenez he noted by way of illustration of "passivity" that "whoever has influence they [the people] just follow them. They are not likely to oppose them [the people with influence] as long as their interests are not touched." But, Fr. Jimenez also indicates his understanding of the peoples' hesitation to organize formally against

injustices or oppression by recognizing their lack of security and power. Jimenez notes that the people

do not like to go against the status quo. But if they know for sure that they are being backed by the priests and Church they will act. (interview 1989)

So peasant passivity is described as the result of traditional cultural values and beliefs, fear of repercussions, and "indifference."

Another, related, explanation of the problems of villagers, and of why BCCs may not be successful, often includes statements about the everyday behaviour and attitudes of peasants that are strikingly similar to those given by members of the elite when they complain about the lifestyles and work habits of their laborers. Fr. Jimenez counts among the social problems of his parish the tendency of villagers to have a "lack of discipline" and to engage in "vices" such as "gambling" (priests' survey 1989). In an interview, Fr. Jimenez expanded on this opinion. He explained that for many people their "value system is only a convenience not [based] on underlying morals" (interview 1989). He feels that it is a sign of a "distorted value system" that the people would spend so much money on food and drink for a wake and that they would gamble and drink instead of praying (interview 1989). Fr. Jimenez, furthermore, decries the "consumerism" of the people that distorts their priorities (interview 1989). Fr.

Rejano also emphasizes "vices," such as "prostitution" and "gambling," in discussing social problems (priests' survey 1989). And, Fr. Muni points to a lack of discipline when he notes that the reason some BCC development projects "flopped [is] due to (...) [the] absence of [a] disciplined and organized community" (priests' survey 1989).

Fr. Lapiona reflects on the fact that lack of education may be the reason for "behavioral problems" among villagers: "little education seems to be the root of the social problems like addiction, low morals with regard to sexuality" (priests' survey 1989). He evenly divides the blame for economic problems of villagers between themselves and their elected officials: "laziness on the part of the farmers, unequal distribution of land on the part of the government = poverty" (priests' survey 1989).

Socio-Economic and Political Perspectives

Just as the opinions of priests and lay leaders about the historical-cultural values of the poor show a high degree of concurrence with each other and with national level BCC positions, there is also consistency in their analyses of the key political and economic problems facing the people, as well as in their

proposed remedies. On the whole, the priests' and lay leaders' answers reflect a structural analysis of social injustice and they express, in various ways, the fact that the BCC activists do not consider peasants to be fully aware of the ways or means by which they are being oppressed.

The opinions expressed in the surveys and interviews, often suggest that making the peasants "aware" (Jimenez and others), or "awakening" them (Jimenez and others) to the structural nature of their oppression through BCC seminars will eventually lead the poor to take social action. One priest put it strongly:

Once they [the BCCs] have reached a high state of awakening, empowerment, and organization I see no problems which the BCCs cannot address effectively in the parish. (priests' survey 1989)

The actual mechanisms that move a peasant community from becoming enlightened to taking social action towards specific goals are usually not specifically elaborated; nor are the constraints to such a development. But the terms used to describe this process come from the stages of BCC-CO development that lead from "awakening" or "conscientization," through "organization," to communal "action" (Basic Christian Communities Part II 1987:4; Luzon BCC-CO Retrospect and Prospect 1986:19).

Given 16 possible stumbling blocks to building BCCs six of the seven priests who ranked these hindrances placed "socio-economic conditions of the largest number of the population" within the top 5 possible stumbling blocks, with one priest giving this the highest ranking. Of the two BCC-CO lay staff who responded one ranked this problem number 3 and one gave it a ranking of 7.

The socio-economic analyses given by priests involved in BCCs, as well as by BCC-CO staff, are often quite elaborate and draw on knowledge about global and local economic markets, as well as about technological advances, logistical problems, and social factors. Fr. Muni explains that in

an export oriented economy exporters-buyers dictate the price of exported goods, like copra, ore, and indigenous materials. Labour is made cheap due to export competition. Supply for local demands is neglected resulting in increased price in domestic goods. The rich few own vast land, most of them lie fallow. The farmers are not given the incentive to develop the land where they squat. Very few have modern farming know-how. (priests' survey 1989)

Fr. de los Santos notes that:

Business enterprises are often dictated by politicians, especially by business-minded politicians and those politicians who have money for [a] campaign fund for the next elections.(...) But the suffering of the town due to business may also be blamed on the multi-nationals who lend money to the country with the view of strengthening the country['s] economy and helping the business sector. But the percentage of devaluation of our currency and the high tariff on our exported products besides

not giving a free license for [our] own industrialization hinders our economical progress. (priests' survey 1989)

Fathers Jimenez and Mantaia point out the inequalities in the local market. Fr. Jimenez notes that, "in copra and pig buying the middlemen are exploiting the actual producers who are unprotected" (interview 1989). One priest noted that the people are "economically exploited," they are

victims of unjust structures. For example in copra buying the prices are set by the Chinese. The people themselves cannot do much but the priest can complain about it and at least then the people are aware. Once they are aware and know who is to blame they will act. (interview 1989)

General comments on the economic plight of the people paint a bleak picture: "Exploited by the affluent, no sufficient job opportunities, lack of ways and means to arouse incentives for income" (Reginio: priests' survey 1989); "poverty, unemployment, destruction of the eco-system, exploitation by middlemen" (Jimenez: priests' survey 1989); "low income, low cost of production, high prices, unemployment, lack of appropriate technology, lack of capital, pollution" (Malaylay: priests' survey 1989). The two BCC-CO core leaders who responded put it very simply but no less powerfully: "poverty" (Pedro: ECC-CO staff survey 1989); "hunger and poverty (intense)" (Adelaida: ECC-CO staff survey 1989).

Analyses by the clergy of political realities in Marinduque combine sharp critiques of the practices of political leaders with disparaging comments about the responses of most voters. One priest commented on "unchristian, dirty political practices before, during and after elections" and notes of the general population that they are "timid, politically exploited, dictated upon by the rich politicians" (priests' survey 1989). Another priest lists political problems:

Graft and corruption in the political system. Whoever enters the political arena becomes corrupt. Expensive elections. Politician's campaign fund come[s] from the rich who become the power behind the throne. (priests' survey 1989)

Fr. Paras notes that the people are "influenced by the wealthy and those in power" and have "no political will power" (priests' survey 1989). Fr. Jimenez speaks of "dirty traditional politics, with vested interests, polarization, [and] political dynasty" (priests' survey 1989). In discussing the political problems in his parish Fr. Malaylay points out the "powerlessness of grassroots people" and their "subservience," he feels they have "no participation in important decision making" (priests' survey 1989). Fr. Malaylay remarks, as Fr. Jimenez does, on so-called "political dynasties" in Marinduque. This term, or a similar one "political clans," is often used to describe the political polarization in Marinduque

between family-based clans. As Fr. Jimenez put it "it goes by two big families. Everyone is divided between them, and people go to [vote for] who gives them the most, or for their relatives" (interview 1989). Fr. Allan notes that "political loyalty of some barangay captains and of the extended family members to the political lords causes divisions" and that "power is concentrated on the family who have in society that results to nepotism and loss of voice of the 'have nots'" (priests' survey 1989).

Perspectives on Religion in Marinduque

The clergy and the BCC-CO staff of Marinduque share with each other and with national level BCC-CO positions a number of concerns about popular and traditional Catholicism on the island. Among these, is their perception that popular religiosity is characterized by "superstitions" (in other words does not represent a "modern" understanding of the world) and by a type of "fatalism" that leads the people to be "passive" in the face of everyday problems. These viewpoints most often accompany assertions by the clergy and the BCC-CO staff that an updated religiosity should be the cornerstone of an approach to social justice and human liberation that requires "modern," or

"scientific," forms of social analysis. In this view Catholicism must be the source of symbols, narratives, and practices that encourage and support social action towards systemic change. Accompanying this perspective is often a concern for the traditional roles that members of the elite play in the long established rituals of the town as these roles almost always symbolically legitimize and perpetuate the prominent positions of the town's elite.

On the other hand, some critiques of popular religiosity derive from more traditional, pre-Vatican II, perspectives. Some of the clergy express concern about the lack of serious contemplation of religious practice and beliefs among Marinduque natives. They note that the people take part in religious practices purely out of tradition, without deeper understanding, or even just for enjoyment, such as in town fiestas. These priests also worry about the fact that the people do not adhere properly to rituals and traditions, for example, do not know which knee to bend as they genuflect upon entering the church. Such essentially more pre-Vatican II concerns commonly come from the same priest who in another context will speak about the need to focus on Vatican II teachings with their emphasis on social justice, and on the "essence" of the faith rather than the "form." (15)

In fact, the lack of fundamental catechetical training of many Marinduquenos often causes a seminar on the relationship between Catholicism and social justice to "disintegrate" into a course on basic Catholic doctrine and proper ritual behaviour. I have often witnessed such consciousness raising sessions "dissolve" through questions asked by earnest and eager villagers who no doubt felt that this was their chance to get an expert opinion on issues that had long troubled them or piqued their curiosity. And so, the overwhelmed sister, priest or BCC lay leader finds him or herself increasingly sidetracked by snowballing questions about how many fingers one should use in making the sign of the cross, whether one should make the sign of the cross when passing a graveyard, and whether the light touches to forehead, mouth and chest made before the gospel reading should consist of 12 touches to represent the 12 apostles.

The lack of formal catechetical training is seen by the clergy not only as a stumbling block to introducing villagers to the more evolved perspectives of Vatican II but also as a key factor in the success of many zealous Protestant preachers now actively reaching out to the barrios of Marinduque. The growing influence of these persistent groups is increasingly becoming a major concern of the Catholic clergy in

Marinduque and nation-wide. (16)

In fact, BCC programs are seen as especially important in this context as they offer additional pastoral personnel, through the greater involvement of lay leaders, to counter the swelling "forces" of lay Protestant preachers. Fr. Rejano alludes to this practical advantage of the program, which in fact has important philosophical underpinnings. He explains that "we lack priest[s] to outreach all the localities of the parish or the barrios so we need to multiply" (priests' survey 1989). The BCC approach also offers a greater emphasis on the Bible than there has been traditionally in Catholicism, through the Bible-sharing practices that are central to organized BCCs. In these sessions, key narratives are selected and interpreted in a way supportive of the program's underlying beliefs about faith and society. The clergy hope that this new emphasis on the Bible will also better prepare the people to resist the religious pitch of the Protestant preachers, which relies on an extensive knowledge, but politically conservative interpretation, of the "Word" and the "will" of God. Biblical interpretations rooted in Vatican II are, of course, quite different in their exegetical emphases and could, in principle, offer a worthy challenge to fundamentalist interpretations; however, not many BCC members in Marinduque would at

this point be able to successfully engage in this kind of debate.

The opinions of the clergy on popular religiosity are more mixed, perhaps more ambivalent, than their opinions on Philippine cultural values, which are almost without exception described as unhelpful in liberating people from oppressive circumstances. (17) The following excerpts from my surveys and interviews reveal the variation in the opinions of the clergy on popular religion.

Fr. Muni laments that "Filipino Catholics simply inherited their religion which they take for granted" and he adds that "very few family live their religion and give religious instruction to their children" (priests' survey 1989). In my experience there are, in fact, very few Marinduquenos who do not in one way or another "live" their religion, as it permeates everyday life to such a great extent, but Fr. Muni is more likely than not alluding to the "great" tradition of Catholicism as opposed to the more prevalent "little" tradition of everyday Catholics in Marinduque. Fr. Muni views traditional and popular religiosity as largely a hindrance to the people's "total human development":

I consider these traditions more as a hindrance than a help. It helps if purely religious. It is a hindrance if mixed with civic, social and political activity. Example is our Feast to

honour our Patron Saint. People attend more to the civic affair than the Church celebration. Many traditions are for self-enjoyment and mere revelry. People are celebrating without cause for celebration. (priests' survey 1989)

Fr. de los Santos perceives the popular religiosity of villagers as a hinderance to their total human development because it "is grounded on superstition, and not well-founded on true Christian doctrine" (priests' survey 1989). He feels the people in the town, although they "like barangay folks have inherited religiosity," have a slight advantage

because of their frequency in attending Sunday Masses [they] are privileged to hear sermons....oftentimes these sermons are systematic in explaining doctrines like catechists do (priests' survey 1989)

Fr. Mantala speaks of "religious ignorance-lack of proper catechises - superstitions" (priests' survey 1989) as religious problems of his parish. But he, nonetheless, views the popular and traditional religiosity of villagers and townspeople as "a real help for the total human development program" because it "is a real good point of entry" (Mantala: priests' survey 1989). Fr. Mantala feels that popular religiosity needs only to be redirected "by proper catechises - intensive and extensive conscientization" (priests' survey 1989).

Fr. Malaylay also speaks of "religious ignorance, religious traditionalism" and

"superstitions" (priests' survey 1989). But, like Fr. Mantala, he feels positive about the ability to view the religiosity of villagers and townspeople as

a help to their total human development because it can be a point of departure or entry point for broadening, heightening and/or deepening their awareness, organization and mobilization in the process of Christian total human development. (priests' survey 1989)

Fr. Jimenez explains that traditional practices and beliefs need only to be "catechized and the traditions will be purified" (priests' survey 1989). Fr. Rejano, however, lists "popular religiosity" and "traditional practices" as religious problems in his parish and is less positive about their potential as inroads for BCC formation. He notes, "sometimes it becomes a hindrance since we are introducing a new concept of the Church some still ... [remain] conservative" (priests' survey 1989).

A clearly different view of popular religiosity, and the need to redirect it, is put forth by Fr. Allan. For Fr. Allan popular religiosity in relationship to total human development, is a

help, because BCC as I see it doesn't impose a new way of religion but only awakening the social, political, economic more. Total development should not be seen or viewed on the part of the developer but on the part of the people....Religious traditions are means of unity, brotherhood, and a way of showing their faith. Then total human development should be seen at that track and be approached at that perspective. (priests' survey 1989)

Fr. Paras, on the other hand, points to "some traditional mentality" and "superstitious beliefs" as religious problems in his parish. And, although he feels that the "majority are now becoming aware that they have that divine obligation to share in the process of total human development," he says not all are willing to become involved, "so they remain somewhat indifferent" (priests' survey 1989). Fr. Paras sees the role of the lay leader as crucial in motivating and inspiring the people:

Trained leaders are so important because they talk and live up to the level of the basic christian communities. They can listen very well to their [the people's] aspirations, problems, and basic needs and so help them get out of their mess. (priests' survey 1989)

The two BCC-CO core leaders, who responded to questions about popular religiosity, were much more inclined to view traditional beliefs and practices as a hindrance to total human liberation because these make the people passive, and, because these beliefs tend to focus on the spiritual side of life and not on people's physical needs. Adelaida sees "Intensive Faith-Life sessions/Bible Sharings" (BCC-CO staff survey 1989) as a necessary means by which to counter this problem. It is in these Bible-sharing sessions that the Christian and liberational messages are fused in a progressive exegesis. (18)

Pedro also notes that a shortcoming of the

people is "no deep understanding about Christianity" and agrees that "faith-life integration seminars" are needed to remedy the problem (BCC-CO staff survey 1989). Pedro views popular religiosity as a hindrance "because spiritual is what [is] given attention only not the whole personality (body and soul)" (BCC-CO staff survey 1989).

With regard to the issue of Protestant sects in Marinduque, alternatively called "Born Agains" or "Fundamentalists," the overall opinion of the clergy appears to be that this is a serious issue leading as Fr. Jimenez puts it to "religious division, fanaticism, [and] confusion" (priests' survey 1989) although he and others (Malaylay: interview 1989) also have hopes that this is just a "fad" that "will fade" (Jimenez: interview 1989). Fr. Malaylay notes that the "Born Agains" are successful because "the people do not have a very good knowledge of their faith, especially in the barrios and so are easily led by those who do" (interview 1989). But, Fr. Malaylay also points to another factor, which is financial; he feels some people become involved because Protestant groups offer money for livelihood projects (interview 1989). Fr. de los Santos also notes this tendency in his parish:

Oftentime those sect who can offer financial assistance use this means too to proselytize members of other religions, especially poor (financially) Catholics and those who are not

matured Catholics. (priests' survey 1989).

And, Fr. Paras says "proselytizers on Christians [Catholics] are well funded by foreigners" (priests' survey 1989). (19)

Fr. Malaylay suspects that those who are turning to fundamentalist sects are feeling lost in the large size of Catholic parishes where they are one in many and the personal relationship between the clergy and the faithful is less developed (interview 1989). Fr. Mantala also notes that traditionally Catholic priests have not placed enough emphasis on personal contact with the people and that those people who are most involved with, and close to, the priests do not join other groups (interview 1989).

While Frs. Mantala, Malaylay and Jimenez feel that most new Protestant members will come from villages the priest seldom visits, and from poor people who are given financial incentives, they also point to the fact that some members of the elite are starting to join Protestant groups because they are fed up with the priests' sermons against them (Mantala, Malaylay, Jimenez: interviews 1989).

Finally, an added reason some priests gave for the interest in Protestant movements had to do with the fact that these movements are associated with much admired Western culture. In Marinduque Protestant

groups are "advertised" in large rallies featuring tall, blond, Caucasian males and females. Fr. Paras notes that the people of his parish are "easily swayed by foreign proselytizers to religion" (priests' survey 1989). Fr. Malaylay explains that Filipinos are

easily attracted to the Born Agains because of culture. They [Filipinos] are very hospitable to foreigners, go out of their way for them....many Third World countries have this, it is continued colonialism. (interview 1989) (20)

Both Fr. Jimenez and Fr. Malaylay point to the politically conservative nature of these new religious groups. Fr. Malaylay notes that the Protestant groups emphasize an "I-Thou relationship with God and maintenance of the status quo in society, they are other-worldly and conservative" (interview 1989).

The data from my interviews and surveys provides an insight into how the clergy and BCC-CO lay staff identify, perceive and articulate the issues they face in BCC organizing. On the level of analysis and discourse there are striking similarities between the expressions of the BCC-CO mediators at this level and the language, types of social analysis, and approaches reflected in the national level literature. The remainder of this chapter focusses on the means by which the new exegesis is introduced to townspeople, and on some of the attempts that have been made to put the theory of re-Christianization into practice in the

towns.

Introducing the New Exegesis to the Towns

In a practical sense, the process of "re-christianization" (Diocesan Survey 1981:i) in Marinduque, entails re-organizing the diocese along the directives of Vatican II and to reflect the main themes of liberation theology. This means introducing new structures such as pastoral councils and the BCC-CO program as a pastoral and liberational strategy. On a more symbolic level it means reinterpreting traditional, pre-Vatican II, or folk Catholic symbols, practices and narratives to reflect the new exegesis.

Especially in the early stages, the reinterpretation of important traditional Christian themes was most prominent in BCC seminars that accompany the organization of new BCC groups and are an important part of their ongoing formation. These BCC seminars, as well as the regular Bible-sharing sessions held by the newly formed BCC groups, were led by BCC-CO lay staff and clergy. The impact of the new exegesis was therefore initially limited to small select groups.

While it is mainly up to the BCC-CO lay leaders to introduce the new liberational exegesis and its

accompanying structures to the villages, usually after an introductory and explanatory visit by the parish priest, it is mainly the clergy's job to introduce the new symbolic interpretations to the town, and to redirect traditional religious life in the town to reflect the directions of Vatican II and liberation theology. So it has been mainly through the efforts of the clergy that townspeople have become aware of the new directions the Church is taking.

Four major means by which the clergy introduce the new exegesis to townspeople are: 1) through sermons, 2) through the mandated organizations, 3) through personal encounters, 4) through addresses in souvenir programs. In the towns, the new "liberational" religious interpretations and messages came to be most widely known through the weekly sermons given by parish priests. For those people who were not directly being organized into BCCs, the elite and other town people, it was especially through these sermons that they became familiar with the themes and concerns of Vatican II and liberation theology.

In addition to sermons, members of the elite in the towns are also confronted with the new exegesis in the context of their mandated organizations; for example when the parish priest joins them for a celebration and gives an address or tries to redirect

the activities of such a group to better reflect the concerns of Vatican II. Another traditionally elite dominated religious structure is the town's pastoral council. These councils were set up after Vatican II to involve lay people in the Church and they have been largely the domain of the Church's traditional patrons in the towns. As the parish priest also attends the meetings of pastoral councils, he is offered a chance to introduce new ideas there. Fr. Mantala notes that this is when he talks to members of the town's middle class about "Vatican II and BCCs" (interview 1989)

There are also opportunities in personal encounters with the clergy, which members of the elite traditionally have enjoyed. But a number of priests told me they do not usually discuss issues related to liberation theology in individual meetings with members of the elite (Malaylay 1989; Mantala 1989). Fr. Mantala explained that although he had enjoyed a good relationship with the prominent Lecaroz family before the temporary closure of Marcopper he had never felt he could talk personally to them about BCCs or liberation theology without generating conflict.

Public addresses from the bishop and clergy to the people of Marinduque, for example in the souvenir programs that accompany most religious and civic feast days, also reveal the new approach to religiosity, the

new concern for issues of human rights, social justice, exploitation and oppression, and the new interpretation of the significance and meaning of important public religious traditions and symbols. An example of this is the bishop's message to the people in the 1988 Boac Mayflower souvenir program booklet:

I would like to suggest that those in charge of the festivities see to it that the celebration be as simple as possible, avoiding as much as possible pompous and extravagant activities, not in keeping with the times we are in. (...) it is not fair to our less fortunate brothers that we feast to feed a few, while many around us have nothing to eat. It is not proper that we enjoy, while many of our brothers and sisters are sad and sorrowful, because they do not have even the basic necessities of life. I am pretty sure that the Blessed Virgin Mary will [be] more delighted and pleased if our celebrations will benefit more our less fortunate brothers and sisters. To provide for their basic needs is one way of endearing ourselves to Her and Her Son, because the poor and oppressed are the priority in the mission of Christ Jesus. (Lim 1988)

The reinterpretation of traditional symbols, practices, and narratives is always done in the context of a broader discussion of the problems facing the majority of Filipinos and is accompanied by an explanation of the Church's commitment, following Christ, to care for the poorest people; the "preferential option for the poor." But, as the above quote indicates this context is not always accompanied by the full complement of BCC social tools: an analysis of the structural "roots" of poverty, a discussion of the need to organize the people, and to mobilize them

for social action towards the restructuring of society.

The degree to which the clergy present wealthy parishioners with structural analyses for poverty and oppression that clearly implicate the elite, something they do unhesitatingly in seminars for the poor, appears to be linked to the setting and the degree of personal interaction there is between the clergy and the elite. Sermons, in which the priest faces a large amorphous crowd, are often noted by members of the elite as being potentially offensive. But, when parish priests meet with members of the elite in mandated organizations, or in pastoral council meetings, they tend to act in much more traditional, non-confrontational and pre-Vatican II ways. While the clergy do try to redirect the activities of these organizations they largely offer members traditional reasons for doing so. They may, for example, suggest that organizations try to raise funds for the poor as a charitable act. Written communications, such as in "souvenir programs," also tend to be carefully worded and one-on-one meetings with members of the elite are especially characterized by civility and a lack of discussion about potentially confrontational topics.

Suggestions for redirecting the activities and focus of largely elite-led religious organizations, to the degree this has been attempted, have been

relatively smoothly received. As we will see, however, no really radical changes have been suggested and the full structural explanations underlying the proposed changes have usually been watered down to more traditionally acceptable appeals to aid the poor.

On the other hand, attempts to redirect the most public traditional rituals, such as prominent processions, and the most prestigious ritual positions, such as that of the hermana and hermano in Boac, or the organizationally most powerful groups, such as the pastoral council of Santa Cruz, have met with great resistance from effected members of the elite and, sometimes, from poorer members of the town who protest the changes to age-old rituals and traditions. The following examples illustrate some of the attempts that have been made to redirect Christian practices in Marinduque.

Reinterpreting Religious Symbols, Narratives and Practices in the Towns

For Fr. Malaylay the question of reforming symbols is not so much one of reinterpreting Christian symbols but, as he put it

going back to original meanings - remove corruptions of time - go back to origins. Don't give new false meanings - stay in history and find meanings embedded before. Don't force Marxist ideas on the symbols. Be critical about

new interpretations. (interview 1989) (21)

Nonetheless, Fr. Malaylay does have very clear ideas about what is wrong with the current interpretations and devotions of the people. Fr. Malaylay notes that Mary is traditionally approached with "deep filial devotion" but that these emotions need to be "redirected"

in the sense that cultural values of family relations are part of it. We depend too much on our parents. We should be independent, think for ourselves. People say masses to Mary to let their kids pass [at school] but they should help them themselves. You have to work for yourself, no deus ex machina. (interview 1989)

Fr. Malaylay views the people's relationship to Jesus in similar terms. He speaks of, "deep emotional feeling but not enlightened, no education. [and] No good external expression" (interview 1989). As an example, Fr. Malaylay recounts a popular "superstition." He explains that men traditionally want to pull the karosa of the sepulchre during the Good Friday procession because they "seek to draw power from Him [the image of Christ inside] but power must be built by work" (interview 1989). Fr. Malaylay insists that the people have a "passive attitude" that must be redirected through education because when in trouble they are "asking above to get them out but not working their way out" (interview 1989).

Despite his concern about the nature of present

devotions Fr. Malaylay concedes that it is "very hard to change the mold and mindset" one must "just try to be creative and analytical" (interview 1989).

Fr. Mantala stresses that the way to give traditional symbols new meaning is to grasp every opportunity to educate the people. He gives the example of when the people of the town of Santa Cruz decided to adopt a second patron saint. The primary patron of the town is, of course, the Holy Cross, for which there is a statue and a procession once a year. But, as Fr. Mantala explained, it is very hard for the people to pray to a cross so they asked to have a second patron saint, which, in May of 1988, became the image of Mary known as Miraculous Medal. (22) Fr. Mantala described how, when the new patron was officially adopted, the people were instructed at the ceremonies that Mary

is not just a lawyer to God so we can ask favours. But a model we must follow as a disciple to her son. She told the disciples to do as Her Son had instructed and so we must follow Christ. (interview 1989)

Fr. Mantala explains that the saints must be seen by the people as models to emulate because they came close to acting out God's orders to live socially good and just lives, as opposed to being seen only as intermediaries for personal concerns. (23)

Fr. Mantala notes that this is also primarily the attitude of the people towards Jesus. He says that

the people still need to know Christ better. The knowledge now is very selfish - Christ as Santa Claus. Especially the Sto. Nino who is very innocent and helpless - very easy to ask Him for things. The Nazarene is the helpless and suffering Christ - like the Philippine people. So we need the victorious Christ and the Christ of social justice - [with a] strong will [and] who sacrificed for other people. (interview 1989) (24)

In order to redirect the various devotions which the people of Marinduque hold, the bishop asked Fr. Mantala to update the novenas in the diocese to make them "biblically, liturgically and ecumenically in line with Vatican II" (Mantala: interview 1989). According to Fr. Mantala this means that they must be made "scripturally upright," that they must reflect the proper relationship between man and the object of devotion, and that they must not go "against non-Catholics" (interview 1989). This refers especially to anti-Jewish references in some old novena booklets.

Fr. Mantala notes that these novenas are very old, they often contain Spanish and Latin words, God is presented as "very remote and not involved with the people." The objects of worship are often addressed as if they are God according to Fr. Mantala. Fr. Mantala gives the example of the "Novena of the Assumption" which "calls Mary Lord of the Universe" (interview 1989).

In redirecting the attention of the devotee "to God through the saints," Fr. Mantala maintains that he

will attempt to include God's directive to believers that they be actively involved in the creation of the kind of social environment that Jesus spoke of and died for (interview 1989). Fr. Mantala expects to meet with great resistance in his attempt to redirect the novenas as "the people don't like new things, changes" (interview 1989). He notes that they "have memorized the old wordings and hymns" and that the novenas have become "miraculous through the prayers offered over time gone by - they become powerful" (Mantala: interview 1989).

Liturgy has also been adapted in many parishes. For example, in Santa Cruz the "offering" of the people during mass is now often made by poor people in the form of food, for consumption by the priest, as opposed to cash that was usually supplied by wealthier churchgoers. This allows more poor people to participate in the support of the Church, and so to "be the Church." Fr. Mantala also did away with the organized choir when he came to Santa Cruz in favour of encouraging the entire gathered congregation to provide the musical accompaniment by singing. Again, the notion of all being equally involved, responsible, and able to contribute, lay at the root of this decision according to Fr. Mantala (interview 1989).

To further emphasize and embody the notion of a

Church for, with, and of, the poor the bishop takes his meals with priests, visitors, and whatever personnel may be around. While the Boac cathedral was being restored in 1989, from the damage of the 1987 typhoons, available personnel included, besides the usual housekeepers and cooks, the workmen from the building site. A common guest at the bishop's table is also the old and mentally handicapped bell ringer for the cathedral who, for all intents and purposes, lives in the bell tower. The plates and cutlery used by the bishop are very simple and many of the glasses for water are empty coffee jars which are also commonly used by villagers.

Another significant symbolic gesture made by Bishop Lim, on behalf of the whole diocese, was to do away with distinctions between rich and poor in the administration of important sacraments such as weddings and baptisms. Rather than receiving a private ceremony for a higher fee there is now only one fee and no private ceremonies (Malaylay 1989). This move not only denies the wealthy the right to buy exclusive services from the Church, and so distinguish themselves from those who cannot afford these services, but also is seen as a means of bringing people, rich and poor, together in important ritual ceremonies such as marriages, which are commonly administered to multiple

couples at once.

An obvious indication of the new direction of the Church is in the much discussed fact that the clergy are dividing more of their time between the town's centre and its outlying villages. Clergy are saying mass and administering other sacraments in village chapels with greater frequency instead of always expecting village people to come to the centre, which was usual under the old model. (25)

While the above examples only minimally impact on members of the elite, although their symbolic message is clear and has not failed to rouse comment, the following examples show how the clergy, being based in the towns and involved in the mainly elite-run activities there, cannot but come into direct dialogue and sometimes confrontation, with these members of the elite, as the clergy try to redirect religious life.

A focus of attention for the clergy, in their attempts to re-Christianize the townspeople of Marinduque, are the mandated organizations. Fr. Malaylay notes that most of the members of the mandated Church organizations in the town are the "richer ones," but he says it is good to "hold on to that and keep educating them in the new model" (interview 1989), although he admits that it is a slow process. Fr. Malaylay describes how he attends the meetings of the

Catholic Family Movement in Boac and that at his suggestion "they invited the poor at their Christmas party and at least confronted with them" (interview 1989). Fr. Malaylay hopes that this will "raise consciousness." He notes that "even if its only small its a start" (Malaylay interview 1989). Another example Fr. Malaylay gives is related to the Daughters of Mary Immaculate who often visit the local jail where they bring clothes and catechism. Fr. Malaylay tries to raise the consciousness of the organization's members, in this case, by asking them to think about the question "why are these men here" (interview 1989) in the hope that they will start to think about "root causes." On the whole, Fr. Malaylay takes a more diplomatic approach than, for example, Fr. Mantala, and, although he does come in for criticism from members of the elite, it is not to the extent of the conflict surrounding Fr. Mantala as we will see below.

Fr. Jimenez gave as an example of a way to "redirect the people" how he adapted the Adoracion Nocturna to a format that would allow the elite members of this mandated devotion to discuss relevant social issues. Normally, a night vigil held regularly by this organization consists solely of prayer, and sleep when one cannot stay awake any longer. The tradition calls

for the vigil to be maintained all night and to include at least 12 men to represent the 12 apostles. Fr. Jimenez convinced the members that even less participants would be acceptable and that they did not have to stay all night but, rather, could stay shorter and spend their time in discussing issues related to faith and society (Jimenez 1989).

Fr. Jimenez notes that he also suggested that the wealthy not spend money on a band for a celebration, such as a procession, but to "use the money for the band to give to the poor or to seminarians" (interview 1989).

Fr. Mantala also saw the Adoracion Nocturna devotion as a target of renewal. He explains that this devotion is typical of most devotions that focus on the relationship between the believer and God, usually through the intercession of a saint, and not between the believer and the community. Fr. Mantala addressed the members of the devotion and emphasized the fact that Christ's death, which is central to their devotion, was a sacrifice for the

salvation and development of others an act which you must now emulate. Don't just reflect on Christ's death for you and so you suffer for him in return and then you can ask Him for favours. (interview 1989)

Fr. Mantala encouraged the devotees to refocus their efforts on reaching out to the needy in their

community. Fr. Mantala explains that his complaint about the traditional emphasis of the Adoracion Nocturna devotion is valid for most devotions in Marinduque.

Despite his concern for bringing the various devotions in line with the directives of Vatican II, Fr. Mantala is sensitive to the reality of the situation, and, he says that he "cannot change the old practices yet because this will create a vacuum because there is not yet a full new system in place" (interview 1989).

The pulpit is another powerful forum through which to propagate the ideas of Vatican II and liberation theology, while linking them to actual events and concerns of the local community. In both Boac and Santa Cruz I was repeatedly told by parishioners, ranging from members of the elite to less prominent Church-goers, that the themes of the sermons are now very often about Vatican II, about the "preferential option for the poor," about BCCs, about pollution, and about political and economic problems of the country, the island, and the town. In these sermons, local wealthy political and economic leaders are not uncommonly taken to task as a group and sometimes even individually.

One priest commented on the difficulty that

many priests encounter in having to speak out in the interest of the people when this means alienating some who are possibly benefactors or even friends. He explains that, "after the elections we [the Church] always have a post-election statement that hurts the Reyes family - especially under Marcos. Now it's pollution" (priest's interview 1989). Although warned against too much intimacy by the bishop, Fr. Mantala has always had an close relationship with the Lecaroz family who supported him in the seminary. When Fr. Mantala became the vocal centre of opposition to Marcopper and assisted the fishermen in starting a court case against the mine, the Lecaroz family turned their backs on him. Fr. Mantala says "it hurts me that they are disappointed with me now because of the rally" (interview 1989). (26)

Fr. Mantala's own sermons very often link local events to a lesson about the teachings of Vatican II, or the principles of BCCs, and may include an implicit criticism of local public officials or businessmen. In a homily on February 12, 1989, in the church of Santa Cruz Fr. Mantala focussed on a recent public meeting of the town council in which they outlined their achievements over the past year in office. Fr. Mantala said the intent of his homily was to "deepen" that experience. He spoke about public office as "a public

trust," about the "principle of accountability to the people," about the need for consultation with the people, and of the people's "sacred right to participate" (Mantala: homily Feb.12,1989). He concluded, that the people themselves must be critical:

Let's evaluate the achievements of our leaders according to the principle of the 'preferential option for the poor' because 80% of the people are poor and living below the poverty line. (Mantala: homily Feb 12,1989)

The need to question authority also came up in a sermon which centered on the story of the angel appearing to Mary to tell her she would bear the child Jesus. Fr. Mantala stressed the fact that Mary questioned the angel at length before accepting its prophecy, and he used this story to urge the people to always question authority.

On February 19, 1989, the theme of the Gospel was the "transfiguration of Jesus" (Luke 9:28-36). Fr. Mantala spoke at length about the importance of change, first of all in people's personal lives, and then in society and in the Church. The latter point was most clearly directed at those in the town who had openly opposed the changes he had instigated:

Change must also happen in our society - we must not be stagnant. There is a saying: Ecclesia seper est reformanda - the Church must always be on the go. This means constant change. This change must be for the good of the people - we must not be afraid of change - just have faith in God. Change is for development aggiornamento of Vatican II means change for the better. Let

us not place obstacles to changes the Church has initiated because the Church needs to respond to the changing situation of the times. (Mantala: homily February 19, 1989)

Fr. Mantala has actively tried to bring the structures of his parish into line with the themes of Vatican II and liberation theology. In addition to putting considerable emphasis on the development of an active BCC program and on creating village pastoral councils, he has attempted to transform existing traditional structures. After establishing village pastoral councils, Fr. Mantala decided to replace the traditionally elite-led town pastoral council, through elections, with representatives from various villages and members of BCCs in the town. Part of the rationale behind this move was to bring people from the periphery to the centre and to place poorer people, who represent the greatest number of people in the parish, in these representative positions. This move, apparently somewhat undiplomatically handled, caused great bitterness among the displaced former pastoral council members. (27)

Fr. Mantala also decided to reform the positions of hermana and hermano of the Santo Rosario in Santa Cruz. Although these positions are not nearly as significant or prestigious in Santa Cruz as are their counterparts in Boac, they are still traditionally held by wealthier patrons of the Church.

The reasons for this are not only the prestige of the position but also the financial costs associated with the job, such as paying for the cleaning of the Church and the priests vestments, and supplying food for certain rituals during the year. The hermana and hermano must also have considerable free time to organize events, which a poor person is less likely to have, and extensive contacts among the wealthy to persuade them to contribute to the costs of novena masses.

Fr. Mantala, however, insisted on giving the position to a poor, but active, member of a BCC in the town. He decided that the necessary financial costs of the position could be born by wealthier Church members who would be asked to contribute funds. In fact, the woman who became hermana felt the position to be a great burden and felt uncomfortable having to solicit funds to help her with her duties. Members of the elite were also disturbed and angered by this change in the "normal" course of the position. (28)

Finally, Fr. Mantala ran into a number of problems with regard to the life-size religious statues that are owned by members of the elite of the town and play a central role in many ritual events. First of all, in order to focus attention on Christ, as opposed to the saints and Mary, Fr. Mantala had long

contemplating removing the many statues that line the inner walls of the cathedral. These statues, often donated to the Church, form a focal point for devotees who enter the church and head straight for their sacred patron to pray and light candles without acknowledging the host, the body of Christ, at the altar. The host is considered the proper focal point in the church and the life and death of Christ are also the main foci of liberation theology.

Although Fr. Mantala had not yet moved on his resolve to free the church of its many "distracting" statues, partly because there was as yet no place to put them, he did decide to end the traditional invasion of the church, in the days before the Good Friday procession, by all the town's most beautiful and most significant statues related to the Holy Week. He let it be known that these statues were taking the place of the people in the church and that this was not to be condoned any longer. Immediately, Fr. Mantala was faced with a possible "boycott" by the elite owners of the statues who threatened to sabotage the Good Friday procession by keeping their statues, the centre pieces of this procession, at home if they were not allowed to move the images into the church on their large karosas, where over the course of a few days the statues could be elaborately decorated. Fr. Mantala, faced with a

mass revolt if the procession were threatened, capitulated.

Also related to Holy Week, and to statues, was a directive from the bishop to replace the traditional Mater Dolorosa (Mother of Sorrows) statue in the joyful salubong ritual of Easter morning with an image of Mary that is smiling, or at least not mourning. In this pre-dawn ritual a statue of Mary, traditionally the Mater Dolorosa which plays a central role in Holy Week, is carried around the town in procession followed by female worshippers. The statue is shrouded in sorrow over the death of Jesus. Meanwhile, another statue, that of the Risen Christ, is carried around in procession in the opposite direction accompanied by male worshippers. At a pre-arranged place the two statues and their entourages meet. The two statues are positioned facing each other, but, of course, Mary cannot yet see her risen son as her face is shrouded. Through the intervention of a deus ex machina, in the form of a child dressed as an angel and lowered by tackle from an elaborately decorated bamboo structure called "the heaven," the shroud is lifted from Mary and she is joyfully reunited with her son. (29)

While the Mother of Sorrows statue is the much loved and central image of Mary during Holy Week, the bishop considers the use of this statue in the salubong

ritual symbolically inappropriate. He wishes, rather, to emphasize by all means the triumphant and victorious nature of Christ's victory over death. The theme of Christ's victory over death is one of the central narratives that are drawn upon by liberation theologians to motivate the people to fight for justice, as Christ did. It is a clear symbolic statement of the inevitable victory of good over evil and the need to act and accept challenges to attain victory. In his effort to substitute the Mater Dolorosa statue in the salubong for another one, Fr. Mantala met with so much resistance from the family who own the Mater Dolorosa in Santa Cruz, as well as from devotees, that again, he backed down. (30)

The bishop himself has also actively taken steps to reform key traditions and symbols so that they may better reflect concerns for social justice and the upliftment and empowerment of the poor. The lavish statues have long been the focus of the bishop's reform efforts. Not only are these statues, which are so important to the ritual life of the community, owned exclusively by members of the elite, but they also are elaborately decorated and dressed to look like queens, in the case of Mary and other female images. As objects of worship that also resemble the elite, the statues subtly legitimate and support wealth. In addition to

distorting historical and biblical truth in this manner, these statues also concentrate enormous power over essential aspects of ritual life in the hands of the elite who own them; non-compliance by the elite to let the statues take part in a procession jeopardizes the ritual life of the whole community. And, finally, as the statues are known by the people to possess miraculous powers, because of their antiquity and the many people who have prayed to them, the ownership of these statues by the elite, who keep them in their homes, light candles for them and pray before them daily, grants the elite a form of great spiritual power. Some people say that the rich are wealthy and have good fortune because they have so many powerful statues staying with them in their homes.

An especially controversial proposal by the bishop concerned the miraculous statue of the patroness of Boac; Mary of the Immaculate Conception. Once a year, on the feast day of the Immaculate Conception, the statue is the centre piece for a large procession that is attended by people from all over the Philippines and even from abroad. This statue, with the features of a Spanish lady, is dressed as a queen in beautiful and expensive robes and sports a crown with real jewels that have been contributed by various wealthy Marinduque families. This crown, when not in

use, must be stored in a safe because of its value. The very fact that the statue of Mary is so expensively dressed, and that it has become generally accepted that she should be so dressed in order to be properly honored, excludes the poor. But, in addition to symbolically legitimizing the wealthy, this statue, as almost all others in Marinduque, is the image of a Western, Caucasian, female.

Bishop Lim suggested the statue should be dressed as a Filipina peasant woman, both to legitimize the poor and in an attempt to present to Filipino faithful an image of their beloved patroness that does not simultaneously uplift Western culture by association. The statue itself, however, because of its highly personalized spiritual significance, could not easily be replaced by one with the features of a Filipina. The bishop's idea was never carried out. When I asked Fr. Malaylay about this he explained that, "the people are not yet ready" (interview 1989).

Also related to the statues of Boac, is another tradition that has, reputedly, caused the bishop concern. Many of the statues in the hands of members of the Boac elite "own land." This is how the owners and the clergy describe the situation in which a hectare or so of land is thought of as belonging to the statue. In at least one case, the profits from this land are

actually deposited in a bank account under the name of the statue. (31)

According to Mr. Montellano, a member of the local elite of Boac, the bishop once made a decision to reclaim all the statues arguing that, in fact, as saints, they belong to the Church. The bishop did not only want to reclaim all of the statues for the Church but he also wanted to implement a plan by which the land that had been "in the hands" of these statues would be distributed among the poor. Mr. Montellano was, as would traditionally be fitting for a member of an influential family, the head of the pastoral council of Boac at the time. In this capacity he was asked by the bishop to use his position on the council and his good standing with other members of the elite to implement the bishop's plan. Not surprisingly, Mr. Montellano is also a member of a family that owns many important antique statues. The ensuing controversy over this affair caused Mr. Montellano to quit the pastoral council. As Mr. Montellano later explained to me "I said, O bishop, you want me to start a land reform program even before the government is implementing theirs. I can not do that !" (interview 1989).

Another example of the bishop's efforts to minimize the influence of members of the elite in what he considers to be essentially religious affairs, is

the case in which he tried to deny political leaders their usual forum in a souvenir program. The souvenir program in question was a particularly important one as it marked the completion of years of restorations and renovations on the centuries old Boac cathedral.

The hermana for 1989 became the chairperson of the souvenir program committee. Mrs. de la Santa had gone to great lengths to raise the necessary funds for the book through friends and corporate sponsors, to organize and contribute to its contents, and to solicit the addresses to the people from the usual political and religious leaders. She was especially pleased that she had even been able to solicit a promise for a letter from Corazon Aquino for the book.

Just before the book was to go to press, however, the bishop let it be known, through Fr. Malaylay, that he did not wish to have any addresses from political leaders as this should be solely a religious affair and should not provide a forum for political leaders. This led to a very tense period in which the hermana threatened to withdraw all involvement. In the end, the book did go to press containing the political addresses.

The matter of the restoration of the Church, after the 1987 typhoons, had itself been a point of conflict as Bishop Lim was determined to maintain

control of the project in which the congresswoman also showed great interest. Mrs. Reyes had taken a previous renovation upon herself and this had become an ongoing source of conflict with the local clergy. The bishop was determined that this renovation would remain in the hands of the Church and that the poor would be highly involved and be seen to have contributed to the project, traditionally a source of pride for the wealthy. To this end, the bishop encouraged the poor to contribute labour and materials and he placed large signs near the building site with the amounts contributed by each village for the pride and satisfaction of the villagers.

Conclusions

This chapter has shown that to a large extent national level BCC-CO ideology is faithfully reflected in the discourse and social analysis of program implementors at the diocesan level. There is, furthermore, a high degree of consistency and concurrence in the perspectives of the clergy and lay leaders from 1981 to 1989. This chapter also provided numerous examples that illustrate attempts by the clergy to reflect the new religious perspectives in practice by reinterpreting existing religious symbols,

narratives and practices.

To review, a number of the central BCC-CO national level perspectives that were faithfully reproduced in the local texts I analyzed and in my surveys and interviews are: 1) the need to "contextualize" evangelization, meaning to make it relevant to social realities as understood by the program; 2) the notion that society is essentially in conflict and that interests of elites and peasants are fundamentally opposed; 3) the notion of "structural" sin, as an addition to the traditional notion of "personal" sin, to capture the moral injustice of systemic oppression of the poor; 4) a view of the poor as "alienated" from the reality of their oppression or having a "low level of consciousness" and needing to undergo consciousness raising to be "made aware"; 5) a conviction that the poor are encouraged to be "passive" through a superstitious, other-world oriented and individualistic folk Catholicism, through a false sense of social reality, through direct economic oppression, and through Philippine cultural values; 6) that social solidarity is, furthermore, hindered by "individualistic" Philippine values, the patron-client system, and a religiosity that is vertically, rather than horizontally, expressed; 7) that people need to be organized to take concerted social action against

social injustice; 8) a redirection of ecclesiastical perspective captured in the phrase "preferential option for the poor" or "Church of the poor"; 9) an effort to decentralize the Church by reaching out to the villages and by increasing lay involvement; and, 10) a realization that religious symbols, structures and practices legitimize and support elite status and need to be transformed. The one area where the responses I received from the clergy showed greater flexibility and more mixed attitudes was with regard to popular religiosity, which was seen by some respondents as a possibly positive force.

The perspectives of the clergy and lay leaders, as reflected in this chapter, are essentially valuable because they do represent an improvement, from the point of view of the poor, over past Church views and lack of critical social commitment. They also reflect a more accurate understanding of the situation of the poor than the perspectives of most members of the elite. And, they largely reflect and explain the statistical data I presented in chapter five on socio-economic conditions in Marinduque. On the other hand, these newer perspectives also reproduce a number of problematic aspects inherent in the BCC-CO ideology.

As mentioned in the national level chapters, the BCC-CO program maintains it is a grass roots

movement while in fact the movement is very much top-down in initial orientation. There is a strong undercurrent to the program that asserts that the people at the "grass roots" are in need of change. This perspective is reflected, for example, in the notion that the people possess inadequate "consciousness" of their situation, need to be made "aware," need to be organized, and to change their cultural values, religious traditions, and social relationships with each other and the "higher ups." This approach fundamentally devalues local knowledge, experience, and survival strategies and fails to understand or acknowledge everyday peasant forms of resistance. It also fails to recognize the dynamic character of peasant culture and religiosity and the potential of local culture and religiosity to provide the ideological basis for organized action under extreme circumstances.

There is a certain irony in the fact that BCC-CO proponents, who often decry the continuing cultural influence of former colonial powers in the Philippines and the propensity of Filipinos to value Western products and culture over their own, should emphasize the need for "scientific" and "modern" methods of social analysis and community organization. In effect, this "superior" outside knowledge serves to further

devalue local knowledge and creates a somewhat artificial distance between BCC workers and the people they are organizing. This is especially true in the case of lay leaders.

Finally, there is a persistent contradiction in the texts I reviewed with regard to the causes of ongoing social inequality. While these causes are usually determined to be structural, the result of systemic oppression, in other contexts both poverty and the people's lack of involvement in BCCs is described as the result of personal vices of the people and their "wrong sense of values." In other words, elite and colonial perspectives are applied as explanations of peasant behaviour.

As this chapter demonstrates, the degree of reproduction of BCC-CO ideology from the national level to diocesan mediators is quite high. This may in part be accounted for through the traditionally strong links of the clergy with the national level. Links that are perpetuated by, for example, ongoing training seminars. The surveys and interviews I conducted among the clergy also showed some measure of transformation of national level BCC-CO ideas. These changes appear especially to be linked to a degree of pre-Vatican II thought that persists, as well as to personal variations and preferences evident among the clergy.

With regard to the attempts to put BCC-CO ideas into practice in the towns, there is greater evidence of transformations to the program. In the limited number of cases where changes have been implemented there is evidence that the poor also express a degree of dissatisfaction with changes to time honored traditions. But, at this point in time the greater source of resistance to attempted changes comes from the elite. To date, the elite are more effected than the poor of the towns both by the pro-poor message of Vatican II and by attempts to reform popular public traditions and practices that the elite have traditionally dominated.

Transformations to the program occur not only as a result of direct elite opposition to changes but also as a result of conflict between aspects of BCC-CO ideology and the priest's Christian mission. While BCC-CO ideology requires a clear commitment to the poor in their conflict with the wealthy, the clergy are bound by their religious vows to facilitate the salvation of all members of their "flock," causing hesitation and uncertainty among the clergy. As the relationship between the clergy and the elite in the towns is a central force shaping the degree to which BCC-CO perspectives are put into practice and reflected in the religious life of the towns, this relationship is

further explored in the next chapter.

NOTES

1. While this chapter explores the viewpoints of both the clergy and lay leaders, the emphasis is on the clergy as they remain the main conveyors of the new exegesis in the towns. The perspectives of the BCC-CO lay staff are further elaborated on in chapter nine of the village level chapters.

2. Some of the results with regard to socio-demographic data bear mentioning as they offer a slightly different and less fortunate picture than that presented by the official statistics provided in chapter five of this thesis. Of 976 respondents 291 registered themselves as squatters (Diocesan Survey 1981:5;25). The 1980 Census of Agriculture lists only 1,423 or 3% of the total of 44,555 farms as "other" than owned, partly owned or leased/tenanted. Of 942 respondents registering a monthly family income (ranging from 0-99 to 3100 pesos and above) the largest group, 535, made 100-300 pesos per family per month with an additional 61 respondents registering monthly family earnings between 0-99 pesos a month. Only 6 respondents' families made 3100 and above (Diocesan Survey 1981:5;28). The official statistics of 1985 note that 48.9 % of families earn under 10,000 pesos a year averaging 7,192 pesos a year. When asking the people to rank themselves in terms of their socio-economic strata the survey uses the categories "destitute, poor, average, rich, very rich" (Diocesan Survey 1981:30). Obviously, these are categories the native Marinduquenos who prepared the survey found relevant. Interestingly, the Tagalog terms and categories which I arrived at (see chapter five) through questioning people to discern native socio-economic distinctions generally coincide with these english glosses.

3. The fact that this survey was conducted under martial law may explain the lack of desire to express political complaints but does not explain the other categories tested. Of the responses, an average of 16.1% said to have "No problem" and 44.5% said to have "No answer" to questions about political, cultural, social, and religious aspects of their life.

4. Interestingly, the survey discovered that 52.8% of the respondents would first turn to immediate family

members for help with a personal problem followed by 27% who would first turn to "God and His Saints" for help. Only 5% would go to a priest first.

5. By 1988, the BCC-CO Luzon program had shifted its focus from sectoral organization to "parish based" organizing, or, "BCC at the service of the community at large." The intent in making this change was to avoid the charge of excluding certain groups of Christians from the liberational task of creating "God's Kingdom on Earth."

6. For more about the BCC-CO core staff meetings and seminars for local level participants see chapter nine.

7. It should be noted that BCCs, much as other local level non-government organizations with minimal funds and personnel, lead a rather precarious existence. There is usually an initial stage of great interest and activity followed by a slow decline in participation and organization of events, such as Bible-study or new recruitments. Some BCCs become totally inactive or dysfunctional, others carry on in a minimal capacity, and many go through phases of renewal at some time down the road due to renewed attention from the outside by, for example, a new parish priest or by the BCC-CO organization itself.

8. It should also be noted that my survey reflects the typical approach taken in BCC-CO social analysis, namely, the breakdown of society into social, political, economic, and religious domains, seeking problems that obtain in each. But, other types of questions on this survey were more open-ended, rendering less predictable answers that sometimes contradicted BCC-CO approaches and perspectives.

9. Fr. Mantala is, however, also very aware of the importance of the laity in this movement. He notes elsewhere that:

The BCC is a new movement in the Catholic Church of becoming a real Church of the People, this is thus a movement of the people. Lay leaders are really a must in this movement of the people. (priests' survey 1989)

There is an obvious ambiguity in these two statements that characterizes the movement as a whole. This ambiguity may be simply expressed thus: to what degree is the movement one of the hierarchy involving the laity and to what degree is the movement one of the

laity involving the hierarchy?

10. The case of Fr. Mantala is interesting as it refutes the typical stereotyping of the BCC-CO and BEC programs that often occurs at the national level and is repeated by the participants of these programs at all levels. While Fr. Mantala prefers the BEC program for, as he says, theological reasons, it may not be said that he is only interested in "pastoral" concerns, or not active in organizing the poor, or unwilling to take risks in doing so, or unwilling to alienate the wealthy in the process. Fr. Mantala's actions refute these stereotypes. While Fr. Mantala seems in many ways as active and committed as, for example, Fr. Malaylay, who embraces the BCC-CO program, and in many cases Fr. Mantala is less diplomatic in his dealings with the elite, the BCC-CO lay staff often equated his preference for the BEC program with a lack of willingness to whole-heartedly join the people's struggle as perceived in structural terms.

11. As I have indicated, Fr. Malaylay is the parish priest of Boac and also the Social Action Director for the diocese. He whole-heartedly embraces the BCC-CO program and works closely together with the BCC-CO staff at the diocesan level. Fr. Malaylay is very well informed about national issues that effect the poor and about international issues that effect the Philippines. Fr. Malaylay notes that:

I prefer the BCC-CO approach because it is more wholistic, contextualized, + scientifically and technically better than the KRISKA [BEC] which although also has the element of organizing does not delve and apply enough deeply into the human sciences with regard to the awakening empowering and mobilizing aspects, phases of sectoral/community organizing. (priests' survey 1989)

These concerns of Fr. Malaylay are particularly evident when he addresses seminars for the poor where the discourse he uses is uncompromising in placing blame for poverty on unjust structures and on those who benefit from them. But, Fr. Malaylay has also managed to maintain a reasonable relationship with the elite.

12. The possible stumbling blocks I offered were, in this arbitrary order: Philippine historical-cultural values; Socio-economic conditions of the largest number of the population; Patron-client type relationships between peasants and the middle-class; A hesitation on

the side of the people to organize formally against injustices or oppression; Popular religious practices of the barrio; Popular religious practices of the town; Lack of funding; Lack of skilled lay leadership; Lack of organizational and motivational skills of the parish priest; Frequent re-shuffling of the parish priest; Lack of unity on the part of the country's bishops on the strategy of BCCs; Lack of unity within a diocese on the BCC approach; Active opposition by the middle-class; Active opposition by the military and right wing groups; Active opposition by insurgency groups (NPA, MNLF etc.); Logistical problems such as remote locations of barrios and difficult transportation.

13. The quotes reproduced here are in the original language of the informants. I have decided that rather than to adjust each quote to comply with proper English standards, or to place [sic] at each anomaly, I will only add information to aid clarity of meaning.

14. The expression "being in the material side of the coin" or a similar phrase is quite commonly used by Filipinos when communicating in English to mean being interested in material things.

15. More on this and other contradictions and anomalies follow in the next chapter.

16. In 1988-89, most of the articles in progressive Catholic journals I perused in Manila dealt prominently with questions of the role of the Church in politics, the role of the Church in the 1986 social revolution, the relationship of Christianity to Marxism, Catholicism and social justice, and, the importance of Vatican II. On a brief return trip at the end of 1991, I noticed a significant shift in emphasis. Articles focussed more on the spread of Protestantism and ranged from questions of how to approach ecumenicalism in the Philippine context to wondering how to "deal" with the fundamentalist "problem." These articles evoked a considerable sense of feeling embattled and perceived threat on the part of Catholics.

17. Perhaps the very obvious enthusiasm of many Marinduquenos for religious matters, even if it may be considered "misdirected" by the clergy, is recognized as a positive force. Indeed, there is some evidence that the expected resistance to changes in ritual traditions causes the clergy to move cautiously so as not to lose popular support.

18. More on this topic follows in chapter nine.

19. Villagers occasionally told me about the financial offers made to people if they would join Protestant movements. I was also asked why the Catholic Church does not offer such funds. One story was about aid given to a number of villages after a typhoon. The housing and food aid was distributed only to those households that contained members of that sect.

20. Fr. Malaylay is referring to the Philippine cultural trait known as "colonial mentality" that describes a certain subservience and admiration Filipinos are believed to express towards foreigners.

21. In this quote Fr. Malaylay does not acknowledge that interpretation of meaning, whether in trying to recover original meanings or seeking new ones, is never unproblematic and is always mediated.

22. The choice of this statue is significant as it is the primary patron of the wealthy Quindoza family that owns numerous copies of this image. The Quindozas also own a pharmacy named after "their" saint. This family campaigned hard for the honour of having their personal favorite become the second patron of the town making their statue very important in subsequent rituals and devotions.

23. There is evidence in conversations, interviews and letters that many people do indeed see the saints and Mary, whom they worship, as intermediaries to God for personal needs. See Appendix II for the translation of a letter that was left under the image of Our Mother of Perpetual Help.

24. Fr. Mantala also explained to me that there is a traditional belief that if someone is given an image of the Sto. Nino, apparently it must be a gift just as a real child might be considered a gift, and they carry it around for a few days treating it like a real baby, they can subsequently ask the image for favours.

25. The frequency of visits by parish priests to the villages is often commented on by members of the elite in the towns, usually unfavorably.

26. The rally took place to protest the closing of Marcopper, which was largely due to the organization and mobilization of effected fishermen by the Church. It was the involvement of the Church in the temporary shutdown of the mine that alienated the Lecaroz family from Fr. Mantala.

27. I return to this episode in the next chapter in order to elaborate on the response of the elite to Fr. Mantala's changes in the parish.

28. While I will elaborate further on the reaction of the elite to this occurrence in the following chapter, I would like to quote the poor hermana Maria Rioflorido on her reasons for accepting the challenge. These reasons are remarkably at variance with the Vatican II inspired reasons for which Fr. Mantala asked her to accept the position of hermana. Maria explained that:

If you are given an assignment by the Church you cannot say no easily because it is a call of God. If you refuse, God might be angry with you. I am afraid. But really, it is very difficult, the feast of the Santo Rosario, Christmas, the salubong at Easter and the merienda [snack] that goes with building the bamboo place [structure] but I accepted the burden. Also, I cannot refuse because Santo Rosario is the most important saint of all the saints. Everyone believes that - all the church-goers. Different Mary's are the same, there is only one, but they are different in the miracles they have done. But Rosario is the major one because it is the mother of Jesus. Really it is very confusing the different names [of Mary] - it is a mystery - ask Fr. Mantala to explain it to you. For Santo Rosario you need to say and pray the rosary every day but for Perpetual Help you need to say the rosary but it is up to you when. Also, look at the feast, it's the biggest of all the Mary feasts. It's the major saint. If you are chosen a hermana of Santo Rosario it is a call of Mary, you cannot refuse. (interview 1989)

Maria is an active member of a BCC in the town of Santa Cruz and a perfect example of how traditional attitudes and beliefs can coexist with the new approaches expressed in the BCC program. Despite her traditional reasons for becoming hermana, she expresses the newer approach of the Church as well. She explains without hesitation why the Church should be involved in the pollution problem of the people:

The Church is for the poor. It observed that the barrios are very much effected by the pollution - of course the Church is involved because the poor are involved. It is good not to just accept the situation. (interview 1989)

29. This ritual combines elements of folk tradition with what would be considered "superstition" by BCC proponents. The bamboo "heaven" is elaborately decorated with flowers and palms. These decorations are eagerly collected by participants after the ritual as they are believed to have become endowed with mystical powers to heal.

30. During a brief return visit, in 1991, I was told that the statue has now been replaced in the ritual.

31. According to one statue holder I interviewed, this land is meant to ensure the proper upkeep of the statue for generations to come no matter how the financial status of the family may change.

CHAPTER EIGHT: Relationships between the Clergy and the Elite in Marinduque Towns

Introduction

From the previous chapter a picture emerges of the degree of reproduction and transformation of BCC-CO theory, and related practices, from the national level to the diocesan level and the towns. From this overview, it is clear that efforts by BCC mediators to transform religious practices and social behaviour at the level of the towns have, so far, most directly pitted the clergy against the local elite. To date, elite opposition has succeeded in minimizing change to popular public rituals of the towns so that there is but little chance to assess likely responses by the poor to BCC inspired changes of popular rituals. In this chapter I, therefore, explore the essential relationship between the clergy and the elite in the towns of Marinduque.

I start by briefly recapping the various ways in which the new exegesis challenges the elite. I then explore in some depth the mixed emotions the clergy express with respect to their changing relations with

the local elite. Changed relations with the elite are shown to present challenges to the clergy.

The following section explores aspects of religious manipulation and experience by the elite. This issue is examined by focussing on the spiritually powerful statues that are the centre of important social relationships, and are, therefore, potential tools of social manipulation and sources of symbolic legitimization for the elite. These statues are, however, also the objects of highly personal spiritual beliefs and experiences.

The BCC-CO program recognizes a relationship between religious power and material power. Elite dominance over important spiritual positions, symbols, and rituals is primarily viewed by the BCC-CO program as a tool that may be manipulated and used by members of the elite in an essentially material struggle. Existing religious symbols are believed to legitimize wealth, prestigious religious positions are shown to consolidate status, and the ability to stage important religious rituals is shown to be a way to control public spiritual and ritual life. But, there is another aspect to elite spirituality that bears similarities to that of the poor, namely the deeply personal experience of religiosity; an experience that includes many of the same expressions, beliefs, practices, and

"superstitions" that accompany peasant experiences of religiosity.

In this chapter I examine aspects of elite resistance to efforts by the clergy to reform traditional religious relationships, practices and symbols. Responses by the elite to changes implemented by the clergy afford a degree of insight into elite interpretations of the transformations the local Church is attempting to carry out. We are also given some insight into the relative power and ability of the clergy to implement changes and the restrictions on that power.

Finally, this chapter reviews some of the contradictions inherent in the ideology and the practice of the BCC-CO program at the diocesan level; contradictions that are all too readily pointed out by members of the elite.

Conflicts Between the Clergy and the Elite

On the whole, the clergy and BCC-CO staff demonstrate an attitude towards local members of the elite that may at best be called ambivalent. Attempts to redirect Christian traditional practices and symbols, especially as related to rituals that are predominantly part of the public pageantry of the town,

inevitably pit the clergy against members of the local elite. The nature of the proposed changes, aimed at empowering the poor and drawing them into the mainstream of religious life, challenge members of the elite in a number of ways: 1) by attempting to reduce the dominance of the elite in rituals and important religious positions, 2) by attempting to transform key Christian symbols so they do not legitimize wealth and power, 3) by attempting to decentralize the Church, and, 4) by attempting to change public consciousness in such a way that will lead to a more socially "aware," critical, and active peasantry that is willing to oppose social injustice.

One of the more sensitive aspects of the new directions being taken by the clergy is the fact discussed above, that many members of the clergy have been wholly or partially "sponsored" as seminarians by these same members of the elite. Fr. Jimenez echoes the sentiments of other priests when he notes that he has a "strong sense of debt," but that he will "still do what I must as a priest...gratitude is a part but it does not mean I am hampered by it" (interview 1989). Fr. Malaylay agrees that a priest

must not let utang na loob go against his principles. Even compadres, comadres, and friends, I tell them that even if they are friends I will not give them privileges and favours. I warn them that it is easier to give favours to strangers than friends. Most resent

it at first but if they are real friends they accept it. Utang na loob is not bad but don't let it go against your principles, especially at elections....It depends on how you accept favours - at my birthday influentials give gifts, I accept them but don't let them buy me with that. (interview 1989)

Fr. Mantala speaks frankly about the difficulty he has in alienating those who have been his "benefactors" because he feels personally "close" to them and "hurt" by their rejection of him because of the position he takes for the poor (interview 1989). From High School on, Fr. Mantala was sponsored by the sister-in-law of Congresswoman Reyes, "her family always considered me part of the family" (interview 1989). He also has long standing ties with the powerful Lecaroz family of Santa Cruz whom he knew "even as a seminarian," Lecaroz "was congressman then," and "now in Santa Cruz the Lecaroz family are benefactors" (Mantala: interview 1989).

Fr. Mantala insists that the Lecaroz family themselves "initiated the friendship" (interview 1989). He explains:

They really came to me. They gave me an image of Our Lady of Fatima when I was in Buenavista...[later] they visited me in Gasan...[later again] they said they wanted me in Santa Cruz because they didn't like the previous priests. They said they would ask the bishop to get me because they liked me. (Mantala: interview 1989) (1)

Fr. Mantala admits that he easily feels part of

the families of his benefactors and that "especially if they are in the church I do sometimes feel obliged not to speak out against them" (interview 1989). Nonetheless, Fr. Mantala insists that he has made "decisions that hurt one person or the family by deciding for the people" (interview 1989). He cites the fact that the Lecaroz family has turned their back on him since the Church was involved in the temporary shut down of the mine (Mantala: interview 1989).

Fr. Mantala feels that the elite of Santa Cruz have rejected the BCC approach as indicated by the fact that "they reject the Church and me"; he feels that they do not like the fact that he is

always in the barrios - they tell the sisters, ka Pia, or someone else to complain [to me] about it. But [it] can be positive that at least they care and want to be involved. (interview 1989) (2)

Fr. Mantala says he has tried to educate members of the elite by giving them "lectures" during "the feasts of their saints," but that, on the whole, they "liked Fr. Rejano better because he keeps the status quo - doesn't change much" (interview 1989). (3)

Fr. Mantala reflects on the changes introduced by the bishop as another source of discontent among the wealthy:

Also in administering the sacraments which must be the same for rich and poor. They [the wealthy] reject that. The rich want a single

marriage with flowers and carpets. (interview 1989)

Fr. Mantala speaks of the time he tried to have the statues removed from the church during Holy Week only to be met with great resistance:

On the second year [of his time in Santa Cruz] before Holy Week I got the owners of the santos and said that the centre [of the church] should be the blessed sacrament and reflection on the passion of Christ because Christ in the BCC is the centre not the images and saints. (...) on Good Friday the people are all going to the images and praying there for their devotions—even during the seven last words. But they [the owners of the statues] wanted to boycott. Maybe they did not yet truly understand the theological reasons. (interview 1989)

Fr. Mantala reflects on the lack of support he has had from members of the local elite in his efforts to organize BCCs and spread the ideology of liberation theology. He considers:

Maybe they don't really know what it is because I concentrate on the barrios. So maybe I haven't given them enough time here in the town. (Mantala: interview 1989)

As noted in the previous chapter, Fr. Mantala never spoke personally about the BCC program with the Lecaroz family because, as he put it,

the time is not yet ripe for it. I know they will not understand it. Its for poor people, they will not care about that. Especially as it is related to Marcopper, it will just cause a fight. I just talk about things we can both agree upon. (interview 1989)

Fr. Mantala relates how he once asked a member of the Lecaroz family to "drive me back to [barrio] Dating Bayan" and "they asked me why I go to the barrios"; he concluded, "I just answered very little" (interview 1989). Fr. Mantala recalls that during the Marcos years he used to always tell the local police force if he was going to a village for a few days and "also Lecaroz, because I might be tagged as a subversive" (interview 1989). The sensitivity, and even suspicion, by the elite about priests spending time in villages remains as an undercurrent.

During a conversation about the role of local members of the elite in the BCC movement and the conflicts and tensions that seem to characterize his relations with the elite, Fr. Mantala suddenly enthusiastically swept up a booklet with 14 hints on starting BCCs to show me that the first point advises "Don't start in the centro. The centro is notoriously difficult to start in" (Inter-BEC Consultations 1988:92). Fr. Mantala concluded, with some hope, that once the elite "see the good" of the BCC they "will come back because they want to be in the Church" (interview 1989). (4)

Fr. Malaylay admits that there are traditions related to the wealthy that he finds very hard to change. He gives as an example the very prestigious and

long established tradition of the hermanahan in Boac. He notes that the "hermanas are very rich, it is very hard to dismantle the system" (Fr. Malaylay: interview 1989). Fr. Malaylay explains that as the system is now the hermanas have to be very rich because, among other things, they "pay for big gatherings in their own houses" (interview 1989). He says that it should be possible to "change the expenses related to it so even the poor could do it," but notes that part of the problem is the expectations of poor people themselves, "people's expectations of hermanas also force them to do it [spend much]. So no one starts reform" (Malaylay: interview 1989). The position of hermana and hermano is one of such great prestige that "especially the nouveau riche of the barrios who have one abroad like to be hermana" (Malaylay: interview 1989).

Fr. Malaylay explains that he tried to reform the ritual position by making the elite hermana clean the church herself, one of the hermana's duties, instead of hiring others to do the work, but to no avail. He notes that in the past even "rich hermanas used to clean but they were not so elite as now" (Malaylay: interview 1989).

Another attempt to pass on a prestigious ritual position that is usually held by people of "social standing" to less wealthy parishioners also failed

(Malaylay: interview 1989). In this case it was upon the advice of the bishop that Fr. Malaylay did not go ahead with his plans. The ritual implements, such as the basin and the perfume, that are used in the traditional "washing of the feet" ritual during Holy Week are owned not only by wealthy Boac parishioners but by families related to the bishop. As Fr. Malaylay put it, "the bishop advised me to wait with that one" (interview 1989).

While Fr. Malaylay struggles to find creative ways to raise the consciousness of the elite, to redirect their traditional positions of prestige and power in the parish, and to reinterpret their powerful religious symbols in line with the directives of Vatican II, he finds himself encountering formidable resistance and cultural barriers which he does not feel he has been very well equipped to deal with:

There is little in the BCC literature on what to do with the rich. We try to get them into the barrios to be part of things. Then they can see that BCC people are articulate and successful in projects, so not just dumb barrio people. (interview 1989)

As I noted above, the shift of some members of the elite from Catholicism to any of the more recently arrived Protestant sects is recognized by some of the priests as a form of protest against the new direction of the Church. Fr. Jimenez notes that some converts to protestant sects are

rich and they are escaping from what the Catholics are now saying. Some do so for their business interests. They use the sect to manipulate people, they don't pay proper wages as the Catholic Church says they should....They join the other sect so that their interests are not threatened. (interview 1989)

Fr. Malaylay notes that:

Some rich who join [protestant sects] are mad at priests because they preach about vote buying and land reform and because of favours not granted and not being given enough attention because of the preferential option for the poor. (interview 1989)

Fr. Mantala speculates that the flirtation of the Lecaroz family with the "Born Agains" might have occurred "because they were at odds with the two priests before I came" (interview 1989). (5) Francisco Lecaroz, who was then mayor of Santa Cruz, went through a very intense and very public feud with Fr. Sustento, one of the two priests stationed in Santa Cruz preceding Fr. Mantala. According to interviews I had with townspeople, Lecaroz clearly felt the priest was overstepping his bounds in his public forays into political matters. Lecaroz took this very personally and was outraged.

Eventually, Mayor Lecaroz reportedly not only invited Born Again groups to hold large rallies in Santa Cruz but also insisted that all municipal employees attend a weekly session given by a resident Protestant group. This move is particularly significant as Lecaroz not only registered personal protest over a

political issue by joining a Protestant group, but he also used his political clout to encourage Protestant "opposition" in the wider community.

Elite Religiosity: Public and Private, Instrumental and Experiential

The analytical perspective underlying the BCC approach relies heavily on a materialistic analysis of social injustice, which is seen to be reflected in, supported by, and perpetuated through symbolic and ritual forms that include common aspects of both folk and traditional Catholicism. In this material analysis a number of dualisms are set up that explicitly or implicitly divide the elite from the poor.

While stressing what separates these two social groups this sort of analysis tends to overlook the significant religious beliefs and attitudes they share. Not all of these shared beliefs may simply be said to be the result of successful hegemonic domination on the part of the elite. Some of the characteristics that the BCC program identifies as holding back the development of the poor, such as that the peasantry is "too religious," "too superstitious" and prone to a plethora of "negative" Philippine values, are equally part of the religious and cultural experiential world of the elite.

While the materialistic benefits members of the elite enjoy by participation in religiosity are highlighted in the analysis of the BCC program, elite experience of religiosity is underplayed. Elite resistance to proposed changes in ritual practices and positions is, therefore, also interpreted one-sidedly as opposition to loss of power and opposed to peasant resistance to change, rather than seen as at least partially rooted in the same traditionalism. While peasant resistance to change may be described in the BCC-CO literature alternately as traditionalism, superstition, or as the result of hegemonic domination and mystification, elite resistance is one-sidedly described as an attempt to maintain the unequal political and economic status quo through a purely instrumental manipulation of religious capital.

Interviews with members of the elite, regarding their statues, lend a degree of insight into the complex mix of attitudes towards these images that include pride in the ownership and control of a prime religious object, a high degree of awareness of, and interest in, the social nexus the statue generates, and an unquestionable faith in the spiritual and miraculous powers of the image, paired with a deep devotion and even love for the statue. This latter attachment seems to be based, at least partly, on the fact that the

image often has "served," and been served by, the family for generations and is considered to have played a part in many important moments of the family. (6)

When asked about the elaborate clothing and jewelry of the statues the elite respond, much as do the poor, that these statues represent much loved saints who should be given all respect and honour possible. I spoke to a poor woman who was decorating the statue of Martha in the church of Santa Cruz, in preparation for the Good Friday procession. She had just placed long, brightly sparkling, fake diamond earrings in the ears of the life-size statue that suddenly looked less spiritual, despite a pious gaze, and more ready for a royal ball. The earrings, still swaying from the woman's touch, brilliantly scattered a bright shaft of sunshine that pierced through an opening in the thick wall of the otherwise dark church. We both stood in awe as the statue seemed to come to life and the woman crossed herself. As soon as I was able to dispel the magic of the moment I asked the woman why Martha wore those earrings. Her answer came with no hesitation, "because she is already a queen in heaven."

This answer appears to confirm BCC activist's concerns that spiritual power is being symbolically represented as worldly power and may, therefore, in

turn legitimize worldly power. There is also a strong sense, among the elite and the poor, that all effort must be made to pay these images the utmost respect possible to reflect the love the people feel both for the images themselves, and for the saints they represent. The fact that respect is linked symbolically to high earthly status concerns the BCC-CO activists.

Another approach to understanding the traditional way of representing the saints is to remember that a key feature of the images is that they are considered miraculous and the saints they represent are considered intimates of God and powerful intermediaries. It could be argued that the saints should be represented as they were on earth, often poor and persecuted, to show the poor that they in fact have much in common with the saints and can, through struggle, triumph despite poverty. This case is sometimes made by BCC activists when they critically evaluate existing religious symbols. But, given that the importance of the saints, for the people, is their eventual status in heaven that allows them to be helpful allies in addressing everyday cares, it makes sense to symbolically represent the images in their triumphant, heavenly state.

Both the elite and the poor share this experiential attitude towards the statues and the

saints they represent. There is no doubt, on the other hand, that the elite are also very well aware of, and very much involved in, the social aspects of religious images. Statues generate social groups of devotees and hold these together, sometimes over generations. The statues, and by extension their owners, form the centre of a social nexus. This occurs partly spontaneously as people are drawn to the devotion of a saint and, so, to the statue. But this process may also be consciously encouraged, or manipulated, by the statue's owner. Once a group is formed and a "relationship" is established to a particular statue, the group and its individual members are concerned to maintain a good relationship with the statue's owner who, to some extent, enables the devotion.

Statues are also the central focus of important rituals such as the novena masses for a saint, for which the statue is brought to the church and placed at the altar for nine days, followed by a procession throughout the town. During these nine days, presided over by that year's hermana of the devotion, the whole town is able to enter the church at any time to pray to the saint. Many people believe that these many prayers further enhance the spiritual power of the particular image making that one statue ever less replaceable over time.

By enabling a devotion, by supplying a statue, the elite owner enters into a form of patronage with the statue's devotees. The owner is the patron of the devotion, while at the same time being a devotee, and the other devotees are clients. By establishing such a relationship, where one did not exist, an owner can create a sense of utang na loob, which commonly underlies patron-client relationships, without there being a formal economic relationship. The creation of such religiously based social networks serves to enhance prestige but, once established, this network may also be used to widen political support or for economic ends. (7)

The social aspect of becoming the patron of a devotion is indeed a potential source of material and political advantage for the statue's owner and, as we will see, there is reason to believe that this potential is at times exploited. On the other hand, the deep and personal faith in the miraculous power of their statues and love for the saints they represent, is also an important dimension in the relationship of members of the elite to their statues. In the following examples both dimensions will become apparent.

Mrs. Ricalde is the widow of a Santa Cruz doctor. She was also the barangay captain of Banahaw, in the centre of Santa Cruz, in 1989. Her statue, the

Sacred Heart of Jesus came to her through her husband's family and has been in the family for as long as she can remember. Mrs. Ricalde explains:

I love the statue because all that I ask the statue for is granted. Its miraculous. At all my deliveries I lit a candle and all deliveries were successful. (interview 1989)

Mrs. Ricalde describes how the statue makes the trip to the church every first Friday of the month in order to "get prayed to" by other devotees of the Sacred Heart and once a year it remains in the church for the nine days of its novena and is subsequently paraded through the town in a procession. As is the custom, Mrs. Ricalde lights a candle for the statue very evening at six o'clock at which time she prays before it.

She explains that while some people in town have small images of the Sacred Heart, hers is the only big one and that, "even if someone else bought a big one mine would remain the one that is honored by all because I am the president" (Ricalde: interview 1989). Mrs. Ricalde is the permanent president of the association of the Sacred Heart by virtue of having this statue. (8) Members of the association pay contributions for the upkeep of the statue, for example, for the clothes it wears, and they contribute to the expenses of the feast day: novena masses, a

marching band for the procession, and candles for the faithful who walk in the procession.

Once a year, Mrs. Ricalde requests a group of old women, who are the traditional religious specialists of the town, to come to her house and sing the Pasyon before her statue of the Sacred Heart. In return she serves them coffee and snacks and sees that they leave with food parcels.

It is obvious that Mrs. Ricalde, who is herself involved in politics and whose son is a provincial board member, is conscious and proud of finding herself at the centre of a number of distinct social groups as the holder of the Sacred Heart statue. She also is connected to all parishioners at least once a year when the feast day of the saint comes around. On the other hand, the statue holds intimate value for her personally as protector of her pregnancies.

Mrs. Padrigon is the wife of an engineer who has run unsuccessfully for mayor of Santa Cruz as a Reyes candidate. The family owns a small off-shore island and various businesses in Marinduque and in other provinces. Mrs. Padrigon owns an important statue for the town, the Risen Lord. She explains that she allows the Church to use it while she takes care of the clothes and the karosa, "my tenant boys pull it" (Padrigon: interview 1989). Mrs. Padrigon is especially

devoted to Jesus Christ:

I love very much Jesus Christ...he is in my body, heart, and mind... I bought these statues because of my love for Jesus... I feel Jesus loves me and I love Him. I use the statues to pray for help. (interview 1989)

She has had a special personal devotion to the Sacred Heart ever since her second child was born, twenty-five years ago, and prays the novena for this saint weekly. Mrs. Padrigon is also a devotee of the Black Nazarene, of which she has a small personal image, and she wears the maroon and gold devotional costume to church. Mrs. Padrigon has statues all around her beautiful large house and on the surrounding grounds. She explains that every evening at six o'clock the servants go around to light candles for all the statues.

In addition to these examples of personal devotion, ten years ago Mrs. Padrigon donated a life size statue of her personal devotional saint, the Sacred Heart, to the village she was born in and where she owns land and has tenants. As she explains:

Every first Friday they have a mass there and I guide the people to love very much Jesus. It is their Patron saint now. They celebrate their fiesta on that day. Also, on my birthday they celebrate with a procession of the Sacred Heart. (Padrigon: interview 1989)

The parallel between Mrs. Padrigon's position as economic patron of some villagers and her donation

to the village of a newly bought statue, thereby consciously establishing religious patronage for the whole village, is significant. The people express their gratitude to her, their economic and religious patron, by celebrating her birthday with a procession of the Sacred Heart statue just as they celebrate the feast day of the saint itself. Mrs. Padrigon has enhanced an existing economic relationship with a religious dimension and extended a personal devotion to her economic clients. It could be argued that the enhanced sense of indebtedness villagers feel towards Mrs. Padrigon makes them less likely to engage in conflict with her over the economic aspects of their relationship.

Mrs. Padrigon is not the only member of the elite to have donated a statue to a village, whereupon that village took to celebrating its fiesta on the new saint's feast day. Mrs. Lecaroz, who owns the Fatima and the Sepulchre statues for the town, has a personal devotion to Fatima. During her husband's very serious illness Mrs. Lecaroz prayed to the statue of Fatima and, as she put it, "her intercession cured him" (interview 1989). Mrs. Lecaroz has since donated images of this statue to various villages of Santa Cruz. At least one, the village of Dating Bayan, made this saint its patron and the people feel grateful to Mrs. Lecaroz

for giving them the statue and thereby its spiritual protection.

Despite the fact that Mrs. Lecaroz claims to now be "Born Again," she is also a member of the strict right wing Catholic organization Opus Dei and a devotee not only of Fatima but also of the Holy Cross. (9) She tells of her pilgrimages to Catholic sacred places around the world, but also of her belief in the healing power of flowers taken from the Sepulchre on Holy Friday and mixed with oil. She uses this mixture to heal arthritis, as well as goiter (Lecaroz: interview 1989).

This kind of eclectic, but sincere, approach to spirituality is equally common among the elite as it is among peasants. But, when BCC practitioners worry about the "superstitious" nature of the "people's" religiosity, because it leads to passivity rather than people taking control of problems in their lives, it is usually only the poor they refer to.

Mrs. Quindoza, the wife of a doctor and herself a pharmacist, inherited a great many statues from her uncle, Mr. Roque, who was a collector (see footnote six). Mr. Roque started his collection with a statue of the Miraculous Medal, of which he eventually owned three, and he named his lucrative pharmacy after this image of Mary. Mrs. Quindoza recalls how she "grew up

with the statues" and how, even as a very small child, she used to help her uncle "in all activities related to the statues." (10)

Mrs. Quindoza's personal affinity for her statues, for their miraculous powers and their link to her own childhood and to her family is evident as she speaks of them:

Now that my uncle is gone I want to care for them as he did. And, as a Catholic, I was trained to revere. And it helps; I have a strong feeling that the statues really help us. Whenever there are problems, like my operation, I rely on them. And they really helped me be strong, gave me courage.... Especially Milagrosa [Miraculous Medal]; I am closest to it. I believe in her assistance. (interview 1989)

Mrs. Quindoza notes that she "mentions" all the statues in her prayers every night and when she prays for the dead at eight o'clock at night. She says she is "training" her daughter to take over the duty after her as she feels the care of the statues should be "generation to generation" (Quindoza: interview 1989).

Like Mrs. Padrigon, Mrs. Quindoza has also extended her personal devotion to Miraculous Medal, for which she is well known, to the community at large by advocating this image become the second patron saint of the town. She donated a smaller statue of this saint to the church where it now has a central position behind the altar. And, a rotating "block rosary" was started with a miniature of the statue. (11)

The ownership of so many powerful statues places Mrs. Quindoza in the centre of a great many devotions and religious associations related to the images. Mrs. Quindoza sees her many duties related to the statues, such as "entertaining" (feeding) her tenants who always come to pull the karosas, as "part of the inheritance" (interview 1989). But, it is primarily through these devotions that Mrs. Quindoza maintains a public presence and an extensive social network including both prominent women of the town, as well as poor devotees. Mrs. Quindoza's husband has long harbored political ambitions. He last ran, unsuccessfully, as vice-mayor (as a Reyes candidate and Mr. Padrigon's running mate) but the powerful Lecaroz family saw their candidate win. Mrs. Quindoza used her social network surrounding the statues to encourage people to vote for her husband.

Another prominent family of which the patriarch regularly runs for political office is the Villaruel family in Santa Cruz. Mr. Villaruel and his wife are the instigators of the largest devotion that functions as a block rosary by introducing what is called the Mahal na Perdon in 1976. This ritual, that is unique to Santa Cruz, involves three statues, a crucified Christ, a Santo Nino and a statue of Mary. The devotion has its own prayer and song booklet and follows a fixed ritual

pattern with the statues rotating weekly, on Friday evenings, to different homes in which elaborate "alters" are prepared in advance.

The intent of the ritual is focussed on forgiveness of personal sins, but a strong healing component has developed over time as well. A small container of oil travels with the statues and this is believed to have miraculous powers to heal. After the usual pattern of songs and prayers, devotees push forward to touch and kiss the statues murmuring petitions and expressions of love. As they retreat again they dip their fingers in the oil and spread it on their throats, often against goiter, their sore joints, foreheads, or wherever else they are experiencing discomfort.

The Villaruels almost always attend themselves; Mrs. Villaruel often nightly, and on Fridays they attend as a couple. Their association with this widespread and very popular ritual in the town is well known and their public prominence is greatly enhanced through their association with this ritual.

There are numerous examples of ways in which already prominent families extend their social and economic status through the sponsorship of devotions through statues. The religious networks that these statues provide, and are central to, are all the more

important in Santa Cruz as there are few other civic or social organizations in the town and none in which both wealthy and poor are involved. Certainly, there are no non-religious organizations that serve such intense emotional and spiritual needs as those served by the devotions. Furthermore, unlike civic organizations that tend to be perceived by the people as being rife with "politics," the religious devotions at least appear non-political, and so not self-serving.

There is an obvious possibility of political applications of the networks established through the sponsorship of devotions, as well as further enhancement of social prestige and even moral credibility of statues' owners. These are the factors the RCC activists critically evaluate when analyzing the way in which traditional religion is manipulated and used by members of the elite to legitimize, support and enhance material advantages. But, the fact that many of these same members of the elite experience and believe in the mystical and spiritual power of the statues, in much the same way that the poor do, is not analyzed.

For example, the owner of the Mater Dolorosa in Santa Cruz is convinced that many of the tragedies that have befallen her family are related to the statue. She says that she must suffer seven sacrifices to

correspond with the seven daggers piercing the heart of Mary that characterize this image. She says "the family with the Mater Dolorosa will be tested" (interview 1989) but she loves the image passionately and always kisses it before leaving the house. And, the owner of the patron statue of Santa Cruz, the Holy Cross, although he has rejected Catholicism and become Born Again, still wonders if the cure of his wife's cancer had something to do with the statue being in his home, while in the same interview deriding Catholics for their devotions to images.

Elite Catholics are aware of the way their status is enhanced and legitimized by public religious prominence and sponsorship, they consciously encourage social networks based on their preferred saints. And, they now feel threatened by the way the Church is trying to divorce members of the elite from religiously prestigious rituals and positions. But, many of them are also devoted believers who experience their religiosity on a personal level in much the same way that poor believers do.

Everyday Forms of Elite Resistance?

Discussions with members of the elite in Boac and Santa Cruz made clear the degree of frustration and resentment they feel about various changes the Church has implemented or attempted to bring about. The types of resistance members of the elite have exhibited to these changes have been both overt and covert, but mainly they have been unorganized.

Some of the forms this elite resistance takes are: gossip; withholding of support and financial resources; threatening to withhold religious objects that effect public religious life such as statues; subtle forms of "cold shouldering" that cause considerable tension in formerly intimate relations between members of the clergy and the elite; withholding the usual outward semblances of status equality; silent protest by avoiding local Church directives, such as the growing tendency now for members of the elite to hold their weddings in Manila where they can pay for elaborate and private ceremonies. The elite may also join Protestant sects or publicly promote access to Protestantism as Mr. Lecaroz did. More direct forms of threat to individual priests also occur, such as Mr. Lecaroz's public and successful campaign to have Fr. Sustento silenced, or the death

threats Fr. Mantala received as a result of his involvement in the temporary closure of Marcopper.

There is a powerful shared discourse of discontent among the elite that I was included in at times. This discourse includes feelings that the clergy "of today" are less educated, less civilized, from less upstanding backgrounds, disrespectful, insensitive to traditional values such as utang na loob, irresponsible, hypocritical, ungrateful, and, sometimes, more politically minded than spiritual. A common complaint is that the clergy are overstepping out of their boundaries as servants of God and are seeking a type of power to influence secular affairs that they have no right to seek. Also, that the clergy are proud, haughty, and even un-Christian in their preferential option for certain followers, the poor, over others. Often in these discussions an appeal is made to traditional Philippine values, such as utang na loob or to "Christian" values such as humility, meekness, piety, servitude, and equality in pointing out why the priests are falling short. This appeal to shared values, and the judgments based on them, is familiar from peasant studies that point out how peasants appeal to shared morals and values in their negotiations with patrons and other members of the elite.

Gossip about the shortcomings of a disliked priest is one of the common ways discontent is expressed. The most popular topics in such gossip concern moral misconduct, usually sexual impropriety, and the misappropriation or mismanagement of funds and other forms of wealth in the Church's care; especially valuable statues or antique gold and silver objects. Fr. Mantala was the unhappy target of extensive gossip concerning both these topics and was, furthermore, regularly accused of being disorganized, irresponsible, and running a "messy" convent. The nature of his problems were not only widely known and discussed in Santa Cruz but also spread to Boac where one member of the elite there commented on the fact that I was not living with an elite family when in the town of Santa Cruz. She blamed Fr. Mantala, who was my first contact in the town, by saying that "he does not have a good relationship with the elite."

Fr. Mantala also complained to me about the gossip and was especially angry that it all went on behind his back. He noted that he was always told about what was being said about him through the sisters, or those close to him such as Ka Pia. Indeed, in an interview with Mrs. Quindoza she complained to me that she did not feel that the statue of Christ the King, which her family had once donated to the Church, was

being well cared for. She said that she wanted it back and would ask Ka Pia to help her. This indirect, or covert, type of detraction was effective as Fr. Mantala was sensitive to what the people were saying. He often asked those close to him what was being said, much as members of the elite typically ask clients who are close to them to report what other peasants are saying about them.

More direct forms of resistance are, for example, a boycott such as the elite staged when Fr. Mantala asked them to remove the statues from the church during Holy Week; or the withdrawal of support, such as Mrs. de la Sarta threatened when the bishop wanted to exclude political addresses from the souvenir program of the Boac cathedral's renovation; or public "snubs" that deny status equality such as not mentioning the names of clergy who are present when opening a public address. Normally such an address starts with the acknowledgement of prominent listeners by naming them individually and looking in their direction.

One of the common complaints I heard from members of the elite is that the priests they have sponsored do not treat them with the respect they are due. One member of the elite in Boac told numerous stories of "impertinence" on the part of the clergy who

first solicit funds from the wealthy to attend the seminary and then, for example, do not invite their wealthy patrons to the celebrations accompanying their induction into the priesthood. One story this member of the elite told was of a particularly brazen young man who, in singularly self confident fashion, convinced the congresswoman to sponsor him, and who, once he had become a priest was often outspoken against her "dynastic" rule.

In Boac, Mr. Montellano often spoke of his frustration with the direction the local Church was taking. There is a particularly tense relationship between Mr. Montellano and the bishop whom he considers to be disrespectful towards the elite. In conversations on these topics Mr. Montellano commonly told a tale of grievance regarding the bishop and then added at the end of it that when the bishop was young he had lived across the street from the Montellano household, "I used to watch him play in the street when he was just a little boy !" This was clearly delivered to indicate that the bishop is only a person, after all, and a "junior" one at that.

Mr. Montellano told of the time that he and his wife noticed that the bishop and his household were eating from old and mismatched plates and cutlery. Through his nephew, who held a high position in the

prestigious Manila Hotel, Mr. Montellano was able to procure a great number of slightly used but very good quality chinaware and glasses. He presented these items to the bishop only to later discover to his chagrin that they had been stored and never used. (12) Mr. Montellano told this tale with obvious annoyance at the perceived slight but also a degree of derision at the insistence of the bishop to eat from inferior wares.

In a similar vein, Mr. Montellano asked whether I had noticed how the bishop eats with all sorts of people, especially workmen and the mentally handicapped bell ringer. Both he and his wife find this behaviour most inappropriate and seemed genuinely disturbed by it. They insist that someone like a bishop should keep some distance from the people and should display in his behaviour the status of his position. He should, they felt, eat alone or with suitable company. Mr. Montellano backed his assertion up with a story about how he had once witnessed that the bell ringer reached over and "took food from the bishop's plate" (discussion: Jan. 5, 1989). Mr. Montellano received much merriment from this event, he said, "I saw it and laughed...this is proof that the bishop's ideas don't work..." (discussion: Jan. 5, 1989). Mr. Montellano asserted that it is necessary to keep the classes apart, "people are not equal, it is a nice idea but not

realistic so we should accept reality" (discussion: Jan. 5, 1989).

There is a possible connection to be made between the structural position of the bishop, as a member of the elite, and the position of the Montellanos themselves. Their desire to see the bishop maintain a status distinction between himself and peasants may be a reflection of their own fear that by his behaviour the bishop is undermining and delegitimizing the very notion of "eliteness" and status. He is also de-mystifying these differences, showing how easily the trappings of distinction may be stripped.

Mr. Montellano was most exuberant when he could point out what he perceived as hypocrisies of the clergy or, even better, when he could show how they had, in the end, had to bend to elite power. Mr. Montellano told of how, when he was still pastoral council president, the bishop had always preached about "Church of the poor" and had said that it was not important to build the Church as an "institution" or as a "structure" but, rather, to build people. All the more gleeful was Mr. Montellano when he met the bishop at a meeting of Marinduquenos in California at which the visiting bishop was trying to solicit funds for renovations of the Boac cathedral. With a mischievous grin Mr. Montellano told of how he "reminded" the

bishop of his statements on "building Church" while still in Marinduque. Similarly, Mr. Montellano recounted how Fr. Mantala had once held a sermon in which he prevailed upon the elite to pay their workers a decent and fair daily wage. Following the sermon Mr. Montellano approached the priest with the question "does the Church pay those who work for it fair wages?" (discussion 1989).

While Fr. Muni was parish priest of Boac he became the focus of Mr. Montellano's attention. Mr. Montellano told me how Fr. Muni used to "preach so much against Reyes" that Mr. Montellano once approached the priest and told him that his homily incited "class-hatred" and that it was therefore "un-Christian" (discussion: October 3, 1989).

In another case, Mr. Montellano told of how Fr. Muni had wanted to go abroad to do some fund raising during the Marcos years, and had been unable to get an exit visa. Mr. Montellano advised him to approach the husband of the congresswoman, then Minister of Immigration and Deportation. As the Church was very anti-Reyes at this time because of the close relationship the Reyeses had with Marcos, Mr. Montellano knew this to be a mischievous suggestion. With a real show of triumph he told of how the hapless priest had eventually taken this route and thereby lost

all credibility, "when he did that he was ours, he is in our pocket now."

Fr. Malaylay fared only slightly better. Mr. Montellano told me that Fr. Malaylay also commonly railed against the rich in his homilies, and especially against the Reyes dynasty (discussion: Feb. 5, 1989). Fr. Malaylay's attitude especially grated on Mr. Montellano because, as he explained, "he is from Mogpog, he shouldn't talk against people from Boac, especially against the big fish" (discussion: Feb. 5, 1989). But, Mr. Montellano said he had a firm discussion with Fr. Malaylay in which he reminded the priest of the other priest from Mogpog who had eventually been run out of Boac by the townspeople. Mr. Montellano maintained that, "now Malaylay says 'po' when he talks to me and he is very polite and he smiles" (discussion: Feb. 5, 1989). Nonetheless, Mr. Montellano is well aware that these outward changes do not necessarily mean a change of heart. After another conflict with the clergyman Mr. Montellano noted, "Fr. Malaylayis still hostile to us and to Reyes, it is just more hidden now" (discussion: Oct. 3, 1989). The statement that perhaps best sums up Mr. Montellano's feelings is one he makes with some sadness in spite of its defiance "I believe in God, but I do not believe in these priests anymore."

Despite the frustration and bitterness that is evident in Mr. Montellano's statements, and even despite his glee at seeing the clergy having to compromise their values, he and his wife have always been very staunch supporters of the Church donating both time and money. Mr. Montellano explained how, after the 1987 typhoons, he had wanted to help out to rebuild the cathedral but had not done so because of his anger with the bishop. When his wife became hermana in 1989, however, he became involved again by channeling money through her and he noted with a large smile, "I felt much better!" (discussion: July 28, 1989). In fact, it appears from his ongoing involvement with the activities of the Church from afar by keeping abreast of developments, and through his behind the scenes financial support, and through his support of his wife who still takes full part in Church-related activities, that Mr. Montellano would very much like to feel able to take on a more active role again.

I found this to be a common position of the elite. They often expressed feelings of having been snubbed, rejected, or insulted. They also often felt they were being relegated to the sidelines and their frustration seemed to come as much from unhappiness at no longer being able to fully contribute to religious life in the way they had before, as from anger at the

slight.

In Santa Cruz, these feelings were expressed by Mrs. Robles, president of the former pastoral council that was later replaced by villagers and poorer people. Mrs. Robles is a teacher who has long had a very intense involvement with the Church. Her brother is Bishop Perlas and she herself has taught catechism. Mrs. Robles is a member of a great many Catholic devotions and associations. She recounted for me the history of the Church in Santa Cruz from as far back as she could remember it by reviewing the various periods of the different priests. (13) Following Fr. Malaylay (1978-81), who started the BCCs in the parish, were the two priests Fr. Sosa and Fr. Sustento (1981-1984).

Mrs. Robles described Fr. Sustento as a very articulate and intelligent man who also taught at the local college. She remembered that his enormously popular sermons were short but filled with witticisms and political gibes at martial law politicians; a favorite topic of his, even outside his sermons. Fr. Sustento's political commentaries never named anyone specifically, Mrs. Robles was quick to point out, but he, nonetheless, greatly rankled then Mayor Lecaroz whom she thinks felt he was being alluded to.

Finally, Mayor Lecaroz wrote a letter to Mr. Robles who also taught at the college and was district

supervisor, complaining about the priest and putting pressure on his compadre to have the priest removed from the college. According to Mrs. Robles no immediate action was taken but, shortly thereafter, there was an induction ball for the new PTA officers in the town plaza at which Mayor Lecaroz took the stand and "shouted out against the priests" (interview 1989). Lecaroz publicly threatened Mrs. Robles's husband, "if you cannot remove Sustento from MCC [Marinduque Community College] then you better resign" (Mrs. Robles: interview 1989). In the end, both the priest and Mr. Robles tendered resignations.

But, this was not yet the end of the story according to Mrs. Robles. She explained that Lecaroz continued to agitate to have the priest removed from the parish. Mrs. Robles remembered that the priest was popular and had a lot of support but that no one spoke up for him "the people just lie low" (interview 1989). In 1984, during the normal re-shuffle of the priests, Fr. Mantala, a choice of the Lecaroz family, was placed in Santa Cruz.

Mrs. Robles's account of the changes brought about by Fr. Mantala describes the alienation of the elite. Mrs. Robles explained that she had been president of the pastoral council but had resigned over an incident that is a variation on a common theme,

namely the alleged appropriation of a valuable religious object by a member of the elite. In this case the object was the valuable tabernacle of the church that was taken by the Lecaroz family, to be cleaned or renovated in Manila. (14) The whole pastoral council fell apart with Mrs. Robles's resignation over this affair and Fr. Mantala apparently did not attempt to support the members or to revive the council immediately. Mrs. Robles explained that, "he wanted people from the barrios and it took him a long time to first organize the barrio pastoral councils" (interview 1989).

In 1987, Fr. Mantala finally did hold pastoral council elections for the town that saw members from various barangay councils, whom he encouraged to participate, form the town pastoral council. None of the former members rejoined the council. As Mrs. Robles put it, Fr. Mantala "also did not call for us [the former members] again" (interview 1989). While Mrs. Robles agrees that there should be greater participation of barangay people, her observation about the situation that obtained at that time was one that was typical of many of the wealthy:

All the organization of the pastoral council is from the barrio - so barrio people are now running the parish but it is still the rich that pay. The financing still has to come from them. When Monsignor [Fr. Mantala] wants money he always gets it from the presidents of the

associations in the town. (interview 1989)

It is a common complaint of the wealthy, that at the same time that they are finding themselves sidelined from major activities and roles, or even under attack, they are still being asked to contribute financially to the Church. Mrs. Robles extends her complaint to a more general unhappiness with the way priests expect to be supported by the people. Mrs. Robles notes that when Fr. Mantala goes to the barrio he "expects them [the barrio people] to buy his food, jeepney, pay for his masses and services and baptism etc. But they are too poor" (interview 1989). (15)

During our discussion, Mrs. Robles recounted a story that is itself part of a genre. As I have mentioned above, dissatisfaction with a parish priest is often expressed through a shared discourse of discontent or "gossip," commonly about moral misconduct or about mismanagement of funds or of valuable religious objects. Mrs. Robles recounted that she had been president of the catechists but had resigned over 10,000 pesos that had been withdrawn from the bank under Fr. Mantala's orders. Mrs. Robles explained that the interest on this money used to go to the catechists but that now the money had disappeared. She recounted that when she confronted Fr. Mantala he told her what the money had been spent on, some of which he said he

gave to the sisters. The sisters apparently denied this.

Themes, such as the above story, never failed to crop up in discussions with members of the elite. Mrs. Quindoza, who declares that she used to be active in many religious organizations and in the pastoral council but is "no longer interested in the set up now in the Church" (interview 1989), is very outspoken and more vehement in her protests than Mrs. Robles.

Mrs. Quindoza explains that she was very happy to be involved with Church activities before, but that there have been "too many changes under Mantala" (interview 1989). Mrs. Quindoza expresses consternation that "the priest made such abrupt changes on how the people should do the novenas" and that "he ordered the use of new novenas without consulting the parish council" (interview 1989). The fact that Fr. Mantala disbanded the former choir is also a source of discontent for Mrs. Quindoza. Mrs. Quindoza links the conversion of a formerly very active Catholic and lay member of the choir to a Protestant sect to the many changes Fr. Mantala had brought about.

Inevitably, the state of the convento is raised as evidence that this priest is unsuitable. "The convento is dirty...under Frs. Malaylay and Narito it was so organized and clean" (Quindoza: interview 1989).

And, again, "rumours" of mismanagement of funds and resources, stated in such a way as to raise suspicion, and complaints that it is always the wealthy who are approached for money, characterized the conversation:

They [the clergy] should use income from masses, collections, etc. to renovate the church but they are always collecting from the same people. Where is their own income? During May there are so many fiestas where the Church gets money for baptisms. Where is this money? (interview 1989)

Mrs. Quindoza also refers to the rice harvested from Church lands:

They should distribute [through the Nutrition Program] the rice they get from their own land after their own use. They get one hundred cavans a year for the priests and the sisters. The rest should go to the poor. I hear rumours only about where it goes. (interview 1989)

Mrs. Quindoza's feelings about the changes in the pastoral council are that the former pastoral council members, of which she was one, were "ousted" under the excuse that "they were non-active" but that in fact it was because Fr. Mantala "preferred to take barrio folks" (interview 1989). Mrs. Quindoza is clearly perturbed by the priest's close relationship with villagers. She exclaims that:

Monsignor always goes to the barrios, he neglects the townspeople. The priest is always out of the convento, he should stay there and not go to the barrios daily. (Quindoza: interview 1989)

Mrs. Quindoza offers an explanation for Fr. Mantala's

interest in villagers that is itself revealing. She notes that, "he ousted us from the parish council because he prefers simple barrio people because they just like him [and] are not critical" (Quindoza: interview 1989).

As in the cases outlined above, Mrs. Quindoza expresses great consternation at the way the priests no longer allow the elite their traditional role in the parish, and at the way she feels the elite are now being sidelined. She gives as an example the traditional co-operation between the clergy and the elite about important public religious events:

They used to call the owners of the statues together during Holy Week to talk about matters - how the karosas will be set up. We were responsible for the Church. Now we even thought of not joining the procession anymore. (Quindoza: interview 1989)

In responses to questions about the social role of the Church it is obvious that Mrs. Quindoza recognizes such a role for the Church, but, again, she feels that such matters should be played through the elite:

The organizations of the different statues can help the Church but we are not being asked. We can hold seminars and lectures. The organizations should help the community and not be only religious. (interview 1989)

Mrs. Quindoza admits to having heard of BCCs, but adds that she has "no idea what it is" (interview

1989), so that her notion of why the priests are visiting the villages is limited to a broad sense that the priests are trying to help the poor and that "the Church is wider now than just the convento - it goes out" (interview 1989). But, she immediately questions the Church's choice of focus on only certain villages. She lists very poor villages and asks "why are they not there?" (Quindoza: interview 1989).

With even more emphasis Mrs. Quindoza launches into a prime concern of hers, one that she feels the Church should be addressing if it is going to visit the villages, namely, the "problem" of the "many Born Agains" (interview 1989). Mrs. Quindoza is able to name the villages that are especially prone to "Born Again" evangelization efforts and among them is the village that many of her tenants come from. She complains that the situation has become so bad that she can no longer count on her tenants to help out on religious occasions at which they used to serve foods or pull the karosas of the statues, "even our tenants in the barrios used to serve us during Holy Week but now only few come, the rest are Born Again already" (interview 1989).

As strongly as Mrs. Quindoza emphasizes that a prime concern of the Church should be the formulation of an effective response to Protestant evangelization successes she also insists that the Church should be

non-political. There is a perception among many people in Marinduque that the Church is anti-Reyes, possibly because the Reyes clan currently controls such powerful positions and so is likely to be the object of criticism by the clergy. Although it would be difficult to argue that the Church is pro-Lecaroz, given the issue over the mine which directly concerns the Lecaroz family, it is well known that Fr. Mantala did once have a close relationship with the Lecaroz family. This may explain Mrs. Quindoza's vehemence as her husband has unsuccessfully run for vice-mayor of Santa Cruz, as a Reyes candidate. Mrs. Quindoza complains that:

I do not like the fact that the Church takes up with political people. There should be separation of Church and State. Some priests are too close to political people and vice versa under this parish priest. Ever since he came there is too much political involvement in the management of the Church. It [the Church] should be neutral in its politics. (interview 1989)

A final example of the way the elite respond with surprise and frustration at being, as they express it, kept to the sidelines of new developments in the Church, comes from a woman who heads the local chapter of a national NGO. Mrs. Montante is the president in Marinduque of the People's Economic Council (PEC), a national organization arising out of the 1986 revolution that strives for economic development of the "grassroots" (interview 1989). The leaders of this

organization must be well to do as it has no steady funding so that leaders themselves supply funds or must be adept at soliciting funds from such sources as the International Labour Organization (ILO) for proposed projects.

Mrs. Montante described how she attended a meeting of the funding agency Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) in Marinduque and only then discovered that the Church, also funded by the PBSP, supports socio-economic projects for farmers and fishermen through BCCs. "I only heard about it now because the PBSP asked him [Fr. Malaylay] to talk about the BCC projects because they fund these" (Montante: interview 1989). (16) She expressed not only surprise, "I always thought it [the BCC program] was just a religious thing" (interview 1989), but also frustration that she had not been told earlier of the economic projects of the BCCs. "Fr. Malaylay is also in the PEC so he should have told me earlier" (Montante: interview 1989). In her excitement she exclaimed, "they [the clergy] should co-ordinate with me as president of the People's Economic Council" (Montante: interview 1989). Mrs. Montante pondered why she had not been told about the Church's projects earlier and explained that Fr. Malaylay had only told her, "it's because the time wasn't right yet" (interview 1989). She wondered out

loud whether it may be possible that "Fr. Malaylay is afraid of loosing control by networking with other NGOs" (Montante: interview 1989).

The frustration and opposition shown by the elite to changes implemented by the Church seem to be rooted as much in a loss of traditional involvement in both prestigious and charitable positions within the Church, as in the sense that they are being attacked directly for their structurally advantaged positions.

There are signs that some members of the elite are trying to come to terms with aspects of the new role of the Church. In a recent souvenir program the 1989 hermana of Boac wrote:

Just as our Cathedral underwent physical changes, spiritually it allowed fresh winds of change in the program of rechristianization.... The church is now concerned, not only in religious activities, but also in the upliftment of the less fortunate members of the community- the farmers, the fishermen, the ordinary citizens through self-reliance and livelihood projects. In a concerted effort with the private sector, the business communities, the Catholic Charities from other countries and the government, the church is helping in the program of countryside development. ...the church today envisions a christian community where peace, justice and love prevail. So the thrust is in building basic christian communities. There must be sharing of responsibilities among the members, respect for the rights of others, emphasis on moral values - in short living the Word of God. Only then can the total development of the human personality come out. (Cathedral Renovation Souvenir Program October 1989)

But most members of the elite, in so far as they want

to be part of the changes want to do so in the traditional way. They want to be consulted and to be recognized as the main support of the Church in these transformations, just as they always have been. This desire appears to be rooted not only in the desire to maintain traditional control over the spiritual arena, but also in the desire to express and act out religious traditions. Despite her acknowledged frustrations Mrs. Quindoza said that she "won't become Born Again because I feel very Catholic" (interview 1989). (17)

Contradictions and Incomplete Transformations

Transformations to BCC-CO ideology and practice, in moving from the national level to the local level through the intervention of local mediators, have been uneven around Marinduque as they are rooted in the individual ecclesiastical and social perspectives of the clergy and in their personal relationships with the people of the towns. In the course of trying to implement the directives of Vatican II, informed by a variation of Philippine liberation theology that accompanies the BCC-CO program, inconsistencies and contradictions have been a painful and sometimes obstinate reality.

The contradictions that arise as BCC theory is

adopted by diocesan mediators and put into practice are rooted in a number of realities, namely: 1) the fact that the clergy find themselves in somewhat of an ambiguous position as spokesmen for the poor while they are members of an intellectual elite with lifestyles that are still more reminiscent of the well to do than the poor; 2) the fact that as religious pastors the clergy have a commitment to all Christians but as social activists they have prioritized the poor; 3) the fact that the clergy find it difficult to directly alter long held traditional practices and relationships because of resistance from the elite; 4) ongoing pre-Vatican II perspectives and cultural traditions that continue to inform the clergy themselves; and, 5) inconsistencies that arise from within the BCC ideology itself.

In their efforts to oppose change the elite are quick to point out the most blatant inconsistencies between theory and practice in the new directions the clergy are advocating. For such varied reasons as not wanting to give up control in the religious arena, not wanting to change age old traditions and for personal religious reasons the elite are concerned about the proposed transformations in their traditional roles in the Church and in their close relationships with the clergy. The fact that they are being nudged out of

these roles and asked to relinquish these relationships in favour of the poor, while still being approached for "traditional" financial assistance and support for seminarians is a considerable inconsistency in the eyes of the elite, as well as a bone of contention.

The clergy themselves frequently recognize inconsistencies and ambiguities as "incomplete transformations" Fr. Malaylay noted that, "because of the transition period...there are contradictions in what I preach and what I do" (interview 1989). He gives as an example the fact that "there is so much food here in the convento, we should make it less and simpler" (interview 1989). I conclude this chapter with some examples of incomplete transformations.

To begin with, two examples that were pointed out to me by Mr. Montellano. The first is an example of how inconsistencies may come about because of cultural traditions the clergy are themselves rooted in. Mr. Montellano complained to me that Bishop Lim is trying to reform the hermanahan to make the celebration, especially the feasting involved, less elaborate. Mr. Montellano pointed out, however, that when the clergy celebrate the ordination of a new priest they also have a very lavish feast, but, he noted, they expect the rich to provide the food and the housing (discussion: Jan. 5, 1989).

Another story Mr. Montellano told was of an event that took place during the run-up to the 1984 elections. In the wake of the Aquino assassination the Church advised the people to boycott these elections. Mr. Montellano, in rare opposition to Marcos-friendly Reyes candidates, agreed with the boycott position. During this period, two new priests were to be ordained in Marinduque and in order to house seminarians and other guests the clergy asked a member of the Reyes family to "give them the Boac Hotel" (Montellano: discussion July 28, 1989). Reyes offered the hotel freely but at the same time a signature petition with the views of the clergy was circulated. The petition advocated boycotting the elections as a protest against Marcos and Marcos supporters (Montellano: discussion 1989). Mr. Montellano explains that he advised the clergy not to submit the petition until after the ordinations, but he notes this event as an example of how the clergy "rail against the rich but use the services always" (Montellano: July 28, 1989).

In the Diocesan Survey of 1981, Fr. Mantala wrote a section on the traditional Lenten practice known as novicio and novicia. He explains how young men and women spend 47 days in service of the Church and in relative seclusion from the community, which is reflected in the special costume they wear. Fr. Mantala

describes this tradition as rooted in Franciscan Third Order practices of penance and as very pre-Vatican II in its intentions and form (Diocesan Survey 1981:16). But, as early as 1981, Fr. Mantala already writes that:

with the new thrust...of the Catholic Church after the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, the lifestyle of these Lenten penitents has been re-directed and re-oriented towards Total Human Development and Community Building without totally disregarding the original motives centered principally on personal relationship with God in prayer and penance. (Diocesan Survey 1981:16-17)

In interviews with nine young men and ten young women (overwhelmingly from poorer families) taking part in the novicia/o tradition in Santa Cruz in 1989, both the reasons for their participation, as well as the perceptions of the young people about what they had learned in seminars were highly traditional and rarely reflected reorientation according to Vatican II themes. (18) Although I attended lectures for the novicia/os, in which an attempt was made to introduce the teachings of Vatican II, it was apparent that basic understandings about Catholic traditions and teachings were so uneven that these sessions quickly "deteriorated" into teaching basic Catholic principles. As mentioned earlier, this is often also the case in lecture sessions for BCC participants from the villages.

There are numerous examples that depict the

ways in which both pre and post-Vatican II approaches and perspectives, as well as culturally rooted traditions and expectations, coexist in individual priests and contribute to inconsistencies. One such example is based on the efforts to renovate the 18th century cathedral of Santa Cruz. Just as the state of the convento is frequently considered a reflection of the abilities and suitability of the parish priest, so the state of the church is seen primarily as a reflection of the economic commitment, and organizational strengths of the parish community, especially the elite. (19) The church in Boac has just undergone a spectacular renovation and there is pressure on the community of Santa Cruz to attend to their own cathedral.

A common decorative desire with regard to churches is to be able to lay a marble floor on the altar. The elite of Santa Cruz organized various activities to try to raise funds for a marble floor. (20) Fr. Mantala, in keeping with the BCC spirit, wanted to try to involve the poor and the villages in this drive to beautify the town's church so that they would also share in the honour and pride involved in such a project. Fr. Mantala sent out a request to all the organized village pastoral councils to try to raise a relatively large sum of money as a contribution to

the marble. He also distributed lottery tickets among the catechists of the villages to raise funds for the same goal.

The despair among pastoral council members in the village of Botilao over the need to raise what was perceived as an impossible sum of money was great. Even the burden of trying to unload lottery tickets worth 1.50 pesos each was perceived as a heavy one. This entire turn of events was, in fact, quite amazing and very much an ironic twist on the original intentions underlying the organization of village pastoral councils.

One of the tenets of Vatican II and of BCCs is decentralization of the Church away from the town to local communities. There is also an emphasis on Church as "people" not "structures" or institutions. But, in this case, village pastoral councils which had been set up to decentralize the Church and are intrinsically poor organizations, were mobilized to supply the centre with funds needed for a purely luxurious enhancement of the church building there! To add to the irony, the pastoral council of the village of Botilao had for some time undertaken various projects, such as Christmas carolling and bake sales, to try to raise the funds needed to put walls on their own very basic tin-roofed chapel structure but had not been able to make much

headway. In this case, it appears that Fr. Mantala expressed very traditional behaviour with regard to church renovations and to fund raising at the expense of BCC theory and practice. (21)

Another example illustrative of the cultural embeddedness of the clergy is drawn from a sermon given by Fr. Mantala. On February 25, 1989, the third anniversary of the "people power" revolution, Fr. Mantala told the people that it is not the victory of Corazon Aquino over Marcos that they celebrate but the

presence of God amidst us. The God of peace who liberated his people from suffering. He is the God of Exodus 3:1-8,13-15 "I have witnessed the affliction of my people - have heard their cry of complaint - so know well that they are suffering - therefore, I have come down to rescue them." (Mantala: homily, February 25, 1989)

Fr. Mantala stresses the active concern God has for the suffering of His people and His intervention in the world. Culturally, miracles are an accepted part of life in the Philippines, and the EDSA revolution is often referred to as a miracle. Miracles are, of course, also part of orthodox Catholicism, although they are considered to be quite rare. But, in the light of Fr. Malaylay's concern that the people rely too much on the miraculous intervention of God in their lives, rather than working to create change themselves, this homily may be considered to encourage the passivity

that is often considered part of popular religiosity.

A number of the contradictions in BCC approaches to social analysis itself have been pointed out above. Whereas syncretic religious beliefs and "superstitions" are often cited as a source of passivity and underdevelopment of the poor there is little account taken of the fact that these are in fact shared cultural and religious beliefs of both the wealthy and the poor and so do not in themselves account for poverty. The wider context in which these beliefs are acted out must be taken into consideration.

Also, whereas BCC social analysis is in essence structural and seeks structural explanations for poverty there is a tendency to add very static and decontextualized representations of "negative" Philippine cultural values and traits to the causes for poverty. These overly negative evaluations of Philippine values, values which the poor also partly share with the wealthy, are in fact derived from an educational system rooted in colonial history.

Finally, there is a basic conflict within the program as it seeks social change based on a secular "scientific" social theory that encourages conflict and direct engagement with structural oppressors through essentially Christian mediators who have a religious commitment that does not exclude any sector or group.

This conflict clearly troubles the clergy, such as Fr. Malaylay, who commented on the fact that the BCC theory does not detail to any great extent what one is to do with the elite.

Differences in the character, and personal histories of the priests themselves also effect the degree of consistent implementation of the BCC program's central ideas in the towns. There are some differences between priests who were largely trained before Vatican II and are rooted in pre-Vatican II traditions and their younger counterparts, although differences based upon age are not consistently predictable. There are also differences in socio-economic background of the clergy that may effect the degree to which they embrace and attempt to carry out the BCC thrust. Especially the more recently ordained priests from poorer origins are expected to be able to embrace the program's ideas with fewer personal conflicts. There are also important differences in individual characters that cause priests to be more or less inclined to disturb harmonious relationships with members of the elite, to be diplomatic, or to prefer one theological approach over another.

As the clergy do not stay in the same parish for longer than five years, the expression of the program at the level of the town can be very much

effected by the turnover to another priest, and, therefore, appear to the inhabitants to be inconsistent; a case in point is Santa Cruz. When Fr. Mantala left Santa Cruz, during the regular re-shuffle, the new priest was a Marinduque native who had served as a priest in the United States for over a decade. Fr. Rodas is not very familiar with the BCC program, nor with the overall direction the diocese has been attempting to take, nor with aspects of Philippine liberation theology. The bishop told me, during a brief return trip I made in 1991, that he had sent the priest on a special training course to try to bring him in line with the overall thrust of the diocese.

Although I did not have much time to extensively research the impact of the new priest on the people of the town of Santa Cruz, a few informal conversations with members of the elite soon confirmed that Fr. Rodas is considered much more "reasonable" and "approachable." They did not hesitate to tell me that the convento is now, once again, an orderly and clean place. It also became obvious that Fr. Rodas spends most of his time in the town.

Fr. Rodas himself admitted to me that he cannot find much time to be involved in the BCC-CO program, or to spend time in the villages, as his duties in the town consume him. He added that it really is up to the

laity to carry the program. In discussing the BCC-CO program, Fr. Rodas confessed to having his doubts about the political inclinations of the movement. He recounted how, during the recent national level battle by progressive organizations against the U.S. military bases, the BCC-CO movement in Marinduque organized a large demonstration against the bases in Santa Cruz at which they burned an effigy of President Bush. This clearly shocked and disturbed the priest who said, "how can that be, the States was also our friend once, it is not right" (Rodas: discussion 1991).

There is, thus, presently a high potential for inconsistency and contradiction in the presentation and implementation of the program by the clergy. The clergy are not primarily selected based on their suitability to convey the perspectives of the program in all their activities and commitments; they are also not consistently in one parish over a long period of time. Even barring elite opposition, such inconsistencies are likely to remain a characteristic at the diocesan level until the principles of Vatican II replace pre-Vatican II perspectives and culturally based inclinations.

Conclusions

One conclusion that may be drawn from the information in this and the previous chapter is that even barring direct opposition by the elite to changes, some clergy are having a difficult time redefining their relationship to the elite in the light of a newly adopted role as social activist on top of an ongoing commitment as pastor. The unresolved contradictions of these dual roles have resulted in a measure of avoidance and stagnation on the part of some clergy with regard to implementation of changes that effect the elite.

Furthermore, the dynamics of the changing relationship between the clergy and the elite are complex. The clergy have traditionally "served" the elite in a spiritual capacity based on personal respectful relationships, in return, the clergy have been accorded the outward appearances of elite status. The initial attempts by the clergy to transform the relationship were based on social insights that identify the elite as a group. Changes were to be implemented uniformly regardless of personal relationships or values such as utang na loob. In the course of dealing with elite responses and resistance personal relationships have, in some cases, reasserted

themselves, albeit in transformed form, where members of each group have made adjustments.

As different priests have responded to the tensions that arose when they tried to implement changes in different ways, this has led to fragmentation of approach and the consequence that the elite show favour to certain priests over others to head their parishes. While Fr. Mantala eventually accepted his alienation from the elite and the personal and organizational consequences this brought, Fr. Malaylay softened his approach, at least in direct discussions with the elite, and appears now to seek to slowly "reform" their positions. Neither approach has, as yet, led to large scale transformations of popular rituals or structures of the town.

A closer look at the issue of elite manipulation and elite experience of religiosity raises a number of considerations. The example I elaborated on, of the role of elite-owned statues in the public religious life of the towns, confirms BCC-CO analyses that elite dominance over central religious positions, symbols, practices and social relationships grants the elite a certain social and possibly derived economic and political power. Religious prominence affords the elite the opportunity to manipulate social groups, if desired. Furthermore, the Church has traditionally

enhanced the social prominence of the elite by rewarding them with prestigious and responsible positions. The presentation of key statues as wealthy further symbolically legitimizes and supports elite wealth. Experientially, the elite and the poor both believe in the positive influence of these large statues and in their ability as representatives of saints, to work miracles for their devotees. In this sense also, then, the private ownership of these statues affords the elite certain advantages.

On the other hand, the strong similarities in the personal experience of religiosity between the elite and the poor raises a number of questions. Many of the characteristics of peasant religiosity that the BCC-CO movement decries as leading to passivity, resignation, and exploitation are in fact beliefs shared by the elite. Members of the elite and the poor share a strong faith in the practical intercession of the saints, Mary and Jesus in their lives. Their faith is equally vertically directed, as opposed to socially conscious, and surrounded by what may be called "unscientific superstitions." While it is true that these features do not lead to a challenge of the social status quo under everyday circumstances, and so may be said to work to the advantage of the elite, in terms of personal experience of faith, and the personal

spiritual practices that flow out of this experience, the elite and the poor share elements of a common world view or perspective. What I am arguing here is that folk belief and traditional world view per se do not uniquely characterize the poor, nor do they innately cause passivity.

It is, furthermore, helpful to recognize the reality of this intense experience of religiosity in understanding elite responses to changes that they perceive as being designed to relegate them to the sidelines of public religious practices. The elite interpret the traditional practices they dominate as forms of religious "service" to God and the community, often even as a financial and personal sacrifice. Many members of the elite protest the fact that the poor are now being given precedence while they are at least equally faithful and equally good Catholics and have "proven" this for years. Elite protests over proposed changes in religious practices in favour of the poor stem not only from a potential loss of social prestige and prominence and control but also from a sense that their religious commitment is being devalued or questioned.

It may be argued that my approach to this issue is overly empirical, taking elite statements at face value as opposed to simply pointing out the underlying

materially-based dynamics. But, I believe it is important to recognize elite responses to proposed changes as, at least partly, rooted in the personal religiosity of the elite as this approach helps to explain why the elite have not taken a much harder position against an organization that has freely used its public forum to spread ideas that are hostile to elite interests. It is the genuine interest that many members of the elite have to remain part of, and involved in, the Church that both offers some measure of protection to the clergy and assures the mutual adjustments that both parties must make.

On the whole, one must conclude that elite resistance and opposition has been successful in halting the wide-scale implementation of changes in important public religious practices of the towns. It has also transformed traditionally close relations between the clergy and the elite in ways that have, in some towns, become obvious to wide segments of the town's population. Traditionally, secular and religious leaders have been regarded by the people as different, but of equal status and authority. Chapter six outlined a number of reasons why this has traditionally been the case and showed how the elite have enabled this perspective and it has been expected by the clergy. An underlying assumption of equal power, which normally

accompanies equal status, has now been called into question.

The, at times quite public, struggle over practices, symbols and interpretations in the religious arena has highlighted real power differences between the clergy and the elite. So far, it seems that the elite have been able to use their economic and political power quite effectively to halt radical changes in the towns. On the other hand, the greater concern of the modern Church for the "masses" may in the end afford the Church a new power base in its struggle for social justice. An example that illustrates the potential of power rooted in the masses follows in the village level chapters.

Finally, this chapter highlighted some of the inconsistencies that accompany the implementation of the still relatively new BCC perspectives. These inconsistencies reflect, to a degree, the transitional nature of the present stage of "re-christianization" in Marinduque. Inconsistencies in ideology and practice are shown to derive partly from ongoing pre-Vatican II perspectives of the clergy, as well as from their own rootedness in historical and cultural traditions, habits, and viewpoints.

NOTES

1. In fact, Fr. Mantala feels that the bishop did indeed send him to Santa Cruz because of his good relationship with the Lecaroz family (interview 1989) and because the tension between the family and the previous priest had been so great. See below in this chapter for greater detail.

2. Fr. Mantala did not have a very good working relationship with the four religious sisters stationed in the parish so that dissatisfied parishioners often voiced their discontent to the sisters.

3. Fr. Rejano was Fr. Mantala's assistant in Santa Cruz for a couple of years until Fr. Rejano was transferred to Torrijos.

4. The centro is the town, the centre of a municipality. It is where the local elite live. Point three in the booklet Fr. Mantala was referring to notes:

Don't choose your leaders from the elite. In the last analysis they will frequently be allergic to all this sharing and will use the position to consolidate their control over people. People whom they previously controlled economically, they will now control 'spiritually.' Instead of one devil, there will be seven as St. Luke says. (Inter-BEC consultations 1988:92)

5. I use the word "flirtation" because the family seems to have become "Born Again" without fully giving up either personal or public expressions of Catholicism. In an interview with Mrs. Lecaroz she told me that she is Born Again but, among other things, she still lights candles and prays every night before her statue of Fatima and still partakes in the Santa Cruzan dancing ritual in the Church because "that is my devotion" (interview 1989). When the family's son died suddenly, the whole family attended a fully traditional Catholic funeral service in the Catholic church. Such mixed allegiances are not uncommon.

6. There are some important differences in the histories of statues in Boac and Santa Cruz, the two towns I am most familiar with. Boac seems to have more truly old, even antique, statues that have been in particular families for many generations. The statues of Boac are also the ones that own land unlike those in

Santa Cruz. More of the large, elaborate, statues of Santa Cruz have been recently bought by wealthy families. Mr. Roque, a wealthy pharmacist in Santa Cruz, especially loved to collect statues. He filled his house with them and upon his death they largely went to his niece, Mrs. Quindoza, but also to other elite households and to the Church. The differences in the statues of Boac and Santa Cruz seem to reflect differences that people from Boac frequently point out between the "cultures" of the two towns. Members of the elite from Boac often comment on the fact that Boac is a more prestigious and elite town than the wealthier Santa Cruz where, they say, many of the elite are "businessmen" or even "nouveau riche." Members of the elite in Boac point to their more formal Mayflower balls or more formal hermanahan to prove their point and declare themselves more interested in refinement and "culture" while noting that the elite of Santa Cruz are being "too political." I was often asked by residents of Boac whether I had noticed these differences yet.

7. There is a more practical reason why the elite must supply the statues for devotions and this is simply that the owner must have a reasonably large and secure home to house a statue. In the case of Maria Rioflorido, the poor woman who became the hermana of Santa Cruz at Fr. Mantala's request, her home was too small and poor to house the statue of the Santo Rosario that usually accompanies this position. Receiving such a rotating spiritually powerful statue is considered one of the bonuses of being hermana for a year. Poor Maria could not even enjoy this "perk" of the otherwise demanding position.

8. In an interview with a well to do member of this devotion I was told that there is some conflict between members and Mrs. Ricalde. Some members feel that the presidency should rotate but Mrs. Ricalde appears not to be open to that suggestion and is able to enforce her position by owning the statue.

9. It was Mrs. Lecarnoz's husband who became involved with the Born Again movement at a time when he was very angry with what he perceived as the political positions taken by a former priest of Santa Cruz.

10. A lifelong friend of Mrs. Quindoza's recalled how as children they used to play together in Mr. Roque's house. She described the large house in town, in which every room was filled with the lifelike images, in eerie terms as both fascinating and very frightening

for a small child.

11. A block rosary is a form of communal prayer in which a group of devotees pray novenas and rosaries before a particular statue nightly. The statue resides for one week in the home of a host who is the primary devotee for that week; he or she lights candles for the statue and prays the rosary before it nightly, even if no other devotees come, and serves snacks to those who do. On Fridays, the largest group of devotees gathers to participate in the prayers and afterwards festive foods are served, followed by a solemn procession of the statue to the home of the next host for a week. Again, having a much prayed over statue in the home is considered very fortuitous and people sometimes choose the time that they will host the statue to coincide with an important event for the family such as a serious illness or academic exams.

12. There is a possible sub-text to this tale as the Manila Hotel was the well-known project and favorite of the Marcoses. The staff there were also Marcos supporters. This story took place while Marcos was still in power and this background may have had something to do both with the offer, as some sort of test of consistency or to compromise the clergy, and with the rejection of the offered goods.

13. Interestingly, she inevitably volunteered the state of the convento under each priest's care. Whether or not it was smoothly run, clean and orderly. This is a common metaphor through which the people express satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a particular priest. Mrs. Robles, as many others did also, complained about the state of the convento under Fr. Mantala.

14. While it is difficult to ascertain the "truth" of these accounts they abound in both Boac and Santa Cruz. In this case, the Lecaroz family had brought the antique and very valuable tabernacle to Manila, supposedly to be cleaned or renovated. After two years the piece had not yet been returned. The people wanted Mrs. Robles to address this problem and she suggested that they write to Mr. Lecaroz. This led to the accusation by Lecaroz supporters that she was trying to have Lecaroz ousted as mayor. In the end, there was an unsatisfactory public hearing over the issue but this did not resolve people's questions and, as she felt the pastoral council was being held responsible, she resigned, whereupon the whole council fell apart. The tabernacle came back after about two years but, as

always seems to be the case in these stories about valuable religious objects vanishing to Manila in the hands of the wealthy only to be returned much later, the people are convinced it is not the same tabernacle.

15. Fr. Mantala has explained, in another context, that he has the poor contribute what they can to avoid a patronizing approach and to let them feel pride in full support of, and participation in, the Church.

16. In a province-wide get together of both NGOs and the Government Department of Social Welfare Development (DSWD) that work on socio-economic development, it was generally acknowledged by those gathered that the Church had the most extensive and developed program in the province.

17. The clergy's feeling that the elite must not be allowed to "run" various socio-economic endeavors is, of course, rooted in BCC-CO perspectives that warn that the elite will not only not be open to the kind of social structural analysis needed as part of peasant consciousness raising but, even worse, will by their leadership perpetuate ingrained aspects of existing unequal relations between themselves and peasants and may even end up using the projects for personal economic gain. The cases cited here generally lend credence to these fears.

18. Reasons given for participation were: repentance for sins; a panata or promise to God in return for healing, to do well in exams, to finish studies, or to improve troubled family life; thanksgiving for healing, doing well in exams, or finishing studies; as preparation for becoming hermana/o in the future; to learn the teachings and prayers of the Church; for "holiness"; to learn a better attitude in life; and to partake in the Lord's suffering in order to lessen sins; to know the presence of God in the Church and in himself.

Responses given by the young people with regard to what they had learned included: how to pray the rosary; how to say prayers; the sacraments; religious songs; the proper procedures in the Church and how to assist at the altar (for boys especially); the "words of God"; how to get along with others; teachings of the Church; how to make the sign of the cross properly at the time of the gospel reading; the mysteries of the Church; the Angelus; how to lessen bad habits; how to find things in the Bible; proper genuflection; and commandments. When I followed up on such topics as "the teachings of the Church," it was apparent that despite a possible

recognition of the term Vatican II the social transformative meanings were not familiar. The traditional division by gender in the goals of the program are also still very much in evidence. For young women it is seen as a preparation for marriage, teaching such practical skills as budget making, washing, and cooking (from interviews with the nuns who assisted the young girls) and for men it is, for example, considered as training for an altar boys.

19. While the parish priest is perceived as capable of playing an important role in motivating the community to keep up the church, concern for such an important public building as the church is perceived as something prominent community members should act upon whether or not supported by the priest who is, in any case, always but a temporary member of the parish.

20. Marble, often from the neighboring island of Romblon, is an expensive but local product in the Philippines.

21. In an interview with Fr. Mantala regarding this issue I expressed my surprise at the turn of events. He first defended the choice of marble for the church as a desire of the people in the town which he could not do anything about. But, when I pointed out the irony and the hardship that fund raising through village pastoral councils presented he appeared genuinely surprised. Fr. Mantala agreed that he had not really thought about it in that way and that genuine participation of the poor might have been better achieved by insisting on a much cheaper tile for the central church that all could in fact feel they had contributed to.

THE VILLAGE LEVEL

People inside the house, we will enter your home now
This plan of ours will not be put off
Because we have found you
The fortunate saint, who will be offered to now

As we come we carry the crown
Which is truly wonderful when you see it
That's why we all rejoice now
The dearest saint will be crowned now

O, dearest saint, with good heart
Accept the offering that we have brought
All the roses and amarillas flowers
Which we have carried here and will throw to you

Our first greeting, accompanied by kneeling
Is like the greeting of the angel to Jesus
Our second greeting is with complete respect
The beloved and Holy Felius Law-damas

Viva! Viva! Viva!, long life! long life! (3x)
Long life to the saint we have crowned
This is a humble act, of simple attitude
Viva! Live long without end! (2x)

(Excerpts from the Putong of Botilao)

Don't you notice
In your surroundings
The air is very dirty now
As well as our rivers

Development is not bad
We have come a long way
But look at the water in the sea
Before it was blue, now it is tailings

A time will come
When wild birds will have no place to live
Look at the trees that were very strong before
Now they are dying because of our foolishness

I have only one request
At my death, I hope it will be raining
I will bring my guitar
So that in the clouds we will be singing

(Excerpts from a protest song sung by villagers from
Botilao at a rally against the pollution of their bay)

CHAPTER NINE: BCC-CO Core Staff: Mediators of New Structures, Practices and Ideas to the Village Level

Introduction

In the diocesan level chapters I focussed on the role of the clergy as mediators of the ideas and practices of the BCC-CO program in the towns. In this chapter I introduce an intensive investigation of the impact of BCC organizing in the villages of Marinduque by examining the essential role of lay leaders in this process. The relationship the BCC lay leaders have to the goals and demands of the BCC-CO program differs in important ways from that of the clergy. Similarly, the relationship of the lay leaders to their primary target population, peasants and laborers, is also of a different nature than that of the relationship between the clergy and the elite.

The role of the laity is central to the BCC-CO program for practical reasons as the logistical requirements of reaching out to far flung and remote communities go far beyond the ability of a single parish priest, even if he has assistance from religious

sisters. But, more essentially, the laity plays a key role for ideological reasons as the program is rooted in a new vision of the Church as a decentralized, participatory, and grass roots "Church of the people."

The first sections of this chapter introduce the BCC-CO core staff of Marinduque. These lay leaders are themselves from peasant backgrounds. While they continue to farm and fish the BCC work has become their primary commitment and their main source of income. These chapter sections outline how the lay activists became involved in the program and what their activities are with regard to the villages they organize and with regard to the regional office in Manila. One such activity, which provides the workers a measure of independence, is the solicitation of funds from donor organizations. These funds are used to run the BCC-CO program and to provide the leaders with salaries. A brief summary is also provided of the procedures lay leaders follow in initiating and consolidating BCCs in new areas.

The following section of this chapter focusses on the BCC-CO seminars which are one of the primary organized means of transferring BCC-CO perspectives and insights to villagers. These seminars provide villagers with an introduction to structural tools of social analysis, to the new religious exegesis, and to the

goals of the program with regard to direct social action. I review common characteristics and procedures of these seminars and examine the two most essential seminars in detail. One of these is the seminar that teaches villagers how to conduct the Bible-sharing sessions that become an ongoing source of liberational perspectives and of group solidarity, as well as a means by which to reach out to uninvolved villagers. I also describe some of the more specialized seminars that are given at the diocesan level for established local leaders.

The next section describes the monthly meetings the BCC-CO core staff take part in, in which they report to each other on their activities in the various BCC areas under their supervision. These meetings lend insight into the typical problems the staff face in organizing BCCs in the villages and illuminate how they respond to these problems. Six month plans are developed in these meetings and bi-annual reports to the head office in Manila are prepared. A review of the organizational aspects of the lay leaders' jobs contributes to an understanding of their goals, as well as to how they are influenced by local level realities and by their contacts with Manila.

It becomes clear in the monthly staff meetings that the BCC-CO core staff function as "middle-men" (1)

between villagers and the BCC-CO head office in Manila. As middle-men the lay leaders present the ideology and aims of the BCC-CO program to villagers and report back to the national level on the successes and problems they experience in organizing BCCs. This broker function of the lay leaders is further explored in this chapter. In the process of spanning different social levels and cultural environments the core staff prove to be sensitive to the differing perspectives of the different groups they interact with. The implications of these different perspectives on the functioning of the lay leaders and ultimately on the program are examined, as well as the personal "conversion" experiences the lay leaders have undergone in committing to the program.

Finally, this chapter provides the results of a survey I conducted among village level BCC participants from eight of Marinduque's twelve parishes. This survey aims to discover the main everyday concerns of these villagers, and, given their degree of initiation into the program, how they feel the program addresses these concerns. There is also an attempt to discern whether BCC perspectives are reflected in the answers of these participants.

Two principle questions underlie this chapter. One, how is the BCC-CO program reproduced or

transformed through the activities of the lay leaders, especially given their role as middle-men? And two, in what way do the responses of villagers indicate how the program may become transformed at the village level?

Lay Leaders Building Basic Christian Communities

The six BCC-CO core staff of the Marinduque program, four women and two men, range in age from 30 to 44. (2) Adelaida, the core staff co-ordinator, is 30. Her husband, Ernesto, is also one of the BCC-CO staff and they have two children. The other core leaders are Annie (female, single), Letty (female, single), Pedro (male, married), and Santa (female, single). The lay leaders come from different parts of the province but all stem from peasant backgrounds. They range in educational achievement from elementary school to a number of years of college. They all ranked themselves as mahirap or "poor." (3) The BCC-CO core members earn 1,200 pesos a month for their work; Adelaida, as co-ordinator, earns 1,400 pesos.

The earliest recollections members of the BCC-CO staff have of hearing about BCCs go back to 1979/80 when Fr. Simplicio Sunpayco, S.J., Fr. Jose Blanco, S.J., and the Luzon branch of the National Secretariat for Social Action (NASSA), the Luzon Secretariat for

Social Action (LUSSA), provided the first seminars that the staff members to be attended at the Apostolic Centre and at or the accommodations of NASSA in Manila: They became full time BCC-CO workers in 1982. During their years of work as BCC-CO leaders the six core staff have been, they say, most inspired by Bishop Lim, Sister Milagros Velasco, F.M.M., Fr. Malaylay, and "other workers."

By 1989, BCC-CO had become the main organizational and ideological approach underlying evangelization efforts in all of the twelve parishes of the diocese but one. The areas that are now being organized by the BCC-CO staff are at varying stages of development.

The main activities of the BCC-CO lay leaders are to initiate and organize local BCC programs in the various parishes of Marinduque; to run diocesan seminars for members of the already organized BCCs; and to hold monthly meetings at which they report on their respective areas, discuss information that has arrived from the main office in Manila, plan long term activities and seminars, procure necessary finances, and plot strategies for ongoing struggles such as against the polluting copper mine, Marcopper.

The lay leaders have all attended a wide range of seminars to prepare them for the BCC work they now

do; these seminars are part of their ongoing formation. The seminars taken by lay leaders span about ten years and have been taken both in and outside of the province. The seminars fall into various categories. A number of the seminars the core staff have taken are introductory. They teach potential lay leaders the underlying principles of Basic Christian Communities, their history, how they are rooted in Church tradition, their vision on society and on the role of humankind (tao) therein. Among these seminars are the "Basic Orientation Seminar" (BOS), the "BCC-CO Orientation Seminar," and the "Lay Leaders Seminar."

While the BOS outlines most of the main elements that underlie the BCC-CO perspective there are further seminars that enhance and "deepen" the basic knowledge learned in this BOS seminar. Among the more specialized seminars that the BCC-CO core staff in Marinduque have taken are: "Philippine History," "Salvation History," "Biblical-Theological Reflection," "Mariology," "Creative Liturgy Seminar," "Grassroots Theologians Forum," "Justice and Peace."

The core staff have also taken seminars that have a more directly practical intent. These are aimed at enhancing the skills of the community organizers. These seminars include: "Project Proposal Making," "Program Management," "Project Management," "Trainer's

Training," "Participatory Research," "Community Organization Program Management and Supervision," "Co-operative Seminar," "Skills Training," "Leadership Training." Finally, there are up-dating seminars, seminars that are tailored to inform BCC participants on evolving situations, and more specialized seminars such as the "Ecology Seminar" that have been taken by BCC-CO core staff members in Marinduque. (4) The seminar that teaches the BCC-CO workers how to conduct and lead the essential Bible-sharing sessions which form the core of organized BCCs' activities is called the "Faith and Life Integration Seminar."

Many of these seminars that the BCC-CO core staff have taken they themselves conduct in the areas of their BCC organizing. The BOS and BCC-CO Orientation Seminar are always the first seminars given to a new group. Soon to follow are the Faith-Life Integration Seminar that teaches the newly forming group how to conduct weekly Bible-sharing sessions. This allows the group to come together around a weekly activity, to start to share personal experiences among themselves, to start to "critically" analyze the personal and socio-economic problems they face, to explore the structural-historical "roots" of these problems, and to place these problems within the greater context of their community, municipality, province, and nation.

The types of social analyses and approaches to be taken in tackling both personal and structural problems will have been dealt with in the BOS but in the Bible-sharing experience the people learn to become familiar with the Bible in such a way that they may find therein texts that reflect these particular analyses of their lives and that inspire them in their ongoing organization and ultimate mobilization for action. What they in fact learn is how to select passages and to interpret them in a way that is informed by the underlying social perspective of the BCC-CO program.

When a BCC-CO core leader enters an area for organizing he or she will first, as they put it, "waste time with the people" in order to get to know them. Then the leaders start to conduct a survey in order to collect some basic information on households, livelihood practices, and the problems as perceived by the people themselves: this is called a "Social Investigation." The staff also start to conduct the main seminars. Through these activities the BCC-CO core leader starts to identify potential local lay leaders. These candidates may be invited to take a seminar at the diocesan level in leadership skills or other relevant topics. These seminars could take new BCC members to Manila or just be given in the village

itself depending on where the appropriate seminar is being offered, available funding, and the degree of potential the candidate shows. Particularly promising local leaders eventually start taking more advanced seminars at the diocesan level and some are offered the opportunity to participate in larger seminars and retreats in other centers of the country as a central idea of the BCC-CO program is to raise awareness of peasants and workers about their nation-wide unity with each other by virtue of their shared daily experiences and problems.

Only after a BCC group has been working well together, which means they meet regularly for Bible-Sharing and have perhaps already identified a solvable problem and tackled it together successfully, are they offered the series of seminars that will allow them to apply for socio-economic project funding: the Project Proposal Making and Project Management Seminars.

Eventually, the BCC-CO core leaders have to phase themselves out and leave the new BCC in the hands of its local leaders, although the core leader typically still revisits the area regularly. There is also a roving team of "Technical Assistance" personnel to help with problems in the projects. The whole cycle from integration into a target area to moving on to a new "expansion" area is carefully mapped out in advance

and regular monthly meetings allow the core staff to update each other on their progress and to seek assistance with any problems they may be encountering. Typically the whole process should not take longer than three years.

A Brief History of the BCC-CO Staff

Adelaida briefly outlined for me the history of the involvement of the present BCC-CO core staff members in the movement. In 1979, she says, community organizing started in the village of Botilao, in the municipality of Santa Cruz, and in the village Tambunan, in the municipality of Torrijos. At this stage the organizing was not yet under the BCC-CO umbrella. Pedro and Santa became the workers for Botilao and in Tambunan Letty, Lydia, and Mauzar started their work. Sr. Mila Velasco, F.M.M., was the co-ordinator of this community organizing project. She was hired by the bishop to do this work (Adelaida: interview 1989).

Santa had been a reluctant convert to the program swayed only by the persistent arguments of Sr. Mila. Santa had already worked as a catechist for the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary in Mogpog and was recommended by them to the Asian Social Institute in

Manila for training as a community worker in 1978-79.

In 1980, she was recruited by LUSSA to conduct "people's research in Marinduque" and during this period she was first approached by Sr. Mila to become a BCC worker for the province. Santa explained that she first refused the offer because of health problems but later she added that "my companions in attending various seminars are scholarly and professionals" (Santa: interview 1989). She admits that she was "ashamed" because "my knowledge might not be the same with the scholars and professionals" (Santa: interview 1989). Despite bad health Santa became one of the longest serving BCC-CO staff members to date.

In 1979, Fr. Sunpayco from La Ignaciana was asked to come to the island to give inspirational seminars. He introduced the BEC program then known as KRISKA. Adelaida started working with the KRISKA program in Gasan where Fr. Mantala was the parish priest. In 1982, however, the bishop decided to promote the BCC-CO program throughout the diocese and Adelaida left Gasan to come and work for the BCC-CO program. She noted personal frustrations in her relationship with Fr. Mantala as one of the reasons she left Gasan (Adelaida: interview 1989). But, she now says that she also finds the BCC-CO approach to be much more effective in dealing with the oppressive realities

facing the people (Adelaida: interview 1989).

In 1982, Annie and Ernesto joined along with some others who later dropped out. (5) The staff now expanded their activities to cover five areas including the villages of Botilao and Tambunan which continued as areas of concentration.

In 1986, Sr. Mila was "phased out" and Adelaida succeeded her as "full time co-ordinator" (Adelaida: interview 1989). In 1986, the team expanded to some new areas and "phased out" of their original organizing areas which they now deemed able to continue on their own. Only Santa remained in Botilao "as a special case because of the issue selected there [pollution]" (Adelaida: interview 1989). By 1986, sectoral organization, a characteristic of the BCC-CO approach, had led to the formation of two diocesan federations under the guidance of the BCC-CO staff: the Federation of Farmers and Fishermen and the Federation of Women (Adelaida: interview 1989).

Finally, in 1988, when the team again took on new areas, Santa moved to Cawite because the BCC in Botilao, which is on the forefront of the battle against the polluting copper mine, was considered strong enough to continue on its own. The year 1988 was also significant because the BCC-CO Luzon program reassessed its basic strategy and made a change in

focus from "sectoral based organizing" (farmers, fishermen etc.) to "parish based organizing" (Adelaida: interview 1989) which is supposed to be more inclusive of the community as a whole as opposed to specifically directed at certain pre-determined target groups. The 25 organized groups the core leaders recorded in 1986, consisted of members "from farmers/fishermen and women" who "acquired skills in conscientizing, facilitating seminars, mobilizing and organizing structures" (Retrospect 1986). (6) From 1988 on, the BCCs would theoretically consist of a broader range of people although the Federation of Farmers and Fishermen and the Federation of Women would also continue to exist, and their members are also members and/or leaders of BCCs.

In 1989, Annie quit the program and three new workers joined and funding was applied for to greatly expand the program. Annie's departure caused great consternation both because she was one of the first to join and was a very accomplished organizer, and because she was quitting to take a more lucrative position as a community organizer for a Japanese NGO working in Marinduque.

Annie's departure from the BCC-CD program was clearly very emotional for her, as well as for the core staff who organized a retreat to try to change her

mind. She was constantly reminded by the others, especially Adelaida, that this work is not like any other job but is a sacrifice for the liberation of the oppressed and that it is a religious calling. Annie tearfully explained to me that this issue was extremely difficult and emotional for her but that she just could not live anymore with her mother's constant criticism of her low paying job.

Annie is the only child her mother, brothers and sisters were able to send to High School and even to college for a few courses. Her mother kept telling Annie that she had wasted her hard earned money on her daughter, who finally broke under the pressure.

Funding: Imported Independence

One of the major concerns as the program grew has been funding. The BCC-CD program, nation-wide, has proven to be very adept at soliciting funds from abroad for its programs. Adelaida, as the program co-ordinator for Marinduque, has a very good knowledge of various agencies, especially those in Europe, that may fund BCC activities and has considerable skill in putting together funding proposals with the aid of the national office in Manila.

In 1989, the Federation of Women was receiving

funding from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA); 100,000 pesos for socio-economic projects and more than 100,000 pesos for training and community organizing (Adelaida: interview 1989). The local BCC-CO program's policy on socio-economic projects is that the funding is a loan awarded to a successful proposal put forth by the recipient of the funds. The project itself is supposed to generate the funds for the recipient to pay back the loan with a minimal interest requirement and to present both the beneficiary and the community with ongoing benefits. Adelaida explained that 10,000 pesos a month of the CIDA money goes to the salaries of the six staff members. But, she is looking forward to increased funds in the future because the program is being "reviewed" by CEREMO from the Netherlands for funding which will allow the staff to hire more workers and conduct larger seminars. (7)

The Federation of Farmers and Fishermen is receiving some funds from BCC-CO Luzon and has a loan from the NGO Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) as well. (8) A 1987 study on development opportunities in Marinduque, conducted by the PBSP, notes that only the local Church serves as "a catalyst for self organization" (BCC-CO Grant Proposal: 1989). The bishop has also contributed 15,000 pesos to the

Federation of Farmers and Fishermen of which 10,000 for socio-economic projects and 5,000 for seminars (Adelaida: interview 1989). (9)

In 1989, the BCC-CO core staff developed ambitious plans for expansion of the existing BCC-CO program both in terms of its present structures and with regard to an additional program for community based health in a number of the more advanced BCC parishes. The expansion plan of the basic BCC-CO structures calls for a grant of 1,016,840.00 pesos over three years. This money will fund a greatly expanded staff structure, salaries, administrative costs, and the costs of training seminars.

The twelve parishes of Marinduque are divided evenly over three vicariates. The expansion plan envisions a Project Director and a Diocesan Program Co-ordinator, a Vicarial Program Co-ordinator for each vicariate and two Parish Workers per parish. Only the positions of Parish Workers will be largely filled by previously unfunded BCC-CO members. Under the proposed program the Parish Workers will be chosen by the core staff from among active and successful leaders of existing BCCs who will receive further training to fulfill Parish Worker positions. The stated aims of the proposal Adelaida devised are to assist targeted poverty sectors "farmers/fishermen and women" to

develop

with increased capability to participate, facilitate, plan, implement and evaluate parish programs and socio-economic activities in [sic] a sustained basis to meet the communities' felt needs. (BCC-CO Project Proposal 1989:2)

Another project proposal put forth by the BCC-CO staff, for the development of a Community Based Health Program (BCC-CBHP), requests 734,415.00 pesos over a two year period to cover administrative and program operation expenses related to the development of community based health care in, especially remote, villages of five parishes within the context of existing BCC-CO structures (BCC-CO Grant Proposal 1989). Such programs already exist and are operated with success in other BCC-CO provinces such as Isabela. The above two funding proposals are to be channeled through BCC-CO Luzon and probably NASSA, which often serves as a screening agency for foreign aid donors.

(10)

Adelaida also has ambitious ideas to develop an expanded credit and consumers co-operative, para-legal services, and an ecology fund that will primarily supply education for environmental preservation (Adelaida: interview 1989). The availability of foreign and domestic funding for the work of the BCC-CO core staff is especially important as it grants them independence from local sources of funding, such as the

local elite might provide, and allows them to develop their agenda without being obliged to consider the interests of local financial supporters. (11)

BCC-CO Seminars: Introducing New Ideas and Redirecting Old Ones at the Village Level

Basic Christian Communities introduce both new ideas and new structures to the village level. New ideas are primarily conveyed, in an organized manner, through the dual media of Bible-sharing sessions and through seminars. These seminars, directly handed down from the national level via seminars the staff have taken there, or adapted from modules taught at the national level, generally reflect the main perspectives of the BCC program at the national level such as: structural approaches to social analysis, cultural critiques, reinterpretations of religious symbols, narratives and practices; how to organize people, how people must change, and how mass social action will be brought about. Unlike in the interactions between the clergy and the elite there is little or no "softening" of the liberational message nor shying away from laying direct blame on oppressive structures and relationships or even on members of the local elite themselves.

As mentioned above, of the many and varied seminars that a BCC participant will take and possibly

give over the course of time, two contain many of the basic perspectives and approaches common to the program: the Basic Orientation Seminar (BOS) and the Faith-Life Seminar that leads to the ability to facilitate Bible-sharing sessions. Many of the topics in these seminars may later find more extensive treatment in specialized seminars, for example on "Church of the poor," but these two cover many of the fundamental principles, history, and practice of the BCC-CO movement. (12)

Commonly these seminars, whether held in the village or at a diocesan centre, will follow a certain pattern. They usually start with a lighthearted and joking welcome address by the facilitator, followed by an opening prayer and a song. The seminars usually start early and go on at least one day or even two. There are frequent breaks for snacks or meals but during information sessions the concentration is intense. The participants often take notes, if they are able to, and the sessions tend to be highly interactive with participants spontaneously asking questions, and readily responding to questions from the facilitator. While there are usually more women taking part than men, the men are equally active in participating. There is usually quite a bit of joking on the part of the facilitator, alternated with serious discussions of the

topics. The facilitators are quick to notice when people are starting to get sleepy and will call for breaks with "action songs" which inevitably result in much hilarity.

A commonly used teaching technique entails the facilitator asking a number of specific questions and getting the people to respond. The responses are recorded on a large paper or blackboard. While the people are responding freely to the questions their answers are anticipated by the facilitator and also somewhat directed by the questions. The facilitator will then, in turn, respond to these elicited thoughts by "deepening" them. The word "deepening" is commonly used to mean taking basic thoughts, usually those offered by participants, and placing them into a broader social context and religious context while endowing them with meaning from the structural perspective of the program. "Deepening," then, is where the facilitator reinterprets the everyday understandings of the participants from the structural perspective of the program, placing the everyday knowledge of the people in a new analytical context, and giving it new meaning. Commonly this process will entail simultaneously reflecting on the participants' experiences in the context of God's will or plan for humanity and may entail a Bible reading of which the

exegesis will further lend credence to the particular interpretation and meaning given to people's spontaneous expressions about everyday life. Ultimately a link is established, through the mediation of the lay facilitator, between the people's everyday experiences, the social structural analysis and insights the BCC-CO program, and God's plan for humanity.

Another common characteristic of all the seminars is the penchant for using charts and diagrams to depict historical developments and complex interrelationships. While the charts do synthesize large amounts of information, and look rather professional they do not speak for themselves and need considerable clarification by a trained facilitator.

Basic Orientation Seminar

One of the key focal points of the BOS seminar, is an interest in the essential nature of human beings, or, "what is a tao?" (13) The seminar discusses at length the fact that humans are made in God's image so that the "basic desires" of humans are "God's will" as well. (14) The participants are asked to contribute their "aspirations" and "ambitions." These are then acknowledged as important, valid, and central to their development as good Christians. These desires, often

for a better life, are affirmed by being shown to coincide with God's own wishes for humans known as "ambitions of the Father." The evidence for this argument may be found first of all in the fact that humans, made in God's image, spontaneously have certain aspirations for a better life. These "primary yearnings of man" are described as one of the ways in which God reveals His nature to us: "even if He is not here physically He is here spiritually" because it is He "who gave us that hope."

The second argument that shows that human needs coincide with God's desires is shown to be found in Biblical salvation history, especially the story of Exodus where God interfered in history to save "the Israelites from slavery leading [them] to [the] promised land" and in the life and death of Christ who fought for the oppressed and died for human salvation. In this Biblical history God reveals himself as sharing human desires.

And, finally, a third argument is that God revealed himself to us directly by becoming flesh in Jesus who shared human needs and desires and defended these basic needs thereby revealing them to be legitimate in God's eyes. Here particularly, certain behaviours and attitudes are pointed to as having been criticized by Christ because they interfere with

other's basic needs, "discrimination...domination of one country to a neighboring country or man to man...competition, success of one's self, wealth, popularity, power" (BCC-CO Module I).

The next step is to ask "what is the will of God?" and to recognize that if the "dream of the Father" is the fulfillment and happiness of humanity then humans, in order to follow God's will, must strive to create the kind of world in which such happiness is possible and so humans are shown to become "co-creators" with God:

It is not God's will that the people suffer poverty, to be oppressed and suffer for an unjust situation. It was proven from our personal experience and it was discovered from the history of mankind. (BCC-CO module I)

It is in the condition of humans as "co-creator" that the social action program of the BCC-CO finds its theological roots. The BOS seminar module points to Genesis (2:15;1:26-27) for Biblical reflections of the notion of humans as co-creator. According to the module the "key" words are "involvement" and "action"; "God gave to man the ability to act freely. Being His co-creator, man will be the one to act, [to] work for the devziopment" (BCC-CO module I).

A natural conclusion from the above is another key aspect of the BOS seminar; the analysis of "the

situation that confronts us." In a diagram tao is shown not only to have a relationship to God but also, because of his role as co-creator, to society. Tao must

be involved in analyzing and discovering what is happening in the society, involved in changes, making of laws, regulations and whatever decision or project that effect man. Criticizing the undesirable happening to society local and national. (BCC-CO module I)

The BOS seminar, through diagrams depicts the current situation in the country. One such diagram is a triangle with in the relatively small top the word "elite." In the next section, drawn about 4/5 of the way up the triangle is the word "middle-class" and in the proportionately very large base the initials "PDO" for poor, deprived, and oppressed (BCC-CO module). (15) Beneath a similar diagram used in a seminar were the words "societal sins" and "unjust structures" which are further explained in abbreviated form as: "blocks to the reign of God," "dehumanizes rich and poor," "breaks up the community of Christians." Another diagram depicts a circle labeled "wealth of the country" with a pie slice of about 1/4 of the pie with the number 93% in it. This diagram expresses the situation in which 93% of the people have only about a quarter of the wealth while the remaining 7% have the bulk of the country's wealth. Evidence of the "roots of sin" and "rejection of the plan of God" are described in

concrete form as being the "colonization of one country to the neighboring country...unequal division of wealth and rights...graft and corruption of those in position in the government" (BCC-CO module I).

After quite extensive discussions about the political, economic and cultural problems facing the country as a whole, including militarization, the debt crisis, the continued colonial status of the country both economically and militarily, and the caprices of the global economy, the participants are asked to focus upon their own provincial and local situation. They are taught how to list their various problems under the headings of "economic," "political," "cultural," "social," and "religious." While many initially have trouble knowing what kinds of problems fall under each of these categories, especially "social," "cultural," and "religious," and their initial expressions are often in the form of personal anecdotes, the experienced seminar attendant soon learns to fill in these categories with the familiar ills in abbreviated form.

Under the heading "political problems facing the country" typical items include: "rampant national militarization"; "rampant murders"; "no action for the complaints of the small ones/ dictatorship"; "vote buying/selling"; "dirty bad elections"; "graft and

corruption"; "political dynasty"; "civil war." (16)
 General socio-economic woes commonly include: "most of the companies are controlled by foreigners, we are controlled by foreigners"; "the price of native products are controlled"; "very high price of commodities"; "great need of fertilizers and pesticides"; "IMF/WB controls the economy"; "sunked to the [sic] debt but still borrowing"; "no jobs"; "continuous poverty" (BCC-CO up-dating seminar: 1989).

Cultural problems of the country also fall into predictable categories: "many are fond of stateside"; "individualism"; "colonial mentality"; "bad vices are rampant"; "bahala na"; "lack of involvement"; "egoistic"; "ningas cogon"; "family centered"; "pakikisama"; "lazy"; "celebration of any occasion/preparing foods" (BCC-CO up-dating seminar: 1989). Under religious problems of the country seminar participants typically identify: "many are still believing in superstitious beliefs"; "wrong beliefs"; "there are some who are still believing to the anting-anting"; "many sects are existing which caused ...our disunity"; "some are doing religion by words only" (BCC-CO up-dating seminar: 1989).

Another important section of the BOS seminar is the section entitled "history of the Church." In this section an overview is given of ecclesiastical history.

This history starts soon after the death of Christ with the first small persecuted Christian communities which, it is explained, the BCCs are modeled after. It then leads through periods of increasing institutionalization of the Church, concentration of power, and defensiveness against Protestantism, to finally end with Vatican II, liberation theology, and BCCs arguing that this end is in fact an ecclesiastical "re-emerging because the Church is teaching again that the Church is the people of God" (BCC-CO module II).

Much time is spent on Vatican II and an explanation of its key theme which, according to the BOS, is overwhelmingly change. Change in the Church itself, over time, leading to the Second Vatican Council, the reality of an ever changing society, and the need for involvement in ongoing societal change, for the improvement of the lot of society's most oppressed, as a goal and even mission of "modern" Christians:

Every baptized person should participate to the changes of the society to have shalom. The blessings of God are within us especially in the PDO. Preferential Option for the Poor is given emphasis. Our theology should be rooted from the history and within the context of the situation. This results in the new commitment for the welfare of the PDO. (BCC-CO Module II)

The BOS seminar next elaborates quite extensively on the international and national history of the BCC movement and especially the history of the

nation-wide BCC-CO program. This explanation does not avoid a detailed discussion of the divisions that exist within the Philippine hierarchy over the program and the fact that some prefer a more liturgical expression of the program and others a "liberational" content in the social sense. The power of the priest in effecting the program is also noted "the priest can destroy the community by choosing leaders just to respond to limited activities (pastoral)" (BCC-CO module I).

The key characteristics of the BCC-CO program are listed. Its "guiding principles" are described as being a Church that is "poor directed [and] should respond to the PDDs situation" according to the "social doctrines of the Church," a "grassroots character based on the concrete experiences of the people," and "people's participation" meaning lay involvement in all actions (BCC-CO Module I). Goals are provided such as "change in structural organizations...based on the word and plan of God" (BCC-CO Module I). All of this is summed up in a chart showing a large arrow with the letters "BCC-CO" at the beginning of the arrow and the word "Changes" on the other end and in the open arrow itself the words "awakening/ reflection/ organizing/ action - leading to one goal" (BCC-CO module I). The word "Changes" is further explained by these words under it, "New Heaven - New Earth - free - dignified-

pro-people - just" (BCC-CO Module I).

The steps needed to come to concrete action are also laid out in the BOS seminar. A newly formed BCC leader, also called a Community Organizing Volunteer (COV), will evaluate the problems of the area with the community and is then expected to "activate the group around the issues in the area" (BCC-CO Module I). The evaluation process includes "social investigation, social analysis, and class analysis" based on an awareness that "society is composed of different people and they have different interests" (BCC-CO Module II). The "Steps in Planning" towards communal action are elaborately laid out. The COV must "know the problems or needs of the community" then "analyze...[the] roots of the problems" and "choose problems to be solved" based on their "seriousness, urgency, [and] growth potential," in other words the degree to which tackling the problem will add to the strength of the group, as well as help people (BCC-CO Module I).

A plan of action is then worked out that includes the amount of time that is expected to be needed to reach a goal, the strategies to employ, the personnel and material needs of the project, the expectations, and how success will be evaluated. The "qualities" of a project should usually be that it is "specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, [and]

time bound" (BCC-CO Module I). Some concrete examples are given to clarify the above. (17)

Faith-Life Integration Seminar

Another important seminar is the one that teaches how to relate scripture and Church teachings to everyday life situations, in order to find guidance and support for social action. The goal of this seminar is to teach local facilitators how to conduct Bible-sharing sessions in the newly forming BCC as this process will become the core repetitive activity of the group, will give the group cohesion, and will be an ongoing educational vehicle to teach the new social direction of the Church. It is in the Bible-sharing that the new exegesis, or liberation theology, may be most consistently conveyed to local level BCC participants, most of which will not be attending more than the most basic seminars. It is also the key activity through which the BCC members will seek to reach out to new members in the village.

La Ignaciana Apostolic Centre sends out weekly Bible-sharing guides to all BEC groups. These guides follow the liturgical year; the biblical readings that form part of that week's Sunday mass. These guides make it possible for even poorly trained facilitators to

conduct the weekly Bible sharing. They give the structure of the ritual, when to sing a song, to meditate, to share experiences. They provide the week's scripture to be read out by the facilitator, they provide a "deepening" section that relates the reading to recent Church teaching, and they provide some probing questions that will allow the participants to start relating the reading to their everyday lives.

The BCC-CO program, however, does not work with a centrally produced Bible-sharing kit. The Faith-Life seminar trains facilitators to put together their own guide for each week. Unlike the BEC guide, the BCC-CO bible-sharing does not necessarily follow the biblical readings of the Church year. As Adelaida put it "they [the BEC] start with the Bible but we start with the experiences and situation of the people... experiences should come first not the Bible" (BCC monthly meeting March 31, 1989). (18)

The BCC-CO facilitator must be very well aware of the major ongoing problems facing the people which may form the basis of a weekly Bible-sharing session, as well as the day to day happenings in the village which may wind up as the theme for that week. The facilitator must also be aware of at least some sections of the Bible that may shed light on a particular topic at hand and must be able to interpret

these Bible sections in a way that reflects both the thinking of Vatican II and a strong liberational theme, in order to be in line with the BCC-CO program. The BCC-CO staff member for a new area will lead the sessions for a long time before asking a new member to take over. By then certain themes, Bible sections, and arguments are familiar and may be adopted. (19)

After songs and prayers, the Faith-Life Integration seminar starts with allowing people to state their ambitions in life and the problems facing them and their village. There is an analysis or "deepening" by the facilitator which affirms these realities and places them in a broader structural analytical context. Then the question of what God has to say about the people's problems is posed. Often a specific topic is chosen as an example and an objective identified "what will you do about this problem" (Faith Life Integration seminar: May 5-7, 1989). The people are shown how to find a Bible section that speaks to the particular issue chosen, for example on the history of salvation. Then they must learn to facilitate the "sharing of the group on the topic," they must teach them to "integrate your life with the Bible" (Faith-Life Integration seminar: May 5-7, 1989). Ideally, a concrete plan of action is ultimately established including answers to the questions "where, when, what,

who" (Faith-Life Integration seminar: May 5-7, 1989) for the ultimate purpose of the exercise is to move from understanding problems in a "deepened" structural sense, through understanding the will of God with regard to these problems to communal action that will participate in the creation of a world more acceptable to God and humans. A dry run may be conducted by splitting the group up into smaller groups.

Seminar participants ultimately go away with a basic outline for the Bible-sharing they will conduct that includes a timetable for prayers, reflections, and songs, and a sense of the kinds of topics that are considered appropriate. They are expected to spend considerable time becoming familiar with the Bible in the course of becoming a good facilitator. (20)

LOI, LIC, and Other Burning Issues

In addition to the regular series of seminars needed for the induction of BCC members into the program, and the special ones that further shed light on particularly complex issues related to the program, there are a number of diocesan seminars which the BCC-CO core staff periodically provide to update members on current national issues or to further their critical understanding about local ones.

In 1989, the BCC-CO core staff provided a seminar for about 30 BCC-CO participants from the diocese. This seminar critically examined the traditional and folk beliefs and practices related to Holy Week. The aim of the seminar was to "discuss the cultural practices of the people and see to what degree these are relevant to their situation" (BCC meeting: February 3, 1989). This critical evaluation highlighted the traditional emphasis on, and adoration of, "passive" and "submissive" religious symbols in Holy Week, especially the Nazarene and the Mater Dolorosa, and pointed out the pervasiveness of superstitious practices in Holy Week which are aimed at mystically empowering essentially oppressed people. The message of the seminar was clear, a call for greater emphasis on strident and powerful Christian symbols such as the victorious Christ of Easter morning and on new ways of gaining "real" as opposed to "superstitious" forms of power.

A seminar was also arranged on the Letter of Intent (LOI) that Corazon Aquino issued in March of 1989. (21) The BCC-CO core staff prepared a "situationer" on this topic called "LOI: The Cross being Carried by the Community." The seminar explained with considerable sophistication such complicated issues as the role of the IMF and the effects of IMF

dictates and massive debt on the Philippine economy. Often these issues were brought down to earth with examples from everyday life. The seminar led up to the question "what is our response?" (BCC-CO LOI seminar: 1989). The LOI was declared "unjust" because it "hinders the improvement of Filipinos...This is against the plan of God" (BCC-CO LOI seminar: 1989). The task of BCC-CO participants was described as

we must live our faith and be challenged to hear the complaints of the people leading to change and freedom for the nation...So we will fight with full bravery... As modern day prophets this is our mission to fulfill in order to reach the new Kingdom of justice and peace. (BCC-CO LOI seminar)

This example clearly illustrates the way linkages are typically made in BCC seminars between topical socio-economic issues and religious motivations for progressive social action.

Luke 4:18-19 was read as further justification for action and a decision was made to "implement a wider information drive," to discuss "these issues at the parish, convent, seminary and other places," and to "write to the president and other government officials to protest the LOI"; addresses were provided.

At times the frustration and anger with the perceived interferences of foreigners in the Philippines led to quite strong language. Pedro noted that

we are controlled by the foreigners because they are the ones managing us. Election is useless...They were the ones who removed Marcos from the Philippines and they were the ones who sent Cory as president. (BCC-CO LOI seminar: 1989)

During a BCC-CO lay leaders' updating seminar Fr. Manguera was asked to speak on national issues that are of importance. He spoke extensively on what he called the "five burning issues" which are: Agrarian Reform; U.S. military Bases; Peace and Order; Graft and Corruption; and Ecology, all of which he also related to the LOI and to the situation of the people in Marinduque. In discussing the perceived overt interference in the country in the form of the U.S. military bases Fr. Manguera also took time to explain covert action, better known as Low Intensity Conflict (LIC). He explained it as a system by which Filipinos are encouraged to fight other Filipinos in order to serve U.S. aims (Manguera: BCC-CO updating seminar: 1989). Fr. Manguera questioned whether the "NPAs are really the enemies of the government" and stated that the "military are the armies of America" (BCC-CO updating seminar: 1989). He warned that although Marinduque is still relatively peaceful the resident CAFGUs could be used against the people, "there is no war yet, if this will come CAFGUs will be used against us" (Manguera: BCC-CO updating seminar: 1989). (22)

Fr. Manguera explained that he was making the

BCC participants aware of these national issues so that they would know how to vote with regard to them and would be ready to take action for the oppressed should these issues impact on Marinduque directly. He also warned the participants that they might be "labeled" for their views, as other committed Church members have been: "progressives... are very active that's why they are called radical [and]...communist" (Manguera: BCC-CO updating seminar: 1989). Fr. Manguera stressed that throughout the country lay leaders have been murdered for their social justice activities. (BCC-CO updating seminar: 1989).

The direct language and unequivocal social analysis that does not hesitate to criticize certain powerful groups is common in BCC seminars and among the lay staff. It is also in these contexts that some members of the clergy, such as Fr. Manguera, express such unveiled viewpoints. In dealings with the elite Fr. Manguera is considerably more diplomatic and the elite rarely are exposed to such uncompromising viewpoints in their dealings with the clergy.

The seminars held at the diocesan level are usually attended only by a few members of each BCC community. Those who stay behind often help out with the fare and food for which they, in return, receive a full report upon the return of the seminar attendants.

Diocesan seminars are typically attended by 20-40 BCC participants. Village seminars attract not only local BCC participants but also other interested and curious villagers. The numbers tend to vary as people "float" in and out of the sessions but a typical group would include 10 - 20 participants. From my experience in Botilao, the information of both the diocesan seminars and the village level seminars does not tend to reach many people in the village who are not directly involved in the local BCC, or are not already interested parties.

Monthly Meetings: Reflections on Interactions with the Grassroots

Once a month the BCC-CO core staff come together to discuss the progress they have made in various areas. At these meetings they report on their respective areas, discuss information that has arrived from the main office in Manila, plan long term activities and seminars, discuss finances, and plot strategies for ongoing struggles such as against Marcopper.

The contents of the monthly meetings lend insight into some of the more common problems and realities the workers encounter in the process of developing BCCs in the various regions. The responses

of the staff to these problems also lend insight into the degree to which the national level objectives of the program are internalized and carried out by the local level staff. Although the six staff members come from peasant backgrounds themselves, and may be expected to adapt the program to local insights and practices in the course of building BCCs, such adaptations are in fact minimal, possibly because regular meetings at the diocesan level reassert the orthodoxy of the program.

The area reporting is a mixture of updates from areas that have been established for some time such as Malibago, where Letty is working, and expansion areas started in 1988, such as Cawite, where Santa transferred to after Botilao, Gasan where Ernesto is introducing BCC-CO to a parish that was long organized under BEC, and Balanacan where Pedro has started BCC organizing. The area reporting lends insight into both the everyday and the sometimes more exotic, situations that the workers may come to face. The workers become familiar with each other's areas and soon names and specific situations become well known. When they meet, the staff spontaneously and eagerly ask each other about the status of specific problems and about how certain situations are being resolved. It is especially during these sessions that Adelaida assures that the

way the workers respond to situations is consistent with the ideals and aims of the program. (23)

Individual area reports usually start with an update on the seminars that were given by each worker in their area during that month and the status of the Bible-sharing in the BCCs of the area. To a large extent monthly progress is measured by how many seminars have been given and how many people attended. These seminars constitute a concrete measuring stick both of participation and of level of advancement of a BCC. The Bible-sharing reports focus on how often the people meet, how many people take part, and to what degree they are able to conduct this key activity on their own. A report that a BCC is able to conduct its own Bible-sharing sessions and does so regularly, that is that there are at least one or two active and advanced local leaders, is an important indicator that the BCC is well organized and ready to be left on its own more.

With regard to the seminars, information is supplied by each worker on which seminar was given - this indicates how far along the group is - and on attendance, how the seminar was received, and problems that arose. Often there is an update on the status of the socio-economic projects of a BCC area, if these exist. Finally, the workers give an overall summation

of progress made and goals not achieved, as well as of the main plans for the next month. A worker may also finish with a wide variety of issues and concerns specific to the area. This is the chance for the workers to ask each other for advice on problems they are facing. After each report the group responds and sometimes an area report will lead to a lengthy debate. These discussions are characterized by the reassertion of the basic tenets and goals of the program and how these should be reached.

The following topics constitute a number of themes and concerns that came up quite consistently over the meetings I attended.

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The role of the parish priest as either a support or hinderance to the success of the program came up in many different ways. The parish priest plays a very significant role in initially introducing a worker to a new region and lending him or her credibility. Pedro notes for Balanacan that "during the first meeting that we had we were accepted by the people through Fr. Ben" (BCC-CO meeting: Sept. 28, 1989). Letty, in reporting on Malibago, notes with great joy the positive signs of progress she can point to. She praises many of the trained lay leaders in the parish whom she feels are really a strength to the

program, but she also recognizes the role of the parish priest. She says that, "if the priest is good there is good accomplishment" (Letty: BCC-CO meeting, Sept. 28, 1989). Letty notes that if she is forced to be absent the parish priest takes over the Bible-sharing for her (BCC-CO meeting: Sept. 28, 1989). Letty also notes the faith the people have in the priest "they have full trust to the priest" and expresses her concern for the continuation of the program when he is gone "when the parish priest will be re-shuffled they will definitely encounter problems because priests have different styles" (BCC-CO meeting: Sept. 28, 1989).

An occasional topic of the meetings is the increasing competition in the villages from keen and persistent members of the various fundamentalists sects operating in Marinduque. Letty notes that she was

very happy because one time the Born Agains entered in the high school building and preached to the students there but the students were not convinced because they argued with the Born Agains using the seminar that they had with me. (BCC-CO meeting: July 31, 1989)

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The BCC leaders often report on everyday tensions they have to deal with that are related to living in a village while setting up a BCC. They often find themselves, and their fledgling BCC, used in disputes between families or neighbors. The workers have to move carefully in making friends and alliances

so as not to upset delicate social and political balances or to be used in ongoing feuds. Gerry reported that he was having difficulties in his relations with the family he was living with and indicated that he wanted to "transfer to another house" of people who do not get along with those with whom he was then living (BCC-CO meeting: Sept. 28, 1989). But Adelaida advised him that he "needs to balance both sides. He should organize first the groups then transfer later" (Adelaida: BCC-CO meeting, Sept. 28, 1989).

Bads, a worker hired to replace Annie explains that when he was first stationed in Buenavista he approached the parish priest for help in identifying potential leaders (BCC-CO meeting: Sept. 28, 1989). The importance of an introduction to the village by the priest is not only to encourage villagers, especially the barangay captain, to accommodate the worker at the request of the priest, but also to induce trust in the lay leader who is, after all, "just" another peasant in their eyes and a stranger at that.

Bads was accompanied by the parish priest to the barangay captain of a village in which he wanted to organize a BCC. At the request of the priest the captain was to help Bads become accepted and established (BCC-CO meeting: Sept. 28, 1989). This method, while the culturally advisable one to follow,

is not always acceptable as the captain may not prove to be a positive identification for a worker, especially in a village with strong political divisions, as this association isolates the worker from part of the village from the start.

Over time, the existence of a BCC in a village may become a source of conflict, especially with the elected village captain and village council. The BCC and the pastoral council usually form the only alternative organized structures at the village level. Furthermore, given the emphasis in the BCC-CO seminars and Bible-sharing sessions on questioning authority, on corrupt elections, and on the problems of political patronage, tensions with village authorities are not surprising. The newly introduced BCC has the potential to upset or enhance existing power balances, and is also a potential source of empowerment for those groups who are out of power in the village.

Their perceived potential for disrupting delicate power balances may make newly arrived lay leaders the recipients of mixed feelings by villagers. On the whole, Bads felt that it was quite difficult to become established, he "shared" that "its difficult to have contact because the people will not trust [you] because you are new there" (BCC-CO meeting: Sept. 28, 1989). This same complaint of initial distrust came

from the second newly hired worker, Gerry, who was starting in Balanacan with Pedro. Gerry relayed an argument he had with one man there who, Gerry said, told him "that they don't have trust for members of their own barangay so how much more with me who they don't know" (BCC-CO meeting: Sept. 28, 1989).

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A common problem cited by the various BCC-CO staff members is the difficulty of reaching people to let them know of planned activities and to mobilize them for seminars. The people often live quite far apart from each other in the village, often in very difficult to reach areas. They are also frequently not at home because of their subsistence practices, which villagers also cite as the main reason they do not take active part in the BCCs. Many BCC workers noted that it is easier to reach farmers than fishermen. Gerry says "the fishermen are very hard to convince because they are fishing very far, unlike the farmers who are easy to contact" (BCC-CO meeting: Sept. 28, 1989). Pedro adds that because the fishermen are "always on the water" he can only "talk to the wives" (BCC meeting: July 31, 1989).

But Bads, distressingly, notes another problem in trying to reach the people. He "discovered" in Buenavista that

Saturday and Sundays are not the right days for visitations because Sunday the people are going out from their home for their vices like cock fighting and drinking in Boac so you cannot see anyone in their home during noontime. (BCC meeting: Sept. 28, 1989)

Santa noted a similar problem. In one village of Cawite she found that the women were "all playing majong" making it hard to "gather them" for the Women's Federation (BCC Monthly meeting: June 28, 1989). The comments by the BCC-CO staff on such "extra-curricular" activities are characteristically negative and may be accompanied by the typical cultural terms to describe the people such as ningas cogon (the habit of being initially engaged but soon losing interest in a project) or bahala na (lack of concern for important issues).

This negative evaluation of the people's leisure time activities partly stems from the frustration these cause for BCC organizers, and partly from the sense that the people do not care enough about their own problems to constructively act on them. But it is also rooted in a more general cultural condemnation of drinking, gambling, and other so-called "vices." A condemnation at least given lip service to by those engaging in these activities themselves, who will sheepishly laugh when admitting to enjoying such diversions, but much more seriously cited by the elite as problems plaguing the poor.

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A major problem that arises time and again is related to the socio-economic projects the BCC program offers. The status of these projects, their success or failure, an analysis of the causes for either condition, and the progress of repayments are a main topic in the area reports. The essence of the BCC, according to the core staff, must be the unity of the group centered around a recognition of each other as "brothers and sisters in Christ" who share similar structural and daily problems; and who, as "co-creators with Christ," must jointly seek solutions both to their own problems and to social injustices more generally. This holistic nature of the BCC program, which seeks to address more than purely spiritual problems of the people, leads the lay leaders to undertake economic projects such as co-ops and small scale socio-economic projects.

The core staff emphasize the need for group solidarity and cohesion created through seminars and evidenced by the fact that the newly formed group independently gathers for Bible-sharing. Ideally these conditions should obtain before project seminars are given and projects are introduced, as these projects are supposed to benefit the newly formed community as a whole and not only individual entrepreneurs. But

villagers are hearing about the available funds for projects and requiring access to them even in the earliest stages of BCC development. Sometimes, BCC staff are even being asked to start a BCC in a village they had not yet targeted because the villagers hope to receive funding for projects.

Adelaida warns that some

people are joining because of the project only. In spreading out you need to convince the people without telling them about the projects because little are joining if there is no project. What you should tell them is the importance of seminars. (BCC Monthly meeting: Sept. 28, 1989)

Pedro also encountered the problem of the people's "single minded" focus on the money for the projects. He says that

I discovered that the people are just giving their attention to the projects and the seminars are neglected. To discourage them I told them that [even] those who are attending seminars before they get their project are still often unsuccessful, how much more with those who are not attending the seminars. (Pedro: BCC-CO meeting, Sept. 28, 1989)

Pedro also had another, quite different, problem to relate that led to extended debate in the meeting. He had found out that people who had been lent money for a banca (boat) for fishing were renting out the banca to other boatless fishermen in the village and then using their free time to gather tuba (coconut wine) to sell for extra money. On the whole the BCC-CO staff decided that this kind of entrepreneurial

activity should be frowned upon. Not only did this usage not correspond with the project proposal but it could lead to exploitation of fellow villagers who did not have a boat which would completely contradict the intent of the program meant not to help one individual but the group (BCC-CO meeting: June 28, 1989).

Pedro further noted dissent among the borrowers about the repayment of loans and the minimal interest thereon. He explained that the people had argued with him that this money had come "free from abroad" and that now "the diocese wants to make money from it" (Pedro: BCC-CO meeting, June 28, 1989).

More often than not repayment was a painful subject especially when the project had failed, for example when the sow in a piggery project died before giving birth. Pedro notes that piggery projects are very uncertain and that the people in his area asked him to teach them how to carve wooden birds so that if their pig dies they can pay back the loan with "bird money" (BCC meeting: July 31, 1989) (24)

Ernesto relayed that he told the people of Gasan that "there is no release in paying back of capital and interest because of their problem to the project" (BCC-CO meeting: Sept. 28, 1989). But he also explained that:

I discovered that some members became unfortunate with their projects for three times

already. So the problem is that how will they pay back their project. (Ernesto: BCC-CO meeting: Sept. 28, 1989)

Santa notes another possible reason the project may not be successful and the repayment of loans may become a problem. A loan in her area was to help set up six people in a "buy and sell" position as fish vendors. But, when they received the capital they were facing other problems, such as "sick kids, schooling costs, and lost jobs" so that the money, 500 pesos each, was used for other purposes and largely lost to the project (BCC-CO meeting: July 31, 1989).

Sometimes the repayment of project loans becomes a real source of tension in a BCC community. Especially as it is up to an appointed member of the BCC to be in charge of the financial aspect of the loans. This means that the treasurer must constantly ask the project holders for their repayments. Especially in the case of neighbors, or good friends, this can lead to very stressful situations. Sometimes those who owe money they cannot repay will withdraw from the BCC.

Unfortunately, it seems that a large percentage of the projects do indeed fail. Santa reports on the practical solution of a few fishermen in a BCC she was organizing in Cawite. She notes:

On September 17, there was a meeting about the project of the fish net. I discovered that the

problem is that the members cannot pay back their project. The problem also is that the people have a fish net but they don't have a motorboat, that's why they cannot catch fish to return the loan so they want to return the fish net because they are not using it. (Santa: BCC-CO meeting, July 31, 1989)

Santa expressed concern that the failure of the project may effect the group. She explained that she asked them whether they will continue as a group even without a project (Santa: BCC-CO meeting, July 31, 1989).

The concern for maintaining strict control over the projects reflects the BCC-CO core staff's concern for maintaining the orthodoxy of the program; for making the practices of the individual BCCs reflect the underlying ideology of the program. The staff, however, often find themselves in a difficult position in enforcing ideal BCC positions. First of all, they are themselves, in the eyes of the villagers, "only" peasants and not that far removed from the people they are working with. A priest or a religious sister would, comparatively, have far less difficulty in asserting authority.

As is evident from the cases above the lay leaders are seen in some ways as being in service of the Church. Some villagers feel that the resources belong to the Church and they challenge the lay leaders authority to preside so strictly over these funds. Some villagers undoubtedly feel the clergy would be, or

should be (given their calling), more charitable in dispensing funds and in setting aside debts. Others, as is obvious from the above are very well aware of the outside sources for the funds and resent having to repay money that was given "freely." (25) In some cases, such as that of Gerry above, the distrust and skepticism towards the lay leaders is greater than in others.

The BCC-CO staff define economic aid narrowly within the context of the principles of the BCC program, this does not include entrepreneurial uses that are not first cleared by the staff or are not considered to contribute to the proper conscientization of the community. In fact, the offer of projects seems to be a milestone of recognition by the BCC staff indicating that the community is ready to receive such projects, which may lead to financial gains, in the correct transformed spirit of community, rather than individual or family, betterment; and the process seems to function as a tool through which to reward communities where consciousness has been transformed through seminars and Bible-sharing.

At the same time that the BCC-CO staff decry the eagerness of the people to receive projects before having received the "correct" attitude towards economic improvement, they may be overlooking the fact that they

themselves now earn their living from the BCC-CO program, however meager this may be.

Another task in the monthly meetings is the creation of six month plans. Each of the BCC-CO core staff make up elaborate charts every six months to outline their plans for their area in the coming semester. The subsequent area reporting, which consists for such a great part of the reporting on new groups organized and seminars given to move groups along to self sufficiency, reflects these proposed programs. The BCC-CO staff as a whole also assesses overall diocesan progress every six months and sets up a program for the next six months. These "semestral assessments" are presented in Manila every six months at the regional office. (26)

In 1989, two staff members from Marinduque were slated to go to Manila from July 5-7, to report on progress between January and June of 1989. On June 28, the group gathered to discuss progress to date. The charts made six months earlier, setting out diocesan plans, seminars, and expansions, were taken out and reviewed and each area co-ordinator was also asked to report on what they had accomplished over the six months and what remained undone in their respective areas.

The group had undertaken to conduct a diocesan

socio-economic survey to study the results of the socio-economic projects on their beneficiaries. This was not done but they noted that in the end they felt this was more the job of the socio-economic committee of the Social Action Centre than of the BCC-CO staff. They had also undertaken to conduct skills training seminars for new leaders in all of the 5 expansion areas and this was accomplished. There had been a decision to give an orientation seminar for BCC leaders on the meaning of "Church of the poor." The feeling at the June 28th meeting was that this had been accomplished to some degree as they did hold this seminar for 40 participants from BCCs in the diocese. The staff had, however, hoped to reach more people. The staff had undertaken to hold a seminar to critically reflect on the traditional religious and cultural practices of Holy Week and this had been successfully accomplished. They had also aimed at expanding independent Bible-sharing groups and these had increased, notably in Malibago where they went from none to three.

A crucial area in which the staff reported mixed results was the perpetual struggle against the copper mine. They had undertaken to produce a massive collection of reading materials on pollution that could be used by the various BCCs for information sessions.

This had not been accomplished for financial reasons and because they could not invest enough time to do the necessary research. What was done with regard to the pollution was the ongoing, province-wide collection of signatures against the mine; these signatures numbering in the hundreds. They had also decided on alliance building against the mine with other sectors and organizations in Marinduque to gain moral and financial support. There had been some movement in this regard towards other Church based groups but not yet beyond these.

At the July 31st meeting Adelaida gave an update of the BCC-CO Luzon office's assessment of the progress in Marinduque. She was clearly inspired by her meeting in Manila and gave a short but passionate speech on the issues discussed there. Again, she broke problems down into political, economic, and cultural/religious. Her statements were somewhat more forcefully put than usual. Adelaida reminded the staff that "mayors support middle-class interests," that there is "ongoing militarization through the CAFGUs," that there is "black propaganda against the Church," and that the people hold too many "wrong values and attitudes." She also stressed the need to look not only at the situation obtaining now in Marinduque but at national trends for what may become a problem in

Marinduque in the future.

Adelaida noted that the BCC-CO Luzon office had suggested that the Marinduque staff should expand on the problems of growing militarization and Low Intensity Conflict (LIC), even though it is not directly a problem in Marinduque yet, because nationwide it is often BCC workers who are targeted by such right wing forces. Adelaida also noted that the Luzon office had found the Marinduque chapter less than effective in dealing with the ecological problem of the mine and that they were spending too much time on organization and not enough on "hitting at the issues and really resolving them" (BCC-CO meeting: July 31, 1989).

At this July 31st meeting new six month plans were also generally discussed for the various areas and for the diocese as a whole. The staff decided to incorporate a section on LIC in an up-dating seminar to be given to BCC leaders from the whole diocese. The completed plans would be presented a month later. Adelaida also wanted to incorporate in all the various activities of the upcoming six months an educational component about the new orientation of the BCC-CO program from sectoral organizing to "parish based organizing." This had also been discussed at her meeting in Manila.

On August 28, further plans for an overall updating seminar for BCC leaders were discussed. The seminar, to be held at the end of September, would cover local and national issues incorporating some of the concerns expressed by the regional office in Manila. It was planned to be held over two and a half days at a cost of 3,000 pesos for 40 participants. These costs would cover "foods" and transportation. The BCC staff discussed the fact that they would like to hold a seminar on the Bible that would help Bible-sharing leaders to find relevant sections but the budget would not allow that. A diocesan ecology seminar was planned. And, finally, an "exposure" trip to the village of Botilao was planned to allow BCC members from other parts of the island to see the problems faced by the BCC participants in that village due to the pollution from the copper mine.

From the above it is obvious that there is a considerable degree of input and guidance from the national level to the diocesan level in this essentially top-down program. The structures of the program themselves, and the practices that have been put in place such as reporting from the diocesan to the national level in semestral meetings, allow the national and regional officers in Manila not only a high degree of insight into local developments, but,

the national level leaders also reserve for themselves the task of evaluating and criticizing developments in the various BCC-CO areas. Just as monthly diocesan meetings serve to guide and evaluate progress in the areas of Marinduque, in which the orthodoxy of the program is reinforced and used as a guideline, so the national level plays this role for the BCC-CO staff of Marinduque.

Adelaida's visit to Manila left her not only inspired and "recharged" for her work, but also subtly redirected her towards more national concerns and more "radical" positions that are not necessarily a natural consequence of immediate concerns in Marinduque.

The Laity as Cultural Middle-"Men"

There is an extensive literature on the role and place of cultural and political brokers or middlemen in societies (Bailey 1969; Blok 1974; Boissevain 1974; Scott 1977a; 1977b; Swartz 1968 and others). Such uniquely positioned people straddle, and mediate between, institutions and structures, or networks, at different levels, such as national levels and local levels, and between cultural systems, especially in cases of colonization or ongoing forms of social and cultural change (Rodman 1982:1).

In many ways the diocesan level lay leaders in the BCC movement play the role of brokers, or middle-men, between, on the one hand, the religious and political ideas, symbols, practices, and aims of the national level BCC leaders and, on the other hand, the social alliances and local knowledge and experiences of the village that is targeted for BCC organizing. The lay leaders also extend their services as middle-men to the local Church, which would not be able to run the program without them. And, it is through the BCC-CO lay leaders that villagers may access the structures, funds and ideas of the program, as well as knowledge of Roman Catholicism and about the local clergy.

The BCC lay leaders are themselves predominantly from villages very similar to the ones in which they work. They are intimately familiar with local level religious beliefs and practices, socio-economic and political relationships, and forms of knowledge about the local realities. But, the lay leaders have also been introduced to a sophisticated understanding of Catholic doctrine and social teachings, with the inherent world views and perspectives these entail. They are familiar with the new visions of Vatican II and the ideas of liberation theology that accompany the BCC-CO program and introduce structural social analysis.

The BCC leaders do not straddle these two "worlds" unproblematically. While in the village they easily revert to behaviours, practices and everyday analyses of local events that are familiar to the people there, and also to the leaders themselves. They must in fact do so in order to establish a rapport, especially in the initial "wasting time with the people" phase. But, these local understandings are also still part of the knowledge of the world of the lay leaders, a mode they flip in and out of depending on the context in which they find themselves. Some lay leaders more radically try to eradicate these "traditional" ways of thinking from their daily lives than others. (27) As time goes by, the lay leaders must attempt to introduce villagers to new ways of looking at: relationships with fellow villagers and with the "higher ups"; their problems; their poverty; and at religiosity. This is done through the medium of the new exegesis of the Bible and through seminars but also, slowly, as the leaders become part of the village, in daily conversations with trusted individuals.

The degree to which the lay leaders consciously express the insights and viewpoints of the BCC program depends partly on the context in which they find themselves. In the monthly meetings they reinforce BCC perspectives and express them with a higher degree of

consistency and assertiveness than they do in dialogues with villagers who are part of local BCCs, and with non-BCC villagers they easily fall back into expressing traditional perspectives. But, at another level the BCC lay leaders also display mixed attitudes and analyses even when explicitly responding to formal interview or survey questions about their involvement in BCCs. Their attitudes with regard to the importance of religion in the lives of people are at once highly spiritual and personal, and informed by structural analysis. Religion is described at times in very traditional terms as a comfort, a spiritual commitment, and a sacrifice, and at others in highly instrumental terms as a tool for social transformation and a way to stimulate commitment to social action.

On the whole, the BCC-CO core staff as a group seem to be more united and in agreement in their understanding of the essential relationship of religion to society and of their obligation to stimulate social action based on the insights of liberation theology than the clergy are. The clergy must juggle the demands of the new exegesis with more traditional spiritual demands, with their obligations to their entire flock, including the elite who have little place in the BCC ideology, and with a need to maintain the orthodoxy of Catholic teaching, which means a very ambivalent

relationship with critical social analysis and prescriptions. For the clergy the daily duties of masses and sacraments must go on, albeit in the most ideal cases these also come to reflect the new exegesis. Expressing the ideas and creating the structures of the BCCs is a fairly new addition to traditional duties.

For the lay leaders the BCC-CO program is their only obligation and commitment; they are not burdened with the complex theological issues that this new exegesis brings with it. The lay leaders also form a "batch" in the sense that they all were introduced to the program in roughly the same time and by the same facilitators. The clergy on the other hand vary greatly in age and in experience and training as religious leaders. Their responses to the new directions of the Church are understandably uneven.

Both the clergy and the elite and the lay leaders and the people they organize are of roughly equal social status. But, whereas the elite hold important financial resources that the clergy, who hold moral authority, must appeal to at times, the lay leaders have a double advantage over the people they organize, namely, the independent resources they have received from NGOs and government organizations such as CIDA, and specialist religious knowledge and authority

supported by the endorsement of the parish priest. (28)

On the other hand, the BCC workers often find that their authority and behaviour comes under scrutiny and even open criticism by the peasants they are organizing. They are much more likely than the clergy to be challenged and even opposed by peasants if they do not take local concerns, relationships, and practices into consideration. Although the lay leaders do not rely on the villagers financially, as the clergy do on the elite, they do need to win acceptance and trust if they are to be successful in their mission and personally fulfilled.

An important aspect of the lay leaders role as middle-men is their function as filters for the BCC program. While training willing participants and seeking new members the lay leaders also carefully evaluate, select, and screen participants, especially those whom they will promote to key positions. There also tends to be a degree of a priori bias against, or wariness of, certain types of people in the village such as small businessmen or commercial middle-men and the village officials. The core staff are in essence the main source of orthodoxy of the program from its source in Manila. The core staff's actions at the village level reflect their attempts to remain true to the insights and aims of the program and their monthly

meetings reflect careful scrutiny and evaluation of village activities in terms of the program's goals.

Although the lay leaders themselves often display a mixture of both traditional and newer religious perspectives, to varying degrees depending on the person, they also often reinterpret traditional concepts in the light of their commitment to the new perspective. For example, when speaking of their willingness to "sacrifice" for their faith they may no longer be speaking of traditional sacrificial practices of Marinduque such as flagellation or all night vigils but rather of the hardships of BCC organizing and the dangers of being branded subversive. Similarly when they speak of a firm commitment to their faith they no longer mean solely a commitment to love and worship Jesus and Mary and support the clergy as good and faithful Catholics, but rather to take part in social action on the behalf of their oppressed fellow men.

When the core staff describe their reasons for becoming active in the BCC-CO movement they describe something akin to a conversion experience. In fact, embracing the perspectives and insights of the BCC-CO program and liberation theology within Catholicism is comparable in its radical implications for the religious perspective of the convert, to converting to a Protestant sect. The "convert" to the BCC

perspective, just as the convert to fundamentalism, is asked to rethink traditional relationships with sacred beings, to rethink religious practices and what worship means, and to rethink what the aims of the Christian should be. In both cases, also, the comfortable relationship between traditional Catholicism, expressed in various folk ways, and a variety of non-Catholic spiritual beliefs becomes more difficult.

The general points made above are illustrated below through excerpts from interviews and surveys with members of the core staff. Pedro describes his main tasks as a lay leader as "awakening [the people], organizing, and studying the words of God" in order to convey to the people a "right understanding in life [and] the original plan of God for man" (BCC-CO staff survey: 1989). He notes political problems such as that the people "just follow the higher ups," economic problems such as "poverty," social problems such as "individualism," and religious problems such as "no deep understanding about Christianity" (Pedro: BCC-CO staff survey, 1989). But, Pedro also points to solutions to these problems, respectively, "teaching how to plan, act, decide, evaluate together...[the] importance of unity, [and] Faith-life Integration" and he sees the "seminars" as the vehicle for these needed transformations of outlook and behaviour (BCC-CO staff

survey: 1989).

In describing his own involvement in the BCC program Pedro responds in a highly personal way that reflects aspects of a traditional religious perspective, "I involved in the BCC because I found here how to become meaningful and worthwhile [in] my Christian awareness" (BCC-CO staff survey: 1989). He notes that his personal life improved through his work "by means of examining deeply my whole personality my neighbors and my surroundings" (Pedro: BCC-CO staff survey, 1989). But, when asked whether religion can help the people with their problems he does not respond traditionally by citing hope for a better life after death or the solace of prayer. Rather, he expresses his conviction that religion can help the people with their problems "if it will give the needed response to the four aspects of life economic, political, cultural, and social" but also that the people themselves must be changed "by means of awakening [to become] truthful, just, with love and worthwhile to the community" (Pedro: BCC-CO staff survey, 1989). The complex mixture of personal and structural responses, traditional religious reflections and those informed by liberation theology, is largely dependant on context.

Letty sees as her main task the "development of oneself and the people in the area" (BCC-CO staff

survey: 1989). She feels that most of the people's problems can be meaningfully addressed through "seminars" and "education" towards "changing of the people to themselves, organizing the organization, and solving problems in the barangay by means of communal decision making and action" (Letty: BCC-CO staff survey, 1989). She says that she became involved in the BCC program "because of the call of the need of the people and the call of God" but she feels her personal life has been enhanced "because in dealing with people I saw the development of myself and my works" (Letty: BCC-CO staff survey, 1989). She is convinced that through seminars religion can come to address the political and economic problems the people face.

Adelaida lists as political problems "militarization" (BCC-CO staff survey: 1989), although she admits that this is not as great a concern in Marinduque as it is in other areas of the Philippines (interview 1988). For economic problems in Marinduque she points to hunger and poverty; for social problems she notes "division" and for religious problems she mentions "fundamentalism" (Adelaida: BCC-CO staff survey). Her "solutions" speak of a faith in the BCC-CO program no less strong than her determination to carry the program out, "continuous organizing and mobilizing, creation or setting up of socio-economic projects,

Intensive Faith Life sessions/Bible-sharings" (Adelaida: BCC-CO staff survey). But, Adelaida is especially concerned with the role that she feels culture plays in holding back the development of the poor,

culture is a barrier to change, people are peace loving, hospitable, not aggressive enough. The BCC tries to activate them and it's working but people are afraid of the military even though there are no cases in Marinduque. There is a culture of silence, rather than to complain. (interview 1988)

Adelaida notes that the effects of organizing are already noticeable:

The people become active in barangay and church activities. There was a change of bad habits. They become organized and act together. They become curious and critical to the things related to their life. (BCC-CO staff survey: 1989)

She sees religion as a possible aid in human liberation but only if the interpretations are "modern,"

it can be, because if the mind of the people is modernized they will have faith for change. But if its traditional faith it might be conservative and the people will think unscientific or not modernized. (Adelaida: BCC-CO staff survey, 1989)

Another potential block to development, according to Adelaida, are the "rich." She notes that there will always be a problem with the wealthy, that the rich will always "oppose the BCC," because the cause of the BCC is primarily for the poor and so this will clash with elite interests (Adelaida: interview

1989). She provides the example land reform. Adelaida notes that "the BCC teaches land reform more radical than the governments" (interview 1989). In an earlier interview she pointed out that the mandated organizations have many middle-class members. Adelaida notes that "they don't like structural analysis but they just stay silent" (interview 1988). While Adelaida admits that there have not been any serious clashes with the wealthy in Marinduque as yet, she "predict[s] problems in the future with the CAFGUs" (interview 1989).

As for changes to date, Adelaida notes that the priests have already changed a lot. But, she admits that change is slow when it comes to changing the old traditions of the people. She says, for example, it is "very hard to change the middle-class hold over religious symbols [but] we tackle this in the Faith-Life seminar and in cultural analysis seminars" (Adelaida: interview 1989). Adelaida notes that it is within these forums that the BCC leaders do reinterpret symbols with the people. She gives as an example that they reinterpreted the cross in the diocesan seminar about the symbols of Holy Week to be a "symbol of victory" (Adelaida: interview 1989). She says that they linked this theme with the fact that the people use a cross when planting. The cross is planted together with

the first plant to encourage growth of the crop (Adelaida: interview 1989). The plant first planted with the cross is also the first to be harvested. So the people already have an example of the cross as a powerful positive symbol (Adelaida: interview 1989).

Another example Adelaida gave of change in religious interpretations of practices was the fact that the BCC-CO staff transformed the traditional Santa Cruzan rituals in the BCC areas of Balimbing and Malibago by having the people "read Bible and share and make a communal plan of action instead of singing so it [the ritual] was contextualized" (interview 1989).

Perhaps the best way to represent Adelaida's personal commitment or "conversion" to the program is to let her express this in her own words:

I became involved in BCC-CO work because I was enlightened of the reality that is truly happening in my country and because of this my commitment to serve my fellows was little by little developed until I learned I can't go away of this work already.

This work has helped me a lot in correcting and improving my values in life. This gave meaning to my existence here, I know now, where I am going.

Simply, when people got to know the true faith that is relevant in our time, people will start to move for economic, political, and other changes.

People should start the change from within their inner selves, that is why self and group awareness sessions must be given first but it should always be based in the word of God. This will be the start of a big changes in themselves, families and communities as well.

Well, BCCs is the way to a greater change on the part of the poor, neglected, oppressed and

exploited and marginalized communities in our society. It aims [at] total change (integral) of the society who is suffering because of the cruelty of some people. (BCC-CO staff survey: 1989)

Responses to BCC-CO Organizing around Marinduque

In order to receive a general picture of the results of BCC-CO organizing around Marinduque I distributed a survey via the BCC-CO core staff in the various areas they were organizing. For the text of the survey and a schematic summary of the responses to questions not discussed here see Appendix III. This survey resulted in 66 responses from villagers participating in BCCs in eight different parishes in Marinduque; Malibago (10), Cawite (13), Gasan (4), Balimbing (10), Balanacan (9), Torrijos (11), Malabon (5), Mogpog (4). (29) Only twelve of the respondents were men and 52 were women (two respondents did not indicate their gender). This is not surprising as it is well known that the majority of BCC participants tend to be women. At the time of the survey, the core staff ranked the respondents as being "very active" (15), "active" (40), and "not so active" (11). The majority of respondents listed themselves as poor (mahirap), had elementary education only, and subsisted primarily from income received through farming and fishing. (30)

Among other things the respondents were asked

to check off the seminars they had taken. (31) Three respondents did not fill out the seminars section. Of the 63 who did, there was no one who had not taken either the BOS or the BCC-CO orientation and 50 had taken both. Furthermore, 50 respondents had taken the Faith-Life seminar, 26 had taken project seminars, and 34 had taken co-op seminars. Only in one parish was there a significant difference (6 participants) between the number of people who had taken the BOS or BCC-CO and a smaller number who had gone on to take the Faith-Life seminar. This information helps to evaluate the degree of exposure these respondents have had to BCC ideology both through seminars and through Bible-sharing which may be assumed to follow the Faith-Life Seminar and so serves to contextualize the respondents' answers to other survey questions. (32)

The BCC participants were asked to briefly discuss what they considered to be the three main stumbling blocks to creating BCCs in their village. (33) The 137 responses this question generated, to which 52 of the 66 respondents replied with comments, provide an insight into concerns and perspectives of village level BCC leaders and participants.

An overwhelming 46 out of 52 respondents directly blamed poverty for the lack of participation of villagers in BCC organizing activities. Common

responses were:

because of poverty they don't want to be disturbed in their job. They are thinking that if they will attend BCC seminar they might not have foods to be eaten the next day. Most of us are poor. (Regis 1989)

Poverty of the people (...) becomes not having time for BCC. At present time of difficulties the people are busy in their daily works, that's why they don't have time for BCC. What they are doing first is for their livelihood to support their needs. (Mirafuente 1989)

Because of the poverty of the people and the continuous increasing of the price of commodities like rice, sugar, soap etc. the importance of the BCC is not recognized. (Mantal 1989)

If somebody [a local SCC leader] who will give training is lack of the basic needs in his/her family he/she will value first the problem of the family. (Malapad 1989)

Some respondents, however, not only pointed to the problem poverty posed in being able to participate, but also directly questioned the value of the program in dealing with their poverty:

We cannot say that poverty is not a hinderance because we do not give time for BCC. They don't want to join the gatherings and their reason they say is that there is always seminar but valueless. (Lacerna 1989)

Involvement is more enthusiastic if there is [a] livelihood [project] to be received. Looking for job is always the reason [for lack of participation]. They give more attention for their livelihood. (Rodriquez 1989)

The people do not give time. They value their own interest only. They don't want to be involved for the success of all. (...) They are easy to convince if there is profit to be received by all. (Pineda 1989)

Others are more blunt about the BCC-CD program, Lucila offered as a stumbling block to BCC organizing the fact that, "they do not give job to the poor" and Cristina states that the program does not give "help to the poor who needs help." Among the possible sources of village level tension attributed to BCC organizing, the perceived injustices in the distribution of funds, sometimes euphemistically referred to as "blessings," is a main source of conflict. Vivian (1989) notes:

The people who are given limited care and blessing from the Church are easily disappointed which is like the rust that destroys the whole personality of the Church as well as the laborer.

In addition to 46 respondents who directly discuss poverty as a hinderance in BCC organizing, 24 respondents mentioned the distance of the villages from the towns and the difficulties with, or lack of, transportation. This problem, which after general poverty was the most commonly mentioned problem, was almost always mentioned in conjunction with the lack of money to pay the fare to attend seminars that are not held in the village. Common responses were:

The third [stumbling block] is the far distance of parangay from the town which becomes the problem of the people in attending seminar. Although the people want to learn they cannot do because they don't have money for fare. (Fatalla 1989)

Because of the far distance of the barrio from

the town they cannot reach [the town] right away due to limited transportation and the lack of fare. (Magpili 1989)

A number of respondents suggested that the BCC organization needs more funding to be effective. Elisa notes that the local leaders are limited in what they can do because of:

lack of financial support from the organization. That's why they cannot make nice program because most of the members are poor also and just relying on fishing for their livelihood.

Interestingly, a number of respondents suggested that the middle-class should do more to help out. While this response to financial need is an expected and traditional one it is certainly not one that would be advocated by BCC-CO activists, who are striving to organize the people to change just such dependencies. Juana notes that, "if the rich people will give support it will be a big help to the workers to act." Elisa puts it more strongly when she states that a problem is:

lack of support from the middle class. Sometimes those who can afford are great pretenders and they don't have cooperation to the Church and social activities.

While responses implicating poverty, in various ways, as a central stumbling block to building BCCs in the villages, are the greatest in number, the second largest category of responses (41) are concerned with

what are described as "negative" cultural values, attitudes and behaviours of the people. (34) While, as we have seen, a generally negative evaluation of "Philippine values" is an integral part of BCC social analysis, usually falling under the category "culture," BCC-CD influences do not seem to be a sufficient explanation for the high number of responses that implicate negative cultural values in holding up BCC development. Again, as discussed above, it would seem to be more reasonable to assume that general education about Philippine traditions and values is partly responsible for these responses, which are further encouraged by BCC-CD seminars.

Some responses that illustrate the ways in which local BCC participants implicate cultural values in hindering BCC development are:

The second [stumbling block] is the traditional culture of the Filipino that they cannot leave which causes the development of the parish to go down. (Fatalla 1989)

One of the biggest problem is "ningas kugon" or easily extinguished [interest] wherein people work together only at the first time but later they work individually already. (Rioveros 1989)

It is a big problem here in our barangay this ningas kugon, kanya-kanya system. They are lack of analyzation and observation in action and organization. There is no unity and cooperation. There are some who are following and there are some who are not that's why BCC is very hard to develop. (Jimena 1989)

While a surprising number of answers link lack

of participation to traditional cultural traits some, such as Gloria, give a more personal explanation, "the majority do not want to listen to the explanations of the leaders, they are stubborn."

In the largest number of cases negative values are seen as a problem for BCC organizing because they are perceived as the cause of lack of unity and joint co-operation. Leonila notes that "the result of individualism [kanya-kanya] and easily extinguished [interest, ningas kugon] is disunity." While disunity is, understandably, always referred to as a lamentable situation by village level organizers of BCCs, they do not always clearly state why unity is desirable, outside of the obvious need for unity if one is to create a BCC. Exceptions are the following examples:

If the people valued the problem together [it] is easy. But if there is no unity even if we wanted to give justice to the oppressed we can do nothing. That's why unity is very important. (Malapajo 1989).

The disunity of the people is hard also because in this situation there is no power to fight the foreign investors with big fishing materials. (Villaruel 1989).

The survey responses reflect a recognition that some people are not interested in becoming involved in BCC activities, for various reasons. This is usually described in a negative way by the respondents of the survey who are themselves actively trying to promote

the organization:

about the situation in the community, they just mind their own [business] and the service is not whole because they just rely on their [own] knowledge. They don't want to be disturbed. (Villaruel 1989)

Only few have BCC because most people don't have interest in it. (Pernia 1989)

Most of the people in our barangay mind their own business which is the reason why we are disunited in BCC. They are very hard to lead because they say that they have so many works. (Ferrera 1989)

It is not clear to them why they need to be united. Lack of trust in everyone. (Rodriguez 1989)

While disinterest in joining a BCC or in "being united," is generally described as the result of a lack of understanding of the importance of being united or, more negatively, as the result of "individualism" or even as "egoistic" (Malapajo 1989), there is also some indication in the responses that people may have a more specific mistrust or apprehension about formally joining an organization: "The disunity and fear of involvement of the people is deeply rooted in their mind" (Solis 1989).

This apprehension becomes a more dominant theme when the BCC participants discuss why the people do not want to fight for justice, six of the 52 respondents addressed this issue:

the people are afraid to fight together to [against] the oppression especially [against]

the rich businessmen wherein the profit is most on their neck [who receive the most profit]. (Mantal 1989)

The people don't want to fight together for [against] the oppression, injustices, because they don't understand fully what is happening, lack of knowledge also especially in terms of faith to our creator. (Osmillo 1989)

They do not fight for their rights to [against] the oppressors because they are afraid. They are lack of knowledge and self-confidence. (Macdon 1989)

The people are afraid to participate especially if they cannot understand. (Llante 1989)

The people don't want to be together to fight for the oppression, injustice and other problems because fear comes first to them that's why they pretend to be deaf and just hoping for the next events. (Solis 1989)

A large number of respondents blame cultural values for lack of participation and commitment to the BCC-CO program in the village. For some, even poverty is not accepted as an "excuse" when it comes to fulfilling what is described in traditional terms as a "duty" to the Church or to God:

Poverty of the people is also the reason why the people don't have time to [for] BCC. But, in my thoughts, if there is unity and understanding, although there are many works, the BCC will be given time also by everyone.(...) The religious tradition of the people in barangay [is] that if there is no occasion like feast the people will not be together in the Church. (Jimena 1989)

The people are easily extinguished [ningas kugon] and not interested to the word of God. (Sanez 1989)

[the villager is] individualistic and no [does not] value the improvement of his neighbor.

There is no interest for spiritual activities or ningas kugon only. (Labay 1989)

Some don't care, and [are] egoistic. They don't have time for service. (Maladajo 1989)

The people do not want to be involved for the success of the organization. They do not [contribute to] the solution of the problem. They are very easy to get married. They don't give time. More important to them is to get job. (Rodriguez 1989)

Synthesis of Local Views

But few respondents gave answers that might be interpreted as reflecting the structural social analysis of the BCC-CO program, and even fewer responded in ways that give evidence of a new religious perspective. The respondents most clearly reflected BCC-CO perspectives in areas that are themselves ambiguous aspects of the program's ideology. Structural analysis explains poverty in terms of historical structures of oppression, and interprets peasant culture as a product of historical inequality. By focussing on negative traits of the poor as the reason why the program is not more effective, even, in a few cases, to the point of denying the people's everyday struggle with poverty as a valid excuse for not participating in the program, the respondents reflect aspects of the thinking of BCC-CO organizers, as well as traditional perspectives that blame the poor for

their own poverty.

The BCC program is supposed to further the interests and needs of the people, but it appears from the above that at least some villagers see the program as an effort of the Catholic Church to reach out to them and, therefore, as something they "should" find time for, be involved in, and "serve." There is irony in the fact that this progressive program is much facilitated in moving into the villages, and being accepted there, by the fact that it is religiously based, but this religious affiliation also colours the villagers' perceptions of the nature of the program. Whereas the BCC program aims to reinterpret or redirect traditional religiosity, it appears that local BCC participants have reinterpreted the program in terms of traditional religious attitudes, practices, and behaviours vis-a-vis the Church which stress their duties and obligations as good Christians.

Another question concerns the perceived "usefulness" of the program, apart from its spiritual aspects. It is obvious from the above that many villagers live in very precarious economic circumstances. There appears to be a degree of sympathy for the limitations this reality places on peasant involvement in BCC activities that do not directly lead to income, especially among the villagers surveyed

here. But, there are still many respondents, even at this level, who blame the short involvement span of other villagers on cultural weaknesses such as "individualism" (kanya-kanya) or the tendency to easily lose interest in a project (ningas kugon).

Both at the national level and at the diocesan level, among the clergy and the BCC-CO core staff, this tendency to blame received, static, cultural values for everyday peasant behaviour is present. It is also evident in the BCC-CO seminars. One might have expected villagers, however, to point more forcefully to socio-economic realities that readily explain why fellow villagers do not prioritize group discussions and seminars over individual efforts to feed families, or why an initial interest in the program quickly turns to disinterest when direct economic alternatives are not offered.

As Scott (1985; 1987) would have predicted, the BCC-CO goal of long term socio-economic gain through concerted social action aimed at challenging and changing structures and institutions is one that is not only unfamiliar to peasants but one that worries peasant participants who express fear at the prospect of "fighting" for justice. As discussed in an earlier chapter, the more typical way peasants relate to elites in Marinduque is through negotiation and relatively

safe "everyday forms of resistance."

While local BCC-CO participants and leaders overwhelmingly emphasized poverty as the major stumbling block to BCC organizing in the villages, followed by unhelpful cultural values, this perception is not reflected by the parish priests and the BCC-CO core staff who responded to similar questions (see chapter seven). Of seven priests who ranked 16 possible stumbling blocks to building BCCs two listed cultural values as the number one stumbling block and a third also ranked cultural values above socio-economic conditions of the people as a hinderance to organizing. The two lay leaders, Adelaida and Pedro, who ranked 14 stumbling blocks to BCC formation in the villages, both listed cultural values as the number one stumbling block with Adelaida listing socio-economic conditions of the people as third and Pedro placing this category seventh.

While the people primarily blame their poverty for lack of participation, the BCC-CO leaders at the diocesan level down play poverty per se as a problem and emphasize a cultural condition that is, furthermore, interpreted as enabling and perpetuating poverty.

Cultural deficiencies may perhaps be considered to be more readily tackled by BCC consciousness

raising. The program is based on the idea that once people's eyes and minds have been opened, they will rise against oppression. As the responses above intimate, however, even if the local level BCC participants gained insight into structural causes of oppression, this may not in itself be a sufficient condition for concerted social action.

Conclusions

The BCC-CO lay staff are more homogeneous as a group than the clergy are in the degree to which they have embraced the BCC-CO program and its directives. They face less ambivalence with regard to the program's social thesis as they do not have a prior, or traditional, relationship to the people they are now working with; a relationship that, for the clergy, is rooted in traditional practices, as well as in traditional theological perspectives.

While the lay leaders do not enjoy the automatic prestige that the clergy do in the villages, their close relationship with the Church and the "modern" knowledge they have to share at once differentiates them from other peasants and affords them a degree of prestige in the villages. This privileged position is enhanced by the fact that the

BCC-CO staff are financially independent, and, even in a position to distribute funds to villagers. The clergy, on the other hand, struggle with degrees of status equality and economic inequality with members of the town's elite making compromise a more likely outcome. And, whereas the lay leaders bring villagers a message of hope, the clergy are essentially criticizing the system that benefits the elite.

Given the lay leaders' untroubled relationship to the BCC-CO program's perspectives it is perhaps not surprising that there is a high degree of reproduction of national level BCC-CO ideology, practices and goals in the thinking and actions of the local level BCC-CO core staff in Marinduque. This orthodoxy is reflected in the way they conduct seminars and in their monthly meetings and is reinforced through both of these activities, as well as through regular contacts with the Manila based staff. The creation of six month plans that reflect BCC-CO perspectives, the reaffirmation of program goals and methods in the monthly meetings and the visits to Manila not only support orthodoxy but are also evidence of the top-down nature of the program.

As middle-men, the lay leaders must be able to understand peasant perspectives and be able to relate and respond meaningfully to peasant discourse. This is, in fact, what happens while the lay leaders are in the

villages working with people whose insights and local knowledge are not typically congruous with the ideas of the BCC-CO program, but, are very familiar and understandable to the core staff who share this background.

It is imaginable that through this encounter the BCC-CO program may itself become somewhat transformed at higher levels. As middle-men the core leaders are in the position not only to introduce the BCC program to the village, but, also to relay back to program activists at the national level some of the realities and cultural responses of the peasants who are being organized at the local level. In fact, however, these experiences are analyzed in the monthly meetings and made sense of through the perspectives of the program and so lose the ability to transform the program at higher levels. Contradictions and conflicts that the leaders encounter in their organizing activities in the villages, situations that are familiar to them as peasants and reflect local perceptions, realities and knowledge, are often reinterpreted in the monthly meetings as the result of negative values, oppression, and either lack of understanding or false ideology, eliciting the response that greater effort is needed on the part of the BCC activists to enlighten the people.

In understanding how BCC-CO core leaders have come to take on such a different perspective from their fellow villagers, in a relatively short time, we must look at the "conversion" experience that they have undergone in embracing the BCC-CO approach. The process of conscientization that has led them to embrace the insights and "knowledge" of the BCC-CO program has transformed their world view, their understanding of everyday reality and their goals in a radical way. Adelaida's words illustrate the personal and spiritual nature of this conversion. While it is true that the program has also changed their everyday lives by affording the core staff an alternative means of making a living, to which farming and fishing is now supplementary, I do not believe that this is a sufficient explanation for the fervour with which they set out to conscientize other peasants.

From the diocesan survey I conducted of BCC participants in the villages, we may discern that BCC insights and goals are, at best, unevenly reflected and shared by villagers. Especially the long term goals of the program that require changing consciousness and creating a new type of community through seminars and Bible-sharings, for which many people feel they have no time, and the goal of concerted and open social action, which many respondents fear, are not readily adopted by

villagers. While the core staff and local participants may share ultimate economic goals they do not share a common vision on how to achieve these goals. Also, local participants frequently still interpret participation in the program in terms of Christian "duty" and as a way of showing respect for the Church, which accounts for their labelling non-participants as selfish, lazy and not good Christians.

The core staff are clearly inspired and motivated by the grand plan, the larger picture, of BCC-CO social theory and its goals and they try to convey this to villagers. But, in their day to day work in the villages the core staff are faced with the limited aims and goals of villagers who primarily seek relief from daily economic stresses, a concern the lay leaders are least able to respond to. There are, however, indications that some other village leaders may eventually also become intellectually and emotionally inspired by the social thesis of the BCC-CO program. Some of the survey responses indicate such a process may be taking place.

The fact that BCC-CO aims and insights do not readily match those of villagers points to the possibility of transformation of the program at the village level, where it is structurally incorporated into the daily practices and relationships, everyday

understandings, and political and economic aims of villagers. This theme, among others, will be further explored in the following chapters which focus on the village of Botilao.

NOTES

1. Although I use the common term "middle-men" it is somewhat inappropriate as most of the BCC leaders are women.
2. This data and all that follows pertains to 1989. There have been some new developments. To the degree that I can, I give updated information based on a brief return trip in December of 1991.
3. Of the six staff members four completed a survey questionnaire in which I asked them to rank themselves in categories ranging from "very poor" through "poor" to "wealthy."
4. Of these seminars, those that were given outside of Marinduque were given by various organizations, the Asian Social Institute, Communication Foundation for Asia, Philippine Business for Social Progress, La Ignaciana Apostolic Centre, NASSA, LUSSA, and others.
5. According to Adelaida, one female worker quit because she married and her husband did not like her involvement with the program, which took her away from home a lot. Another woman also married and quit, and the third woman quit, according to Adelaida, because she found the work too strenuous due to the distance of her BCC area from her home (interview 1989).
6. From "The Luzon BCC-CO Retrospect and Prospect" (1986).
7. CEBEMO supplied funding to Marinduque for housing aid after the major typhoons of 1987. This funding was channeled through the BCCs.
8. According to Adelaida, the BCC-CO Luzon funding was coming from the NGO Misereor in the Netherlands (interview 1989).
9. The Federation of Farmers and Fishermen had about

150 members from five villages of four parishes in 1989, and the Federation of Women had about 500 members (from the "Peasant Development Program Project Proposal" made by Adelaida: 1989). These organizations each have a written Constitution and By-Laws, five working committees, an ongoing social credit program, and are registered with the Security and Exchange Commission.

10. Adelaida explained that NASSA has "evaluated Marinduque for CEBEMO" and that NASSA has also "endorsed" her proposals "to the Asia Partnership for Human Development" (interview 1989).

11. During a brief return visit to Marinduque, in December of 1991, I learned that the ambitious BCC-CO expansion plan has found funding for three years from MISSIO in Germany and is in full operation. The Community Based Health Program has yet to find funding.

12. The discussions that follow about the BOS and the Faith-Life seminars do not present a comprehensive outline but rather focus on a few key elements.

13. The Tagalog word tao is actually much more appropriate than the common english translation "man" for all human beings. Where I do not use tao in this section I will use "human being" unless I am quoting. The use of "man" for tao is, however, common when BCC facilitators slip into english and is also common in translations made for me by my research assistant.

14. The quotes in this section come from various BOS seminars I attended in Marinduque, in 1989, and from seminar modules.

15. PDO is a very common abbreviation used in the BCC-CO program and by other progressive organizations. It is typical of a pervasive kind of analytical shorthand that seems to quickly be adopted in the process of consciousness raising about social injustice.

16. I recorded the responses in this section during a diocesan "BCC-CO up-dating seminar" given for leaders of various established BCCs, as well as for members of the Federation of Farmers and Fishermen who are also BCC members. This seminar was held over two days starting on September 29, 1989. The participants were villagers who had already had the BOS seminar. But the identification of various categories of problems in the country, and at the local level, usually with a component of "deepening" by a facilitator, which

further clarifies the problems and links national and local levels, are common elements of most gatherings and seminars. As the responses I record here are from one particular seminar they do not constitute a complete list of expected responses under each category, but the responses listed are common ones. Usually, as was also the case in this seminar, there is also a section in which the participants are asked how they plan to respond to immediate problems they face.

17. There are some rather surprising elements in the BOS modules. In discussing the "basic needs" of humans (in order to show that these are also concerns of God and therefore need to be addressed in order to create the Kingdom of God) one module refers to "Maslow's hierarchy of needs" from "physiological needs" to "self actualization" complete with a pyramid on which these are displayed! In another section, after stating that "man is mysterious" and that humans are "an image of the creator" the "research of one psychologist" is quoted: "man is divided in four categories 1. unstable introvert, 2. stable introvert, 3. unstable extrovert, 4. stable extrovert" (BCC-CO Module I)! This is presumably elaborated on by the facilitator in the seminar. These rather odd examples highlight the intense interest BCC-CO activists have in applying "scientific" and "modern" theoretical developments in the social sciences to BCC theory even if the connection with the general argument may seem somewhat spurious.

18. In Marinduque, the BEC guide was still received and used by the parishes of Santa Cruz and Gasan in 1989. Fr. Mantala started the BEC program in Gasan and continued it when he was later transferred to Santa Cruz. One of his main lay leaders in Gasan, Naty, continued to use the guide when Fr. Mantala left but started to face resistance from the new priest, Fr. Muni, who said that some of the BEC guides were too long, and were sometimes just followed mechanically by untrained facilitators with no true "deepening" (BCC-CO monthly meeting: August 28, 1989).

19. A BCC-CO staff member may lead the Bible-sharing sessions for six months to a year but as soon as possible will ask a local participant to take over every now and then, with guidance, in order to train a local facilitator.

20. While some who will gravitate to the role of Bible-sharing facilitator are already catechists, even these do not usually have an extensive knowledge of the Bible

as Bible study has not traditionally been a central part of Catholic catechism. In fact, the central role of Bible-sharing in the BCC process marks one of the first times the Bible has come to play a central role in everyday Catholic religious life in Marinduque.

21. This Memorandum on Economic Policy is a 47 point economic outline of austerity measures and economic adjustments according to suggestions by the IMF in exchange for further loan guarantees by that body.

22. CAF-GUs, it will be recalled, are nation-wide paramilitary forces created to help the military fight communist insurgency.

23. I attended seven monthly meetings and the following information is drawn from notes taken at these gatherings. Sometimes, I generalize from information on all the meetings and, sometimes, I quote from a specific meeting in which case the date is supplied.

24. Wooden parrots carved from the soft, light wood of the dapdap tree are a major cottage industry of Marinduque. These brightly painted parrots are exported to Manila and abroad.

25. In fact, the conditions for funding made by outside donors sometimes stipulate that loans to peasants for projects be made on condition of repayment.

26. The charts, plotting the upcoming six months of activities for each area and for the diocese as a whole, are very well organized and set up. Across the top are the headings "Activities," "Objectives," "Target Group," "Key Persons" (to facilitate), "Time Frame," "Venue," "Expected Outcome," "Budget," "Review Date." Under "Activities" fall sub-headings such as "Economic," "Political," "Economic," "Cultural." The elaborations under headings such as "Objectives" and "Expected Outcome" are concise but informative.

27. Adelaida and Pedro are examples of lay leaders who try to consistently express and live their new insights and beliefs whereas Santa and Letty are more likely to vacillate between older and newer perspectives.

28. The fact that CIDA and other organizations do impose their own conditions on the donation of funds is an important factor both in the relations of the lay leaders with the funding agencies and in their relations with the villagers they are trying to organize. Adelaida once complained to me that CIDA was

reconsidering continued support for the women's federation. Adelaida expressed anger that a powerful agency such as CIDA could jeopardize their work. In a subsequent interview with Salada Leclerc, the field worker for CIDA who was based in Manila, she explained to me that she was disappointed with the high number of projects that failed and the low level of funds returned to the program through repayments of loans.

29. Six of Marinduque's twelve parishes are in her towns and six are barangay parishes that were started when Bishop Lim took over the new diocese. I asked the BCC-CO core staff to distribute and collect these surveys on my behalf. BCCs in the town parishes of Santa Cruz, Boac, and Buenavista were not included nor was the parish of Marcopper. Buenavista, Marcopper, and Boac do not as yet have a full program and Santa Cruz is the parish of Father Mantala who insists on the BEC method. The BCC-CO communities that exist in Santa Cruz, from before Fr. Mantala's time, are operating independently now.

The number of survey respondents per parish does not necessarily reflect the total number of participants in that parish. Nor do the surveys necessarily form a representative sample with regard to any of the questions asked. They may reflect such things as participants who were available when the BCC-CO staff member asked for responses, those who had time to respond, those who were able to respond, i.e. literate or not ashamed to seek help.

30. The socio-economic categories offered were those discussed previously: napakahirap (extremely poor), mahirap (poor), hindi gaanong mahirap (not exactly poor), maykaya (well off), mayaman (rich).

31. The seminars offered to be checked off were: BOS; BCC-CO orientation; Faith-Life Integration; Project Management; Program Management; and, Co-operative Seminar. Various skills seminars, while listed to be checked, in fact fall under the BOS and the BCC-CO orientation and so were taken by all who had either of these two seminars.

32. There are, of course, numerous other factors that determine exposure to BCC ideology, or that effect that exposure, such as whether the area is one of the "old" organizing areas such as Malabon, or one of the newer ones such as Cawite, whether BCC involvement has been consistent or sporadic, and, whether the respondent is an "old hand" or a new participant.

33. Possible stumbling blocks offered for consideration were: Frequent re-shuffling of the parish priest; Philippine cultural values such as kanya-kanya, utang na loob, ningas kugon, pakikisama; Poverty of the people so no time for BCC events; Lack of skilled lay leadership; Lack of organizational and motivational skills of the parish priest; The people do not like to organize to fight oppression or injustices or other problems; Lack of support from the wealthy; Lack of funding from the organization; The religious traditions of the barrio people; The remote location of the barrio or transportation problems. There was also an open space in which the people could respond with any "other" concerns they may have.

34. Other categories of answers such as "lack of trained lay leaders," "lack of ability of the parish priest," or discomfort of the people to participate because of shame of their lack of knowledge," which some respondents registered under the "other" category, while important did not exceed nine responses per category.

CHAPTER TEN: BCC-CO Structures, Networks, and Funds in Botilao

Introduction

The fishing village of Botilao, situated along Calancan Bay in the municipality of Santa Cruz, has received the most intense and long term attention from clergy and BCC-CO lay leaders of Marinduque. The farmers and fishermen of the villages of Calancan Bay have been involved in a drawn out struggle against the pollution of the bay by the copper mine Marcopper. The village of Botilao is considered one of the worst effected by the mine's waste products. The issue of environmental degradation and its effects on the health and livelihood of villagers has provided a uniquely focussed struggle for Marinduque's BCC-CO activists. This focus has also provided me with an opportunity to study the village level dynamics involved in BCC organizing over a relatively short period (ten years), but an intensely eventful and significant time. As the BCC-CO lay staff have "phased out" of Botilao the BCC in the village provides an example of how a BCC evolves after full-time support is no longer considered

necessary. What these circumstances did not allow me to study is the day to day interactions between lay staff and local BCC participants.

This chapter starts with an extensive review of the history of environmental protest against the operations of Marcopper in Marinduque. These protests started around the time of the mine's opening, in 1969, and culminated in a dramatic rally against the local Church in July of 1988. This rally was supported by Marcopper after the mine had temporarily closed as a result of environmental concerns. This history reveals some of the potential, as well as the limitations, of BCC organizing. The importance of BCC networking with other progressive NGOs also becomes apparent. My fieldwork in Marinduque started in December of 1988, and was very much influenced by the aftermath of the recent events surrounding the mine's temporary closure, as well as by a response to these events that was to come while I was living in Botilao.

Next I introduce some of the geographic, economic and political particulars of the village of Botilao. The effects on the lives of villagers of more than ten years of dumping tailings into Calancan Bay is also discussed. This section sets the scene for a review of the history of BCC organizing in Botilao, which started in 1981. This history focusses on how the

main BCC structures, the core group and the pastoral council, became established in the village and how these structures responded to external and internal events over time. This section shows how BCC structures may contribute to social action as envisioned by the BCC program but, also, once established, start to respond to local aims and goals of village sub-groups and become part of the fabric of social life of the village. I illustrate these points by tracing the involvement of three villagers in these BCC structures. The effects of the introduction of outside funds to the village, for BCC-CO socio-economic projects, are also discussed.

I describe the state of affairs in the village in 1989, after the barangay elections of that year, which were also effected by the ongoing conflict with the mine. And, finally, I describe the complexly unfolding events involving the Church hierarchy, the BCC-CO lay staff, the mine officials, and the BCC participants of Botilao, as the opportunity to stage a province-wide rally against Marcopper presented itself. The build-up to this rally afforded me an opportunity to study the dynamics between the various involved groups and the discourse that accompanied the negotiations leading up to this event; an event that had special significance for the BCC members of

Botilao.

A number of central questions that this chapter addresses are: how is the BCC-CO program, in the form of structures, networks and projects, reproduced and transformed at the village level; are the aspirations and goals of villagers reflected in, or responded to, by the program's structures and projects; does the program lead to social action by the participants of Botilao; and, what are the forces that limit the success of the program, and how is the program resisted, at the village level? The important question of whether the program leads to transformed social consciousness, in other words, whether the villagers of Botilao accept and reflect the central social thesis underlying the BCC program, is briefly addressed in this chapter and more fully explored in the following chapter.

An Environmental Focus

On the whole, the more radical BCC-CO program seems to have quite naturally flourished in dioceses experiencing extreme oppression, human rights abuses, and economic exploitation. Often these extreme situations are found in regions with a particularly troubled history of landlord-tenant relations, or,

where minorities are struggling for recognition of their unique problems. In these areas the army is often employed to aid local policing authorities in quelling opposition from struggling peasants or minorities and their supporters. Increasing militarization and frequent clashes between the military and paramilitary units, and the communist guerrilla movement the New People's Army, or other revolutionary groups, are the consequence. Under these extreme conditions peasants appear to be more willing to take the risks involved in becoming organized and associating themselves with a progressive movement. (1)

More often than not, throughout the Philippines, people being organized by BCC-CO workers have already been exposed to community organizing and/or consciousness raising sessions by human rights organizations, any number of progressive NGOs, or even by members of the NPA who are active in their area. (2) In the case of Marinduque, however, a predisposition for the program was imported with Bishop Lim in 1978, who had headed the troubled Northern Luzon diocese of Laoag since 1971, and had become the regional chairman of the Luzon BCC-CO in 1979. Unlike other BCC-CO regions Marinduque is relatively peaceful. Marinduque has no history of major tenant struggles against oppressive landlords, no marginalized ethnic minority,

and no overt NPA presence. For many Marinduquenos the BCC-CO organizing strategies and underlying social thesis is their first experience with Marxist based perspectives and community based problem solving.

Perhaps the most persistent target of BCC-CO social action in Marinduque, and certainly the most dramatic, has been the partly Canadian owned copper mine Marcopper. (3) While there has been a growing concern over environmental issues in the Philippines among progressive organizations in general, and also within the BCC-CO movement, the situation in Marinduque is a rather unique one within the BCC-CO movement.

In October of 1969, Marcopper Mining Corporation started operations high in the mountains of Marinduque's central mountain range. The open pit mining operations at Mount Tapan, located almost in the centre of Marinduque within the municipality of Santa Cruz, produced mainly copper with gold and some silver as profitable by products. The fine grey mine tailings, made up of the crushed remains of Mount Tapan mixed with chemical residue from the ore extraction process, were deposited in the nearby San Antonio pond which was believed to have a dumping capacity of about 20 years.

Almost immediately upon commencing operations the first complaints were registered about pollution of

the Boac river, one of the island's main river systems that originates near the mine site. People complained that a wide variety of edible animal species had disappeared from the river. These complaints continued unabated until 1974, when they were amplified by the first protests coming from the inhabitants of seven villages located along Santa Cruz's Calancan Bay. The fishermen/farmers of these communities have for generations relied on the bay for subsistence, as well as for cash as they were able to sell their once rich catch at the local market in Santa Cruz and to middlemen from Quezon province.

In 1974, Marcopper engineers verified that an ore body at least as rich as that of Tapian was located directly under the San Antonio dumping pond. At this time the decision was made to pump the tailings out of San Antonio and dump them, together with the tailings still coming out of Tapian, via an elaborate pipe system directly into the shallow waters of nearby Calancan bay. (4) Barangay captains from seven villages near the bay, representing a quarter of the entire population of the municipality of Santa Cruz, wrote to President Marcos to protest the planned dumping of mine wastes to Calancan Bay. They asked President Marcos to issue a restraining order to the mine. Among these protesting settlements was the village of Botilao.

Despite continued protests from the villagers located along Calancan Bay and from the people of Boac and Mogpog who complained about river pollution, Marcopper received a dumping permit from the then National Water and Air Pollution Control Commission (NWAPCC) in October of 1976. (5)

While the combined tailings from Tapian and San Antonio started spewing into the bay at a rate of 1.5 million dry metric tons per month (Philippine Constabulary Report: 1981) the villagers of Calancan Bay continued, to no avail, to file a steady stream of petitions of complaint with local and national level politicians and the National Pollution Control Commission (NPCC). Fishermen especially noted marked reductions in their fish catch as more and more of the corals became covered in tailings and the first complaints were being registered at this time of illness believed to be a result of eating marine products from the bay. Stomach and skin ailments appeared to be more prevalent in the villages along the bay than in other villages of Santa Cruz (Southern Luzon Journal, March 31, 1981:6; Bulletin Today, April 25, 1981; Bulletin Today, May 20, 1981). By this time the rumour that seafood from the bay was unsafe made it hard for the fishermen to sell even their reduced catch at the local market in Santa Cruz. (6) The fishermen's

complaints, as well as a consulting agency's reports on the steady deterioration of marine life and corals in the bay, based on frequent monitoring, were equally ignored. (7)

In the meantime, the largely middle-class Santa Cruz chapter of the Jaycees organization, known locally as the "Morion Jaycees," was being mobilized against the mine by a former employee of Marcopper and a member of the ruling Lecaroz family of Santa Cruz, Francisco Preclaro. Preclaro was the chairman of the Jaycee Committee on Environmental Protection. (8) In March of 1981, the full text of a protest letter by Franco Preclaro to the vice president for finance of Marcopper Mining Corporation was published in the Southern Luzon Journal (SLJ) and in June of the same year Commissioner Pecache of the NPCC came to inspect the disposal system and to speak with fishermen and village officials of the effected village of Botilao and with the Morion Jaycees of Santa Cruz.

On June 17, 1981, Marcopper was ordered by Pecache to cease and desist dumping tailings from the San Antonio site to sea. The order was later changed with the issuance of a six month temporary permit to operate, on October 22, 1981. This temporary permit carried the significant conditions that the mine come up with an alternative and acceptable tailings disposal

system and that discharge in the meantime not exceed 32,000 dry metric tons per day. For the first time since the start of operations it seemed to many people, who had been steadily complaining about the mine, that they had booked a significant victory.

The final chapter, however, in this first major battle with the mining corporation has a plot twist not unworthy of a modern political novel and one that was to be mirrored in the second major offensive of the people against the mine six years later. The Canadian president of Marcopper, Mr. Garth Jones, directly solicited and won the support of President Marcos to overturn the constraints on the operating permit. The NPCC was informed by the Presidential Executive Assistant that Marcopper was to be allowed to operate without constraints with regard to its disposal system. The disappointment of the people at the sudden and, to them at that time, mysterious reversal of the NPCC's legal dictates could only have been greater had they been aware of the direct intervention by the country's president for Marcopper, and of the interests, 49%, which the Marcos Government held in the mine.

By 1981, the same year the Jaycees initiative against the mine had failed, the Church had decided on the BCC strategy for the "re-Christianization" of Marinduque. In line with the BCC-CO methodology of the

time, which advised that people be organized around particular concrete problems or issues, the pollution issue was seen as a direct and obvious point of departure for community organizing. Botilao, on Calancan Bay, became one of the first villages to receive BCC attention. Two of the earliest BCC-CO trained workers, Santa and Pedro, now BCC-CO core staff, started BCC-CO organizing in Botilao. Many of the villagers of Botilao maintain today that they either first heard about or first understood the problem of pollution when it was explained to them by these two BCC workers. Village pastoral councils were also organized in the affected villages along the bay and consciousness raising with regard to the issue of pollution began. Whereas the Jaycee organization had not organized villagers and had been town based, the BCC-CO movement took up information and conscientization tasks in the effected villages.

Around this time, Sr. Zenaida (Aida) Velasquez of the environmental NGO Lingkod Tao-Kalikasan, based in Manila, also became involved through her contacts with Fr. Sunpayco of La Ignaciana Apostolic Centre. Fr. Sunpayco had been visiting Marinduque to give lectures and seminars on BCC organizing. (9) In 1985, many of the fishermen along Calancan Bay who had been organized through the Church joined the newly formed Federation

of Farmers and Fishermen and also wrote letters of protest and collected signatures as an organization whose members were united in the battle against the disposal of tailings to Calanacan Bay. The following year, 1986, was for many Filipinos a year of hope and high expectations with the overturn of the Marcos government and his replacement, in February, with the extremely popular Corazon Aquino. In Marinduque this seemed to be the break the now organized villagers along Calanacan Bay had been waiting for. Although they had never stopped petitioning politicians at various levels to show concern for their plight, the fishermen and their families had lost hope of being heard after the 1981 intervention against them by Marcos himself. In April of 1986, the newly organized pastoral councils of the Calanacan Bay villages of Ipil and Dolores separately passed resolutions asking the Ministry of Natural Resources to stop Marcopper from dumping into the bay.

On August 9th of the same year, 200 fishermen, barangay council officials, and pastoral council members from 12 villages met and passed a resolution with the following points: 1) that the NPCC order of June 17, 1981 for the immediate stoppage of dumping to Calanacan be implemented; 2) that Marcopper be requested to take active steps towards the rehabilitation of

Calanacan Bay; and, 3) that all further decisions by government officials regarding Calanacan Bay be taken only after consultation with representatives of the people of the effected area's choice. The minutes of this meeting were conveyed to Attorney Tria at the NPCC. Pastoral councils from other towns in Marinduque added their support to those of Santa Cruz; a first sign of the solidarity and potential power of BCC organizing.

Because the situation was heating up considerably a dialogue was organized between Marcopper and the Santa Cruz pastoral councils in which many fishermen and politicians took part. According to Fr. Mantala this meeting became very unruly when Lecaroz "shouted at and intimidated fishermen and barangay captains downgrading them and calling them by name so that they will be ashamed and they fell silent" (Mantala 1989). The fear of angering a powerful man such as Lecaroz, and of being personally recognized and identified by him as an "irritant" is a powerful and intimidating weapon against most villagers who prefer to keep a low profile.

In the meantime, the media was catching on to the issue and numerous newspaper and magazine articles were being published about the controversy. (10) On September 22, 1986 the NPCC once again ordered

Marcopper to immediately cease and desist dumping into Calancan Bay until the company could install an approved disposal system. This order was later, on November 11, 1986, changed to a temporary permit to operate under the conditions that Marcopper transfer its dumping system back to San Antonio pond within two months. While Marcopper protested this move the villagers of Botilao wrote letters of gratitude to Attorney Tria and President Aquino in which they expressed the hope that the order of the NPCC would not be overturned.

Because Marcopper filed a formal request with the NPCC that the restraints on their permit to operate be lifted, Sr. Aida arranged for free legal aid for the fishermen, in the persons of senator Lorenzo Tanada and Attorney Domingo Abadillo, to assist them to formally file their opposition and request that the permit conditions be retained. These actions put formal hearings into motion in February of 1987. Unfortunately, these hearings were interrupted by the reorganization of various environmental agencies to form the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) and the Pollution Adjudication Board (PAB) that would now adjudicate pollution cases. These two agencies fall under the auspices of the newly organized and named Department of the Environment and Natural Resources

(DENR). In the meantime, the mine continued dumping its tailings into the bay and the residents of Calancan Bay kept up a steady barrage of letters asking for the speedy continuation of the hearings and for alternative ways the mine could be stopped while they waited for the creation of the new PAB.

Finally, on November 19, 1987, the new PAB was created and in January of 1988, the council for the fishermen filed an injunction and damage suit against Marcopper at the Regional Trial Court of Makati, Manila. In a meeting of barangay and pastoral councils of the effected area the fishermen Alejandrino Quindoza and Jaime Palatino from Botilao and Marcelino Paras, barangay secretary of Ipil, were chosen to represent the people in the court case. These fishermen had been particularly active in protesting the dumping of tailings in Calancan Bay.

Since the debacle with the Jaycee protestors that had forced Marcopper top men to seek aid from Marcos in order to keep operating as they wished, the company became more sensitive to the need for good public relations. This at least is how the public relations manager of Marcopper explained the various small community projects Marcopper had undertaken in the municipality, and especially along Calancan Bay.

(11) A more cynical view may be that Marcopper realized

the time had come to invest at least something in the community so that ordinary people, outside of the small number with jobs at the mine, may feel they had something to lose should the mine close.

From the beginning of the growing controversy with the Church-led farmers and fishermen Marcopper tried to divide the villagers by pointing to the few projects, such as the building of roads or village halls the company had recently undertaken along the bay. In December of 1986, the mine had circulated a petition along the bay in the hope of getting people to express support for Marcopper. A move to counter petitions organized by the pastoral councils and BCCs, these efforts by the mine had only limited success and were met with ridicule by the organized villagers. As I was told by one villager from Botilao who pointed with disdain at a square concrete structure in the village, "what good is this to us? We cannot eat the barangay hall." But in January of 1988, shortly after the suit against Marcopper was filed, the mine started hiring "casual" labour from the affected area. Although these jobs were temporary and very short term, usually only a month, they for the first time had the effect of dividing the loyalties of the villagers who were desperate for a source of income.

On February 22, 1988, the Fishermen's council

submitted that Marcopper should be stopped from dumping into Calancan Bay because the mine violated PD 984 on pollution and had operated without a legal dumping permit now since February 10, 1987 (Position Paper, Yanada & Abadilla February 22, 1988). (12)

Finally, on April 11, 1988, and as a direct result of the fishermen's court case, the Pollution Adjudication Board issued an order to Marcopper to cease and desist the dumping of tailings into Calancan Bay. While this order did not request the closing down of the mine, the tailings could have been diverted back to San Antonio. Marcopper responded by shutting down completely, and totally without warning, on April 19, 1988. The effects of this close down were felt around Marinduque as the mine simultaneously closed down its large generators which were the only source of electricity for the island. (13) For most of the villagers around Calancan Bay, and throughout Marinduque, the lack of electricity hardly affected their lives as these villages were not electrified anyway. But for the middle-class who ran small businesses in the five towns that did receive electricity and had become used to the comforts of electricity in their homes, this shutdown caused much anger.

On April 20, 1988, Marcopper filed a petition

of appeal with the Office of the President requesting to be allowed to continue operations as usual and to be granted a permit to operate the Calancan disposal system. This strategy of appealing directly to the president had worked well once before and was now to be tried again! In the meantime, while the bishop and priests of Marinduque issued a written support of the DENR order, a massive rally against the Church and against the fishermen supporting the PAB decision over Marcopper was being organized.

Even before the actual shut down of Marcopper, tension had been steadily rising since the PAB cease and desist order eight days earlier. The town of Santa Cruz was divided on the issue of the mine as some inhabitants had steady jobs there, but especially because powerful townspeople profited greatly from spin-off business arrangements with the mine; most notably the Lecaroz family and the town's major, Percival Morales, a Lecaroz candidate. (14) The powerful political support for the mine was balanced in the municipality by the overt and constant criticism of the mine's corporate irresponsibility by the parish priest Fr. Mantala. Fr. Mantala was known for his outspoken sermons on the need to care, as a community, for the plight of the fishermen along Calancan Bay, rather than selfishly looking only at personal

interests, such as the comforts of electricity. He was also known to be a very committed follower of the BCC strategy and his frequent forays to the villages, his reorganization of traditional town parish structures and practices to reflect the Church's preferential option for the poor, and his criticisms of the wealthy and of political "clans" had earned him enemies in the town especially among the traditional power bases.

In an interview, Fr. Mantala stressed the significance of the role he had played in organizing and motivating the people. He noted that it was "really because of me that it all came together" and that the people "said that they could do nothing without me as leader" (Mantala: interview 1989). He also maintained that outside observers and participants always came to see him as the "prime mover" (Mantala: interview 1989). Fr. Mantala was initially named as one of the complainants with the fishermen in the court case but had to withdraw as he was not directly affected by the pollution, but acted as a supporter of the fishermen. While Fr. Mantala's statements detract somewhat from the energy, commitment, and risk displayed by the fishermen themselves there is evidence in Marinduque, as elsewhere, that institutional support, such as from the Church, can give peasants the confidence they need to take risky action. BCC participants nation-wide rely

on this support although it cannot always guarantee protection.

Marcopper management put the blame for their problems squarely on the local Church which they said had been misleading and inciting the people to rebellion (Ante interview: 1989). Soon after the Cease and Desist order against the mine Fr. Mantala was confronted with an angry mine employee who not only verbally assaulted him but also struck him in the face. A week later, on the day of the unannounced closure, the mine workers arrived at the gates of the mine site to find themselves locked out and in a large group they returned to the town led by foremen from the mine who shouted out angrily for the parish priest. Fr. Mantala described the situation to me as having the feel of a lynching party. All day groups of angry workers roamed the town and shouted threats at the religious authorities.

That evening, Fr. Mantala was warned that the executives of the mine were telling the people that the closure was the fault of the Church and that he himself was in danger if he stayed in town during the planned anti-closure/Church rally of the next day. Not long afterwards an angry crowd advanced on the Church yard chanting "priests and nuns, give us light!" and while they pounded on the gates of the compound and on the

large wooden doors of the convento they shouted abuse and threats at the priests inside. The threat of violence was so great that Fr. Mantala, who had already received an anonymous death threat in the course of these events, finally decided to vacate the convento. In a much recounted drama he escaped through a back entrance of the convento and in the dark of night made his way to Boac by motorcycle, aided by a sacristan, where he ended up staying at the bishop's residence for almost a month until the issue had calmed down enough for him to return to his parish.

Not only Church officials suffered verbal abuse and threats of violence but also the three fishermen who had taken part in the court case against the mine. Alejandrino Quindoza and Jaime Palatino of Botilao received death threats and found themselves being ostracized by fellow villagers to the extent that when the mine closed down they also felt unsafe in their village and left the island to stay with relatives in other provinces for about a month.

The day following the flight of Fr. Mantala from the parish, a massive two day rally, organized by the mayor of Santa Cruz with the support of Marcopper management, was held in the town. Marcopper assured extensive media coverage by flying in journalists and compensated their employees with 50 pesos each for

their participation in the rally. (15) The rally was particularly vicious. Hand carried signs displayed such messages as "electrocute the priest"; "make lechon of Mgsq. Mantala" (lechon is roasted pig) and signs at a public meeting held the same day shouted out "To Mantala and Aida GO TO HELL that is where you'll find POLLUTION" and "you killed the goose that lays the golden egg!" Pamphlets that were handed out proclaimed that the "communist priests and sisters" were responsible for the mine's shutdown.

At this rally a number of the important local politicians spoke with great fervour in support of the mine including the elected officials of Santa Cruz and the island's congresswoman, Mrs. Reyes. Church officials were not invited to attend and the interference of the Church in the operations of the mine was roundly denounced. The politicians' speeches assured the people that they were not being exposed to any harmful pollutants.

In the end, the company's April 20th direct appeal to the president once again had the desired result. Although the order to continue operations was not signed by Aquino herself, as Marcos's had been, but by the Assistant Executive Secretary of Legal Affairs, Cansio Garcia, from the Office of the President, the outcome was the same.

On the 27th of April, Bishop Lim issued a general document to "All the Priests and Sisters, and the People of God" under the heading "SO THE PEOPLE WILL KNOW" in order to tell the Church's side of the story and to respond to accusations that had been made against the Church. In this letter Bishop Lim used long quotes from documents related to Vatican II in order to root the actions of the Marinduque hierarchy in recent Church teachings. Bishop Lim explains that his letter is meant to respond to rumours, which have led to confusion among the people, that the local Church wants to stop the operation of Marcopper by "teaching the people living along Calancan Bay to arise and fight against the mining corporation."

Bishop Lim refers to the joint decision of August 9, 1986, taken by barangay and pastoral councils representing twelve villages and some 12,000 fishermen and their families along Calancan Bay, and explains that the Church is justified in getting involved in such affairs by lengthily quoting from the words of Pope Paul VI in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, (page 29). This text asserts the mission and duty of the Church to include "action for justice" and "the unceasing interplay of the Gospel and man's concrete life, both personal and social." In his letter Bishop Lim also addresses the people's possible concern over the

Church's involvement with

leftist and radical elements, out to contribute to the general effort of many communist front organization[s] to destabilize the country's economy and ultimately the Aquino government....(Lim 1988)

This time Bishop Lim quotes at length from the Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes* and he underlined the sentence that states that the Church "does not need to have recourse to ideological systems in order to love, defend, and collaborate in the liberation of man" (*Gaudium et Spes* 26,27,29, in Lim 1988).

Bishop Lim concludes his letter with the hope not only that the people's understanding of the role of the Church in the Marcopper issue will be enhanced but also their sympathy and concern for the people directly effected by the mine.

When I arrived on the island to start my fieldwork, in December of 1988, the shockwave from the events surrounding the mine's temporary shutdown in April was still palpable. Almost everyone I met and spoke to for any length of time started to tell me of the most dramatic event that had taken place on the island that year. Fr. Mantala told me that he had been "warned," by local political "friends" to stay out of the villages and to remain in the town for his own safety. He told me that the months following his return to Santa Cruz had been extremely frustrating as he

longed to return to his village ministry; although he was still afraid of repercussions. He also told me that he now no longer gave rousing sermons against the mine but rather avoided discussing the issue. He did, he said, still discuss general issues of right and wrong which related to the mine but did not mention the mine directly.

Fr. Mantala also expressed regret, however, at the breach the pollution issue, and his stance in it, had caused between himself and the Lecaroz family with whom he had had a very good relationship before. He insists that his friendship with the Lecaroz family did not stop him from speaking out about the pollution issue but it did cause him to feel "hurt" that they turned their backs on him after the rally (Mantala: interview 1989).

The effect of the closure of the mine, the anti-Church rally and the self imposed exile of Fr. Mantala from the parish, on the BCCs of Santa Cruz was initially devastating. Two BCC facilitators from the village of Dating-Bayan near Calanacan Bay told the story this way:

Since 1981, there was an order in the BCCs to stop the tailings. About 1984, Fr. Mantala came. He activated the whole thing too. Around 1987, the pastoral councils became more active too. Also many barangay captains [became involved]. There were so many active leaders then. But now they are lost because Marcopper offered their sons work. Marcopper is paving roads, making

schools, multi-purpose buildings. Now the pastoral council of Dating-Bayan stopped their support because [they] gave up.(...)The leader of the pastoral council is doing nothing so the BCCs do nothing. (discussion with two BCC leaders Jan. 13, 1989)

Another local BCC leader in Dating-Bayan is Edgardo Rodas. (16) He explained that after the barrio pastoral council was established in Dating-Bayan by Fr. Mantala, in 1985, he started to organize BCCs in the village. By 1986, Edgardo said the BCCs were active and meeting regularly. A main topic of discussion was the pollution which Edgardo explained he had known nothing about until he became involved in the Church.

Edgardo explained with great excitement the way pastoral councils, along with many barangay officials who were members of the pastoral councils, and the BCCs had worked together in signing petitions and getting the court case going; but this all changed after the closure of the mine:

Then in 1988, with the Marcopper shutdown and rally it really fell apart. Because in barrios where there were Marcopper employees these became furious with the pastoral councils and BCC people and hassled them. Also, the weekly facilitators meetings in Santa Cruz stopped because Fr. Mantala was in Boac. Everyone lied low and did not want to meet anymore. (Rodas: Feb. 19, 1989)

Edgardo admitted that the effects of the long hiatus in active BCC organizing and the sense of hesitation and uncertainty among the people persisted to that day.

Edgardo's story sheds light not only on the way the controversy over the mine divided villages, but also on the personal effects Church workers experienced over their commitment to change. Edgardo explained that his brother-in-law, a messenger at Marcopper, had long been angry with him saying that he was "lying and brainwashing the people" (Rodas Feb. 19, 1989) about the pollution. After the shutdown the brother-in-law became violent, Edgardo explained, and they fought. Almost a year later the family members had not yet spoken to one another.

Fr. Mantala also discussed the sudden turn around after the temporary shut-down of the mine. He explained that before the trials

all the lay leaders, pastoral councils, and barrio captains [of the effected area] came together in Ipil [1986] and all agreed unanimously that the pollution was bad. They praised the Church and myself for being the only ones concerned for the people. They all signed against Marcopper. Then the trials started. Marcopper approached pastoral councils, individual lay leaders, etc. with promises. For example in [one village] the barangay captain promised the head of the pastoral council a job as teacher in the school there if he would sign a declaration for Marcopper. Many have debts to Marcopper now, utang na loob, so pastoral councils are divided. (Mantala: Jan. 17, 1989)

Not surprisingly, Fr. Mantala's analysis of the way the battle against Marcopper played itself out emphasized cultural factors. He noted how easily Marcopper had been able to buy peasants out because of the Filipino

value of utang na loob (Mantala: Jan. 17, 1989). Fr. Mantala also noted that after he fled the parish the people felt they had lost support and direction and that they had, therefore, turned to local elected officials (Mantala: Sept. 2, 1989).

My arrival, just before the ritual of the novena masses leading up to Christmas 1988, seemed to be somewhat of an added incentive for Fr. Mantala to return to the villages. The traditional nine misa de gallo, dawn masses, leading up to Christmas are extremely popular in the Philippines and Fr. Mantala wanted to go to the various villages he had "organized" to celebrate these masses there. I expressed an interest in accompanying him and, in the end, it was these pre-Christmas visits to a number of villages to say mass and sing traditional Christmas carols that became my introduction to various villages of Santa Cruz, including the one in which I was to conduct my fieldwork: Botilao. (17)

Barangay Botilao

My first visit to Botilao, shortly after arriving in Marinduque, was one I was not to forget despite the numerous and routine trips back and forth to the town of Santa Cruz that were to follow in my 11

months on the island. The first part of the jeepney ride to Botilao, after having turned off the island's dirt ring road, leads along the wide and gravelly road Marcopper built. This road is one of the best non-paved roads on the island. It leads to the village of Ipil on Calancan Bay where it is possible for the first time to see the amazing result of years of dumping tailings into the shallow bay.

Jutting out into the aqua waters of the bay is an incredible gray causeway that looks for all the world like a desert landing strip for large planes. The causeway is about five kilometers long, and 500 meters wide, reaching out towards Quezon province on the main land of Luzon. Under the calm waters of the bay approximately 50 square kilometers of tailings have spread themselves over the bottom of the bay and the corals that used to live there. Looking inland from this point the three dirty white pipes, that alternately transport the tailings, can be seen coming down the mountains as flashes of white through the lush green mountains to the bay.

As we got closer to the bay the roadside became littered with rusted segments of pipes strewn about at random. Fr. Mantala stopped the jeepney numerous times to show me the disastrous results of pipe breakages. The highly abrasive tailing material apparently wears

through the pipes; something I was to witness the results of on numerous occasions. All along the road rice fields were swamped by a grey sludge. Bamboo houses, built up on tree trunks, floated above the solid grey bed of tailings laid down over numerous "accidents," and small waterways showed a strange blue-grey colour. On another trip I saw the results of a more recent pipe breakage. A towering bamboo cluster covered from top to bottom with a glittering layer that for all the world made the delicate leaves look as though they had been individually painted with silver. (18)

At the village of Ipil, on the bay, the jeepney took a sharp turn upwards onto a much narrower and very rocky road. At the juncture of the Marcopper road to the causeway and the start of the barangay road to Botilao, Fr. Mantala pointed to a steep green mountain wall that was streaked with bright limestone rocks. This is the site of a huge cave system of which one large open cave, called the cathedral, housed a Rizalista cultic healer for eight years, until recently. This female spiritualist was sought out by believers from all over Marinduque and was very popular with the people of Botilao. (19)

The same limestone that allows for caves all over Marinduque is used in the quicklime factory that

supplies Marcopper and is owned by the mayor of Santa Cruz. These hard white slabs, furthermore, contribute to making the ride to Botilao from Ipil onward an unforgettable experience. (20) The winding "road" to Botilao follows the curve of the bay but must also hug the mountain that inclines steeply to the sea. Not only does this put the jeepney at a constant tilt towards the sparkling sea far below but the road further undulates pitching passengers forwards and back as the jeepney struggles up steep inclines or breaks and slides, on rainy days, down again. The road itself can best be described as resembling a very narrow, dried out, rocky, river bed. My first trip in the priest's privately rented jeepney, while interesting, proved unexciting when compared to the regular trips I was to take in the once daily passenger jeepney from Santa Cruz in which human cargo shared space with whatever else had to make the trip to town or back that day: pigs, goats, coconuts or copra, fish, etc.

It is during jeepney break downs when all must load out, or when the passengers are asked to walk during particularly bad weather so that the jeepney can negotiate the worst sections of the road, that the passengers are treated to a panoramic view of the whole bay with its smaller islands and the uncanny sight of the silver causeway slicing its way out to open sea.

The section from Ipil to Botilao, where the road mercifully ends, can take anywhere from 30 minutes to more than an hour depending on the weather. As many people cannot afford the fare, or cannot make the once-a-day transport, they walk to Ipil and then seek a more regular jeepney there. As the jeepney makes the last long descent into Botilao children from the nearby elementary school run to meet it. Botilao has no electricity and something so simple as the daily visit from the jeepney is a source of interest not only to the children.

Botilao has a population of 1,175 people in 197 households, almost all of which are Catholic (1989 Socio-Economic Profile). The village has a land mass of 470.8 ha. and is subdivided into six smaller areas or sitios. Three of these sitios have access to the road which cuts first through Puti (named after the white limestone that contributes to the intractability of the road), then Bayanan, to dead end in Pantalan, the centre of Botilao. (21) These three sitios also border on the bay. The other three sitios can only be reached by foot, via paths, or by boat, from the centre Pantalan. Either trip is relatively easy to make to Tuog, which borders Pantalan, but Kawayan can only be reached from Pantalan by a relatively long boat trip or a long trek through mountainous terrain, and Tanawan is

only reached through a strenuous hike up the mountain. In fact, only a small land area of the village is relatively flat, a strip that borders the bay. In moving away from the sea the village steeply inclines up the mountain.

Pantalan, where the road from Ipil ends, may be considered the centre of the village. In close proximity there are a coral pier where boats from other sitios can dock, a small elementary school, a concrete basketball court, a newly built barangay hall, complements of Marcopper, and a few small sari-sari stores. From Pantalan paths lead off in various directions to the other parts of the village. While the number of households in Botilao is fairly evenly distributed between the six sitios the sitios of Tanawan and Kawayan are much larger than the other four and so the houses are spread further apart. _

Botilao borders on the municipality of Mogpog and lies in a remote corner of the municipality of Santa Cruz. The influence of this geographic fact on the composition of the population is obvious when one reviews the family names. Many of these start with the letters L, M, and N. These letters usually start the family names of inhabitants of Mogpog and Boac while Santa Cruz family names usually start with P, Q, and R.

The geographical and demographic realities of the village have political repercussions as a significant number of the residents of Botilao feel greater affiliation to Boac politicians, presently the Reyes clan, than to Santa Cruz political clans. Some of the residents of Botilao explained that this divided loyalty accounts for the fact that the village, and even individual village political figures, have not benefited from "favours" from the politicians in Santa Cruz. Villagers point to the bad road as an example of the fact that they have been relegated to the sidelines. Botilao, they feel, is known to be an uncertain barrio for Santa Cruz politicians.

The way local residents deal with the potentially conflictual and at times even dangerous aspects of the village's divided loyalties gives some indication of peasant responses to unequal power relations with local elites. Mrs. Mantaring reports that she and her husband "split" their vote so that one votes for a Boac politician and one for a Santa Cruz politician. The significance of voting for many peasants, other than the possible financial gains inherent in the process itself, lies greatly in creating or maintaining alliances to powerful clans who may be called upon in future situations of need. For many inhabitants of Botilao this comes down to trying

not to alienate one of two powerful factions to whom the villagers may be expected to pledge allegiance.

Economically, this isolated and mountainous village is almost entirely dependent on fishing, copra, and more recently on money returned to the village by family members working in Manila or abroad. There is little land that is suitable for growing rice so this staple must be bought by most villagers. Most people do try to grow some vegetables in small plots to supplement their diet and some try to keep chickens or raise pigs. Forest products (vines and large leaves) such as nipa, buri, and nito, which are used in cottage industry products, offer some an added source of income but this is peripheral income. Finished handicrafts made from native materials are mainly for personal use. Most of the land in Botilao is split up into small privately owned holdings of about 1-3 ha. each. The poorest families have no land at all or have pawned it all to those who are better off. There are, however, no large outside landowners.

The income from copra production is not only highly dependant on world prices but more directly on the often exploitative prices set by middle-men at the village level and in the towns. Ownership of copra land can be an important source of income but, for those who have no land, or have pawned it, the income from

laboring on others' lands is extremely small. Most copra laborers noted that they receive 30-40 % of the value of the copra as given by one of the three buyers/dealers in the village. (23) As other sources of income and labour are scarce many people contribute to the harvesting of any coconuts that are ready to be taken. The laborers share must then be divided amongst many workers. Since the major typhoons of 1987 even this source of income has become minimally available. On the other hand, the relatively easy access to the food resources of the shallow bay, needing only home made bancas, or native dugout style boats, has been a more reliable and less market dependent source of income.

Because of the isolation of the village and the difficulty in bringing products to market in Santa Cruz this has always been a relatively poor village, but, from extensive interviews with members of more than 60 different households from all six sitios a picture of past self-sufficiency clearly arises. The main source of economic stability and subsistence was the bay with its extremely rich maritime resources. Squid, massive crabs, all kinds of fish, huge shrimp and a wide variety of shelled creatures not only supplied the villagers with their daily food but also granted them a livelihood as they sold their considerable surpluses to

buy other needed staples. Traditionally, the fishermen would ferry the fish to Ipil and then take them to town by jeepney from there. Or they would take them to one of the bay's small islands where large boats from Quezon province would come across to buy them.

One of the most common and painful topics of conversation with Botilao villagers centered on the how abundant the fish had been as recently as 15 years ago. Stories abounded about the ease of fish corrals in the shallow bay that only needed to be checked once a day and yielded more fish than could be used. I also heard stories of casual fishing trips that easily filled large baskets so that the fisherman would even throw some out on his way back up the steep mountain if the load became too heavy. (24) Even staunch supporters of the mine, usually those who work there and their families, or those who hope to, agree that the decrease of fish has steadily worsened as the mine continued dumping tailings into the bay. (25) One BCC-CO participant summed up the feelings of the complainants against the mine when she exclaimed, "we don't want anything from anyone, we are poor but we can manage if only we have our sea. Everything was possible before from the sea. I was able to go to college and become a teacher, we had a house and enough food, all from the sea. Now we have nothing."

The dwindling supply of fish forces fishermen to leave the bay and enter deeper waters, with higher waves, in search of food. This is really only possible for those fishermen who have motorized bancas, which is only a handful. The others have slowly started to rely on more drastic, illegal, and harmful methods of fishing such as dynamite fishing, using cyanide, fishing with very small meshed nets to catch young fish, and pounding the corals to scare the fish out.

The causeway is also the source of other perceived problems in Botilao. The people told me stories of how the wind blows across the bay towards the village, especially likely during certain times of year, bringing with it clouds of the very fine but gritty particles from the causeway. No matter how people close up their houses the grey matter ends up covering everything with a fine layer like dust. When I first experienced such a sandstorm I was particularly surprised at how the tailing particles made rain-like sounds as they descended on tin roofs.

These dust storms from the tailings are more than just a nuisance. While there is piped water to a number of households, many people still rely on water from three open pit wells and from the river. People noticed that they became very ill with stomach complaints after drinking water from the wells during

the time of year that the tailings tended to blow over the village. Marcopper eventually supplied the village with tin sheets to cover the wells with. These, now rusty, sheets do not, however guarantee that no tailings enter the water supply.

Another disturbing problem is that the people have stopped trusting shelled sea creatures as food. Again, there is anecdotal evidence that shelled seafood has become poisonous. (26) Many people have complained of stomach ailments after eating clams and there are two cases of sudden death following the eating of large numbers of clams; one incident involved a six year old girl. Such cases have made the people wary but many villagers also said that they had been warned not to eat shellfish.

Whether these allegations can be proven or not is a matter of some concern but the consequences of the villagers' fears are themselves serious. A local community health nurse who visited the village in 1989, commented on the high incidence of goiter in the village, a disease that can be prevented by taking iodine or by eating plenty of shellfish. She particularly expressed surprise at her findings as the people live right on the bay and are fishermen.

Again, on the level of anecdotal evidence, many people complain of skin ailments that do not easily

heal, brittle bones, and stomach ailments. With these health complaints, as with other scientific aspects of the disposal problem, such as the level of toxins in the tailings, if, and how, these leach into the bay, and what their effect on marine life is, hard evidence is difficult to come by. Marcopper, of course, denies most of these problems.

One demand that came out of the 1988 closure and eventual reopening of the mine, through the president's intervention, was that Marcopper spend 30,000 pesos a day to cover the causeway with vegetation to decrease the harmful effects of blowing tailings. The mine made the most of this demand by devising a plan to cover the tailings with top soil and plants with the help of monthly recruits from the villages along Calancan Bay. Every month two new members of each village were given a one month contract. The designation of who was to get the much longed for jobs was to be made by the barangay captain. The work was done in such a way, with small wheelbarrows, shovels and rakes, that it would surely take a long time. (27)

From interviews in Botilao it became apparent that in the opinion of the villagers the greatest problem, after poverty, is the disunity of the people in the village. Marcopper's practice of hiring "casual"

labour from the affected villages to work on the causeway is but the latest in a number of decisions the mine's management have made since the first threat to their operations in 1981, but particularly since the trials started, that have had the effect of dividing the opinions of peasants from the effected villages with regard to mine.

Introducing BCC Structures, Networks, and Funds in Botilao

There are a number of important factors that shape the initial introduction of BCC structures into a village and that continue to significantly effect development of the local BCC program. Basic Christian Community structures, such as a BCC core group and a pastoral council, are established through the mediation of members of important existing local structures and relationships. An important local structure is the barangay council; important local relationships and networks include kin relations and neighborhood groups.

Once established as new institutions in a village, BCC structures become part of internal social dynamics as a new resource in ongoing, as well as emerging, relations between individuals and factions in the village. These new BCC structures may become a

source of, or catalyst for, changes in traditional relationship patterns in a village, sometimes in ways unintended by the program; or they may become largely incorporated into, and even co-opted by various groups in the village. In the case of Botilao, BCC structures have fulfilled both roles at different times. In any case, BCC structures are vulnerable to local changes, such as shifts in political power relationships in a village, and to changing relations with the object of their organizing activities; in this case responses by Marcopper to the threat posed by BCC organizing.

There appears to be a correlation between factors that characterize local leaders and status figures in a village and factors that cause initial contacts of the clergy and BCC lay leaders to be with these leading individuals and their families and friends. In Botilao these factors appear to be related to personal prominence or leadership in village life, whether as an elected official, a teacher, or as a generally respected authority.

First of all, more prominent families live along the road or along the bay, rather than up on the mountain. (28) Prominence is also related to resources, such as land, capital goods such as motorized bancas, and increasingly to having a family member abroad who supplies the family with funds. Prestige is also

related to links with members of the political and economic elite in the towns. And, increasingly, educational achievement is becoming a source of prestige. Commonly, a number of these factors come together in a prominent family.

Not surprisingly, when members of the clergy or BCC-CO lay leaders first approach a village, as in the case of Botilao, these prominent individuals and families become their first contacts. Prominent villagers actively seek the association of the honored guests and elected officials are expected to provide official welcomes. There is also a "natural selection" with regard to those villagers who have the confidence to associate with outsiders and those who shy away from such potentially embarrassing contacts. Villagers living high on the mountain may, furthermore, not even hear about the visit until it is all over.

There is a self appointed group, mostly women related to more prominent families, that is usually the most active in organizing fiestas and communal religious traditions such as enacting the pasyon. These women and their neighbors were also the first to become active in organizing housing and food and providing information for visiting Church members when the Church started to reach out to the villages.

While it may be said that certain villagers

actively sought association with the visitors it is equally true that these villagers were soon evaluated as the best place to start in organizing a BCC core group or pastoral council as they had already proven possession of such leadership qualities as being "active," interested, able and willing to mobilize and organize resources and people, and they were easily contacted.

The following three case studies of villagers who joined BCC structures as they were being formed in Botilao illustrate the above points and also present examples of the ways in which village relationships are effected by BCC involvement and the ways in which outside influences impact on local BCCs and so on relationships in the village.

Monchito Sotta

Monchito Sotta, better known as Ka Monchito, is one of Botilao's albularyos or traditional healers. At 65, he has used his knowledge of herbs, as well as his extensive knowledge about the spirit world and powerful secret rituals he learned from his grandfather, who was also an albularyo, to heal villagers from Botilao and nearby villages. He also uses faith healing based on aspects of Catholicism and the Bible. Ka Monchito is

also a midwife and more recently he has become a Barangay Health Worker so that he now states that sickness can come from "lack of sanitation [or] ...from spirits, especially engkanto" (Monchito 1989). (29)

Ka Monchito lives in Puti, along the road. He was a barangay councilman from 1968 until 1982. Although he only has four years of elementary school education he considers himself reasonably well off with three hectares of copra land and three of his six children working in Manila.

As early as 1970, before Marinduque became an independent diocese, Sr. Leonor Sevilla started to come to Botilao to teach catechism. According to many villagers she was the first Church worker to come to Botilao; she stayed for a couple of years. Sr. Leonor recognized Ka Monchito's potential as a local leader and convinced him to attend seminars in Boac. Ka Monchito was not easily convinced, as he said, "I was ashamed because others were educated, engineers etc. But she convinced me to be active and to join the seminars" (Monchito 1989).

By the time Santa and Pedro became BCC-CO workers in Botilao and a pastoral council was established, in 1981, Ka Monchito was a logical candidate to become involved. He joined the newly formed pastoral council and the BCC core group. In

1984, when Fr. Mantala started his barrio babad by staying in Botilao for a week he too was impressed with Ka Monchito's potential as a leader. The pastoral council had no officers yet at this time but Fr. Mantala decided that officers should be chosen. As Ka Monchito put it, "Fr. Mantala said he wanted me to be president." When questioned further he added that, "I was voted in by raising of hands" (Monchito 1989). Apparently, however, Fr. Mantala's choice did play a role as others also noted that Fr. Mantala "chose Monchito."

Ka Monchito explained that he had, by now, had many seminars for the BCC core group and the pastoral council which he calls "training for civilization so that you can talk with the highly educated" (Monchito 1989). Ka Monchito noted that he had learned much including "not to be afraid of the educated," "how to help the needy in the barrio," and "how to organize the people" (Monchito 1989). One of his teachers was Sr. Aida who discussed the pollution problem with the people.

As acknowledged by others in the village, Ka Monchito had been an early and vocal opponent of the dumping of tailings into Calancan Bay. As he says, he was one of the first to complain on November 2, 1975, when the tailings first started spewing into the bay.

The former barangay captain, Ricalde, initiated a resolution against the dumping to be sent to the National Pollution Control Commission and concerned citizens of Botilao had signed it. On November 3, 1975, the municipal council of Santa Cruz added their own resolution asking for the assistance of the NPCC in preventing the pollution of Calancan Bay.

In 1982, however, shortly after the first major threat to the mine's continued operations had been averted by Marcos's intervention, Ka Monchito's son was offered a permanent position with Marcopper. According to other villagers this was the moment Ka Monchito altered his position on the mine. As one of the BCC-CO participants put it "he [Sotta] was a complainant first. He only became for Marcopper when his son was given a permanent position."

Ka Monchito's change of heart became a problem as he headed the pastoral council and as, Fr. Mantala was making strides, between 1984 and 1986, in urging the village pastoral councils of Calancan Bay to take a united stand against the mine. In fact, conflict arose when Marcopper offered to help Ka Monchito, as pastoral council president, with the construction of the village chapel. As he explained it, the other pastoral council members boycotted this idea, especially the Quindoza family who said that "they will be the ones to do that"

(Monchito 1989).

In 1986, Ka Monchito's son-in-law was also offered a permanent position at Marcopper and when it came time to sign the important 1986 joint resolution against Marcopper, which was participated in by barangay and pastoral councils of 12 fishing villages along Calancan Bay, Ka Monchito refused to sign.

At this point Ka Monchito found himself at odds with the other members of the Botilao pastoral council, who were united against the mine. They complained to Fr. Mantala who also seemed to want to change the pastoral council president. As Ka Monchito explains it, he was deposed from his position without his knowledge as he was not informed of the elections that were unexpectedly called. He acknowledges that the reason for his demise as pastoral council president was "because I am for Marcopper" (Monchito 1989). Alejandrino Quindoza agrees that the "elections" were somewhat irregular. He notes that Fr. Mantala "just appointed Mantaring" (A. Quindoza 1989), but his sister intervened during the interview to say that "there were elections but not at the proper time because the people did not like the pastoral council president so they asked Fr. Mantala to reappoint a president" (C. Quindoza 1989). All other pastoral council members remained the same.

Ka Monchito's own reasons for changing his mind about the mine do not focus on the issue of jobs received by his family. Rather, he argues that, "the people of Botilao were poor even before the tailings," and while he acknowledges the "bad effect" of the tailings he says that Marcopper offsets this with "projects and jobs" (Monchito 1989). Ka Monchito argues pragmatically that, "the tailings cannot be removed now, the fish will not come back soon, so if you close Marcopper you have nothing" (Monchito 1989). Becoming somewhat defiant he adds "The priest could not give me a job, they only ask for payment for baptism and even funeral" (Monchito 1989).

While Ka Monchito possesses many of the qualities that cause individuals to be initially drawn into BCC structures the historical developments with regard to the mine eventually caused him to withdraw from the program. The consequences of these events are still felt in the village as Ka Monchito's wide network of family and friends in the sitio Puti are uninterested, some even hostile, to becoming involved in BCC activities. As Santa put it "forget about Puti, it is very hard to organize there because of Sotta" (Santa 1989). Ka Monchito's wife, on the other hand, said that Santa always used to visit them when she was first in the village and that they are hurt that she

does not come by anymore.

Rolando Mantaring

When Bishop Lim decided to initiate the re-Christianization of Marinduque with an emphasis on the poor and the traditionally marginal village communities he started a movement that parallels new perspectives and practices of dioceses in other parts of the Philippines, but which was very new for the people of the villages of Marinduque. According to the people of Botilao the bishop not only visited their barrio during his initial parish visitations, soon after his acceptance of the position of bishop of Marinduque, but he also stayed there over night. For Botilao, as for most villages that had at best had a priest come to visit briefly once a year for the fiesta, the visit of the bishop was a major event.

Fr. Malapad also came to Botilao and also stayed over night while he was parish priest (1978-1981) in Santa Cruz. Fr. Malapad, Santa and Pedro started organizing the pastoral councils and the BCC-CO program in Botilao at this time. Then Fr. Mantala stayed in the village for an extended period of time in 1984, in accordance with his barrio babad method of organizing the villages. (30)

Each of these clergymen, as well as the two BCC-CO lay staff who lived in the village for a number of years, ended up staying in the house of the Mantaring family. (31) The reasons for this are important in the light of understanding through what structures and relationships BCCs often enter villages and in what ways the new structures and networks that BCCs introduce become incorporated into, and even co-opted and transformed by, internal aims and goals of factions within the village.

The Mantaring family consists of Rolando Mantaring (age 46), his wife Gina (age 44) and their six young children. Their large concrete house is situated right at the end of the road into Botilao on the shore of the bay and with the elementary school, where Mrs. Mantaring is a teacher, at its front. (32) Mr. Mantaring finished high school but his main occupation, when he met his wife, was fishing. (33) Mr. Mantaring is one of 10 siblings of which eight are living and working abroad, either permanently (2) or temporarily. He also has one brother in Boac where his father is from. His mother is from Botilao and had some land there. Gina is from neighboring Ipil. Her whole family is in Marinduque. The land Gina's family owns is in Ipil.

While Rolando still fishes, with the assistance

of one of a small number of motorized fishing boats in the village, he does so mainly "casually" for his own family's consumption; Rolando's actual occupation is small business man. (34) He is one of the three copra dealers in the village, he breeds pigs, and he runs a small village store, or sari-sari. Through these activities Rolando is able to consolidate copra lands from less fortunate villagers who are willing to pawn them. Rolando considers himself hindi gaanong mahirap (not exactly poor), or adequately well off. The Mantaring family are in fact one of the three most well to do families in Botilao.

The large concrete house, as well as the capital and concrete shelter needed to start up as a copra dealer are the result of financial aid from Rolando's siblings abroad demonstrating, once again, the significant impact repatriated funds can have on a village family.

When the bishop made his first visit to the village Mr. Mantaring was a barangay councilman. Mr. Mantaring was chosen as the bishop's host because he held an official position and his house was the most comfortable and well located; the same happened when Fr. Malapad and Fr. Mantala visited. The house of the barangay captain of the time was in the sitio Tanawan on the mountain. For anything as official and important

as a visit from a member of the clergy to the village the barangay officials are expected to be not only visibly involved in the planning of activities and speeches but also responsible for the comfort and well being of the honored guests during their stay. Consequently, the clergy and lay leaders first become familiar with these officials of the village as opposed to more marginal families. While Santa and Pedro were staying in Mantaring's house and starting to organize a pastoral council they convinced Rolando to join. As Rolando put it "Ka Santa told me to join even though I am very busy. So I joined as a member" (Mantaring 1989).

The composition of the barangay council at the time the Church reached out to Botilao has proven to have ongoing significance. The barangay captain of Botilao, Salvador Ricalde, was first elected to that position in 1968. When Marcos declared martial law, in 1972, all elections were halted so that Ricalde remained captain until 1982, one year after the lifting of martial law, at which time barangay elections were once again held. Ricalde maintained his position as captain but all other councilmen were replaced. Both Ricalde and Monchito Sotta were members of the barangay council when BCC-CO organizing first started in 1980-81, and both became involved with the Church in the

struggle against Marcopper. Both, however, later joined the lucky few whose immediate family members were to receive jobs in the mine and subsequently became pro-Marcopper.

Rolando Mantaring voiced a belief, which was widely accepted to be true not only in Botilao but also in neighboring villages, that captain Ricalde was financially helped by Marcopper in attaining his reelection and that, around 1982, he also started to receive a steady "salary" from the company. In any case, from 1976 until 1982, the captain had been a staunch complainant against the tailings and the company according to Rolando. Indeed Salvador Ricalde's signature may be found on many petitions against the mine from these times. Then, Ricalde's son was offered a job at the mine and after 1982, when Ricalde became captain again and Lecaroz became major of Santa Cruz, Ricalde started to support the mine. (35)

Among the nine new barangay officials chosen in 1982, were Rolando Mantaring and the two future legal complainants against Marcopper from Botilao: Jaime Palatino and Alejandrino Quindoza. (36) Both Quindoza and Mantaring were also already members of the pastoral council. The president of the pastoral council at that time was Monchito Sotta. Interestingly, the other nine pastoral council members were all women and there were

no women on the barangay council so that the only men on the pastoral council either were, or had been, on the barangay council.

In 1986, Fr. Mantala and some of the other pastoral council members wanted to change the president because the pastoral council threatened to become defunct in its task of raising the question of pollution with villagers. Mantaring noted that Fr. Mantala, who always stayed at his house, encouraged him to run for president. Mantaring became the pastoral council president.

Most of the members of the 1986 pastoral council come from the easily accessible sitios, Pantalan and Tuog, and are either related or neighbors. Only two men are members and both of these are also barangay council members. The initial pattern of barangay councilors overlapping with pastoral council members was prevalent in many of the organized villages along the bay. For this reason, when Marcopper began to target village leaders for favours, such as jobs, many pastoral councils also became defunct.

Alejandrino Quindoza

Alejandrino Quindoza, better known as Ka Jandro, is 54 years old but looks older. Ka Jandro completed 2 years of high school. Although he married relatively late in life, he and his wife Leah have had nine children of which two died young. The family lives on the waterfront in Tuog in a house with a concrete floor but walls and roof made of light natural materials. Ka Jandro's oldest son is eighteen and helps him with the fishing. They have a motorized boat and six nets spanning over 1,000 meters but cannot catch enough fish for commercial purposes. The family greatly relies on the income of Leah, who is an elementary school teacher in the village.

When Santa and Pedro came to Botilao, in 1981, they soon got to know the extended Quindoza family, who all live close together in Tuog. Prior contacts with this active family had already been established through Fr. Malapad. Santa and Pedro convinced Ka Jandro, who was known to be concerned about the disposal of tailings to Calancan Bay, to become one of the first BCC-CO core group and pastoral council members. While Ka Jandro says he is only a "part-timer of the BCC because I have family cares and lack of money" (A. Quindoza 1989) he, nonetheless, ended up playing a

pivotal role in the struggle against Marcopper.

According to Ka Jandro, Santa and Pedro started to tell the people about pollution related to the tailings and asked the villagers to write letters to the country's president and to make resolutions against the disposal of tailings in Calanacan Bay. From the first protests against the mine, in the seventies before the local Church became involved, until roughly 1986, the village was largely united against the mine and active opponents such as Quindoza and Palatino had been elected as barangay council members in 1982. and although the mine first started employing workers from the village around 1979, the numbers were small.

Ka Jandro notes that "especially when Aquino won we sent so many resolutions" (A. Quindoza 1989). After the important 1986 resolution by fishermen from 12 villages Sr. Aida came to Botilao to offer support and spur the people on to continue with their struggle (A. Quindoza 1989). Ka Jandro notes that especially in the time between 1984 and 1986, "there was much unity not like now" (A. Quindoza 1989).

When the fishermen's resolution was followed up the same year by a NPCC order to Marcopper to "cease and desist" dumping to sea Marcopper responded. One such response by the mine was to send around a counter petition to the villages that people could sign in

support of the mine (December 1986). Since 1984, the mine also started to conduct some "projects" in Botilao such as supplying pipes for water, a toilet, and "trash cans" made from empty chemical drums (A.Quindoza 1989); needless to say there is no garbage pick-up in Botilao. Offers for jobs were now also forthcoming, such as the job offered Ka Monchito's son-in-law. According to Ka Jandro, it was not the projects but the jobs that influenced people's opinions in favour of the mine. The years between 1986 and the final court decision against the mine in 1988, were marked by increasing tension and division in the villages of Calancan Bay. Ka Jandro notes that during this time he was on the barrio council, but only he and Jaime Palatino were still willing to speak out against the mine. He explains "the others were not totally for [the mine] but did not act, they were afraid" (A. Quindoza).

Ka Jandro readily admits that "I also did not want to get too involved because I do not like trouble also" (A. Quindoza 1989). But when the time came, Ka Jandro and Jaime Palatino allowed themselves to be convinced to represent the fishermen of Calancan Bay in the court case against the mine. Ka Jandro remembers that:

I wanted to lie low, not get as involved as the bishop wanted me to, but I was forced to act. My nights were sleepless and days were troubled too. (...) I only acted on the pollution because

no one else would. (...) I did it for the whole barrio not for me, I was dedicated to that work. (A. Quindoza 1989)

Ka Jandro explains that it was his first court case and that Sr. Aida "co-ordinated us and got attorneys" (A. Quindoza 1989). He also remembers that the bishop called him to Boac and gave him some financial assistance, but his nights in Manila were spent sleeping with cousins or on the floor of the small office of Lingkod-Tao-Kalikasan (A. Quindoza 1989). In the meantime, Ka Jandro felt he had little support from other villagers who either were beginning to support the mine, or did not want to become involved in something controversial. Even those who were sympathetic to what he was trying to do were doubtful of the outcome. Ka Jandro remembers:

All the people here said they have no power or ability here and said I also cannot do anything because I am poor and only [have] small education. But I acted. They also said the captain is for [the mine] so what can I do. (A. Quindoza 1989)

Ka Jandro emphasizes the role the Church played in getting him involved, "without the Church I never would have acted," and in sustaining him through the ordeal,

it was the Church that helped me stand through it.(...) Fr. Mantala went with me [to the trial] when it was still new, twice, and Sr. Aida went often too. (A. Quindoza 1989)

With the successful outcome of the court case in 1988, and the subsequent response of Marcopper by shutting down the mine, which in turn led to the presidential order to override the legal verdict of the Pollution Adjudication Board, life became more difficult for Ka Jandro. As he said:

Many people hated me during the shutdown. I brought my family to Lucena [Quezon province]. Bishop Lim told me to do that. I stayed with a cousin for one month. But June 10, I came back because my wife is a teacher here. But it is very hard for me here, even now. Monchito has not talked to us since the case started. Some Marcopper employees act friendly but I know they are not. I never fully trust them. (...) I feel very isolated and alone now. I cannot act because I am alone. (A. Quindoza 1989).

The time since the dramatic events of the spring of 1988, and my arrival in the village early in 1989, had not brought much hope to Ka Jandro and those who still oppose the mine. As Ka Jandro pointed out:

Fr. Mantala is not talking about it [Marcopper] in his homilies now; he's calm now. (...) Before he was always asking me for news but now no more. (A. Quindoza 1989)

There had also been no more news from Sr. Aida according to Ka Jandro. While Ka Jandro still felt that his old friend Jaime Palatino was on his side he indicated that Jaime also did not act anymore "because he does not want Marcopper to be against him so that if he ever needs to, he can work there" (A. Quindoza 1989). (37)

On the other hand, Ka Jandro also expressed some hope during this discussion when he said that he thought "the Church is starting to act again now" (A. Quindoza 1989). From this statement it appears that Ka Jandro was willing to become active again if the Church took the lead in setting further action in motion.

Ka Jandro felt that most people were for Marcopper now because of the short term jobs they were receiving, or hoped to receive. But he remained angry at this turn of events saying:

I do not know why they give all their trust to Marcopper after just a casual job but that is how it is. (...) People will sell their souls for one month work. (...) Money is the only thing that talks here, they will do anything for it. (A. Quindoza 1989)

While Ka Jandro has sworn that he will never work for the company he explained that his son was working on the causeway for one month. He said, "I feel much pain because I do not have enough money to give my son so I cannot be against" (A. Quindoza 1989).

One of the greatest disappointments for Ka Jandro was the way the great unity among the villagers of Calancan Bay disintegrated under the offers for jobs and other alleged bribes made by the mine. He said that all the villages eventually retracted their opposition to the mine with the exceptions of Ipil and Botilao and that Ipil had now also been "bought" as the barrio

captain had been offered a large sum of money by Marcopper for the development of the village (A. Quindoza 1989). According to Ka Jandro, Botilao now stood alone and there were about 12 families still openly against the mine in the village (A. Quindoza 1989).

Ka Jandro was disappointed at what he perceived as the shortsightedness of his fellow villagers:

I can remember our lives before Marcopper. We could survive, we could live. Now everyone knows only that we cannot get by without Marcopper because of a few things they have given us which will only last a short time. What about the future of our future generations? One day Marcopper will just leave us and we will have to live without them but we will be worse because of the pollution we have now. (A. Quindoza 1989)

In the end, Ka Jandro concluded that his active participation in Church structures at the village level and his subsequent stance against the mine had been difficult and not without risk. Ka Jandro explained that:

It is not easy to be one of a BCC-CO and to act as a community organizer. It's too hard. BCC-CO is always near to trouble, you are always in danger. Here, if I organized the barrio and the people were active the town officials and military would start to think I am a subversive. You might be shot, even in Marinduque, especially under Marcos but even now because its easy to hire murderers if economic interests are at stake. (A. Quindoza 1989)

Socio-Economic Projects

It is obvious that poverty and lack of economic alternatives greatly hampers social action by villagers. The small-scale socio-economic projects the BCC-CO program makes available are meant to address this problem. The project funding can be accessed by those involved in the BCC structures and those who have taken the project seminars. These seminars not only teach the ideological perspectives behind the projects but also provide some technical information to ensure a greater success rate. As was discussed above, villagers involved in the BCC structures, while they may be among the poor of the village are not usually marginal within the village as are the very poorest (napakahirap) and those most isolated geographically and in terms of social status. Nonetheless, there are considerable differences in wealth between BCC participants. Those most likely to start projects that ultimately fail are the poorest of the local BCC members. Rolando Mantaring on the other hand has been very successful with a piggery project and a fish net project although he least needs the money of all the BCC members in Botilao.

Piggery projects require not only specialized knowledge (which is provided in the seminars and

through ongoing technical assistance) but also particular conditions for the pig, such as a shelter, and sometimes medications and special foods which are not always affordable for the poorest BCC members. These are reasons why piggery projects tend to fail for poor BCC participants, usually because the pig dies or ends up taking so long to reach a desired weight that the cost of food and care equals or exceeds the price at sale. (38)

In 1984, the sixteen members of the BCC-CO core group in Botilao all received their first piggery project. They all received money to buy three piglets. Most received 330 pesos; 100 pesos for each piglet and 30 pesos for initial expenses, transportation, food and medicine. Some borrowed more money, around 600 pesos, and bought "bred" pigs as opposed to "native" pigs. One of the project holders, Irene Monte, explained that the native pig is stronger and heavier but takes much longer to gain weight, whereas the bred pig is less hardy but gains weight very easily. The results were extremely varied among the participants. Some pigs died, some did not gain weight, but if even one pig did well and could be sold then the loan could normally be paid off, including the interest of 1% per month. While a number of projects left the participants indebted, and a few were successful, most broke even or made a

small profit.

In 1988, new funding for a second piggery project was made available and five core group members tried again. Most bought native pigs this time. This project was ongoing while I was in the village. While some had already lost their pigs to death, others were still hopeful. Ideally the pigs should only need 7-8 months of feeding to reach a weight at which they can be sold for profit, but most take longer if the quality of the food is not so good or the pig is not in good health. Some project holders told me that they sold the pig as soon as they could make a small profit, to safeguard against the possibility of sudden death of the animal.

The fish net projects are also not without drawbacks. But in this case the problem is more directly linked to the pollution issue. The main problem with the fish net projects is that the greater catch the net is supposed to supply never materializes because of the problems related to fishing in the polluted bay. Again, those who are better off and have motorized boats benefit the most from fish net projects as they can leave the bay to fish in deeper waters that are not effected by the tailings.

In 1988, seven BCC-CO core group members received fish nets through BCC-CO funding; three were

among the original 16 members and four were new members. Each member received two nets of 200 meters each and the materials needed with a net such as weights. The borrowed amount for the fish nets was 1,300 pesos. Of the seven who received projects, the three who have motorized bancas were able to pay back their nets from the profit of fish they caught outside of the bay. These members were enthusiastic about the program because, as Lito Pitero said, "it is hard to get a net otherwise" (Pitero 1989). The other four members, however, all complained of the small catches they were getting in the bay and the fact that they could not pay off their debt.

The failure to be able to pay back the loan of a project sometimes becomes a source of tension that may cause a member to withdraw from other BCC activities. On the whole, the small scale nature of the projects and their potential to fail for those who need the funds most, do not allow them to function as a replacement for the kind of employment Marcopper offers. (39)

How Things Stood in 1989

In May of 1989, barangay council elections were held and of the eleven full time employees of Marcopper in Botilao four ended up filling one of the nine positions including that of barangay captain. (40) There was much talk among villagers of encouragement, including financial backing, by Marcopper for its employees to run as candidates in these elections. In Botilao, many people told me of money that accompanied promises to vote for the new captain. But, the fact that the barangay captain can directly influence who gets jobs at the mine might also have led to the relatively high number of votes going to Marcopper employees who may be willing to help supportive villagers in the future. Fr. Mantala commented on the high number of new captains in the effected area who are Marcopper employees (Mantala: May 17, 1989).

The new barangay captain in Botilao, Isidro Garcia, is a surprising winner in many ways. He was born on the mainland of Luzon. He only came to Botilao in 1979, to marry his wife whose family is from Botilao. (41) The couple do not own any land in the village. All of Garcia's and his wife's siblings are in Bulacan and in Manila. Garcia expressed his own surprise at his electoral victory when he explained to

me how little family he has in the village, "so how could I win the elections?" (Garcia 1989).

Garcia applied at Marcopper as a sign painter and received the job. Then he became "Born Again," in 1987, joining a sect known as IEMELIF. (42) Garcia's support for Marcopper is expressed partly in religious terms when he derides the Catholic Church for taking social action against the mine. He reiterates the position of many Born Again groups of Santa Cruz who insist that it is not the place of religious organizations to be involved in political matters:

Church leaders should not get involved. They should just be neutral and they should just pray for solutions but not social action. And if you really follow God you should always be in the middle don't favour one side - just pray to God. (Garcia 1989)

Garcia also insists that while the tailings have reduced the amount of fish, which he believes Marcopper will compensate for with projects at his request, there is no pollution in the sense of health risks to the villagers (Garcia 1989). He, furthermore, states that the village is now "for Marcopper" with the exception of a handful of bitter villagers who were defeated in the last election and who do not have jobs at the mine (Garcia 1989).

Although Ka Jandro, Rolando Mantaring and Jaime Palatino stood for re-election in the 1989 elections,

only Jaime Palatino received a position. Jaime was supported by Bert Padrigon in Santa Cruz who is a Peyes supporter. Bert Padrigon had unsuccessfully run for Mayor of Santa Cruz against a Lecaroz candidate and Ka Jandro, Rolando and Jaime had campaigned for him (Quindoza and Palatino 1989).

A somewhat surprising win was that of the only female elected; Pilar Roque. Pilar is an active and long time member of the pastoral council and the BCC-CO core group. She explains that she joined the new organizations "right at the start" because "I wanted to improve myself, to add to knowledge, [and] to meet other people outside the barrio also" (P. Roque 1989). She explains that she ran for a position on the barangay council as a result of her involvement in the BCC activities:

My mind was awakened. I can now analyze the situation of the people. So now in the council I can do something about it to represent the people. That is the main reason I joined the council. I feel I want to do something, to be more active against pollution to help my family and neighbors. (P. Roque 1989)

Pilar, while a very strong woman, is also shy and easily embarrassed. She worries about her lack of higher education having only finished elementary school and she admits that normally she "is more the kind of person to stay at home...I never before thought I would run - I was never such a person before" (P. Roque

1989). She is "frustrated that Ka Jandro and Rolando would not [did not] also win and be my companions because we [as a group] would be stronger" (P. Roque 1989). (43)

Pilar explained that her only preparation for this job comes from the "seminars and awakenings" she received through the Church, "through that I discovered I have the right" (P. Roque 1989). (44) She agrees that these seminars help in public speaking, in leadership and in organizing people but says that she is "still ashamed" (P. Roque 1989).

Pilar was strongly supported by the members of the pastoral council and the BCC-CO core group in her bid for office and she accounts her win in part to her involvement in these structures. Two of the active members of these structures, Norma Quindoza, the sister of Ka Jandro, and Gemma Erondo were her "campaign managers" (P. Roque 1989). (45)

The Second Rally

Just over a year after the temporary closure of Marcopper, and the dramatic rally against the Church and the fishermen who had supported the court case, a surprising turn of events brought the villagers of Botilao and other BCCs around Marinduque back into

action. The second chapter in this saga must really be largely attributed to political maneuvering and the ongoing rivalry between the Reyes and Lecaroz clan.

Mrs. Reyes had fully supported Marcopper in the 1988 rally against the Church; she publicly insisted that there is no pollution and that the Church was out of line in its involvement. Ultimately, it was she who petitioned President Aquino to allow the mine to continue operations unhindered. But, at the same time, she became interested in the large sum of taxes the mine had not paid over many years. Marcopper had received special tax suspensions under President Marcos and was now seeking to have these unpaid taxes "condoned" by the Aquino government. (46) Mrs. Reyes was in the process of passing a resolution in Congress that would lead to a greater proportion of taxes resulting from the exploitation of natural resources to be returned to the province where the resources are tapped. The passing of this bill would result in great political advantage for the congresswoman in Marinduque, but her efforts were pitting her directly against Marcopper management. The congresswoman started a vigorous campaign appealing to the president of the country not to allow Marcopper's taxes to be condoned. (47) In an interview in the newspaper Tempo Mrs. Reyes angrily announced that if Marinduque did not receive

more assistance from the national government (regarding the tax issue) she "would rather join Ka Roger" (Reyes in Tempo: September 1, 1989). (48) The Lecaroz family, on the other hand, supported Marcopper in its bid to avoid paying these taxes.

Simultaneously, a number of political incidents in 1989, steadily increased the tension between the Reyes family and the Lecaroz family. For one thing, the ballots from the 1988 elections for governor were still being recounted as the losing candidate, Bocobo, a Lecaroz candidate, insisted that he had actually won over Congresswoman Reyes's brother-in-law Luisito Reyes. Then, at an exclusive gathering of the Poor Boys' Club in Santa Cruz, a number of incidents occurred that apparently greatly annoyed Mrs. Reyes. First of all, she was reportedly not invited by the mayor to the event at which members of the political elite of Santa Cruz and Marcopper management were present. When she arrived at someone else's invitation she was apparently not acknowledged properly, or "snubbed," in the proceedings. She left abruptly, but after her departure members of the gathering reportedly took to addressing Bocobo, who was present, as governor. This was reported back to Mrs. Reyes by someone who had remained at the gathering. (49) The traditionally close relationship between Marcopper management and the political elite of

Santa Cruz may have become a further point of contention for the congresswoman at this time as she found herself taking on Marcopper management.

In any case, Mrs. Reyes started to discuss the possibility of organizing a rally against Marcopper over the issue of the taxes. At this time she started to woo the support of the Church. Mrs. Reyes attended a joint meeting of the pastoral councils of Santa Cruz, which was participated in by over 70 members. She admitted to the pastoral council members that she had been the one to ask Aquino to allow Marcopper to continue operations a year ago. In her speech, in which she exclaimed "mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa," she also told the members of the pastoral councils that a year ago she did not "understand what you were fighting for" and urged them to join her now in her effort to stage a rally against the mine. Many of the BCC participants of Botilao, Ka Jandro and Jaime Palatino included, who had felt betrayed by the congresswoman were excited at her apparent move towards their side and seemed willing to trust her. (50)

Although Mrs. Reyes invited the bishop and the parishes to take part in the rally the bishop was not immediately convinced. A period ensued in which the Church was at times presumed "in" with regard to the proposed rally and then was considered "out" again. On

July 17, the BCC-CO staff had an emergency meeting to discuss what the stance of the BCCs should be in the rally and on the 18th Santa arrived in Botilao to update the local BCC participants. In a discussion with Fr. Mantala, on July 22, he told me that:

I am unsure if I should join the rally. It is the politicians who asked for the permit and its to get Marcopper taxes back. I talked to Mayor Morales who advised me not to join as it is only political fighting and I may get caught in the middle. Mayor Morales said it is just Reyes against Lecaroz. I do not want to be used for political purposes and I will wait for more information before organizing my people and calling out the pastoral councils. (Mantala: 1989) (51)

On the fourth of August, Ka Jandro received a letter from the BCC-CO core leader Santa saying that "the Church will not join because pollution is not allowed on the [demonstration] permit" (A. Quindoza: August 7, 1989).

An important conclusion may be drawn from both of the above points, namely, that essential decisions, such as the one of whether to join the rally or not, are made at the top by the clergy and the BCC-CO staff who maintain the option of "calling out" the people they have organized if it is deemed in the people's interest. In the meantime, I learned from a close political ally of Mrs. Reyes's that she would cancel the rally if the Church would not join and that she was making every effort to seek the Church's participation

by petitioning the bishop. (52)

On August 8th, there was a lengthy "dialogue" between Church officials, Ka Jandro, Jaime Palatino, and another BCC member, Erlinda Erondo, from Botilao, politicians from around Marinduque, Secretary Factoran from the Pollution Adjudication Board (PAB) and Marcopper management. (53) When the three from Botilao came back to the village, at 4:30 that afternoon, excitement and renewed hope radiated from them as they told and re-told the events of the day until deep into the night. Erlinda had proudly worn her BCC-CO T-shirt to the talks. Together they remembered the way Marcopper's public relations manager, Ralph Ante, who was the moderator of the discussion, continuously ignored Erlinda's raised hand and was eventually replaced by Secretary Factoran. Factoran gave the microphone to Bishop Lim who declined it in favour of Jaime Palatino. Jaime positively glowed as he recounted his long speech that re-told the whole story of the struggle of the fishermen against Marcopper.

For Jaime, this day was something of a reinstatement as an activist. He explained that before he was given the microphone by Bishop Lim he had been raising his hand to speak and was, like Erlinda, ignored. In the meantime, a member of the political elite in Santa Cruz, who was seated next to him, kept

asking him why he wanted to speak and what he could possibly have to say. Jaime also recounted how after the session the resident manager of Marcopper, Bob Gallagher, had approached him and angrily demanded to know why he had spoken up. Jaime explained that:

He said to me "Why did you say all that you did? I thought we had an agreement." I think Gallagher meant his help with the barangay hall [for which Jaime had sold land] so I said "I am very grateful for the barangay hall but that does not change the problem of the pollution." I think Gallagher was shocked at my speech because he thought that I am already on the side of Marcopper because I lied low since last years rally. (J. Palatino 1989) (54)

Speeches in favour of Marcopper were given at the meeting by Marcelino Paras, the former secretary of barangay Ipil and former co-complainant with Jaime Palatino and Ka Jandro against Marcopper. Paras is now a councilman of Ipil and insists that there are "no more problems" and that the people once again "catch so many fish" (quoted by Quindoza: 1989). Mayor Morales gave a speech about the negative effects losing Marcopper would have on the economy of the island, and municipal Vice-Mayor Popoy de los Santos said that the only reason the people are complaining is because they want jobs and are jealous of those who have them.

Even after this dialogue it remained uncertain for some time whether the Church would join the rally. Eventually, on the 14th of August, a meeting was held

with Ka Jandro, Jaime, the BCC-CO core staff, the bishop, some of the clergy, some involved citizens of Santa Cruz, and provincial board member Franco Preclaro from Santa Cruz as the government's representative. At this meeting details of the upcoming rally were worked out including who would be giving speeches; Ka Jandro and Jaime were included as speakers. It was also decided that the Church and the fishermen would primarily present the pollution issue while government officials would concentrate on the issue of back taxes. Ka Jandro remembers that Franco Preclaro particularly urged the bishop to have all parishes participate.

At this point, Fr. Mantala decided to try to make this an ecumenical affair by inviting pastors from Protestant denominations in Santa Cruz to join the rally. Most clergymen declined Fr. Mantala's offer. An indication of the differences of opinion between Catholic and Protestant denominations over social action became clear in the letter of one pastor to Fr. Mantala declining his invitation. In this letter the young pastor of the Gospel Church noted that "our Church does not want to join this socio-political rally" (Pastor Funzalan: Aug. 19, 1989).

On the day of the rally, August 19th, jeepneys from all over Marinduque brought in the pastoral council and BCC members from all the parishes. As the

jeepneys pulled into the courtyard of the cathedral of Santa Cruz it soon became apparent that the Church had managed to bring out the largest number of people. For all Franco Preclaro's extensive campaigning in the villages and schools of Santa Cruz, the number of people from the municipality who heeded his call were few. (55) Citizens from other municipalities, who were invited by their respective mayors, also did not take part in large numbers.

Knowing the recent history of relations between the Church and the local government over the mine and the fact that just over a year ago a large anti-Church rally had been held on this very spot with the active involvement of Mrs. Reyes, made the sight of the congresswoman and the bishop sitting side by side centre stage in the town's plaza all the more remarkable. The bishop spoke first, then the congresswoman. The stage was further occupied by many political leaders from around Marinduque, who had been called out by Mrs. Reyes. Only one maverick member of the Santa Cruz elite joined the demonstration on the stage (in addition to the board members Preclaro and Regalia who have long fought the pollution issue). And only one, particularly committed, Santa Cruz barangay captain spoke against the pollution; his impassioned speech earned him warnings from friends that he might

face repercussions from the local military or CAF-GUs. In her speech Mrs. Reyes derided the absent municipal officials and, looking over to the town hall, called out that she hoped they could hear the speeches despite the fact that they were hiding.

As the sun was setting, after many emotional, and often long speeches the patient crowd who had spent the whole day in a blistering sun were surprised by some very popular entertainers that had been flown in from Manila by a wealthy Reyes supporter. This little interlude came as a total surprise to the BCC-CO core staff, who spent the whole day recording speeches on equipment given to them by the main office in Manila. It was also a surprise to the clergy; despite the fact that firm agreements had been made that the rally be "joint" in every sense from planning through execution.

Not only did these entertainers soon transform the serious nature of the event but they also performed until dark at which time the crowd, and many of the assembled prominent guests on stage, started to disperse. Ka Jandro and Jaime had been scheduled, by Franco Preclaro, to speak after the entertainment. (56) At this point only Mrs. Reyes, with Fr. Mantala on her right and the bishop on her left remained seated. A few other "prominents" milled around on stage and the plaza

itself was a bustle of activity as people filed out. In the end, only Jaime was able to give his speech to a nearly empty and dark plaza. The speech that Ka Jandro had worked on all week was never heard.

In the end, it was the slowly and steadily built communities of the Church that proved to be sure to come to the rally when "called out" by Church leaders. As Dorie said after the rally, "only the Church has the moral trust of the people." Had the village whose captain suddenly reversed his promise to Franco to come had a BCC program then its members would likely have attended the rally despite the captain's opposition. Franco was disappointed that the results of his own campaigning efforts had had little effect in Santa Cruz despite the fact that he is a prominent provincial board member.

The aftermath of the rally almost immediately revealed a renewed and perhaps even enhanced distrust of politicians by the clergy and BCC-CO lay staff. One priest explained that he felt "we were used" and that:

We thought it would be real co-operation but the government upstaged the Church literally and practically. It tried to present itself as the one fighting for the people affected. I would not do it [collaborate] again. The next time the Church will go it alone. (...) The largest group was from the Church. (October 4, 1989)

At the BCC-CO core staff's monthly meeting held, on August 28th, a lengthy evaluation of the rally

revealed much bitterness. The BCC leaders were angry at the bad scheduling of Jaime and Ka Jandro and at the "unnecessary artists" they had not agreed upon. They recalled that this was to be a joint rally in "planning, organizing, execution, and evaluation," but, whereas two fishermen were planned to speak only one did and at the post-rally evaluation Franco did not show up; they felt he anticipated their criticisms.

The lay leaders also commented on the fact that the Church was only represented by the bishop on the stage. Whereas all the towns' mayors were on the stage the priests had to stay in the audience. Again, the view that it was really the Church that "carried the rally" was put forth. The lay leaders pointed out that "without the BCCs there would have been very few people there," and they asked "where were the schools of Franco?" (BCC-CO core staff meeting: August 28, 1989).

An interesting analysis made by the BCC-CO staff concerned the possibility that the new structures of the Church can be used by politicians for their own ends. At the monthly meeting the BCC-CO staff wondered:

Maybe we are only building Franco as a politician and then when he is already very high he will go against us. Maybe he is with us on this issue but maybe on other issues he and his CAF-GUs will oppose us. (BCC-CO staff meeting: August 28, 1989)

In fact, the BCC activists recalled an occurrence in

which they felt something similar had already happened. They explained to me that the present vice-mayor of Boac used to be the pastoral council president of the town and that this position had greatly helped him win support during his political campaign. He had also had the support of the Church. Then, at the rally against the Church of a year ago he had proven to be "an enemy of the Church."

Finally, while the main theme running through the renewal of Church structures and Church perspectives revolves around "empowerment" of the poor, there can be no doubt from the above account that the Church's new strategies in reaching out to and organizing remote communities has led to considerable "empowerment" of the local Church itself in the ongoing struggle for the hearts and minds of the people.

Conclusions

An important question to be addressed in concluding this chapter concerns the degree of reproduction and transformation of key BCC-CO structures, networks, and projects as these are introduced to the village from the diocesan level through BCC-CO core staff and clergy. BCC-CO structures that were established over ten years ago, the core

group and the pastoral council, still exist and still fulfill their intended tasks. Members of both, furthermore, not only respond to calls for action from outside the village, such as monthly parochial pastoral council meetings and special seminars, but continue to spontaneously undertake activities within the village although the core group is somewhat more active year round, with Bible-sharing activities, while the pastoral council tends to become active during feasts or special events.

On the other hand, subtle transformations concerning the underlying principles of the BCC-CD program with regard to these structures appear to have accompanied their very introduction to the village and to have been an ongoing characteristic of their existence. Because of an almost inevitable introduction to the village through individuals already involved in the village barangay council, and other villagers who are readily accessible, not ashamed to make contact, and often leaders or prominent in one sense or another, there is a degree of pre-selection of those who first become involved in the BCC-CD structures. The attention of Church leaders, and especially the establishment of new semi-formal structures, is a development prominent members of the village want to be associated with. By the dynamics of this process of introduction the BCC

becomes both indigenized and somewhat removed from the ideal of reaching out to and empowering the most marginalized and poorest people.

Even with long term efforts to reach out to the very poor, the less educated, and those living in remote areas, something Santa and Pedro did do over time, the core of active members remained those who first joined. A later split among participants over the Marcopper issue served to further root the BCC-CO structures in local social and political affairs. As the internal divisions over Marcopper became more significant in the village, so did the function of the pastoral council as an alternative structure to the barangay council and a particular vehicle for the Quindoza family and other deposed former barrio officials. By becoming involved in political issues at the local level and in the village the BCC finally became indigenized to the degree that it reflected the aims and goals of at least some villagers themselves.

Once BCC-CO structures become established they become part of the ongoing dynamics between individuals, families and factions in the village. Especially as day-to-day outside involvement by lay staff lessens the new structures have the potential to become not only indigenized but also co-opted by their members for aims not envisaged by the BCC-CO program.

On a daily basis it is the personalities involved and their situations and motivations that breath life into the structures rather than the ideology that spawned them.

The socio-economic projects follow membership in the BCC-CO structures and also are indigenized by the circumstances of the BCC members. Leah Quindoza complained that Rolando Mantaring is receiving and benefitting from BCC-CO funds for his successful piggery projects although he is already a well-to-do "business man" in the village. On the other hand, poorer members of the BCC were largely unsuccessful in improving their lot through the projects and even ended up in debt to the program.

With regard to the question of whether the BCC-CO program responds to the aspirations and goals of villagers themselves, a number of different factors must be considered. First of all, it is important to remember that the program is only serving a limited number of villagers so that an answer to this question is both qualified and determined by this fact.

From a personal and social perspective participants expressed satisfaction with the program. Pilar and Monchito especially expressed an interest in the seminars for reasons of personal development and education. Pilar also saw the program as a way to

establish links outside of the village. The program addresses the longing of some villagers to be more formally involved in the wider religious community and to be recognized as equal members in that community. These members are particularly interested in orthodox religious training and in teaching catechism to the children of the village. There is also an interest in the social aspects of the program that focus on developing community and good relations with neighbors and relatives. These considerations will be further explored in the next chapter.

As we know, the program aims to respond to the needs of villagers facing various forms of political and economic oppression. But as the program becomes indigenized, as described above, it is shaped to meet the political concerns of its key participants. In practice this process may lead to a co-optation of the program by the more powerful members of the village. In the case of Botilao there was an initial degree of overlap between the members and the goals of the barangay council on the one hand, and the pastoral council and BCC-CO core group on the other hand. But some BCC members lost their political positions through their stance against the mine.

For these villagers the structures of the BCC program offer a means by which to maintain their

internal unity and organization, as well as their positions as unofficial opposition to current leaders. BCC-CO structures also provide members with the mechanisms by which to project their viewpoints and the means by which to reach out to other villagers through Bible-sharing sessions.

As we have seen above, some of the important aims and goals of villagers, with regard to the BCC-CO program, are economic in nature. There is a great need for alternative sources of income and villagers are keen to borrow money at low interest rates to start projects. But the restricted nature of the projects, ideologically, financially, and technically cause these to best serve those villagers who are already in a better socio-economic position for reasons of financial resources, geographic location, or education. The projects cannot sufficiently meet the needs of the poorest BCC members.

An important question is whether BCC structures and networks promote social action. I believe the above history of Church-led peasant protest against the pollution of Marcopper emphasizes the very important role such structures and networks play in organizing, supporting, legitimizing, and encouraging meaningful and sustained social action.

It may be argued that the first protests

against Marcopper came spontaneously from effected villagers of Calanacan Bay through the barangay councils proving that social action can be meaningfully initiated by peasants themselves without outside knowledge or support. This aspect of the history of protest against Marcopper calls into question the characterization of peasants as essentially "passive." But later developments, which are typical in such cases of peasant protest against powerful forces, clearly challenged the resolve of protesting villagers. Key elected authorities at the village level were effectively "bought off," or eventually replaced, and financial offers to villagers, in the way of limited jobs and village projects, eventually caused divisions within villages. Normally, these events would have meant the end of organized resistance.

By the time Ka Jandro and Jaime Palatino were becoming involved in the court case against the mine there was no longer much support in the village for their stand, especially among elected village authorities. Open support for their action was limited to their families and the members of the pastoral council and the BCC-CD core group. These village structures, as well as the support networks supplied by the clergy, BCC-CD lay staff and, importantly, Sr. Aida's environmental agency Linqkod Tao Kalikasan, were

now essential to enable and sustain social action. The involvement of Lingkod Tao Kalikasan indicates that BCC organizations can effectively link up with other specialized progressive NGOs to find support for the action they are taking. Sr. Aida brought the case to the attention of environmental agencies world-wide and passed on the signatures that indicated support from these agencies to the fishermen. She also supplied the lawyers for the case, as well as countless pieces of information and evidence used in the trials.

The importance of support and direct involvement by "the Church," in the sense of extra-BCC structures and personnel is evident when Ka Jandro indicates above that since the failed action of 1988, there has been a quiet period but that perhaps now the "Church" will become active again. It is clear from the history of the second rally that Jaime Palatino was also waiting for strong leadership on the part of the Church before becoming involved again. While these points qualify the ability of individual BCCs to initiate risky action it is, nonetheless, important that despite serious personal repercussions as a result of earlier action, neither of the two fishermen, nor their families, hesitated to become involved again given unequivocal support by the Church. Important also, was the fact that existing BCC-CO structures in

the village could immediately be mobilized for action and as support systems for members who take a leading role in social action.

Rather than to say that peasants are inherently "passive" it might be better to note that they need strong structures and powerful alternative political allies, or patrons, to act.

While involvement in the BCC-CO program allows villagers to voice their concerns more effectively than would otherwise be possible, there are also clear constraints on social action. These constraints include poverty, fear of physical or economic repercussions, and disunity. In the case of Botilao, Marcopper actively supplied some of the disincentives for action. Responses by Marcopper to BCC organizing varied at different times and some responses by the mine's management were more effective than others. Various infra-structural projects offered by the mine, while these contributed to the improvement of village life, had little effect on the desire of villagers to protest against the pollution of the bay because the real problem the people face is loss of livelihood.

A subsequent, and more effective strategy of the mine was the selective distribution of jobs. These jobs, and the promise and hope for jobs, directly addressed the problem of poverty and so silenced the

protest of those who received them and their immediate families. Equally significant was that these jobs divided villagers both in Botilao and along Calancan Bay who now could no longer present a united front. The effects of these internal tensions between former allies, neighbors and friends cannot be overemphasized. Community, and positive relations with neighbors and fellow villagers, is of great importance to people who live in relative isolation and rely on each other for medical, spiritual, and social support. Ka Jandro's sense of isolation, despite important support from members of the BCC structures, was a major theme in his life in 1989. The BCC was not able to transcend divisions created in Botilao by the possibility of work offered by the mine. (58) But BCC structures and networks in the village did provide essential community support for the resisting peasants enabling them to persevere as a group and also providing a forum for their shared discourse of discontent. Given the opportunity to protest again, in 1989, the BCC members of Botilao were ready and eager to do so.

Finally, there is the constraint of physical violence or the threat thereof. During the temporary closure of the mine, in 1988, the anger of the mine's employees and the death threats received by the parish priest and by Ka Jandro and Jaime Palatino dealt

resistance a significant blow. It is obvious that poverty also places a serious constraint on social action, if only because people who spend most of their time on subsistence practices have little time for organized protest. Furthermore, as we have seen above, the socio-economic projects offered by the Church cannot replace the lost means of livelihood caused by environmental degradation, nor compete with the jobs offered by the Marcopper.

The question of whether village level BCC participants accept and reflect the underlying BCC-CO social thesis may be briefly addressed at this time and will be more extensively explored in the next chapter. It could be argued that the organized and open protest of BCC-CO members from various villages along Calancan Bay against the mine is evidence not only of successful community organization but also of successful consciousness raising. There is reason to believe that such large scale and long term social action would not likely have taken place without the role the Church played in community organizing in the area. But to argue that all these protesters were inspired by the structural analysis offered in the BCC-CO seminars may be going too far, especially when one remembers that protest against the mine started before the Church was organizing in the area based on local analysis and

knowledge.

In fact, as we will see more clearly in the next chapter, there is a wide degree of variation among BCC-CO members in the numbers of seminars they have taken and in what they retain from these seminars. For one thing, while many men are members of the pastoral councils and the BCC-CO core groups they are less likely than the women to participate in seminars. But men were very much in evidence on signature lists gathered against the mine and the court case was headed by three men. Ka Jandro's statements that his livelihood activities prohibited him from taking many seminars and that he "doesn't understand it all" (A. Quindoza 1989) are very common responses among BCC-CO members. Many BCC participants have trouble remembering what they have learned at various lectures but what they do tend to retain are issues they are already familiar with or can translate into something they are familiar with. Many members say that BCC participants have to get along better with their neighbors or work towards being better united as a village and that the rich are not always "good." These are, as such, not "new" insights to villagers.

On the other hand, there is evidence from Pilar's statements that she was, as she put it "awakened," and therefore inspired to run for the

barangay council. Equally important is Ka Jandro's admission that he wanted to "lie iow" but felt he had to act for the sake of the "whole barrio" and that he is now "dedicated" to the work of protesting. Ka Jandro's statement is possibly an important indication that the BCC-CO message of Christian duty and sacrifice directed at the good of the community, for social as opposed to the more traditional personal reasons, has been adopted. But the question of whether Ka Jandro's and Jaime's actions were the result of personal "conversion" to the insights of the BCC-CO social thesis or the result of a combination of structural support and encouragement, or even gentle persuasion, by the clergy and lay staff is not easily resolved. We do know that total "conversion" to BCC-CO perspectives is possible from the diocesan lay staff. The question of whether it occurs in the villages, or is necessary for social action, will be further explored in the next chapter.

As a final point, this chapter does illustrate, through the history of the second rally (1989), the potential power of broad-scale community organizing by the Church. The Church was able to bring out a larger number of participants to the rally against the mine than could the government officials. Even if only one or two BCC members per village may be considered actual

or potential "converts" to BCC ideology, so that this becomes their personal motivation for social action, others, who joined the structures and groups for various personal reasons, may be mobilized through the BCC networks. Some may join under pressure of fellow villagers, some out of utang na loob to the Church. The inherent trust people place in the motives of the Church is a powerful organizational tool. The Church has shown the ability to become a third force in Marinduque politics through organized peasant communities.

NOTES

1. There are, of course, factors other than extreme human rights abuses that facilitate the adoption of a BCC-CD program by a particular diocese, such as the inclinations of the bishop and clergy. Conversely, the comparatively less "radical" BEC program exists, and has been effective, in some well known "hot spots" such as the Prelature of Ipil.

2. I was told of an interview a fellow anthropologist had with a NPA member who said that recruits from among peasants who have been involved in ECCs are very welcome as these do not need much ideological training!

3. The Vancouver based company Placer Dome Inc. owns 39.9% of the shares in Marcopper. The Philippine government, formerly under Marcos and Aquino, now Ramos, owns another 49% and the rest is in the hands of private individuals (Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility 1988-89 Annual Report: 64-65). While Placer Dome insists it is a "passive partner" the company it is responsible for the technical and business management aspects of the mine's operations (Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility 1987-88 Annual Report:49). The top management of the company are largely Canadians and the company maintains

a Canadian resident manager at the mine site.

4. Calanacan Bay is only about 40 meters deep at its deepest point and was once a bay rich in corals and fish species.

5. At that time this commission was called the National Water and Air Pollution Control Commission and was later, about 1975, renamed the National Pollution Control Commission.

6. While I was in the field, 1988-1989, it was common for shoppers in the market to ask about the origins of the fish they were buying specifically to avoid fish from Calanacan Bay. Fishermen from Botilao told me of the ruses they devised to convince potential buyers that the fish was not in fact from the bay, such as letting a friend or kinsman from another fishing area sell the fish at the market.

7. Synergistics Consultants, Inc., a Philippine company, conducted a number of surveys of Calanacan Bay between 1975 and 1987, in connection with environmental permits the company needed.

8. Preclaro's constant position against the mine is a complex one to explain, especially as this position has placed him in direct opposition to his powerful family in Santa Cruz. The steadfast and long term nature of his commitment to fight pollution in Calanacan Bay has to be acknowledged and respected. Preclaro is also a diver who was familiar with the bay before its destruction and can attest to its deterioration. Politically Preclaro has now aligned himself with the ruling Reyes family and has thereby been ostracized by the Lecaroz clan. He is presently a member of the provincial board or Sangguniang Panlalawigan.

9. Sr. Aida has made the Marcopper issue one of her agency's main concerns and has directed her personal efforts, on behalf of the fishermen, towards gathering historical and factual information and establishing links to other environmental agencies such as the Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility, and Pollution Probe in Canada. She has solicited support and signatures from environmental groups worldwide, has petitioned the Philippine government and its various agencies, and has kept individual fishermen in the villages around Calanacan Bay informed of developments. Much of the historical data related above comes from her agency's files and from an interview I had with her in Manila in 1989.

10. "Thanks to FM these Fishers live in Penury" (in Philippine Daily Inquirer, Aug. 12, 1986:1), "Pollution of Bay Hit" (in Manila Bulletin, Sept. 4, 1986), "The Destruction of Calanacan Bay" (in Philippine Daily Inquirer, Sept. 6, 1986:13), "Environmentalists want Marcopper sued" (in Philippine Daily Inquirer, Sept. 6, 1986), "Marcopper Rapped for Pollution" (in Daily Express, Sept. 23, 1986:1), "Pollution-ridden Works at Marcopper Terminated" (in Malaya, Sept. 23, 1986:1), "Mining Firm Padlocked" (in Manila Bulletin, Sept. 23, 1986), "Licensed to Kill Calanacan Bay" (in Malaya, Sept. 30, 1986).

11. Interview with Ralph Ante, public relations officer of Marcopper (October 9, 1989)

12. Presidential Decree 984 states that:

Pollution means any alteration of the physical, chemical, and biological properties of any water, air, and/or land resources of the Philippines, or any discharge thereto of any liquid, gaseous or solid wastes as will or is likely to create or to render such water, air, and land resources harmful, detrimental or injurious to public health, safety or welfare or which will adversely affect their utilization for domestic, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational or other legitimate purposes. (Position Paper, Tanada & Abadilla, February 22, 1988)

13. After having turned down repeated requests to sell excess electrical production to the island, Marcopper had recently closed a deal to supply the island with electricity for which the mine is paid. A common belief is that the mine finally acquiesced to the sale under the growing pressure of environmental protests and the newly perceived need to contribute something to the community.

14. The issue of jobs has long been a bone of contention as Marcopper does not in fact employ a very large percentage of Santa Cruz inhabitants full time and, furthermore, almost all higher level jobs that are in the hands of Filipinos have gone to non-Marinduquenos.

15. This information comes from a number of sources including employees who told me of the financial arrangement themselves.

16. Edgardo is one of the most active BCC leaders in Santa Cruz and has attended seminars in Marinduque, as well as at La Ignaciana in Manila, in 1981, in Lipa City and Quezon City in Manila in 1986, and in Baguio in 1987.

17. Fr. Mantala did continue his visits to the villages after Christmas and even started organizing new village pastoral councils and BCCs again, which entailed the so-called barrio babad or extended stay in the village. So the constraints placed upon him by the events surrounding the temporary closure of the mine did not have a lasting effect on his organizing activities although they did continue to restrict his verbal expressions in church.

18. As the pipes wind the 14 kilometers from the mine site down to sea they break at random anywhere along the way. The third pipeline is supposed to be employed until the segment of one of the other pipelines can be repaired but the reaction time is notoriously slow, especially when the breakage occurs somewhere in the mountainous jungle areas. Major sources of water for villages along the way have been rendered periodically unusable through pipe breakages but the people often do not have much choice but to carry on with their usual practices as much as possible regardless of the bluish muddied nature of the tainted water.

19. In Vincente Marasigan's (1985) book about the Rizalist cult of Banahaw the caves of Santa Cruz are mentioned as playing a role in this movement (pp. 164-165).

20. There are numerous caves around Marinduque. Many of these contain the raided remains of Ming dynasty burial jars and human remains. One such cave, near Botilao, contained numerous glazed shards among the human bones. Some of the shards had clear dragon designs on them. Many of these caves have been explored by the National Museum.

21. A road extension has been planned to connect Botilao with a remote but bordering village of the municipality of Mogpog but this has not yet been implemented. Perhaps such an extension will lead to improved jeepney services for Botilao.

22. I was told that the Spanish implemented this system when they induced the population to choose family names, presumably for administrative reasons. It would

appear to attest to the bureaucratic fastidiousness of the Spanish administrators that they not only implemented a system of names but further allocated the letters L, M, and N, for Boac area residents, P, Q, and R for Santa Cruz area residents, and S and T for Torrijos area residents. What is perhaps even more surprising is that it is still quite an accurate way to determine where a person's family is originally from, and that the overwhelming majority of family names in these three regions still correspond to the above scheme.

An added note of interest is that most Boac area names are Tagalog, with the exception of old elite names, while most Santa Cruz area names are Spanish. Pure speculation may lead one to wonder if the Tagalog names were the result of greater resistance to Spanish occupation in that area. There are also a number of these Tagalog names starting with L, M, N, that have rather flippant or even scandalous meanings reminiscent of the obviously non-serious names many Dutch chose when forced to choose last names by Napoleon.

23. While I was in the village the price for copra bought in the village ranged from 3.8 to 4.5 pesos per kilo. Most people had had one or two crops, which were still greatly reduced in size from what the trees used to give before the typhoons of 1987. Someone who used to get about 1,000 kilos from their land was now getting about 200-300 kilos.

24. Among others, my research assistant Glenda, who was 21 years old, recounted memories of very successful fishing trips she had experienced as a child with her father.

25. In December of 1991, on a brief return visit to the island, I learned that Marcopper had stopped dumping to sea as it prepared to open a second mine site after depletion of the Tapan pit. In the eight months since the pipes had stopped spewing many people told me that the number of fish in the bay had been steadily increasing.

26. It is well known that especially shelled sea creatures tend to store accumulated pollutants in their bodies.

27. In 1989, I travelled out on the causeway by jeepney and was soon engulfed in a gray swirling dust storm that blocked out the sun and transported me into another world. As I tried to protect my camera and to cover my nose, the sight of human shapes looming up in

the gloom ahead was unforgettable. These peasants had their heads covered with cloths and some had surgical masks over their faces but their arms and legs were bare and their feet, as ever, shod in rubber slippers. Beside the men were the shadowy fleet of wheelbarrows in which the soil was already grey with tailings. The workers stared at the jeepney and then turned back to their shovels.

28. I am not trying to establish causality here, in other words whether prominence followed from having had the fortune of having the road pass by one's house, or whether those in prominent positions naturally gravitated towards the road. I am, rather, noting certain significant correlations.

29. Barangay Health Workers are part of a municipal health program. Participants take courses in community based health care.

30. Fr. Mantala introduced the BEC method to the village, along with the use of the Bible-sharing guides sent from La Ignaciana but the BCC-CO workers Santa and Pedro, who started their organizing activities in 1981, stayed in the village and continued a BCC-CO type of organizing. This sometimes led to conflict between the BCC-CO lay staff and Fr. Mantala. While I was in the village, in 1989, one of the more active BCC local leaders, Alejandrino Quindoza, asked Santa who returned to the village for a visit, what the difference really was between the two programs. Santa gave him an answer in point form that he carried around with him in the back pocket of his jeans. When I asked him what the answer to his question had been he responded that the most important part was that the BCC-CO was more active in helping the people with their problems and the BEC was more for prayer.

31. Santa stayed in Botilao about six years and Pedro, who had to leave earlier because of knee trouble that was aggravated by the mountains in the village, stayed three years.

32. The Botilao elementary school has seven teachers but only 4 are from Botilao.

33. According to a Socio-economic census of Botilao taken in 1988 by the municipality of Santa Cruz the educational attainment of the villagers of Botilao six years of age and older breaks down in the following way. Forty-five people have had no schooling; 634 have completed some elementary grades; 46 have attended

college; 15 hold academic degrees; and eight did not respond to the question.

34. There are roughly 7 motorized bancas in Botilao (1988 Socio-economic census).

35. I happened to be with Fr. Mantala, in 1989, when he was called to the bedside of the former captain who was dying from stomach cancer. After giving Ricalde the sacraments of the sick Fr. Mantala told me of the struggle he had had against this man over the issue of organizing the people against the mine.

36. Rolando Mantaring said that he too would have been a complainant against the mine but that his less than destitute status excluded him from representing fishermen who had been impoverished by the tailings

37. Jaime Palatino was further impoverished, in 1989, as he had had considerable hospital expenses for a very sick child.

38. Rolando explains why it is difficult to keep pigs successfully if the participant has insufficient funds. First of all, he notes that most people do not feed their pigs well. He gives the pigs professional feed. Then, he says that most do not know enough about, and cannot afford, proper medications for the pigs, and finally, that they do not have a proper place to keep the pigs as these must be sheltered from wind and cold of night. Norma Quindoza agrees with Rolando. She says that there needs to be more supervision by the BCC-CO technician and adds that many people are too poor to feed the pig if they do not have enough food for themselves.

39. One villager in sitio Bayanan returned from a period of time in Saudi Arabia. He built a nice but simple house and was looking for something to do to survive in the village. He was not a member of the BCC program, and did not know much about it, but he heard about the possible loans with minimum interest that the program offers. He told me how disappointed he was at not being able to get a substantial sum of money from the program to start a large scale professional piggery. He had already built an elaborate pen. He insisted that small scale projects were not efficient economically.

40. Rolando Mantaring complained bitterly about the quality of the new councilors saying that they were all new to the job, that only two had high school

qualifications, and that the new captain had never even been a councilman before. An interview with Ka Monchito's 29 year old son, a Marcopper employee and newly elected councilman, was indeed dismaying. The young man explained that his candidacy, "was just a joke to see what would happen" (M.Sotta 1989). When I asked him what he planned to do for the village there was a long silence, which was finally filled by suggestions from his parents who were present. When Gus did come up with an idea it was to start a nightclub, two of which have sprung up in another village of Santa Cruz and are the only such establishments in Marinduque.

41. In both "targeted" interviews I conducted, which were aimed at certain groups or individuals, as well as in my random household interviews of which I conducted at least eight in each sitio, I asked informants where they and their spouses were originally from. There appeared to be a pattern of men from other parts of Marinduque, or the mainland, marrying into the village as opposed to the other way around.

42. IEMELIF stands for Iglesia Evangelica Metodista en las Islas Filipinas.

43. Pilar and some of the others in the pastoral council and BCC-CO core group, were experiencing frustration with Jaime Palatino as they felt that he was using his position on the barangay council to find jobs for his family members. More generally, there was a sense that Jaime was looking after himself first at this time and was less committed to making waves over the pollution issue.

44. Pilar took the BOS, Project and Program Management, and Leadership Skills seminars.

45. In a brief discussion with Pilar in December of 1991, she expressed her frustration with her position in the barangay council as she has little support and so is always voted down. She said she is now mainly quiet.

46. Marcopper had its taxes suspended from 1984 until 1987, under President Marcos's Presidential Decree (PD) 2027. Aquino issued an Executive Order No. 340 to the effect that all suspended taxes of copper companies should now be paid in full. Marcopper was trying, in 1989, to have these back taxes "condoned." The back taxes of Marcopper were estimated at 753,426,482.29 pesos by Mrs. Reyes (C.Reyes July 7, 1989: Letter of

Appeal to Corazon Aquino regarding the payment of Marcopper taxes).

47. The mine's managers responded to Mrs. Reyes's efforts with a threat they have repeatedly made when Marcopper's "operations as usual" were threatened: they warned that if the taxes must be paid the prospects of opening a second mine upon imminent depletion of the first site would be jeopardized (Letter from the Vice-President of Marcopper to Congresswoman Reyes: July 12, 1989).

48. Ka Roger is a well known leader of the banned guerrilla movement the NPA.

49. I was told of the events that had occurred at the gathering of the Poor Boys' Club by two independent witnesses who had attended the event, one of which later informed Mrs. Reyes of the evening's events.

50. These notes are from field notes taken at the pastoral council meeting and with Botilao villagers afterwards and from a later talk with Mrs. Reyes. Franco Preclaro was also at this meeting and later commented to me on the highly informed and critical nature of the crowd. He noted that it was the most responsive group he had spoken to on the issue of pollution and he was especially interested in the fact that they directly questioned Mrs. Reyes's motivation and commitment to them.

51. I am unsure why Fr. Mantala would seek, or take, the advice of the mayor who had obvious reasons to discourage Church participation in the rally.

52. Mrs. Reyes later confirmed to me her commitment to get the Church involved.

53. This dialogue came about as a result of three letters that the bishop had sent to the country's president inviting her to come and see the problem for herself (Bishop Lim: August 8, 1989); Aquino sent Factoran instead.

54. It became clear this evening that Jaime may have made some compromises with regard to Marcopper management for financial and security reasons, but that he was obviously willing to risk angering Marcopper management if further action against the mine could become possible with support from the Church.

55. One poignant example of the silent pressure exerted

by local, Santa Cruz, politicians on people to stay away from this rally is the case of Marinduque Community College. Mr. Robles had first committed the school to attending the rally but later withdrew at the advice, he explained, of the board of trustees of the school. Both Lecaroz and Mayor Morales are members of this board. Another Santa Cruz barangay captain who had pledged to bring his village in full force mysteriously stayed away and refused to discuss the issue after the rally.

56. Franco later admitted to me that he had scheduled the speeches in this manner because he was concerned that the fishermen's speeches would not be as well received by the crowd as speeches from eminent individuals.

57. Through Sr. Aida's efforts the Canadian NGO Taskforce on the Churches and Corporate Responsibility in Toronto financed a study of the bay by a Canadian scientist, Dr. Peter Rubec.

58. The importance of community is illustrated by the following example. In a conversation I had with the wife of the former barangay captain's son, who has a job at Marcopper, she explained that she and her husband want to

join with other barrio people because one day Marcopper will be gone but we will still live here in this barrio and have to get along with the people here. The people are more important than the job. (M. Ricalde 1989)

CHAPTER ELEVEN: BCC-CO Ideas and Practices in Botilao

Introduction

In the previous chapter I discussed how BCC-CO structures, networks and funds were introduced to Botilao and the role they played there. In this chapter I focus on the effects of new ideas and practices that were introduced to the village through the interaction of villagers with full-time BCC-CO staff who lived there, through BCC-CO seminars, and through the practice of Bible-sharing sessions. The ideas introduced by the program present a new way of analyzing everyday events and clear prescriptions for social and political action. As Catholic religious symbols, narratives, and practices form the medium through which these new ideas are presented and legitimized, Catholicism is not only actively being re-introduced to the village but it is being introduced in a form that is new and that reflects the social thesis of the BCC-CO program. This chapter focusses, then, on how new political and religious perspectives were introduced to Botilao and the effects of these new

ideas on village religiosity and everyday political thought.

As we have seen above, discussions about peasant religiosity in BCC-CO literature and seminars predominately reflects the theoretical distinction between "great" and "little" traditions (Redfield 1956) that has characterized much Western academic literature about world religions. In this literature "little" traditions are most frequently devalued with respect to great traditions. Often, this lesser valuation derives from the perceived lack of orthodoxy of the "little" tradition as well as from its perceived primitive and traditional nature. In the BCC-CO program the devaluation of the "little" tradition of Catholicism of the villages combines the notions that this tradition is somehow backward and "not modern" with the belief that it is, furthermore, a tool of pacification of the poor and certainly not likely to promote progressive social action.

While the local clergy in Marinduque are attempting to regain control over traditional Catholic practices and symbols in the towns in order to reinterpret these in ways that reflect a critical social analysis and an orientation towards the poor, in the villages, the BCC-CO lay leaders attempt to replace "folk" traditions and perspectives with practices and

religious interpretations that reflect the liberational social thesis of the BCC-CO movement and will contribute to motivating the poor to take direct social action. These new religious perspectives are considered both more "correct" from the point of view of Catholic orthodoxy (following Vatican II), as well as more "modern" and able to address social injustice. Traditional village notions of what it means to be a "good Catholic" and to "sacrifice" for the faith find new meaning in the context of BCC-CO seminars.

In this chapter I first discuss various aspects and characteristics of traditional village spirituality both Catholic and non-Catholic. The importance of local spiritual specialists and healers in the community is highlighted. I then briefly review the recent history of the involvement of Catholic religious authorities in the village including the diocesan BCC-CO lay staff. The fourth section provides information about the current BCC-CO participants in Botilao and the activities they are involved in. The final two sections of this chapter focus on the BCC-CO participants in Botilao. I explore the effects of BCC-CO seminars and Bible-sharing activities on their understanding of Catholicism and of social responsibility. The first of these latter two sections explores villagers' reactions to the process of BCC organizing and how they

conceptualize its usefulness and purpose. I also attempt to gauge the degree to which typical BCC-CO perspectives have been adopted by village participants. The final section takes an in-depth look at the ongoing practice of Bible-sharing as this activity reflects some of the transformations the program may be responsible for in local participants, as well as ways in which local participants are indigenizing the program.

A number of central questions that this chapter addresses are: to what degree have BCC-CO participants in Botilao incorporated the new exegesis in their religious perspectives and practices?; how is the connection between the new religious exegesis and the social thesis of the BCC-CO program understood and articulated?; how is the program reproduced, transformed, or resisted at the village level?; and, how important was the BCC-CO religious exegesis and the social thesis for the action taken by villagers from Botilao against Marcopper?

Catholicism, Spirituality and Beliefs in Botilao

Important characteristics of spiritual life in the village before BCC-CO involvement, elements which still largely characterize spirituality in Botilao,

are: 1) an emphasis on local community and spiritual self-sufficiency; 2) a high level of individuality and creativity in the expression of Catholic religious practices; and, 3) an experience of God, the saints, and Mary that is largely characterized by trust, comfort, intimacy, and at times intense adoration and love.

Botilao is not unlike many villages in Marinduque, and indeed is similar to many lowland Christianized Philippine village communities that have long found themselves at the margins of mainstream Catholic public life, which plays itself out in the towns. Until very recently, a mass was a rare event in Botilao although a priest may have briefly visited the village once a year on its fiesta for San Isidro, which is celebrated on May 17. As a norm, villagers have three important reasons to make trips into town to benefit from the ritual services of the clergy there: for baptisms, for weddings, and for the funerals. In addition to these extremely important life events, some villagers, those who are more mobile and who regularly travel to town to go to the market or to conduct business with middle-men there, will pass through the large cathedral when it is quiet stopping to say a prayer at the image of a favoured saint. A smaller number of villagers, those who are not too ashamed of

their poverty, will combine marketing on Sunday with going to mass.

As in other remote villages, and many in Marinduque are considerably more isolated than Botilao, there are still a large number of villagers who only visit the town on very rare occasions in their life. While villagers in Botilao have long been marginalized in terms of the mainstream Catholic ritual and sacred life of the town, they have experienced a rich and elaborate spiritual life in the village that includes, and sometimes combines, elements of Catholicism and traditional beliefs concerning the spirit world and healing. There are a number of religious specialists in the village who each have their separate areas of expertise. More generally, "the olds," as a group, are recognized as the bearers of traditional knowledge and of spiritual knowledge in particular. With the exception of the funeral, a villager could live out his or her life without official contact with the Church and without fearing significant social or spiritual repercussions. But a position of status in the village requires, and is enhanced by, as many official Church ceremonies and accompanying feasting as possible.

A consequence of the traditional lack of official Church involvement in the village, is that villagers have developed highly creative, personalized

versions of rituals that take place in the town. Sometimes, they perform rituals that are no longer being performed in the town. The lack of control and supervision over these rituals of the village has allowed them to be reinterpreted over time and adapted to changing circumstances. These are truly rituals "from below," similar to those that have, in the past, shown great potential for bearing revolutionary messages (Ileto 1979). (1)

One example of this individualized and spontaneous development of ritual is to be found in the creation of a Three Kings celebration in the village of Dating Bayan. Edgardo Rodas explains that the 27 year old ritual was started by his father, who lived in barangay Punong. Every year, on the 6th of January, the date of Three Kings, three members of the Three Kings organization depart from the house of that years hermano/a. They are riding a carabao (water buffalo) and two horses. On the carabao, which is first in line, sits that years hermano/a; on the first horse to follow is the hermano/a from the previous year and on the third horse is the hermano/a for the following year. (2)

The three riders are dressed elaborately to resemble how they imagine the three kings from the Bible might have looked. They slowly make their way

through the three participating villages, Punong, San Isidro, and Dating Bayan, singing Christmas carols all the while. People line the route they travel to watch the three kings pass. Eventually, they end up outside the house of the incoming hermano/a where they are joyously greeted with shouts of mabuhay (long life) and viva (life) by the gathered crowd. Candies and coins are thrown out off the house of the incoming hermano/a and are eagerly scrambled for by children.

The three kings then take three seats outside the house, their crowns are taken away, and three people are randomly chosen from the audience. These three start to dance before the three kings all the while singing Christmas carols and periodically shouting mabuhay. The dancers motions depict the long journey the kings made to find the Christ child. Eventually, the dancers take the crowns and dance while holding these. Finally, they approach the three kings and "crown" them under much shouting and clapping from the audience. After this ceremony there is feasting hosted by the household of the new hermano/a for that year but paid for by the proceeds from caroling by all fifteen members of the organization and their yearly contributions of five pesos. (3)

Ka Edgardo explained that membership to the organization is open to anyone. Membership is,

furthermore, inherited as it is in the unionans. Members have numbers and automatically become hermano/a when their number comes up. Membership is passed on to the first born, whether male or female, in a family and therefore the hermano/a may be male or female and the three kings may also be male or female. Ka Edgardo emphasizes how the ritual keeps changing and new things are added, such as when he moved to Dating Bayan and added that village as a participant to the ritual. Because Ka Edgardo became a lay leader in the BCC movement under Fr. Mantala he learned how to conduct "dry masses." (4) Ka Edgardo has now added a dry mass to the Three Kings celebration.

On a daily basis, year round, Mary is often the most immediate object of devotion. Devotion to her is characteristically expressed in words reminiscent of the trusting relationship of a child to its loving mother. Jesus especially becomes central at Christmas, as a dear baby, and in the pasyon enactment, which "the olds" have traditionally performed in Botilao, where His great sacrifice and suffering for mankind is central. The saints are not understood in their orthodox sense by most villagers; they are often seen as angels or as variations of Jesus, just as Mary has so many "versions." But a number of saints play an important and specialized role in agricultural rituals,

in healing practices, and as patrons of villages. (5)
The patron saint of Botilao is San Isidro.

There is only one hermana/o position in the village and this is as "hermana/o of the barrio fiesta." The position is currently held jointly by one man and one woman. For the village fiesta of 1989, Ester Magturo and her husband were the hermana and hermano. Ester explains that it is best that way because otherwise the woman has to do all the work (E. Magturo 1989). For Ester, it was a panata to become hermana. She had been in the yearly lottery of those who wanted the position a number of times and was finally given it because she kept losing. Ester noted that "many like to do it here."

Ester explained that her panata was linked to a request she had made of God that her husband be given work. She had been praying for this at the Bible-sharing sessions of the BCC that she attends as well as at novenas. But, Ester notes, she has now "proven" that

there should always be service first to God before you ask for something. If you serve first it will be very easy for God to give something. (E. Magturo 1989)

Ester's husband had recently been given long term, but not permanent, work on the causeway.

As hermana, Ester lit a small kerosene lamp at the image of San Isidro in the village chapel every

evening at six o'clock and said some prayers. She also tried to contribute some improvement to the chapel structure in the course of her term as hermana. The fiesta was Ester's greatest concern, she explained, because she was responsible for the transportation of the priest, the costs of the mass and of the "foods to feed the priest and his companions." Ester broke down the costs in this way: the jeepney, 150 pesos; the mass, 200 pesos; and the food, between 650 and 1,000 pesos (E. Magturo 1989). She also explained that she gave a pig. The pastoral council helped with the costs from money they make Christmas caroling. After the mass there was a procession through the village with the statue of San Isidro.

For Ester, one advantage of being hermana was having the statue in her own home, which she says is "lucky." But one of the sisters from Santa Cruz asked her to return it to the chapel as the chapel now did not have a "symbol." Ester returned the statue but said she really "missed it" (E. Magturo 1989). Although Ester feels the statue is a positive force she is not sure if it is miraculous because it is a relatively new plaster one that has come to replace the antique wooden one that was stolen. (6) The old statue was miraculous according to Ester.

As may be expected, the relationships of many

villagers to Catholic holy personages is far from orthodox. While accompanying Fr. Mantala on a visit to a village for a pre-Christmas mass, I was intrigued by the preparations that had been made in the small bamboo village chapel. The chapel had been abundantly decorated with flowers and fruits and on the small wooden table that served as alter, and was covered with a bright white cloth, there were a great many tiny statues, icons, rosaries, and novena booklets. A wooden sign above the alter read in large letters "Mother Mary Bless Us." The alter was dominated by images of Mary, many of which were large duplicate plaques of the popular Mother of Perpetual Help image. I noticed something sticking out from behind one such image. Upon further inspection it turned out to be a wooden crucifix that was entirely hidden but for the top of the cross. This crucifix was in fact holding up one plaque with the image of Mary that leaned against it. This was the only crucifix and one of the few images of Christ outside of a few small Santo Nino statues. I eventually learned that these images had been brought from people's homes to be placed on this alter as it is believed that they will become blessed, and so more powerful, by "partaking" in the mass. (7)

As mentioned above, villagers' relationships with Catholic personages are comfortable and non-

conflictual; they are ones of trust and support. While it has been pointed out that many Filipinos approach Catholic images as patrons they may appeal to for certain favours, often in return for sacrifices or a promise, there is another important aspect of the relationship of Filipinos, both peasants and members of the elite, to Catholic sacred personages that receives less attention but is of equal importance. The relationships of Filipinos to Mary and Jesus reflect, and are an extension of, their ideal intimate relationships with family members.

Mary is approached as a loving Filipino mother who would never reject her child, and Jesus, as Mary's child, is sometimes addressed as "brother." The Holy Family is a very intimate concept to most Filipinos and is approached in a way that is an extension of everyday family, and ultimately, community relations. Mary is not only prayed to in order to ask for favours but also just to talk to as a source of comfort. I was often told by people that they regularly "talk" to Mary throughout the day telling her their problems or thanking her for good fortune.

The consequence of this intimate and personal relationship is that being Catholic, especially for many villagers, is much less complicated and rule-bound than it is presented in either basic pre-Vatican II

catechism or in post-Vatican II social teachings. Both basic catechism, with its emphasis on duties and responsibilities of Catholics and of spiritual consequences related to non-compliance, and the complex relationships between religion and society inherent in Vatican II teachings present challenges to established religious lifestyles and beliefs of villagers.

As opposed to relationships with Catholic sacred personages, villagers' relationships with other kinds of spirits and a wide range of non and semi-human beings that populate their world are full of danger, ambivalence, and intrigue. (8) It is these spirits that can cause grave physical illness or can cause people to become mentally unstable. Because one can never be sure of the form a spirit being may take, relations with the natural world are also circumscribed by rules of behaviour. For example, when in a boat one must never point to anything unusual in the sea because the unusual object may not be what it seems and, if it is a spirit, it may cause a large wave to capsize the boat. (9) There are also particular natural phenomena that are known to be prone to spirit habitation such as clusters of very large rocks, large old trees, especially the balete or talisay tree, and brooks, streams, or wells.

The world of spirit beings, especially

engkanto, kapre, and duwende, is an elaborate one. There are many stories about the particular characteristics and habits of these non-human beings and about the ways they become manifest in humans' lives. There is also another category of beings that are part human and part super human or supernatural. These may be aswang, which are often translated into english as "witches" and do in some Tagalog versions share characteristics with some versions of Western witches but also have other unique characteristics, such as a tendency to use their long tongs to reach inside a woman and kill her foetus. Mangkukulam are beings who are able to make others ill or die, usually by a curse, or by torturing a figure made to represent the victim. And tianak, a dead unbaptized baby that will cry for attention and then kill whomever tries to care for it and eat their liver is another such wondrous being. (10) There is also a belief that some people who look very poor and are dirty may have special powers, so that it is very dangerous to deride them or treat them badly.

Ill health may be caused by a great number of things that people do, which are not directly related to spirits but to their own, or someone else's, inadvertent actions. For example, looking at someone who is sweaty from work can cause a faintness and

nausea that is diagnosed as balis. (11) Stepping over a sleeping person can cause them to have problems with their legs when they awaken. There are also a very large number of things that people can do to influence and improve their lot in life. For example, by stealing the cotton from the mouth of a corpse and putting it in a fish net the catch will be improved. There are also many important signs and indications that people receive from the natural world, and through dreams that foretell the future. For example, if someone dreams of losing a tooth they will lose a close relative. Finally, in the realm of healing there are a great number of cures known by the olds, and others for which one must consult an albularyo or faith healer.

All of the above beliefs are not the sole property of the poor or of remote villagers. Many of these beliefs are shared, or "known," by members of the elite and even by Filipino priests. Sometimes, these beliefs are reinterpreted to better fit Catholic beliefs. For example, bad spirits become reinterpreted as expressions of the devil. Even the diocesan BCC-CO core staff, although they express despair at "the peoples' superstitions" because they fear that these beliefs lead to passivity and a reliance on "magic" in the face of adversity rather than social action, will elaborate on many of the above beliefs and, when asked,

agree that some are "true."

Spiritual Specialists and Healers in Botilao

The significance in Botilao of this whole realm of supernatural local knowledge, both Catholic-based and animist, is twofold. First of all, these beliefs give rise to local specialists who play a very important role in the community and, secondly, they contain a reflection of shared values, rules by which to live, a perspective on everyday life that is called upon, and reflected on, in human relations. Characteristics of "non-human beings" are weighed and compared to human behaviour and their peculiar relations with human beings, sometimes falling in love with them as in the case of engkanto or duwende, are also used as analogies of human foibles. Stories are told of relations between neighbors or spouses that were not "good" and that led to one party seeking the aid of a mangkukulam to hurt the other party. These shared beliefs, reflecting shared evaluations and understandings of everyday social life, form an important body of common knowledge of the village community.

Spiritual specialists in Botilao include Ka Monchito, who knows all about the spirit world and can

cure using this knowledge combined with his knowledge of powerful rituals containing Catholic elements. Other spiritual specialists are those who know how to perform local Catholic rituals such as the pasyon, the prayers for the dead, prayers for a saint on its feast day, and the buhos ritual that serves as a baptism until an infant can be baptised by a priest.

In addition to Ka Monchito, who is especially called in to heal when nothing else works, there are many who know various healing rites including the village hilot, or midwife, and "the olds" who have powerful remedies that have, according to the people, been passed on for generations. Many of these healing remedies, or preventative prescriptions, address the spirit world in some way. Sickness is rarely seen as a purely physical event.

Ka Monchito

Ka Monchito's grandfather was a well-known albularyo. He gave Ka Monchito (65 years old) the secret Latin words that are his best weapon against illness. The various practices Ka Monchito uses to heal are typical of albularyos in Santa Cruz. Part of his knowledge concerns discerning the cause of illness, and the other part is curing the disease. Ka Monchito notes

that it is especially the sicknesses that a trained doctor cannot cure that he is successful at treating. He explains that these sicknesses will only get worse under the treatment of a town doctor.

Ka Monchito can discern causes of ill health by, for example, blowing on an egg and then touching the egg to the forehead, chest, shoulders, elbows, hands, knees and ankles of the ill person. On the forehead, he makes the sign of the cross with the egg. He then breaks the egg into a glass of water and studies the patterns the white of the egg makes. From these he can discern the nature of the illness, as well as the possible place the illness was picked up. A similar technique to discover sources of illness involves using white candles that are also blown on, touched to the person, broken into three even bits, melted down individually, and then thrown in water while still hot. As Ka Monchito touches the objects to his clients he whispers words which are secret. Words always have great power in healing rituals, especially Latin words. Another method involves folding together a number of ingredients including a soft white stone, known as pilanombre or tawas, and Holy Water in a paper and burning them. The shapes of the pilanombre when it hardens gives the albularyo the information he seeks. In another, similar, cure pilanombre is first whispered

to by the healer who then makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the patient with the white stone and touches it to their chest, elbow, backs of hands, stomach, knees, and ankles. The pilanombre is then melted and cooled to reveal the shapes of the spirits responsible for the sickness. Once this information has been established, the same pilanombre is pulverized in calamansi (lemon) juice and again applied to the patient as before. This procedure will then cure the illness. Ka Monchito also says he can look at the lines on a person's hand and check to see where their pulse is strongest on their arm. These acts give him information about the nature of the illness.

To quickly discern if the illness is caused by kulam, the practices of a mangkukulam, or spirits, Ka Monchito blows on the person's head. He explains that

the air will pass through the hands. If it is kulam the air will pass through the fourth finger of either hand; if spirits through the other fingers. (M. Sotta 1989)

To discover which mangkukulam has placed a curse on a person Ka Monchito blows on a thin cigarette paper, touches it to the client in the same way described above, and then sticks it to the forehead of the patient. After a while, he removes the paper and studies its folds to get a picture of the person doing the evil.

A common form of cure for many health problems brought on through supernatural causes is to write specific Latin words on a thin cigarette paper and to stick this, with glue, to a person's stomach, forehead, or chest. The paper may not be removed until it falls off naturally. Ka Monchito also makes use of Bible passages to cure and has memorized particular passages for particular types of symptoms. He may write these passages on the paper or whisper them as he touches the patient. Ka Monchito notes that, in this case, "it is God curing the person."

Like many other healers, Ka Monchito has a special secret booklet, which he was given by an old man, with cures and healing phrases. He insists that this booklet must remain secret so that the power of the words within it will not be dispersed, but he adds, "it's also so there will be no competition." Ka Monchito insists that the booklet's magic can only be used for good and that there are also phrases in it that will protect one from violence, such as bullets, or from losing a court case.

For "natural" illnesses, Ka Monchito is also a well-known curer by massage, and by prescribing mixtures of herbs. Like most traditional albularyos Ka Monchito has an extensive knowledge of medicinal plants and herbs but he is also very much interested in

pharmaceuticals, especially antibiotics. Some albularyos have such a trusted reputation that their signature is enough to cause pharmacies to release some modern drugs to patients.

Ka Monchito explains that his fee is very flexible. He tells people it is "consideration only" meaning whatever they think is appropriate. Sometimes, he only receives a package of cigarettes or five pesos, sometimes more. His maximum, for a delivery, is 100 pesos. He adds that many people in the barrio consult him because they cannot afford the doctor in town.

While one of the albularyos I interviewed in Santa Cruz is of the opinion that the religion of the person to be cured is irrelevant, but that the healer has to be Catholic, Ka Monchito insists that both the healer and the one to be cured must be Catholic. He explained that despite his anger over his treatment by those in the pastoral council and the BCC core group he would never become "Born Again" because then he would no longer be able to heal. The significance of being Catholic for Ka Monchito is far removed from that put forth by the BCC perspective.

Eduardo Rodrigo

Eduardo (63 years old), who is the father of Pilar Roque, is a religious specialist who is sought by all those in the village who want to give their child a "baptism" either until they have the child baptised by a priest or in place of this event. The buhos, or "pour," ritual is considered to "make the child Christian so if it dies it can go to the church to be blessed and buried in the Roman Catholic cemetery" (E. Rodrigo 1989).

Church baptisms, like weddings and funerals, are events the people traditionally want to surround with festivities and much feasting. Only in the case of a funeral can the Church sacrament not be delayed and so families often take on significant debts or sell land to be able to pay for the service and the foods to be served the mourners. If a couple cannot afford feasting and baptism costs at the time the child is born, they will often put the baptism off, but have a buhos instead. (12) It is deemed especially important to have a buhos if one wants to travel with the child or to take the child on a boat.

Eduardo explains that the buhos also, like the putong, is sometimes done by people in order to cure a sickly child. This may be done even if the child has

already been baptised. He also added that the albularyo will not cure a child that has not had a buhos; he will send the parents away to give the child a buhos first. Mrs. Mantaring told me that her first son had a buhos ritual performed for him more than once because he was so sickly. According to Eduardo many parents in the village request his services but that now that the priest is coming to the village also more there are more baptisms by the priest.

Eduardo described the ceremony that he performs in this way. There is only one Godparent who is asked to hold a candle and pray the apostles creed. If the candidate does not know the text they, "should not try it because the baby will have trouble speaking" (E. Rodrigo 1989). The Godparent then holds the lit candle and the baby while Eduardo pours the water over the child's head. Eduardo explained that the text he says at this time is Latin and he quickly murmured the words. He is saying the child's name and adding the Latin for "I baptise you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen." (E. Rodrigo 1989). (13) Eduardo says that after the ritual he is usually given a drink of tuba as thanks unlike the priest who is paid for the baptism.

Lourdes Jardiniano

Lourdes (72 years old) is one of four hilots, or midwives, in Botilao. She has been working as a midwife since she was 22. Her mother was also a hilot and taught her the necessary skills. Lourdes's knowledge extends far beyond the physical aspects of the pregnancy itself. She knows all about the actions that should, and should not, be taken by young women experiencing their first menstruation, about massages and herbs that will induce abortions, or help further a pregnancy, and about what a pregnant woman must do, not to be bothered by engkanto, which she is particularly vulnerable to at that time. (14) Lourdes also knows all the things a pregnant woman should, and should not, do to ensure an easy pregnancy. For example, she should not stand in doorways or the baby "will not easily come out." There are a great many beliefs with regard to the behaviour of the expectant mother and the effects on the baby that Lourdes knows and advises mothers-to-be about. Lourdes explains that midwives may ask for up to 250 pesos for their services, but that her fee is usually 100 pesos.

The aswang are particularly dangerous during childbirth and when one has a newborn child as they like to eat babies. Lourdes has a number of defenses

against aswang. The best, she says, is a little piece of cloth from the clothing of the "saint" in the church, the cotton with the Holy oil used in baptism by a priest, and thorns from the crown of Jesus together with a key without a hole, and the tail of the pagi. She admits that these things are difficult to get if you do not have friends in the church so she lends her own satchel with these items to prospective mothers in the village.

~~There~~ There are also numerous rituals surrounding the birth itself and the period immediately thereafter that must be followed to ensure the good health of mother and child. Among these, a chicken should be slaughtered at the time of birth which the mother will eat to regain her strength. For the first birth a small piece of the placenta will be cooked with the chicken and eaten by the mother so she will recover fully from the birth. The first two months after the birth contain many specific actions that the new mother and those caring for her must follow.

The child might be given a pillow of magazines to encourage intellectual development and its placenta will be washed in the river so that the child will be clean. The placenta is sometimes buried at the flagpole of the village school with a pencil to further encourage educational development. Other possible ways

of disposing of the placenta also hold significance. (15) The placenta must not be buried under the house or the child will always be sickly. All newly born children receive a small pouch filled with various objects and medicinal plants to ward off spirits and to prevent illness. The hilot usually makes these pouches, but they can also be bought in the market in Santa Cruz. There is also a bracelet for young children made of aromatic seeds that serves the same purpose.

Lourdes also knows many of the cures that are required for young children. For example, she puts charcoal with the herbs romero and camangan, pilanombre, salt, and the ends of the roof materials of the house in a coconut shell. She then lights these and holds the baby over the smoke to prevent it from being effected by evil spirits and to make it less of a crier.

The "Olds"

Elderly people in general are consulted about all aspects of traditional knowledge. There are extensive beliefs that still play a part in everyday life. These beliefs surround, for example, witches, death, illness, dreams, spirits, healing, and a great number of everyday activities, such as, food and

eating, agriculture, marriage, omens and animals, weather, travel, and building houses. (16)

"The olds" also know many coconut shell cures, in which specific things are collected and placed in a coconut shell and then burned. The person to be healed will then position themselves above the smoke. If there is a problem in the village that does not seem to have a "natural" cause, or in the case of an important event such as the building of a new house, the olds will often be consulted on proper ritual procedures. The olds constitute an important resource in the village.

The Batikan

There are a number of acknowledged batikan in the village. Batikan, in general, are specialists. The women referred to as batikan in Botilao are specialists in rituals and practices related to Catholicism. Acknowledged as batikan are Geraldine Pascual, who is 68, Lalaine Allen, who is 73, and Leonora Quindoza, who is 59. Although Eduardo Rodrigo conducts the buhos he is not considered batikan in the sense of the three women, because that is the only ritual he conducts. Some say "he is batikan in buhos."

The three batikan are from different parts of the village and mainly serve their own area. Geraldine

is from sitio Tanawan up on the mountain. The families who live there are far from the road and greatly rely on her services. Lalaine serves the sitio of Puti at one end of the village and Leonora serves the sitios at the other end. Both Ka Norma and Geraldine were urged to take on the responsibilities of a batikan at a relatively young age by an older female family member who was herself batikan. For Geraldine, who was then 19, it was her mother-in-law; for Ka Norma, who was 38, it was her aunt.

The batikan all specialize in praying the novena for the dead, the prayers for a death anniversary and on All Souls' Day, as well as the prayers for "the saints in this barrio" (N. Quindoza 1989). The saints the batikan especially address in Botilao are San Vicente, San Isidro (the patron saint), and, according to Ka Norma, "Santa Maria of the Assumption and the Biglang Awa." The batikan are also specialists in singing and performing the pasyon, the putong, and the special combined version of these rituals that exists in Botilao and its neighboring villages.

Novenas for the saints and Mary are read and sung from preferably old novena booklets as these are considered to be both more powerful and better suited to the traditional tunes the batikan have memorized

(Geraldine 1989). (17) Sometimes the batikan will pray the novena for a saint upon the request of a villager because they are ill, or for a family because they have a panata, or promise, to that saint. The prayers for San Isidro are also done for the fiesta and to encourage rain in the dry season. San Vincente is prayed to if children are sick, in order to heal them, or, if a child was sick and healed, the prayers are said for thanksgiving. According to Ka Norma the Biglang Awa is also "good for sickness." She notes that the prayers should be directed at whichever of these holy figures the sick person or parent called out to spontaneously when in need.

On August the 15th, Norma always prays the novena for the Assumption of Mary at the house of Irene Monte who "has that as panata" (N. Quindoza 1989). Irene and her husband Efren live next to the Mantaring family in sitio Pantalan and are also active in the BCC. The novena booklet Ka Norma uses is dated July 16, 1928. At the back of the booklet is written that Julia Hidalgo started the organization of the Assumption of Mary in 1914, that it had 2,000 members, and that she called it Katipunan. According to the novena booklet, a statue was made for the organization in 1928. Jaime Palatino, who also attended the prayers on the August 15th, 1989, explained that the statue was "baptized by

a priest from Mogpog during the Second World War and my mother was the Godmother of the statue" (J. Palatino 1989). The statue now belongs to Irene and Efren. Twenty-six villagers attended the prayers of which 19 were female. This preponderance of women at such prayer events is quite common.

To conduct the prayers for the dead is both a very central function of the batikan in the village and at the same time a dangerous one. In the town, these prayers are considered important in part to help the spirit move from purgatory to heaven, but not all villagers seem to be aware of this aspect of the prayers. A more common reason given for why these prayers are so important is so that the spirit will be at rest and not keep coming back to bother the living. This is also a common fear in the town. Even those villagers who knew about the soul's supposed route through purgatory to heaven were at least equally concerned with assuring that the spirit did not continue to linger around the living.

For this reason, the function of the batikan is very important but also difficult. Ka Norma admits that when she first took the task upon herself, "I was afraid of the soul (...) When I went home I would go between two people, but now no more." Her main fear was to have the spirit become angry with her. She

remembered one time when,

I did not do the novena for someone because I was tired and it was late. At midnight there was knocking at the door, it was the sign. So the next morning I went to the dead's house very fast. I was very much afraid. It is dangerous to pray for the dead because if you fail they will come to you. The dead will surely trouble you because it will be unhappy. I have often proved this through signs. Now I tell the dead person not to trouble me with signs or I will not pray for them. (N. Quindoza 1989)

Geraldine notes that she is also sometimes asked to come say prayers for someone who has died if they start bothering their family. She says that this is a sign that they want more prayers said for them.

A very important part of the batikans' yearly commitment is the singing and performance of the pasyon during Holy Week. There is usually a group of "olds" who are considered batikan in pasyon. The olds in Botilao say that the pasyon has been performed and sung there almost every year for as long as they can remember. They themselves started to sing and memorize the pasyon as teenagers. Important characters in the ritual are Jesus, Mary, Mary Magdalene, Veronica, Pilot, Judas, Noah, Adam and Eve, St. Helen, and Martha. Usually a person plays the same character every year and becomes known as skilled in performing that role.

For the olds, singing and performing the pasyon is a panata. If no one sponsors the enactment, or

kalbaryo, then they will still sing the entire pasyon text at home, either alone or in small groups. Roby Pitero, one of the olds who is batikan in pasyon describes the kubol, or shelter, where the kalbaryo will be performed:

You make it like a church. You make a shelter and cover it with a white cloth. Then you put images inside. The singers sing in the kubol and the actors act all the time outside and sing also. (R. Pitero 1989)

Geraldine describes the "alter" inside the kubol as containing whatever small statues the people in the village own "mostly of Mary, St. Vincente, St. Isidore" (G. Pascual 1989). The singers inside, usually two at a time, relieve each other as the entire ritual takes about 24 hours and is continuous. The outside of the kubol, according to Geraldine, is heavily decorated with flowers and fruits. The spiky "flowers of the coconut" are used to hang up traditional pasyon foods such as rice cake, shrimp, bread, crabs, and fried bananas. At the end of the ritual these foods are distributed through a test of skill in which the pasyon singers address each food item with lines from the pasyon in which the name of the food is somehow included. (18) The same group of batikan and olds who perform the pasyon are also the ones who know and perform the special version of the putong that uses the pasyon text as its base. (19)

The above examples of elaborate and evolving rituals, and of spiritual life in the context of the village community, illustrate the creativity, flexibility, and independence of expression that is common in this community, as well as the high degree of self-sufficiency with regard to spiritual matters. A wide variety of local specialists serve members of the community at important stages of their life both in practical and spiritual ways. Often these two aspects of care are closely interrelated. There is almost no aspect of everyday life that does not have a corresponding set of "beliefs," and sometimes special behaviour, surrounding it which are confirmed to be "true" by the olds who have "proven it many times." An important aspect of village life that the above examples illustrate is that, contrary to the critical opinions of many new local BCC leaders in the survey conducted around Marinduque, villagers do work together, serve each other, and sustain important spiritual and everyday aspects of community life. Accusations that the people are individualistic and kanya kanya, have to be re-evaluated in the light of these examples.

Catechists and Diocesan BCC-CO Leaders in Botilao

In the seventies and early eighties catechists, religious sisters, started to reach out to the villages of Santa Cruz where they taught mainly basic, pre-Vatican II, catechism. But some did try to bring the ideas of Vatican II into practice, especially by seeking to train local lay leaders and by connecting religion and social issues. In 1970, Sr. Leonor Sevilla started to come to Botilao to teach catechism and later Sr. Mila Velasquez also spent considerable time in the village teaching catechism. She also started to address the growing problem of the tailings. Both sisters were eventually transferred by their orders to other parts of the Philippines. The next persistent attention given to the village was by Santa and Pedro. Each of these religious educators introduced a concern for greater orthodoxy in Catholic practices, observances, and beliefs in the village. With the growing impact of Vatican II, concern for orthodoxy was complimented by a concern that village Catholicism also reflect a social agenda. From responses to a survey I conducted among village level BCC leaders around Marinduque (see chapter nine) it appears that there has been resistance not only to the social implications of BCC-CO teachings, but also to the impact on traditional

religiosity of this re-christianization.

Ka Edgardo, from Dating Bayan notes:

The olds don't like it [the RCC] because it asks them to change the old style. BCC tries to encourage the people to change their religious practices. They [the people] believe that if you believe in God, even if you don't go to church, you will be saved. BCC encourages people to attend the mass in the town so that they will know the words of God by which to live. BCC is also to create a community that will help each other and stand together. (E. Rodas 1989)

The sense that villagers are not overly worried about "salvation" or concerned with going to mass is echoed by respondents to the diocesan survey of BCC leaders I conducted. Ka Edgardo adds that the people are "too saint oriented." This too is reflected in the answers of survey respondents, as is the sense that community needs to be created through the BCC process.

The religiosity of most Botilao villagers is not primarily characterized by pre or post-vatican II attitudes. The relationship that the villagers of Botilao have to Catholic personages such as Mary, Jesus and the saints is not one that is rooted in fear of eventual retribution for sins committed. In other words, they do not primarily pray to the saints for ultimate salvation. Nor is this relationship primarily mediated and constituted by the institutional Church through masses, penance, or other practices that convey interpretations of "how to live" by using the saints'

lives as examples. This is a common way post-Vatican II attitudes are conveyed in the town. Sacraments that villagers do take part in, such as weddings and funerals, are often experienced and interpreted by them in a way that is very different from the orthodox intention of the sacrament by the Church. Whereas traditional catechists introduced a notion of sin and its consequences after death that focussed on personal behaviour and attitudes, which will not have been very well adapted to village religiosity, the notion of "structural sin" and of being "co-creators" with Christ in daily life, as introduced by the BCC-CO lay leaders, is equally alien in the context of village spirituality. What is much easier for villagers to understand and to adopt is the BCC-CO emphasis on community. But, as we will see, BCCs largely build on communities that do already exist.

BCC Participants in Botilao

Santa and Pedro's BCC activities in Botilao over about six years have led to the organization of a number of structures and organized groups involving a total of 27 members or participants. These twenty-seven villagers include 12 pastoral council members, 5 trained catechists who work in the elementary school,

20 BCC-CO core group members, about 23 members of the Federation of Farmers and Fishermen, 16 people who took part in a first piggery project in 1984, and six who started a second piggery project in 1988, and seven villagers who have started a fish net project in 1988. There is almost complete overlap between BCC-CO core group members and members of the Federation of Farmers and Fishermen, which has slightly more members. Furthermore, 13 of the 20 BCC-CO core group members overlap with more than two of the other categories mentioned above. There are only three pastoral council members and one catechist who are not in any of the other categories.

With the notable exception of Lalaine Allen, the batikan from Puti who has not been active due to her age and economic circumstances, all of the BCC-CO core group members, as well as the one catechist and three pastoral council members not in the BCC-CO core group, come from the three sitios Fantalan, Tuog, and Kawayan, although the six sitios in fact contain roughly equal numbers of households. It is also notable that the most active members are closely related, often siblings, spouses and their neighbors. The Quindoza family are particularly prominent with five members in central and multiple positions.

All 20 BCC-CO core group members and the

members of the Federation of Farmers and Fishermen have had at least one of the introductory courses to the BCC-CO program, BOS or BCC-CO orientation, and have had the Project Proposal and Project Management seminars. About 17 members of the core group have also attended other seminars in the context of the BCC-CO program.

Ka Norma, who often leads the Bible-sharing sessions, supplied me with a list of people (27) whom she considers to be active in participating in Bible-sharing activities. This list again shows a high degree of overlap, about 19 names, with members from the above categories but in this list are also names of neighbors and relatives of BCC members who enjoy attending the Bible-sharing sessions when these are held in their neighborhood but have not yet been persuaded to officially join any BCC organizations. These people are the primary source of new recruits.

The central "core" of BCC members who regularly organize, host, attend, and lead the Bible-sharing sessions is quite small; it consists of about five women. These five attend and hold the Bible-sharing sessions anywhere in the three mainly active sitios are joined by "faithfuls" from that particular area, as well as whomever happens to wander by or become interested. Usually these Bible-sharing sessions consist of between five and ten participants, but they

can also become quite large if held in a central BCC location or if combined with an occasion such as a birthday. Although there is a regular schedule of sessions, once a week in Pantalan, twice a month in Kawayan, and once a month in Tuog, this schedule is frequently not adhered to. There is, however, usually a Bible-sharing session somewhere at least once a month.

While the membership of the core group is quite evenly represented by men (8) and women (12) only women conduct Bible-sharing sessions and the men that attend tend to be those who happen to be there. Getting together to share experiences and food in this manner, as well as the fact that this activity is often considered a religious prayer session, relegates the activity to the domain of women as far as many men are concerned.

The question that naturally rises is, "what about the rest of the village, those not involved in the program?" In the course of my fieldwork I visited all six sitios on numerous occasions and conducted both targeted interviews in each, as well as a set number of random interviews of heads of households in each sitio. There are not many villagers who do not remember Santa or Pedro at all. Most of those with only vague recollections were able to link the lay leaders to the Church as "missionaries" of some sort; others

remembered that they were against the tailings. Some villagers admitted that they had wondered if the gatherings Santa and Pedro called together were subversive.

As may be expected, there is a clear correlation between the distance individuals live from the logistical centre of the village (Pantalan where the road ends) and the degree of involvement in, or knowledge about, BCC activities. There is also a strong correlation between the degree of marginality, in terms of poverty and social status, and lack of interest in the program, even by those living near the road or in the three more active and accessible sitios. In marked contradiction to the BCC members, many of whom describe themselves as having been excited by the program and eager to participate, members of this marginal group largely keep to themselves, they tend to be suspicious of the program and skeptical, or uncomfortable, with a high level of visibility and social interaction, possibly because of their poverty. (20)

Another significant group that is not involved in the BCC-CO activities are those who oppose the organizational thrust against the pollution. While these naturally include many family members and friends of Marcopper employees, they also, increasingly, include those who do not want to be seen joining a

group known to be opposed to the mine as they fear the new barangay captain, who dislikes and feels threatened by the pastoral council, will pass them over for the job recommendations that he now has the power to make.

In response to questions I posed to the regular BCC-CO participants about why other villagers are uninterested in joining I received very similar answers to those that showed up in the survey. I conducted of local level BCC participants around Marinduque. I was told that people say they have no time, are too busy with their livelihood activities, that they are kanya kanya and possess other such negative Philippine values, and that they are only interested if they can get projects. What was perhaps different in the responses of BCC-CO participants in Botilao, compared to those from members in other parts of Marinduque, was a greater emphasis on the fact that people do not want to organize formally and openly against oppression. For example Norma, said that many say "the rich are too strong," and that the people "prefer to stay in the background, to stay silent" (N. Quindoza 1989) and Gemma Erondo noted that "some people don't want to get involved in fighting for a problem because they are afraid and have no power to voice out" (G. Erondo 1989).

The Effects of Seminars and BCC Practices on Core Group Members

Among the 17 BCC-CO core group members I interviewed there was a high degree of agreement on what they considered essential aspects of their experiences as BCC members. Topics members consistently brought up were: the fact that they were attracted to the seminars offered through the program; that there is "real unity" among the members of the group; that only the Church really cares for their problems; that they are grateful to be offered livelihood projects; and that they have been "awakened," have learned to fight for their rights, and not to fear the "higher ups."

The first batch of recruits to the BCC-CO core group were assembled in 1982 by Santa and Pedro. This group included 16 members of whom one has since died and one has moved out of the village. In 1984, two more members joined and in 1987, four more joined the BCC-CO core group. These latter four were recruited by the original members of the core group.

Especially in interviews with the members who joined in 1982 and 1984, I was often told about their desire to learn and be enlightened by the seminars. As noted above, Pilar remembers that she joined "right at the start" because "I wanted to improve myself, to add to knowledge, to meet other people outside the barrio

also. These are the main purposes" (P. Roque 1989). Pilar also became a catechist. Pilar's mother, who simultaneously joined the core group, says of the BCC organization:

It's to solve problems, to become united, to learn what you have not yet experienced because there is no other such organization - everyone just stayed at home for themselves. (V. Rodrigo 1989)

Irene explained that Santa and Pedro went house to house in the village. As Irene and her husband Efren live right next to the Mantaring family, where Santa and Pedro resided, Irene soon learned about the program. Although she had a particular interest in the projects, she was also happy to join the seminars:

Besides projects its to teach people how to live together, how to explain about God, how to communicate with each other. You really learn again even if your education is only small. (I. Monte 1989)

Irene later was convinced to become one of the catechists in the school as well.

Erlinda Erondo, who is a neighbor of Pilar, lives in a remote part of the village in Kawayan. She is grateful for the fact that Santa and Pedro visited and conducted seminars in out of the way places. Erlinda remembers that even though she had a newborn baby she was interested in the seminars being held at Pilar's house, "I wanted to join, to not just stay at

home with the children so I attended with the baby" (E. Erondo 1989). Although she was not a member in 1982, she joined in 1984. Erlinda's sister-in-law Gemma Erondo also became intrigued by the seminars being attended by other villagers:

Before I didn't know what it is but I noticed that the others were learning much and when I attended I was very happy because my shamefulness disappeared and I learned to speak before many people and not be afraid. You will learn how to communicate with others. It widened my knowledge. (G. Erondo 1989).

One of the goals of the BCC program is to create a united group that will be able to act in a consolidated manner. Not only BCC members, but also other, non-involved, villagers I interviewed commented on the unity of the group. Ka Norma explains that BCC "is the way to be close to each other so if we have a problem we can solve it together. We need companions to be happy" (N. Quindoza 1989). Lito joined the core group in 1987, but was already a member of the pastoral council. (21) Lito seems to agree with Ka Norma's description, he notes that he joined "because it's a good organization and has good people I can get along with. It's always happy when we are gathered" (L. Pitero 1989).

Although Lalaine is a member of the core group she is not very active anymore and she does not remember much about the seminars she attended in the

village. But, she remembers the visit of Bishop Lim very well, "Bishop Lim told that people should become united and help each other" (L. Allen 1989). Lalaine emphasized, however, that this ideal condition "is only true now in the core group." (22) Irene agrees with Lalaine; she notes that "its really good in the core group, they are really united unlike other people in Botilao" (I. Monte 1989). Erlinda is concerned about the fact that the core group is a separate entity in the village:

It is a gradual process - the membership grows slowly. Pollution is really uniting us in the group but it also excludes others who are for Marcopper or who have relations there or are casual. Others are afraid to join. There are those who say this group is subversive.... (E. Erondo 1989)

Another topic that came up in various interviews is that the Church is the only organization that is really willing to do something for the people. Lito notes that

they [the Church] are the ones helping all the way back to Sr. Sevilla. (...) The Church also helps with livelihood. They come here and ask the situation of the people and then give projects. The priests come here and inform the people so that they will know their situation and what will be the result of the tailings in the future. (...) The Church cares for the people. (L. Pitero 1989)

A number of people noted that, unlike politicians who only come to the village and make

promises when there is an election, the Church is a steady source of support. One member explains that:

The Church more than the politicians has helped us. For example, Sr. Aida even went scuba diving to prove it's [the tailings] bad and gave seminars. Here no politicians help us, they are against us like Morales and Lecaroz. They say only that the people should sacrifice for the pollution. (..... 1989)

Ester gives as an example the pollution issue, "Bishop Lim and Fr. Mantala helped to organize the people to complain, to make a resolution to send to Manila. It's a big help to us" (E. Magturo 1989).

Another member emphatically asserts that:

They [the Church] are the only ones organizing the people to act and fight, not the politicians. Government officials have their own motives in what they do. The Church is really for the people, especially the poor. (..... 1989)

Ka Norma simply says, "It is only the Church that gave us a voice and cared about us" (N. Quindoza 1989).

Aside from the fact that the clergy and BCC-CO diocesan staff have shown consistent concern by coming to the village and giving their time, there is no doubt that the people are very much interested in, and appreciative of, the fact that they can get loans for projects. Even most of those whose projects had failed still seem pleased to have been given the opportunity to access the funds.

Rose remembers that:

When my house was downed by the typhoon the Church gave me a new house and a fish net to catch more fish and two piggery projects. (R. Quindoza 1989)

Rose's two piggery projects were failures, but she says she will try again once she has paid these back. The fish net, which actually went to her husband, was useful since her husband Marceo has a motorized boat. Although projects do fail, and many are less successful than planned, Norma and Erlinda insist that the piggery projects have the potential to be successful and profitable.

The four members who joined in 1987, were all men and all joined to get a fish net but three of them have wives who are active members. Marceo Quindoza, the husband of Rose, Salvador Ricalde, Lito Pitero, and Efren Monte, the husband of Irene, all admit to having little time for, and some little interest in, the seminars. Lito said he sends his wife or his sons to the seminars because he has no time and Efren admitted to having his wife do all the paperwork for the project because he was "not interested in that" (E. Monte 1989). Efren, while now a member of the core group says, "I don't know the point of the BCC outside of the projects. I know only the projects" (E. Monte 1989). Efren also says he has not attended any seminars and relies "only on God's graces." But both Efren and

Salvador had no success with their nets as they do not have motorized boats and neither plans to take another project because of the debt they already have.

Most villagers involved in BCC activities and seminars feel they have benefitted somehow, if only by learning how to care for pigs or to "be a better neighbor." A number noted that their involvement has led to a new way of looking at their situation, specifically with regard to the tailings issue, and for a smaller group again, the BCC experience has transformed their everyday lives, their evaluations of their situation and desires for the future. This last group may be said to be experiencing a personal transformation a "conversion" to the perspectives of the BCC-CO program. The latter is most patently evident for Jaime Palatino and Ka Jandro, who committed themselves to public action by being involved in the court case. But Ka Norma and Erlinda Erondo also belong to this latter group.

Other BCC members, while not as "developed" as the above four, do reflect aspects of the perspectives of the BCC-CO program. Various positions are presented below. Salvador describes his view of the program as:

It helps you stand on your own feet and not be ashamed to others and there is fairness and equality. These things are according to God. For God there is no rich and poor, he created us all equally. (S. Ricalde 1989)

Salvador was one of the few respondents to actually link equality and social justice to "God's plan for humanity" as this is done in the seminars. Rose notes that the Church helps to "open the eyes of the barangay people about the pollution, to see the truth" (R. Quindoza 1989). When asked about the role of faith in this, Rose adds "faith is included because you cannot act without faith in God." Ester concurs with Rose and Salvador that the BCC program is "awakening the people to learn how to be strong and to fight against oppression and for their rights" (E. Magturo 1989). Ester sees the task of the core group as:

To widen the knowledge of the people not only for God but also for human rights. It cannot only be praying and praying and have no action. The seminars should be applied. (E. Magturo 1989)

According to Ester she has learned to, "lose shame, I can voice out now."

Celeste Labay, who is an member of the pastoral council but not of the core group, also notes the change that has occurred in the village for those involved in the program. She notes that, before

no one could voice their opinions, they were afraid or they ignored their responsibility to the problem. Now they can and do voice out because of organizations like the pastoral council, the core group, and the seminars. Erlinda and Norma are so active now but before nothing. And Fr. Mantala's visit made a big difference and Ka Santa. The attitude of the people changed. (C. Labay 1989)

Celeste also agrees that "it should be not only prayer but action to help us." She sees as her task on the pastoral council to:

Make the people aware of the problems here and to make them religious and give them hope that God is supporting them - to relate God to daily life. (C. Labay 1989)

When asked why she joined the pastoral council Celeste answers in a way not untypical of other BCC participants, "to me its like this, Fr. Mantala is asking for it. It was a plan. I never really thought about it, its ok to me" (C. Labay 1989). Celeste's answer, and similar ones of others, gives an indication of the implicit trust the Church has among the people; a powerful tool in the organizing process.

Jaime Palatino's and Ka Jandro's commitment to action against pollution was obvious in the court case and in their renewed enthusiasm during the preparations for the 1989 rally against the mine, at which they were to speak. These two fishermen committed themselves to action and in the process underwent a powerful change in their daily lives and their perceptions of themselves through social action. The degree to which they have committed themselves to the program rests less on inspiration from the seminars or Bible-sharing sessions than on direct personal action. In fact, they

have not been as active in attending seminars as some other members and they are less likely to take part in Bible-sharing sessions around the village unless held in their neighborhood. Two of the most unfailingly active BCC-CO members, on a daily basis, are Ka Norma Quindoza and Erlinda Erondo.

Norma discusses the changes in her life when she says that before, she and Erlinda were "not really leaders, just some people around us will talk to us. It was still kanya kanya system for us all." Norma is now a member of the pastoral council, a catechist, she coordinates the socio-economic projects in the village, and she is able to facilitate the Bible-sharing sessions. Norma explains that, "the seminars have really inspired me to continue, I want to tell this to the people here." According to Norma the "attitudes of the people are changing - consciousness raising is opening the eyes of the people." Norma notes that there must be "unity first, and then we can take action." But she is also concerned with the religious aspects of the program and wants to "guide the people to know their situation, as well as their faith" (N. Quindoza 1989). Norma explains that it is necessary to

spread a knowing of God here - many here have no religious knowledge. The superstitions are many, we try to change that; the BCCs help people to modernize. (N. Quindoza 1989)

Erlinda Erondo is without doubt the more strident of the two. Like Norma she is also a catechist now, but she is also involved in the Federation of Farmers and Fishermen as the diocesan secretary of the organization. Erlinda discusses at length the changes in her own life, as well as changes she notices in long time participants to the program in the village. Erlinda explains that:

It changed me for sure. My attitude changed, sometimes I was cranky and I had a lot of shame to others, higher ups, the bishop, visitors like you. Now I will speak even to the president [of the country]. Now I know I am equal. Especially I learned this from the bishop and priests because they really treated me like equal and special but they are higher so I felt equal. He [the bishop] doesn't treat me different than the rich, I can tell. Even I am not hurt by gossip, I feel stronger. I am less easily hurt by barrio people. I am much more active in the barrio now, I can be more central. (E. Erondo 1989)

As an example of her new confidence, Erlinda recounts a visit to the village by then Governor Lecaroz in 1986. She remembers how she and other BCC members were very forthright in speaking up about the pollution problem to the governor. Erlinda also remembers the response of many other villagers who, she recalls, "said we had no shame. Others say that it is impolite, doesn't show respect to higher ups" (E. Erondo 1989). The wife of the barangay captain was apparently especially angry with Rose who also spoke her mind openly. According to Erlinda, "we never would

have spoken like that without BCC training, we were awake already."

In 1989, Erlinda was chosen to accompany the BCC-CO diocesan core staff to the BCC-CO inter-regional meeting in Cebu. She came back thrilled at being part of such a large organization and with an interest in the issues facing other BCC-CO communities in other provinces. Erlinda explains that she now "shares" her experiences with various BCC groups around Marinduque and that they are also excited. One way that Erlinda evaluates the progress made by the people in Botilao is by their participation in the Bible-sharing. She notes that, "the older members of the core group talk already about the community and unity. New members still talk just about their own family" (E. Erondo 1989).

From the discussion with Erlinda it is obvious that she has moved beyond local concerns of the village. For example, she discusses the fact that one problem of the BCC-CO organization is that it is not accepted by all members of the clergy. Erlinda explains that:

If all bishops and parish priests would agree to BCC-CO it would be easy to widen the unity and easy to solve the different problems by means of organized communities which awaken and act together. (E. Erondo 1989)

On a return visit, in 1991, I learned that the BCC-CO organization in Marinduque had received outside funding

to expand. Two "grass roots" members from each parish were "promoted" to paid positions as Parish Workers. Erlinda was one of 24 in the diocese chosen by the BCC-CO lay staff to receive this opportunity. Once again, this illustrates the degree of top-down control the organization continues to exert over who "moves up" and is given positions of leadership. An equally active, but perhaps ideologically less critical or less "converted," member may not have been promoted. While Erlinda and Norma are equally active at the village level, and both have a good grasp of the perspectives and goals of the program, Norma tends to be milder of manner, more village oriented, and more focussed on the religious aspects of the program than on the social action side. While it is difficult to judge just what people retain from seminars, or how their consciousness is transformed through participation, a few points may be made based on the above excerpts from interviews, and similar viewpoints expressed by other involved villagers. First of all, it is obvious that villagers participate to various degrees of intensity and so are effected by the messages in the program in different ways. Even among those who have attended many of the same seminars, which is the majority of the core group, the information of these seminars is unevenly retained and understood. Few respondents could give

more than very global answers to questions about the contents of a particular seminar, many repeated the title of the seminar as the answer to questions about content and added such general concerns of the program such as "becoming united" and "becoming active." Even such long term members as Ka Jandro and Rolando Mantaring, when pressed to move beyond such generalizations, concluded that they are still not exactly sure what the BCC is all about.

Answers to questions about the purpose and goals of the various BCC village structures are revealing in the sense that they show what participants have come to understand about the BCC-CO program and at the same time give evidence to the confusion that still exists as to the conceptual connections between different aspects of the program such as social action, Jesus, the Bible, the social teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, socio-economic projects, and the connection between general principles of the program and local applications. The answers also give some indication of the degree to which participants are able to distinguish the general goals of the structures from their specific applications in Botilao. Many of the respondents concluded their answers with the statement that there is more but that they have "forgotten already."

Lalaine says that the purpose of the core group is to complain about the tailings. Pilar notes that the core group is to "help improve the knowledge of the people living in the remote places so that they have their own rights." She adds that it also helps in public speaking and in leadership. Pilar's mother, Virgie, notes that "they started the core group to be able to fight for the solution to the tailings against Marcopper, that's the reason." Rose Quindoza says that the core group is to "keep the people together - to unite them." Rolando Mantaring says of the core group that it is "an organization through which projects can be done and to help each other do the projects. Its Christian because it is run by the Church and because it helps people."

As president of the pastoral council Rolando notes that this organization is to "unite the people to voice out their opinions and to solve problems." But later he makes the following distinction saying that "the pastoral council is for prayer and the core group for projects." He also stresses that the pastoral council is united against Marcopper and organizes the collection of signatures. Ester Magturo says that the pastoral council is "to know the rules and regulations of the Church - they learn about the Church and explain religion. To convince the people to join and be active

in religion."

Gemma Erondo notes that the core group is to "help people have capital for projects and to spread the knowledge gained from BCC-CO." Gemma's description of the pastoral council comes close to the objectives set out for this organization by the clergy. She says that she likes to be a member "because you are the Church here.(...) you prepare the chapel for mass and conduct the dry mass" (G. Erondo 1989).

In a lengthy discussion with Erlinda and Norma they helped each other remember the various aspects of the program and how these are represented by the various organizations. Erlinda said of the core group that it,

is the first step to making a BCC. It's to make unity. The core group was organized to solve the problems here, especially the tailings. I cannot really tell what is core group but without core group the people will not be awakened to the situation of the barrio and the country.(E. Erondo 1989)

Ka Norma adds that "the core group is to carry on the work of Santa and Pedro, its to further organize the people."

Of the Bible-sharing Erlinda says,

it really discusses the situation of the people. According to our studies we are not separating our activities from what is in the Bible. The Bible guides us. Bible-sharing is based on daily activities and on the Bible because our daily activities are in the Bible. In the core group you organize to act, in the Bible-sharing you

reflect your life to the Bible. (E. Erondo 1989)

Of the pastoral council Erlinda says that it, is to spread the Church from the town to the barrio. They [the pastoral council] are to help the hermana, to entertain visitors, to prepare the chapel, to prepare for the priest and the mass. They are the leaders, they will show the people that they are working for the barrio to improve it like the barangay council does. (E. Erondo 1989)

Ka Norma notes that the pastoral council is to "teach the people what is Church. Church is people because they are together in worshipping God and in action."

Ka Norma and Erlinda were best able to reflect the various tasks of the different organizations, according to the program, but still struggled to connect these various functions. When asked what the connection is between God and social action Erlinda struggled to explain and concluded in a traditional and personal way that:

God is guiding us, whatever I do here God is part of that. I am always thinking God. God has mercy, lessens my troubles. My hope is never lost in my actions. (E. Erondo 1989)

One thing that stands out, is that much of the information that is most consistently retained from seminars, and is spontaneously reproduced in interviews, is on topics that were of interest to villagers prior to their introduction to the program, and, that at least some of the information received in

seminars is subtly transformed or translated into more familiar contexts by villagers.

The very fact that the seminars are so eagerly sought after by some reflects a local belief that "knowledge" comes from outside. Local knowledge and experience is generally devalued vis-a-vis outside knowledge and this perspective is further enhanced by the BCC strategy of offering seminars to "open people's eyes to the truth." Even local religious knowledge is discounted as illustrated by Ka Norma's statement that "many here have no religious knowledge" (N. Quindoza 1989).

One of the topics that BCC participants most commonly focussed on in interviews is the fact that the seminars emphasize the importance of unity among villagers. While some added that this unity is necessary so that they may effectively fight for their rights, others discussed unity in terms of harmony among villagers and neighbors.

Within a relatively small and isolated community, such as exists in Botilao, inter-village relations are both important and a potential source of tension. Not only are many villagers related to each other but they also rely on each other for income from copra. Those with land need laborers and those without must rely on their networks and relationships to be

given employment in harvesting coconuts and preparing the copra. The importance of community is expressed in such yearly events as the fiesta, for which even villagers who have left Marinduque return.

The BCC-CO appeal to participants to seek unity within the village is one that strikes a cord in most villagers. But the BCC-CO notion of horizontal solidarity as an alternative to vertical ties, which complicate social action, is not fully understood by most BCC-CO participants. For most, unity and good relations within the village are seen as a positive goal in and of themselves and are not necessarily related to a wider struggle with the elite. While the Church has tried to make the goal of peasant solidarity concrete by suggesting villagers seek local, even BCC members, as Godparents for their children, most still seek patron sponsorship through this ritual. And while peasants have always had a sense of themselves as a group, as the poor, it is not evident from the answers of most BCC participants in Botilao that this notion has become transformed into something that may be considered, from an etic point of view, class consciousness.

The totally new relationship between the Church, through the clergy and lay staff, and the villagers of Botilao is a source of great pride and

happiness among many villagers. The fact that various members of the clergy have stayed overnight in the village is often recounted and Santa and Pedro's prolonged stay is seen as evidence of real concern by the Church for the village. For most BCC participants the seminars given by Santa and Pedro were the first chance they had had to learn new skills and the projects that were made available to BCC participants were gratefully received as further proof of the Church's true concern for their well being. For those particularly interested in religion, such as the batikan Norma, the training to become a catechist was, furthermore, important so that the people could learn "proper" Catholic teachings and practices.

Ironically, the way in which many villagers expressed their new relationship to the clergy was in terms the seminars have rebuked when these apply to peasant-elite relations. Many BCC participants expressed a sense of gratitude towards the Church, especially towards the bishop, Fr. Mantala and Sr. Aida, who have fought for them, and Santa and Pedro who have lived with them and taught them new skills and practices. The projects are a further source of feelings of gratitude. For some villagers, the Church has clearly become a new patron and the feelings expressed by some BCC participants are those of utang.

na loob. Whereas the diocesan survey (1981) noted that only 5% of respondents would turn to a member of the clergy for help with problems, the new, more intimate, relationship of the clergy with villagers may be changing that. Cristy, the sister of Ka Jandro and Norma, is one of the new catechists in Botilao. She notes that:

If people are religious they help each other and they can also ask to the Church for help. For example if there is a sick person they can ask the priest for help for that person if that person is very poor. (C. Quindoza 1989)

The clergy may be finding themselves identified by villagers in a traditional patron role despite themselves.

The strength of the sense of utang na loob that some villagers feel towards the Church was illustrated during the 1989 rally against Marcopper. Rolando Mantaring confided to me that he was concerned about walking in that rally because he had been fostering a good relationship with the mayor of Santa Cruz. The mayor had apparently even given Rolando the impression that he supported him to become the barangay captain. Although both Rolando and his wife felt somewhat misled by the mayor after the elections, Rolando was still perturbed about being seen in the rally. As Rolando put it "I am ashamed to the mayor." Still, he knew he could not stay home on that day for Santa had come by just

days before the rally to "gather the people" and Rolando knew she expected him to be there. Furthermore, he is president of the pastoral council, at Fr. Mantala's prompting, and as such could not stay away from a rally the Church was involved in. While Rolando's sense of responsibility to the Church must be acknowledged he was equally compelled to join for the sake of his relations with his fellow BCC participants in the village who would certainly frown upon his non-participation. (23)

Bible-sharing: a Ritual of Bonding

The regular BCC practice of Bible-sharing, in which a trained facilitator mediates between people's everyday expressions of their personal experiences and desires and carefully interpreted sections from the Bible, is probably one of the most important tools of BCC formation and maintenance, as well as of transference of ideology. While the degree of transfer of BCC-CO ideology depends on the skills and social and religious and perspectives of the facilitator, the ritual of getting together for this activity creates a strong bond among the participants.

Ideally, the Bible-sharing should be done once a week or in some regular fashion. In Botilao, although

it does take place with regularity the date is not set. Attempts to set a particular date and place, such as on Sunday in the chapel, have usually failed over time. Now the date and place for the next meeting is set at the meeting taking place and often is renegotiated as the time nears. An interesting development, and one that is observed in other parts of the Philippines, is that BCC members ask to have a Bible-sharing in their home on the occasion of a birthday or other personal event. There is a subtle indigenization of Bible-sharing in this practice as the session is located within everyday experiences that have highly personal significance and is felt to enhance these personal events with a sense of spiritual authenticity. One of the intentions of Bible-sharing sessions, however, is to move people towards more community and even nationally oriented concerns and practices; to locate the personal in the broader structural picture.

Bible-sharing sessions in Botilao may be labeled as a ritual as they have very concrete stages and emotional phases that are repeated in most sessions and leave participants, at least temporarily, transformed in their relations to each other and to the problems of their everyday existence. The following, briefly outlined, example serves to sketch the typical pattern of a Bible-sharing session.



This Bible-sharing session was held on September 4th, 1989, in sitio Tanawan at the house of the new hermana. (24) Participants were Ka Jandro's wife, Leah Quindoza, Irene Monte, Pilar Roque, Gemma Erondo, Ka Norma, Maricon Ricalde, Cristy Quindoza (the sister of Ka Norma and Ka Jandro), an old woman, Ana, who is a neighbor of the new hermana, the new hermana, my research assistant Glenda, myself, and an assortment of neighborhood children. The husband of the new hermana hovered within hearing distance but did not join the group. (25)

At about 2 pm, an hour later than planned, the contingent from Pantalan, Tuog, and Kawayan met and started the trek up the mountain to sitio Tanawan. As we rose higher above the village, along the narrow mountain trail, the bay stretched out, wide and incredibly blue, below us with the surreal looking gray desert of the causeway cutting a rude swath across the bay. This sight prompted a discussion about the problems with the tailings that lasted until we reached the flatter mountain meadows of Tanawan. The group walked single file through tall grasses sharing nervous jokes and stories about poisonous snakes. Having reached the hermana's house, at about 2:45, we were greeted with a flurry of activity. Neighbors had gathered and the hermana and her husband were busily

cooking rice cakes and preparing sweet potatoes. Immediately, some children scrambled up nearby coconut trees to knock down the fruits for fresh drinks.

Inside the house we sat on long, narrow, wooden benches our feet resting on the packed dirt floor of the house. Lengthy discussions were held about fishing, politics and family issues. Information about what was going on with families in the lower sitios were swapped for stories about those living in Tanawan. There was no pressure at all to start the Bible-sharing session, in fact it was not mentioned. Finally, at 3:30, the session started. Most neighbors had by now drifted off again. Ka Norma led the session. She had brought along an old Bible-sharing guide that is put out by the BEC, movement as she had not had time to create her own; the guide she brought was for September 1986.

Norma legitimized the gathering by recalling that "God has said, wherever we are gathered He is there." Then there was an opening song that was sung with much fervour. Leah started a personal prayer asking God to let the participants feel His "whole love" in their session. Leah ended her prayer with a typical part of the mass, "we ask you this through Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you now and forever." Norma then took over by reading part of the guide. The guide, in order to introduce the

gospel reading of that week, opened by reminding participants that Jesus had sought the company of sinners. It asked what the role of the BCC participant should be vis-a-vis those who have "gone astray." This led to keen but controlled discussion in which one by one each of the participants took part. Each participant took pains to say something general and "wise" about the topic. Each seeking what are considered acceptable and "noble" views on the topic. The discussion moved from general ideas to specific examples taken from the participants' lives. At this point Ka Norma took over and wrapped up that section and moved on to the Gospel reading. She next discussed the introduction to the reading provided by the guide: It is revealed here that Jesus sees the mission or call of God to Him as taking care of those who are neglected or miserable. The two parables here are concerned with how the powerful comment on Jesus's dealings with the neglected ones in the society (N. Quindoza 1989). Norma then handed the reading to Maricon to read.

Before Maricon started reading a neighbor wandered into the house with fresh tuba (coconut wine). He was persuaded to join the group but sat somewhat apart and did not contribute to the conversation, although he listened attentively. The gospel reading was from Luke 15:1-10. When Maricon finished reading

there was silence, as prescribed by the guide. After some time, she read the passage aloud again. In the silence that resumed Leah took the Bible Norma had brought and read to herself. There was ongoing silence, as the members thought about the passage, or entertained other private thoughts. This silence was very comfortable, no one moved, the steady breezes that cool the mountain area blew through the house and slowly everyone seemed to drift off into private worlds. Eventually, the mood changed from thoughtful silence to become almost soporific now, as it usually did at this point. Finally, Norma brought the gathering back by starting to ask the questions provided by the guide.

These though provoking questions eventually led to a lengthy and at times impassioned discussion about the relationships between the "poor ones" and the "higher ups" with numerous examples about how the poor treat the wealthy with so much respect but get none in return, about the shame the poor feel vis-a-vis the wealthy, and about how the poor have a hard time saying what is on their mind to the wealthy. Unlike in the first sharing section the participants were now less careful in choosing their words, less formal, and more likely to interrupt each other. Ka Norma did not discourage this personalization of the exchange. Small

separate discussions developed and people spoke through each other.

The following are responses to the first question provided by the guide, "Why are the scribes and pharisees whispering to each other?":

C. Quindoza: "Instead of joining with the well to do He [Jesus] is joining with the poor ones."

P. Roque: "For me, we should think it over, because rich people are joining with the rich ones too and the poor are dealing with the poor ones also. We should help Christ."

Ana: "If there is a party, the richer ones are given full attention first. They are entertained very well and they just entertain the poor ones if the richer ones are finished eating already."

P. Roque: "Let us not go to distant examples. Let us talk about what is happening in our barangay. When there is a meeting with teachers they are given good or nice chairs while those who are needier [poorer, less status] are put aside. We should not do it to them."

Hermana: "We are not removing our shamefulness. Like what we are doing right now, there are some who are still ashamed to share."

Glenda: About the shamefulness attitude in entertaining visitors, we should avoid this attitude because sometimes we can't voice out what we want to voice out

because we are ashamed. We should think that we are created equally, that's why we should treat ourselves equally. (...) Let's think of our barangay situation to the problem of pollution. If not for the small people who spoke to the higher ups and spoke about their problem, they will not know what is the problem. So it's better to avoid shame because we are benefitted by avoiding it."

G. Erondo: "Another attitude that we should avoid is that whenever there are rich visitors we are sitting at one corner, as if we are hiding. We should not be like that because we are also people like them."

The second question raised by the guide was, "Who are the miserable and neglected of society?" The following are responses from those gathered.

.....: "The poor ones are the ones who are neglected in the society, like in Marcopper company, we are neglected by them as if we are poison to them."

.....: "It's not only the company but also the town officials like.... He is neglecting us, we are like a broken bottle in the society but in fact we are the mirror to them."

N. Quindoza: "We have discovered how Jesus gave importance to those who are neglected in the society"

In this section the discussion usually drifts from the original theme to topics that are considered

important at the time. The discussion inevitably focussed on the issue of the pollution. The pain that the BCC participants feel about being ridiculed by fellow villagers with jobs at the mine surfaced:

We are put down by those who are working in Marcopper. They do not understand that we are fighting for their right also. They are thinking that we are oppressing them but they are the ones oppressing us. At least they are earning there, how about the ones who are suffering poverty? (...) They do not care about their neighbors. They say I have money I do not care if you are suffering poverty. (..... 1989).

They noted that if it had not been for their struggle the mine would never have distributed jobs in the first place:

Some are like this, they will say, right, you work alone and we will just join with you when there are blessings already. (...) They don't want to be interrupted in their work but when there are blessings already, like jobs, they will say we are your companions now. (...) We should continue what we are fighting for if there is reward or none. (..... 1989)

"Do you think Marcopper will prioritize Botilao in giving jobs if there are no complainants?" (G. Erondo 1989). They discussed how difficult it is to keep fighting for what is right when you are poor and isolated. And, they discussed how difficult it is for the "small ones" to be heard by the "higher ups." They agreed that although the wealthy and the mine have money, the poor have a voice and so must use it:

It's easy to hear those who have money. We don't

have money instead we have our voice as our right. We are fighting for our own right but Marcopper are fighting for their right with the use of money. (..... 1989)

Leah called their struggle a "sacrifice" they were making for the good of all. The discussion was quite heated now and unstructured. As the frustration people felt slowly dissipated in the course of its expression so did the focus on the session. A few people started moving around to do other things.

Eventually, Norma called the gathering to order again by reading the last section of the guide that further "deepens" the Gospel reading. It was a long section and all calmed down again. Finally, Norma noted that it was time for the closing prayers. Immediately, a serious mood prevailed. In this section, each participant says a personal prayer out loud. The others are very quiet and listen intently. Typically, the speakers start by sharing how the session effected them and how they feel at that moment. They give thanks for certain things and ask forgiveness for others, and they petition God to help them with difficulties in their lives. It is in this highly personal section that participants very often break down and cry. It is, after a long intense session, a very emotional and very "open" time in which barriers between the participants seem to disappear. The following are sections from

these, often quite long, prayers:

The line from the gospel that caught my attention is about sinners returning themselves to God. We can connect this to what is happening to us now like complaining to Marcopper about the effect of the pollution. Lord, bless the people who have wrong judgement to us. Enlighten their mind because we know that we are not doing wrong against them. You know what we want to do, that we, the small ones are hoping to be heard by the higher ups by our complaints. Give unity in our barangay so that every member will understand what is good and bad, especially the barangay officials. Heal those who are sick, bless our children so that they will avoid the wrong doings that might tempt them. (G. Erondo 1989)

Bless our family to remain united. For our children bless them to be obedient, and for my husband, save him from those who are accusing our family so that we will become peaceful in our daily life. (L. Quindoza 1989)

I am very happy that we are gathered in this kind of activity [Bible-sharing]. Give wider understanding to those who are thinking that this activity is just a disturbance in their job so that they will be able to attend and join with us. (...) We are very happy Lord, because we feel that you are within us at this moment that's why we are asking your blessing to everyone here. (...) You know that my mother is really suffering from her sickness, I know that you are the greatest doctor of all that's why I am asking you to heal the sickness of my mother. (G. Jamilla 1989)

Finally, Norma said the last public prayer and some closing words. The last event was a closing song. It was now 5:00 pm. After the final song there was a sense of celebration and joy. The participants joked and walked around energetically. We drank tuba, ate the foods that had been prepared and laughed a lot. The hosting hermana was obviously pleased at how well

everything was going. As it would soon be getting dark, we all said good-bye, waving many times to the small house as we left, and started on our way back across the fields and down the mountain. The mood was positively jubilant now, the friends sang songs out loud, kidded around and hugged each other when they parted company. There was a sense of catharsis, of release. In later discussions the BCC participants wondered if the new hermana would now also be interested to join their group.

The fact that the whole Bible-sharing process has a structure, in this case aided by the BEC guide, and that there is a recognized expert as facilitator, removes this ritual from the framework of everyday discussions. Norma further emphasized this by paraphrasing Jesus's words from the Bible in opening the session. Leah added to this formal sense by using words from the mass. There is a legitimacy to the process, lent it by associations with the formal Church. But the session is also well adapted to local traditions and ways of relating and further indigenized as it is performed.

Aspects that give the session continuity with village spiritual traditions are, for example, the fact that Ka Norma, already recognized as batikan, leads the session. Importantly, this ritual, in its performance,

is similar to other "folk Catholic" rituals performed by the village's batikar, as it is characterized by flexibility, may be creatively adapted to local spiritual traditions, and emphasizes community. It is also seen to serve another need of the village as many feel participation in the Bible-sharing session is somewhat equivalent to taking part in a mass for those who cannot make it to town every Sunday, just as the buhos effectively protects the child from ill until a baptism by a priest can be arranged. This is why the suggestion to hold the Bible-sharing sessions on Sundays in the chapel arises from time to time. The Bible-sharing sessions thus enhance the already highly autonomous Catholic religious community of the villagers of Botilao. (26)

Conclusions

The first two sections of this chapter showed village religiosity to be vibrant, varied and creative, highly self-sufficient, flexible and evolving. The importance of local specialists who serve the community's spiritual needs underlines the fact that this is a community of people who rely on each other not just in subsistence practices, but also for spiritual services. On the whole, the experience of

Catholicism of the villagers of Botilao is relatively uncomplicated, adapted to daily life, and characterized by a relationship of intimacy and trust with the saints, Mary and Jesus.

The Catholicism of the village not only responds to everyday problems of meaning in a spiritual sense but also may be applied to concrete problems regarding health, procreation, and subsistence activities. It, furthermore, provides moral and ethical guidelines for social life. Beliefs about how people should treat one another, both within the village and with regard to the elite, are commonly expressed through Christian values and discourse. But village religiosity and practices diverge in important ways from both pre-Vatican II Catholicism and from the more recent social teachings of the Church.

The recent history of Catholic authorities coming into the village is one of potential conflict with everyday religious practice. Early catechists emphasized orthodoxy of Catholic teaching. Later, BCC-CD workers emphasized both orthodoxy, as well as perspectives derived from liberation theology. In both cases, where villagers were pressed to change traditional religious practices there was, and is, a measure of resistance.

With regard to orthodoxy, many villagers refute

the need to go to mass when they already say their own prayers and believe in God. They also do not like to be persuaded to hold important events such as weddings and baptisms at times when they cannot afford a feast. With regard to the new exegesis, villagers are not easily persuaded to take only poor peasants as Godparents for their children, foregoing the chance to make ties with a wealthy patron. They also resist new novena booklets that are updated according to Vatican II insights. On the other hand, aspects of the new exegesis and especially newly introduced religious practices, seem to be quite readily added on to existing spiritual beliefs and practices by religiously active villagers.

A brief update on the present state of the BCC in Botilao reveals a rather tight core of active members who have remained active and involved for about ten years. While the group has not grown significantly it has maintained internal coherence and unity. The core members show a high level of commitment to the program and to each other. As we saw in the previous chapter, a significant number of currently active members were already related, friends, or neighbors when the program was introduced to the village. Among the constraints to further growth of the core group are: 1) the social and geographic marginality of many villagers; these frequently very poor or uneducated

villagers tend to stay away from involvement in prominent organizations; 2) the fear of some villagers of becoming involved in an organization that may be "subversive" or land them in trouble; and, 3) hesitation on the part of villagers to associate with a group that has openly opposed Marcopper. These villagers do not want to forfeit possible jobs nor do they want to alienate the present barangay captain. In some areas, such as Puti, BCC-CO organizing is almost impossible as villagers either have jobs at Marcopper or have family and friends who work there.

It is clear from my interviews among BCC-CO core group members that they readily accept that "knowledge," especially "modern" insights, is something that comes from outside of the village. For this reason, and because there is an implicit trust afforded the Church, interested villagers tend to be uncritical and open to the new message of the Church that is presented through seminars and Bible interpretations. Many BCC-CO members I interviewed agreed that they especially liked, or even joined the group for, the seminars representing outside knowledge. Other factors of the program that appeal to villagers are the BCC-CO emphasis on unity, the projects, and the very fact that the Church is showing concern for the villagers.

One of the effects of Church involvement in the

village has been a new, more intimate, relationship between some local core group members and the clergy. On the other hand, this new relationship is frequently interpreted in traditional terms. For some, the Church is now seen as a new patron. There is evidence of this in the fact that Rolando Mantaring felt a sense of utang na loob to Santa, Fr. Mantala and the bishop that caused him to attend the rally although he worried about how his participation would effect his relationship with the mayor.

Data from the Bible-sharing ritual also provides evidence of the subtle ways in which this practice has been added on to existing religious practices and has been indigenized to suit the spiritual and social needs of BCC-CO participants. On the other hand, the "sharings" of the members also reflect the degree to which they have, in fact, reinterpreted some traditional Christian understandings, such as what it means to be "good" and to "sacrifice," in new ways consistent with BCC-CO perspectives. The Bible-sharing gatherings also provide a forum for, and encourage, shared expressions of anger and grief over poverty and injustice in the participants' lives, as well as defiant challenges aimed at authority figures.

With respect to the new religious exegesis,

there is obviously a high degree of variation among BCC-CO members in Botilao in the degree to which they have understood this combined social and religious thesis. There is evidence of ambiguity and of conceptual confusion among most members. Most, also, have but vague or very global recollections of what was taught in various seminars. Usually, there is one point that they remember and reproduce in isolation in interviews.

Only a small group is able to reproduce aspects of BCC-CO ideology that represent new ways of thinking about religion and social interactions. And only a few, of which Erlinda is an example, may be said to be undergoing a form of ideological conversion that is, in itself, both a source of excitement and inspiration for these members and has truly changed how they view their relationships to other villagers and to members of the elite. Specifically, these few now see themselves as members of a nation-wide group of oppressed peoples for whom national solutions must be found. It is from this small segment that members are chosen for promotion in the program.

In order to evaluate whether the statements of BCC participants represent new ways of thinking about social injustices and the role of the Church in social action I interviewed villagers in Botilao who are not

involved in any of the new BCC structures or practices. The belief expressed by many BCC-CO participants in Botilao that the elite are prone to behaving egotistically and unjustly could be taken as evidence that these villagers have accepted key aspects of the BCC-CO social thesis. In fact, this perspective is not uncommon among villagers not involved in the BCC. Similarly, the fact that BCC participants of Botilao are willing to undertake social action against the mine does not necessarily mean they are inspired by structural social analysis and have embraced the need for concerted social action aimed at transforming essential power relations between the wealthy and the poor. From the previous chapter we know that when some of the BCC participants of Botilao thought Mrs. Reyes had joined their side they were excited. In other words, the struggle against the mine is not primarily seen as part of a general structural battle so much as a single issue that may best be solved with help from powerful allies.

Importantly, however, while participation in the struggle is often described by BCC participants in very traditional religious terms such as "sacrifice," as Leah called it in the Bible-sharing session, this sacrifice is being made by a few on behalf of the whole village and not purely for personal religious reasons.

The link between social action for the benefit of the community and Christian duty is new and appears to have been adopted by some BCC members. (27)

Resistance to BCC organizing in Botilao has been strongest among Marcopper supporters. There are also signs that resistance may be expected to attempts by the clergy or BCC lay leaders to change traditional religious practices in the village. This has, however, not been the focus of attention, as it has been in the town, and has not been pursued with any great consistency or urgency. On the whole, BCC-CO practices and perspectives have not replaced traditional religious beliefs or practices, even in the village core group, but rather have been added on to existing religious expressions. Even though some BCC-CO core group members express a negative evaluation of local "superstitions," their ongoing participation in practices that may be so labeled leads to the conclusion that this label "superstitions" is differently applied or understood by villagers themselves than by, for example, the diocesan BCC staff. (28)

It is clear from the above examples that certain BCC-CO practices, such as the Bible-sharing activity, are prone to being reinterpreted and indigenized by villagers, potentially contributing to

traditional characteristics of village religiosity such as independence from the town and creativity of religious expression and practice. This is especially likely as the BCC ages and it receives less full time attention from outside initiators and the "consciousness raising" process of involved participants is not consistently maintained. In other words, if orthodoxy of BCC-CO practice and content are not somehow continuously enforced.

NOTES

1. Some of these rituals also show individual variations as they are performed in the towns, such as in the enactment of the pasyon and in the celebrations for Three Kings which vary per town in Marinduque and, from reports, show a high degree of variation throughout the Philippines. But where there is clerical supervision there remains a potentially higher degree of control over orthodoxy than in the villages.

2. Ka Edgardo insisted that the only significance of the carabao as mount for the hermano/a is to distinguish him, or her, from the other two riders.

3. Much of the dancing of this ritual is reminiscent of a Marinduque tradition that is unique in the Philippines but has recently spread to one or two other provinces from Marinduque. This ritual, called the putong or "crown," may be performed for someone's birthday, to heal a sick person, and, more recently, to welcome visitors. There are many versions of the long, sung poem that accompanies the ritual, as well as of the elaborately staged motions that go with it. Many of these versions are not written down but memorized by the "olds" of a particular village. In Botilao and the neighboring villages of Punong and San Isidro there is a special version of the putong that combines putong melodies and actions with the text from the pasyon. This version may only be performed during Lent and Holy Week.

I have noticed characteristics of the melody and dancing motions of the putong reflected in other rituals in Marinduque such as the boling that is performed in the church in Boac on the day preceding Ash Wednesday. In this case the priest sits in the church and dancers slowly approach him in stages singing a poetic text about the seven sacraments. The ritual dramatizes the washing of the head and feet of Jesus by Mary Magdalene.

4. A dry mass, or para-liturgy, is a mass conducted by a lay person in the absence of a priest.

5. Interestingly, I was told by villagers that while one should pray to St. Augustine for rain, if it comes one should thank St. Isidro. If one is suffering illness, or a difficult child birth, one should beg God to intervene and Mary to petition her Son for help, but when the danger is passed one should thank St. Vincente or the patroness of Marinduque the Virgin of the Biglang Awa.

6. All around the Philippines old and antique religious objects are disappearing from villages and churches to end up in the many antique shops in Manila.

7. This belief not only holds for religious images. One boy wore his new sneakers to Church so that they may be blessed.

8. I am using the word spirit here only to indicate something non-human and not natural to this world. The people sometimes call engkanto "people but not like us."

9. While such rules of behaviour exist with regard to the natural world, I did not discover any elaborate fishing rituals in Marinduque such as exist in other parts of the Philippines (Polo 1988). While the question of dynamite fishing in parts of the Philippines where people's relationship with the sea is highly ritualized and characterized by respect, such as Polo describes for Leyte, is one I have yet to see addressed, fear of possible spirits in the form of fish did not impede environmentally destructive fishing practices in Marinduque.

10. The tianak story, as I was told it, continues as the baby grows up and continues to kill and cause illness. But because it is already dead it is invisible, although its voice can be heard. It should be said that while central aspects of these beliefs are

repeated by most people, many versions about what the peripheral characteristics of these various non and semi-human beings are vary greatly depending on who is telling the story.

11. One cure for balis is to allow the person whom you suspect gave you the balis to rub some of their saliva on your forehead and stomach !

12. In the case of weddings some couples either go to a Justice of the Peace, if they cannot afford much feasting, or live common-law until they can afford a church wedding. Either of these options are deemed acceptable alternatives, or temporary solutions, for couples who are poor. The emphasis, from a moral point of view, is clearly not on the blessing from the Church, but rather, from a social point of view on the ability to treat family, friends and neighbors to a feast.

13. At church baptisms it is quite common for a child to have multiple couples as Godparents. Given the importance of establishing ties with "higher ups" through fictive kin this is not surprising. The Church is now trying to encourage parents to seek only one couple as Godparents, and from the village instead of from among the wealthy of the town. The reason given for this is that villagers need to strengthen horizontal solidarity as opposed to perpetuating patron-client patterns.

14. While Lourdes disapproves of abortions and worries about the health effects she says that many women ask her to help them abort or start an abortion themselves and then call her for help.

15. Lourdes remembers a couple in sitio Puti who sent the placenta out to sea in a small boat so that the child will not have a hard time leaving home. This may be linked to the growing necessity of children to leave home for employment to help out the family.

16. I explored beliefs concerning these issues in Botilao with the help of Francisco R. Demetrio's, S.J., book Myths and Symbols Philippines of 1978. While Fr. Demetrio's "checklist of beliefs" was collected in the Visayas I was able to use these as a starting point for discussions of traditions and beliefs in Botilao. I asked in a general way whether, for example, there is any belief about what one should do when leaving the table, avoiding telling my informants what the tradition in the Visayas is until they had answered.

17. The power in the old booklets comes from the fact that they have been used in so many ceremonies and have become more "blessed" in the process. People also place their novena booklets on the alter of the village chapel when the priest comes so that they will be blessed through the mass and even attach them to their palms on Palm Sunday so that they will be sprinkled with Holy Water.

18. An example of this is for crab. The word for crab is katang. In the pasyon there is a phrase katanghaliang tapat ang araw, meaning "at noontime." This phrase, containing the word katang, awards the singer with the crab.

19. While the words from the pasyon are used the tunes are much more joyous: more like cheerful putong tunes than somber pasyon tunes. The actions accompanying this putong also exhibit variations from those in the everyday putong. In the long version of this putong the singers sing the entire pasyon, but leave out one section; the death and assumption of Mary. This section is then done at the end as a putong. In a shorter version this section alone serves as the putong. Geraldine described this as the "putong for Mary in the pasyon." According to Ka Norma, if there is an image of Jesus on the cross the performers first remove this. To explain this, she indicated that this putong is somewhat less solemn than the pasyon and so, perhaps, inappropriate for the image of the crucified Christ to witness. This version of the putong may be performed for a statue of Mary during Holy Week, or for a person who is, however, addressed as Mary throughout. Ka Norma also noted that if the host family cannot provide food for the singers for the entire text of the pasyon they will let the singers know who will then sing only the "very important words" (N. Quindoza 1989).

20. These were also people who were most likely to be uncomfortable about being interviewed by me. They avoided eye contact with me, focussing instead on my research assistant whom they asked many questions about who I was. Sometimes this process was a strategy to delay the interview and it also indirectly signalled the unwillingness of these villagers to participate. Some were also obviously uncomfortable about their poverty.

21. Lito Pitero, while expressing a true interest in the BCC program, says he is too busy to become very actively involved. He explained that Fr. Mantala

appointed him to the position in the pastoral council and that his wife has now effectively taken over for him.

22. Lalaine Allen also knows that the core group is "to complain about the tailings" but wonders "how can they succeed, they are only few?"

23. Whether or not Ester Magturo would join became a source of discussion before the rally. The fact that her husband had received a long term position on the causeway caused some to doubt her allegiance to the BCC cause. In fact, she did not join, giving as her reason that she had to stay at home with her three young children. Although Rose basically had the same reason for not joining the rally Ester's absence was noted as significant.

24. While the new hermana is not a member of the BCC it is not surprising that she should ask to have a Bible-sharing session in her home as part of her function as hermana simply because it is now a religious ritual of the village. This example shows, again, how such BCC practices become indigenized, or contextualized.

25. I was later told that the husband of the hermana had been hesitant about the idea of sponsoring a Bible-sharing session as he had his doubts about the "real intentions" of the group. He thought it may be too political.

26. In villages where a lay leader has learned to conduct dry masses, such as Ka Edgardo in Dating Bayan, they are held on Sundays and are seen by villagers as equal in value to a mass, as Bible-sharing sessions are in Botilao. Rolando Mantaring, as pastoral council president, should have learned how to conduct "dry masses" but says he has been "too busy with my pigs."

27. A distinction must be made here between the belief that individual Catholics should take risky social action on behalf of their structurally oppressed brethren and the belief that the Church, understood as the clergy, should be involved for the poor. In my interviews with villagers not involved in the BCC I asked whether the Church should be involved in social action (with regard to the tailings problem) or should just conduct masses and pray to solve the problem. Only a few villagers answered that the Church should restrict itself to prayer. These were, notably, villagers who support Marcopper.

28. The diocesan BCC-CO staff themselves maintain many beliefs and practices that may, in turn, be condemned as superstitious by other Filipinos.

CHAPTER TWELVE: Conclusions

This study of the BCC-CO movement has allowed me to explore specific analytical questions regarding the role of non-local ideologies in Third World progressive organizations and the role of religion in popular political and social movements. Eventually, my choice of the Philippine BCC-CO movement as a focus of research generated additional questions more specifically related to the program itself and to particulars of the case study I conducted at the local level.

In these conclusions I first provide a review and summation of my findings with regard to the main analytical themes running through this thesis. I follow this up with a critical evaluation of the BCC-CO program's ability to meet its own goals. As this latter discussion is informed by the particulars of my research in Marinduque, I also review a number of important features of my case study and discuss their impact on my general conclusions.

**Production, Reproduction and Transformation of BCC-CO
Perspectives over Three Levels of Organization: A
Review and Summation**

I have described the BCC-CO program as a nationally organized, urban based, top-down progressive religious movement of which central concerns are the pursuit of social justice and alleviation of the suffering of poverty through a processual transformation of unequal and exploitative social, economic and political relationships in society towards a more equitable distribution of resources and political power. I have argued that the program is informed by, and reflects aspects of, two main non-local ideological influences: Marxist social theory and cultural nationalism.

As I have noted, the adoption of Marxist insights by the BCC-CO movement is characterized by a type of analytical shorthand that becomes more pronounced as these ideas move from the national to the local level. A number of key concepts have come to form the core of what BCC-CO activists call their "scientific tools of social analysis." These concepts include the notion that society is essentially divided into classes rooted in economic inequality and that the elite are able to maintain their privileged positions by controlling society's main political, social and

cultural institutions. BCC-CO sources of information further reflect the belief that society is characterized by conflict between those in privileged positions and the dispossessed, but that the poor are handicapped in their struggle by being largely unaware of the structural roots of their poverty. The program suggests that it is through the dual processes of "conscientization" and organization of peasants and laborers that these will become united as a class and motivated to struggle for common goals in a concerted manner, thereby putting pressure on unjust social structures.

The other key contributing ideology to the program is that of Philippine nationalism. This nationalism accounts for the program's stance against political and economic interference in the Philippines by powerful foreign nations and organizations, as illustrated by its concerns about low intensity conflict (LIC), its stance against the U.S. military bases in the country, and its critical reviews of the IMF and World Bank. An interest in strengthening inter-regional links and feelings of unity between peasants and laborers nation-wide is also a pressing nationalist concern of the movement.

A more cultural manifestation of nationalism in the BCC-CO movement is a persistent concern with the

question of national identity. Filipino cultural, including religious, traits are commonly reviewed in an effort to discern whether they are borrowed or indigenous, tainted by colonial influences or capable of sustaining national pride and development. More often than not, Filipino cultural and religious characteristics are perceived as contributing to the oppression of peasants and, therefore, in need of transformation.

Both national level ideological influences embody underlying assumptions about peasant economic, political, cultural and religious realities and about their relationships with each other and with the elite. These assumptions are reflected in BCC-CO program formation at the national level and also effect local level practices of the movement. On the whole, the ideological influences of the program lead BCC-CO activists to focus on what is lacking (proper economic and political consciousness) or problematic (negative cultural traits) in local peasant communities. And, both principle ideological strands of the BCC-CO movement derive from etic perspectives.

The BCC-CO program may be described as a progressive religious movement. It is rooted in recent developments in the history of Catholic social action in the Philippines and BCC-CO staff maintain close ties

with national and diocesan Catholic structures and with the hierarchy. The lay leaders of the movement are all Catholic and, from the data of this study, are intensely involved in the spiritual, as well as the social aspects of their faith. The BCC-CO social thesis, as informed by the ideologies outlined above, is communicated primarily through the idiom of religious discourse. Popular religious symbols, narratives and practices are reinterpreted to reflect BCC-CO social analysis and form the medium through which new perspectives are conveyed to target populations. Liberation theology texts are one source of Marxist insights for national level BCC-CO activists. These texts also provide examples of how Catholicism can be shown to embody progressive social perspectives. While the BCC-CO movement itself has not expanded on international discussions of liberation theology with a local theological variation, in building basic Christian communities at the local level, BCC activists are involved in the practical expression of a contextualized liberation theology.

In order to study the role of non-local ideologies and of the new religious exegesis in BCC-CO practice, I focussed on processes of production, at the national level, and of reproduction and transformation at the diocesan and the village levels where the

program is mediated to local populations by, respectively, members of the clergy and trained BCC-CO lay leaders. I was particularly interested in processes of "slippage" (Scott 1977 part I:1-5) at the juncture of BCC-CO insights and knowledge and the culturally constructed forms of local knowledge that are rooted in local practice. Key questions that structured the presentation of my data in the local level chapters were: 1) to what degree and how are the ideas and aims of the BCC-CO program reproduced at the local level, 2) how is the BCC-CO program transformed by the process of mediation and by local knowledge, aims and practices, 3) how is the program resisted at the local level, 4) what is the role of religious manipulation and of religious experience in the reproduction or transformation of the program, 5) to what degree has the program become indigenized at the local level? And, finally what is the ultimate effect of these factors on the ability of the program to change local level power relations.

Production of BCC Ideology at the National Level

In chapter two I discussed some of the key areas of conflict within Church circles over the proper role of the Church in social action in the Philippines:

the possible role of the elite in social transformation, the role and acceptability of violence in social change, etc. These tensions arose historically and led to divisions within the Philippine Catholic hierarchy. I argued that relatively more progressive or conservative positions taken by various members of the hierarchy may be correlated to the socio-economic status of the clergy, but are also influenced by less predictable factors, such as how religious conviction, in conjunction with historical events and personal experiences, effect individual decision making. Ongoing divisions in the hierarchy about key issues concerning the role of the Church in social action have come to be reflected in the two nation-wide BCC movements: BEC and BCC-CO.

The BEC program developed out of a long term commitment to Catholic social action on the part of the Jesuit order. The program is very much an extension of the positions historically arrived at by this order in the Philippines and remains under the strong leadership of Jesuit clergy. The BCC-CO movement, on the other hand, has its roots in the social action agency NASSA set up by the Bishops' Conference in the turbulent years preceding martial law. Not only did NASSA attract clergy who were committed to effective social action but it also encouraged strongly motivated lay leaders

to play an active role in giving the program direction.

The two BCC programs each reflect and draw upon wider societal, academic and theological influences in formulating ideology. In chapters three and four I provided an analysis and comparison, respectively, of political and cultural influences which the national level activists of the BCC-CO and BEC movements draw upon in constructing their socio-political positions; frequently carving these positions out in opposition to each other. Here, I summarize the influences on the BCC-CO movement.

By adopting key aspects of Marxist social theory as guiding principles for social analysis and strategy formation, the BCC-CO movement finds itself influenced by, and part of, a collectivity of progressive organizations considered to be broadly "national democratic" in orientation. This political orientation is further supported by, and reflected in, the movement's preferences with regard to particular forms of liberation theology, and for certain academic texts providing political analyses and insights into society over others. These preferences are reflected in BCC-CO sponsored and supported publications.

As described above, Philippine nationalists commonly engage in an evaluation of Filipino cultural and religious traits in order to discern whether

existing popular characteristics are likely to advance or hinder national liberation and development. The overwhelmingly negative evaluation of existing cultural and religious characteristics that is evident in the BCC-CO literature largely mirrors similar points of view expressed not only by progressive, but also by conservative forces at the national level.

From the progressive point of view "native" religiosity and culturally expressed local knowledge and practices are commonly devalued as they are believed to be rooted in colonial oppression and reflective and supportive of ongoing unequal social relations. They are, furthermore, considered to be "not modern," to encourage "passivity," and to be inherently conservative. As I have pointed out, this negativity is, to a degree, rooted in colonial perspectives and documents that are perpetuated in academic texts and in the educational system. These negative evaluations of popular religiosity and Filipino cultural values and traits are further prominently reflected in public life, for example in speeches and in debates.

There are now a number of important and well-known scholarly texts that illuminate the historical and colonial roots of these traditional perspectives about national character traits, and refute their validity. I reviewed these arguments and showed how

some knowledge of these texts is evident in BCC-CO publications. Nonetheless, these newer perspectives have not, as yet, impacted on BCC-CO national level viewpoints or program formation.

A further explanation for why more positive evaluations of existing national cultural and religious traits have not informed BCC-CO texts, aside from those provided above, may be found in the program's adoption of a Marxist social analysis. A negative evaluation of existing cultural characteristics and religious traditions is consistent with Marxist views that culture and religion, as experienced by the poor, contribute, as "false ideology," to the legitimization and perpetuation of existing unequal social relations. In other words, BCC-CO activist's focus on reinterpreting and reforming existing religious symbols, narratives and practices to reflect the liberational and poor-centric themes Vatican II, and to "modernize" the peasantry, are further supported by aspects of the program's social thesis.

What is particularly striking about the BCC-CO literature at the national level is the degree to which it reflects the obviously powerful appeal of "modern," "scientific," and "rational" social models, such as those produced by academics and found in scholarly texts. These academic analyses are eagerly drawn upon

and incorporated into BCC-CO explanations of social problems and in the development of programs for the local level. Marxism is a particularly powerful social theory. It offers an historically based understanding of present social inequalities that incorporates both macro and micro social levels, claims predictive value, and offers concrete suggestions on how society may be transformed by activists.

It is somewhat ironic that the leaders of many Third World movements continue to adopt Western theoretical frameworks upon which to base their social action at the same time that the moral and scientific limitations of over-arching paradigms, such as Marxism represents, are being debated by scholars (postmodernists and others) in the West and there is, more generally, a growing skepticism about the value of scienticity and rationalism as tools to illuminate and alleviate social problems. (1)

Reproduction and Transformation at the Diocesan Level

At the diocesan level, in the towns of Marinduque, the BCC-CO program is primarily mediated by the clergy and the most immediately effected residents of the towns are the local elite because of their traditional prominence in public religious practices.

The clergy of Marinduque show a high level of commitment to the BCC-CO program as a pastoral and as a liberational strategy. As the results of surveys and interviews I conducted among the clergy indicate, there is also a high degree of reproduction of national level BCC-CO perspectives among the clergy of Marinduque.

Especially in analytical approaches to, and understandings of, social injustice the views of the clergy greatly reflect those of the BCC-CO program. While a general poor-oriented perspective among the clergy could be attributed to the teachings of Vatican II alone, aspects of critical structural analysis, the notion of "false consciousness" among the poor, and other central BCC-CO tenets indicate a strong link between the ideas of the program at the national level and those of its local level mediators. With regard to the cultural and religious evaluations represented by the BCC-CO program at the national level, there are also indications of faithful reproduction of these perspectives at the diocesan level although in this case it is more difficult to relate these viewpoints to the BCC-CO program alone, as generally critical reviews of Filipino culture and popular religiosity are more wide spread in society.

The surveys also reveal indications of subtle transformations of BCC-CO ideology due to particular

characteristics of diocesan mediators: pre-Vatican II perspectives that persist among the clergy, the rootedness of the clergy themselves in ongoing local cultural traditions themselves, and individual differences in emphasis and style of clergy members. These factors partially account for the contradictions and inconsistencies that characterize the implementation of the program in the towns.

The primary means by which the clergy have communicated the new social and religious perspectives to the townspeople has been verbally through talks to organized religious groups, in personal discussions with townspeople, and, in particular, in sermons in which Bible passages are interpreted according to the new exegesis. The new exegesis is also reflected in written statements, such as the addresses in souvenir programs. Attempts to reinterpret popular public religious symbols and practices of the towns have been less than consistently successful. While attempts have been made to transform major religious symbols and practices to reflect and support the perspectives of the BCC-CO program, these attempts have met with considerable resistance from the local elite. This resistance was further examined.

As I have maintained, it is important to examine both aspects of religious manipulation,

instrumental uses of religion, and aspects of religious experience. I illuminated ways in which control over traditional religious symbols and prestigious functions have served the elite in creating social networks, inducing social indebtedness, and enhancing status. For these reasons, as well as for the reason that many religious symbols and prestigious positions implicitly support and legitimize elite status and wealth, it is not surprising that the elite protest changes that result in loss of control over traditional religious domains.

On the other hand, the elite are themselves, in many cases, fervent believers and protest what they consider to be a rejection of an important expression of their faith, through the statues, and through traditional offers to "help" the Church and the religious community. They explain that they are being excluded from religious participation and that the sincerity of their faith, or even its quality and worth, is being questioned. While elite protestations may be reasoned to derive solely from loss of power and control over an important symbolic domain, I showed in chapter eight how the reality of elite religiosity may also be limiting the positions of opposition some members of the elite are likely to take, thereby offering some measure of protection to clergy.

Local clergy, on the other hand, are attempting to regain control over the religious domain in order to transform it to reflect the new exegesis; the "re-Christianization" of Marinduque. The clergy are themselves using religious symbols, narratives and practices as instruments through which to project a new understanding of the proper relationship between people, and of people to God. But, another powerful aspect of the religiosity of the clergy is their commitment to serve all humans in their quest for salvation. In other words, to treat the elite not as a structural group that must be confronted in a struggle for justice, but as Christian individuals, children of God. I have shown how this conflict of purpose facing the clergy has, at times, contributed to inaction and stagnation of the clergy's projects.

Transformations to the program at the diocesan level, then, have been partly rooted in prior characteristics of the clergy themselves, and have been partly the result of direct, or anticipated resistance by the elite. But, transformations have also come about through interactions between the clergy and the elite over time. The process of mediation, in the light of local level cultural expectations, aims and goals, has both impacted on the perspectives of the clergy and transformed and indigenized the program in part.

Initially the clergy were inspired by the ideology of the program to implement its recommendations, which impact on the elite, in a depersonalized, equal, and structural way. Over time, however, direct confrontations with resisting individuals, as well as the process whereby some members of the elite have made apparent accommodations and adjustments, have slowly personalized relationships between the clergy and some members of the elite again, so that now, once again, relationships between the clergy and the elite vary from individual to individual. However, in those cases in which an active member of the clergy again maintains a good relationship with a member of the elite it tends to be a transformed relationship on both sides. Other relationships between members of the clergy and members of the elite have either deteriorated or have gone from bad to worse.

Clashes with the elite, for example in the aftermath of the temporary closure of Marcopper, have, however, confirmed BCC-CO structural analysis of elite opposition to a more egalitarian social order. While relationships between the clergy and the elite have become more personalized again over time, personalization has not undermined or replaced structural analysis; it does, however, reflect a

recognition on the part of the elite that a structural position cannot be adopted simplistically, in practice, because elite responses have proven to be varied and sometimes unexpected.

Reproduction and Transformation at the Village Level

Whereas the clergy are the prime mediators of the BCC-CO program in the towns, the BCC-CO lay leaders are the program's middle-men vis-a-vis the peasants and laborers of Marinduque, especially in the villages. As I elaborated in chapter nine, the BCC-CO lay staff of Marinduque have a much less ambivalent relationship with the peasants they are organizing, than the clergy have vis-a-vis the changes they must implement among the elite. For the BCC-CO lay staff the program's perspectives are their primary inspiration and responsibility, and their relationship with the peasants they are organizing is a new relationship, unhampered by established expectations. Also, unlike the clergy, the BCC-CO core staff are not in the delicate position of being financially dependant upon, or even socially indebted to, the subjects of their organizing efforts. In fact, the program pays them a salary that offers them a degree of independence, and that has transformed their own working lives.

These practical factors undoubtedly contribute to the wholehearted embrace of the program by the BCC-CO lay leaders. Of great importance, also, is the "conversion" experience I described in chapter nine. The BCC-CO core staff proved themselves to be very adept at manipulating traditional religious symbols and at transforming traditional practices to reflect the new exegesis; but they also expressed an intensely personal experience of their religiosity and referred to the spiritual guidance they receive as an important force in their daily organizing work. The powerful linkage of spiritual experience to the social thesis inherent in the BCC-CO program produces the fervour and total commitment to their work shown by the lay leaders.

I call the process of linking faith to the BCC-CO social thesis one of "conversion" as it constitutes a personal journey towards a new understanding of the relationship between religion and everyday life that is not immediately accessible or obvious but takes time to master and embody. In interviews with converts to various local protestant sects I encountered a similar sense of excitement, of conscious and very stimulating discovery and insight. Both BCC-CO converts and converts to protestantism were generally more eager and able to explain, and even to fervently argue the case

for, their new found insights and beliefs than were traditional Catholics.

Finally, the high degree of reproduction of the perspectives of the two main BCC-CO national level ideologies is undoubtedly also attributable to regular and structured contacts between BCC-CO core staff and the Manila office. These encounters, as well as the monthly meetings of the core staff, ensure and enforce orthodoxy in the face of the alternative perspectives and views offered by local culture, knowledge and aims with which the BCC-CO workers are daily confronted in their organizing activities in the villages.

The reproduction of national level perspectives and the reinterpretation of traditional religious symbols, practices, and narratives to reflect these perspectives is readily observable in the many seminars that the lay leaders prepare and present at diocesan centers and in the villages. The lay leaders also provided me with some examples of ways in which they transformed traditional religious practices of the poor. In addition to the seminars, the regular Bible-sharing sessions in organized BCCs are another formal vehicle through which the perspectives of the program are linked to traditional Christian narratives.

Having reviewed reasons why the core staff are committed to the program and reproduce national level

perspectives, I explored forces that could lead to transformations of the perspectives of the core staff through their organizing practices and their mediation of the program to the villages. Among these are the fact that the BCC-CO core leaders are themselves of peasant backgrounds, and so are intimately familiar with the world view and the everyday practical aspects of peasants' lives. In mediating the program to the grass roots the core staff are confronted daily with local perspectives, strategies and aims that are familiar, and on some level "reasonable," to the activists. Simultaneously, the core staff must adapt to village culture, practices and knowledge to some degree in order to be accepted and to communicate effectively. From my research it is apparent that experienced core leaders do indeed communicate well with villagers.

The experiences, which BCC-CO staff encounter in the villages, could conceivably reflect back on the understandings of the core staff themselves and allow them to re-evaluate the basic tenets and underlying assumptions rising out of the two main ideologies of the BCC-CO program. In fact, this does not occur. Rather, villagers' perspectives, everyday practices and strategies are generally reviewed and evaluated by the core staff from the perspective of the program; a perspective that they have adopted and internalized.

For example, peasant forms of resistance and relations with the elite are explained as products of "false consciousness" and the reluctance of villagers to devote time to the BCC-CO program is often interpreted as an example of negative Filipino values such as kanya kanya. In fact, activists' responses to their inability to get peasants to adapt their daily practices to the demands of the program, at times are ironically reminiscent of elite explanations of why peasants do not conform to their demands on them. Generally, forces promoting orthodoxy, such as the monthly meetings, override forces that could lead to transformations of the BCC-CO core staffs' insights.

While the process of mediation from the diocesan level, and the confrontation with village level social arrangements and cultural expectations, does not noticeably impact on the perspectives of the core staff, these processes do contribute to transformations of the program itself at the village level. From a survey I conducted among BCC-CO participants in villages around Marinduque, and from the case study I conducted in Botilao, evidence of such local level transformations, and of degrees of indigenization are apparent.

The survey of BCC-CO members from eight parishes illuminated important discrepancies between

the perspectives and goals of the program and the immediate concerns of local participants. The BCC-CO core staff tended to view stumbling blocks to BCC organization from the perspective of the program's two main ideologies. For example, as I indicated above, they cited lack of awareness of the structural basis of inequality and negative Filipino values for inconsistent participation and lack of involvement. The villagers themselves focussed on the effects of poverty on their ability to devote time to the program. Local level participants also expressed hesitation about becoming involved in open and organized protest. And, they cited as reasons for their involvement in the program a traditional sense of duty to be involved in religious or Church work. While the long term perspective and broad scope of the BCC-CO program's goals for social change inspire and excite the salaried core staff, they cannot remove the immediate economic stresses that engage the everyday lives of villagers. This was apparent in the responses of many local BCC-CO participants who expressed regret at the fact that they could not be more active due to economic reasons.

These differences of perspective between the core staff and local participants were also reflected in my discussions with residents of Botilao. The case study in Botilao, furthermore, illuminated other

possible sources of transformation of the program at the local level. One aspect of my research in the village encompassed a review of how BCC-CO structures and funds had been introduced to the village. I discovered that the logistics of mediation by the core staff, as well as social, cultural and geographic realities of the village, shaped the process of introducing the BCC-CO program to Botilao.

As I outlined, existing local structures, networks, kin groups and neighborhood circles affected membership and participation in the newly introduced BCC-CO structures. Similarly, villagers who held geographically or socially marginal status in the village tended to remain marginal to the program as well, despite eventual efforts to reach these people by the core leaders staying in Botilao. Existing divisions in the village, due to the conflict over Marcopper, also remained a source of division with regard to membership in BCC-CO structures and activities. Finally, I indicated ways in which the newly introduced structures became vehicles for local aims and goals of the involved segment of the village.

With respect to the two main ideologies of the BCC-CO program, interviews among BCC-CO members of Botilao indicated that the intricacies of the Marxist based social thesis of the program, as presented in

seminars, were not in fact readily adopted or understood. Villagers tended to interpret the social aspects of the program in terms that were already part of their own discourse about the differences between themselves and the elite, and about the hardships of poverty. This is also evident in the survey responses I received in which one woman suggested that if only the elite were not so stingy and would contribute to the program financially it could be more successful.

What becomes apparent, however, is that although the details of the social thesis underlying the BCC-CO program are not readily adopted, villagers do recognize and respond to the general arguments that are made and themselves display a shared indigenous analysis of the power held by the wealthy and the injustices that they are prone to suffering because of these inequalities. In the seminars these expressions by villagers are used as the starting point for consciousness raising about the structural basis for inequality which is supposed to eventually replace indigenous perspectives. But in the village it appears that, more often than not, indigenous expressions and analyses continue to be used, albeit with a greater sense of legitimation derived from the seminars.

Villagers, both in Botilao and as reflected in the diocesan survey I conducted, do largely concur

with BCC-CO cultural analyses. Negative cultural traits are commonly referred to by villagers as the reason people do not become involved in the program or do not dedicate more time to it. While these opinions may have been influenced by seminars and interactions with the core staff, they are also part of a wider social discourse reflected, and rooted for a part, in the educational system.

The linkage between social justice, social action and Catholicism is, again, generally retained in much less detail, and often in more traditional terms than are presented in seminars. What is clearly recognized is that the Church is concerned for the well being of the poor and is strongly committed to involvement the villages for the first time. The "marriage" between religious conviction and the social thesis underlying the BCC-CO program, which in part motivates the core staff, is not experienced in the same way by most villagers.

The new exegesis, as taught, is but partially adopted by local BCC-CO participants. Notions such as being "co-creators with Christ," which are linked to the need for structural social action, are not reflected as such. But more general understandings, that Christ loves and cares for the poor, and that villagers should care for one another, are reflected.

An example that shows that the new exegesis has not entirely taken hold is that I could find no cases in Botilao of spontaneous reinterpretations, by local BCC-CO participants, of existing village religious symbols or practices to reflect the new exegesis. Rather, BCC-CO practices, such as Bible-sharing, are slowly starting to reflect and respond to existing village culture.

The dominant religious perspectives and practices of the village remain the traditional ones, with BCC-CO religious interpretations and social messages "added on" to greater or lesser extent by various participants. What is important, however, is that the central BCC-CO religious and social perspectives do not clash with, or pose problems for, existing understandings of the poor, as they do for the elite. While the full extent of BCC-CO social theory and its exegetical links with Catholicism largely continue to mystify, despite the seminars, the basic concept that the poor suffer unjustly and that God cares about their suffering is one villagers readily accept. That this knowledge should translate into concerted, overt, social action to actually challenge and transform existing conditions is more problematic for most villagers.

I have emphasized above the understandings of

the majority of village level BCC-CO participants, at least for Botilao. I should mention that there are signs that for some villagers the conversion experience I described for the core staff is occurring. Erlinda's discussions with me displayed not only a higher degree of discourse and perspectives from the seminars but also a high degree of personal transformation. In most cases, this may be expected to come about through extended and intensive exposure to the ideas of the BCC-CO program through the seminars.

In Botilao there are also examples of BCC-CO participants who have become extraordinarily committed to the program through practice. I am thinking of Ka Jandro and Jaime and their families. In the case of Ka Jandro, details of the social thesis of the program are still but vaguely understood and he has little time for seminars, but he has committed himself through action. His personal relationships with the clergy and the BCC-CO core leaders in the village provided the conditions necessary for his decision to take action.

Finally, I would like to address the fact that, while religious experience remains a powerful reality in the lives of most villagers, they are also very well aware of the ways in which shared religious perspectives may be called upon in negotiations with the elite, and so they are also able to "manipulate"

religiosity. There is already a strong sense of social justice and injustice at the village level, partly rooted in and expressed through Christian perspectives. The ability to translate these feelings into real gains is, of course, limited by the immense power differential between the wealthy and the poor. This remains a major stumbling block, even with BCC-CO social insights. The "power" of the movement relies on the expected desire of ideologically enlightened peasants to become united and take collective action. But peasants unenlightened about structural analysis also share a discourse and understanding of their oppression that under extreme conditions can translate into concerted and open action. In normal conditions, however, the fear of economic and physical reprisals serves to suppress such action.

To summarize this section, I believe that the approach I have taken, tracing the BCC-CO program over three levels, has led to important insights into the workings of this program. This has involved focussing on: how ideological perspectives and religious interpretations of the program are produced, reproduced and transformed through the mediation of various middle-men; the confrontation with local cultural knowledge, aims and practices; and the experience of religiosity of those involved. The ideological

components of the program are shown to play a very different role at different levels and for various participants.

Ultimately, for the clergy, nuns, and lay leaders who are committed to creating a society characterized by social justice and equality and to rooting out the suffering of poverty, one can see that indeed Marxism and post-Vatican II Christianity are very compatible in their shared idealism and ultimate utopian visions based on social and, for Christianity, moral justice. Together, the ideals of these two philosophies serve to inspire and motivate. Marxism, furthermore, serves the perceived need of intellectual program activists to root the program in "scientific" and "modern" social principles. Marxism also provides an important link with nationalist sentiments by stressing the universal nature of the plight of the poor, their essential commonality nation-wide, and by providing a single set of liberating principles for peasants and laborers throughout the Philippines.

For the clergy, unlike for the lay leaders, putting structural insights into practice vis-a-vis the elite does reveal an underlying tension with Christian notions of the universal brotherhood of man. Furthermore, as I outlined in chapter five, there are points of incompatibility at the local level between

the underlying assumptions of Marxism, and emic understandings of relations between peasants and elites, resistance, and power. While these emic understandings also could provide the basis for resistance they are not valued, as such, by the "conscientized" core staff members.

In this sense the BCC-CD activists appear to concur with analysts of BCC movements, such as Gismondi (1986) and Reed (1984), who insist that people's empirical statements and understandings are not the place to start if one wishes either to understand the underlying realities of social life (Gismondi) or if one wishes to organize people to change these realities (Reed). I would hesitate to argue that a BCC rooted in local interpretations and knowledge could be more successful in a protracted struggle against a powerful mining corporation. But a greater appreciation for the contextualized validity of local knowledge and experiences may allow BCC-CD activists to better understand local practices, which in turn may eventually make the movement more accessible to more villagers. Also, a greater understanding of local perspectives may make BCC-CD lay leaders less likely to fall back on basically elite and conservative evaluations of peasants when their efforts are not responded to as they would hope.

At the village level BCC-CO ideology still plays a minimal role. Traditional religious perspectives and local strategies vis-a-vis the elite, based on local practice and knowledge, still dominate and indigenize BCC-CO perspectives. There are, however, some examples of villagers who are starting to experience the marriage of new religious insights and the BCC-CO social thesis and are becoming aware of the broader nation-wide implications of the program. For these villagers, participation in the program does appear to take on personally transformative dimensions. For social action, however, association with the clergy remains more important than ideology. It is this vertical connection that ultimately empowers the people to take action.

Evaluating BCC-CO as a Tool for Liberation and Marinduque as a Case Study

First of all, despite considerable agreement and concentration of viewpoints among BCC-CO activists at the national level, local BCC-CO units come in a very wide variety of forms. An important factor that accounts for variations between local level BCC-CO programs is the role that local initiators, usually members of the clergy, play in determining, for example, the degree of political expression of the

program and what kinds of social action will be taken. Other important and related factors are such local realities as historical socio-economic conditions of the region, ethnic make-up, geographic realities, and the specific nature of the problems facing the people.

I believe that the circumstances I experienced while studying BCCs in Isabela, in 1984, are in some ways more representative of the conditions faced by the BCC-CO movement, and other BCC programs, across the country than are the relatively peaceful conditions of Marinduque. The differences between Isabela and Marinduque may be reduced to a few main points: 1) there is less of a history of organized struggle between peasants and members of the elite in Marinduque, 2) because there is no permanent NPA presence, and accompanying military frenzy, there is less terror of physical violence and less polarization among the population, 3) the population is considerably less politicized and aware of structural forms of analysis.

These differences must be kept in mind when drawing broad conclusions based on this case study. Nonetheless, I believe that the central analytical foci and findings of this study, the basic characteristics of ideological mediation between BCC-CO levels, the role that local culture plays at each stage, and the

role that experience of religiosity plays, are elements that could form a recognizable core of any BCC-CO case study. Furthermore, many aspects of the dynamics that arose during the protracted environmental struggle against Marcopper, including the threat of physical violence, are undoubtedly representative of other struggles against powerful organizations encountered by BCC organizers and participants throughout the country.

Keeping the above mentioned considerations in mind we may now ask an important question: does the BCC-CO program in fact lead to liberation of the poor and oppressed? More specifically, does the program lead, as hoped, to economic and political liberation, to liberation of consciousness, and to liberation of action?

If we start with the question of economic inequality, oppression and suffering we may approach this problem on two levels: the day to day experience of struggle for survival by the poor, and the structural social institutions that perpetuate poverty. While most peasants are engulfed in the first, the program is ultimately concerned with directly challenging structures and relationships that perpetuate economic oppression. On the whole, the socio-economic projects developed by the BCC-CO program in Marinduque to aid villagers and the poor of the

towns to meet their daily needs are not highly successful. This is a common evaluation of such small scale efforts nation-wide. From my own case study I would point to lack of funding, lack of supervision and technical expertise, in other words personnel, and perhaps the role of ideological constraints on certain kinds of ventures, such as entrepreneurship, as contributing factors. In any case, these projects have not proven to be able to replace the lost source of livelihood provided by a healthy bay nor have they been able to compete with the offer of jobs by Marcopper, nor have they systematically improved the conditions of the poorest sector of the barrio people.

With regard to structural economic and political struggles, to liberation of consciousness, and to liberation of action, we must look at the struggle against pollution from Marcopper by the effected fishermen of Calancan Bay. The history of the struggle against the mine reveals a number of things. First of all, the Church proved highly effective in organizing pastoral councils and BCCs in the effected area. Undoubtedly, the high level of trust held by the clergy among the people and the villagers' interest in religious involvement and a relationship with the clergy played an important role. As there were originally many village officials who were eager to

protest against the tailings this factor also undoubtedly facilitated village level organization.

The degree to which structural analysis played a role in motivating or activating the people is, as I have mentioned above, minimal, as its principles do not appear to have been widely adopted. But there is no doubt that the people understood that they were being unfairly treated and that they had a right, even an obligation from a Christian perspective, to protest. The moral legitimation of their protest by the Church must not be underestimated. While this may not be consciousness raising in the most ideal or most complete sense from the perspective of the BCC-CO program, it did convey and enhance the key elements of social justice and the right to protest. This was the message offered to the people by the clergy and the lay leaders involved in the area.

The single most important impetus for direct action by the concerned fishermen was, however, not ideology, nor even the sense of power in unity with other peasants, but the close personal relationships these fishermen had developed with members of the clergy, and the sense that they derived from these relationships that they would be supported and protected as much as possible. The influence of the personal involvement of members of the clergy, such as

the parish priest and the bishop, and their obvious desire to see action taken, was crucial in mobilizing villagers who had developed personal relationships with the clergy.

I do not mean to underestimate the essential opposition to the mine's pollution that already existed among villagers themselves. Villagers had started protest against the mine even before the Church became involved in the area. Nor do I mean to underestimate the importance of strength in unity. Undoubtedly the joining of villagers from the whole region of the bay, via the pastoral councils, was a powerful strategy. But even when this unity broke down, the involved fishermen continued their struggle, supported by their vertical links with the clergy.

Finally, then, the organization of villagers in BCCs and pastoral councils did culminate in concrete action against the mine, in the way of a court challenge, and even in a victory, albeit short lived. At the time the three complainants were chosen to represent the fishermen who were organized in pastoral councils and BCCs, they knew themselves to be supported by a large number of their peers and took on their task with some measure of confidence and pride. Of course the mine did not remain idle in the face of this threat, and by the time the drawn out court case

finally culminated in a verdict against the mine the complainants had become virtually isolated. They did not, however, abandon their course of action.

As a footnote to the power of organization, I might add that at the joint rally against the mine of 1989, government officials were surprised at the large number of participants the Church was able to contribute by mobilizing organized BCC members from all over Marinduque. Despite calls from government representatives at all levels, the elected officials were not nearly so successful in mobilizing people to take part.

Another reading of this history might emphasize the fact that in the end almost all key battles were lost to the greater power and wealth of the mine and the local political structures that supported it: the mine ultimately resumed operation. It may be pointed out that in key villages once dedicated pastoral council members were persuaded to side with the mine and that overall the pastoral councils, the BCCs, and even the local parish priest were immobilized and silenced in the wake of the 1988 rally against the Church: a situation from which the village organizations have not fully recovered to this day. It may, further, be pointed out that the wider political battle was also lost as the Barangay Council elections,

of 1989, saw Marcopper employees post major gains as village officials, even in Botilao. And, finally, despite concerted effort by the Church and BCC-CO activists from Calancan Bay, Marcopper has been successful in opening a second mine in Marinduque, in 1992, which poses new environmental dilemmas. Although the tailings are no longer dumped in the bay there is no guarantee that tailings will not eventually again be dumped to Calancan Bay.

This reading of events in Marinduque raises the question of whether Church-led progressive organization can truly change local level power relations and injustices. Mulder (1990:7) notes that, while some analysts see the Church as a possible balance for right wing forces in the Philippines, it is limited in its political potential because it cannot formally take part in the political arena as a party. I would argue that in order to judge political influence or potential one should not look only at formal political structures but at political attitudes and understandings of the people. The BCC-CO seminars and Bible-sharing activities do offer new or enhanced understandings of concepts that are central to political life. These include notions of power, authority, legitimacy, and justice.

In his important book exploring the

relationship between the language of early Christian conversion in the Philippines and new notions of power and authority that were introduced to Tagalog society through translated Christian texts, Raphael (1988) illuminates the long-term effects of political meanings embedded in religious discourse. It is from this linguistic position that Raphael states that "[r]eligious conversion was crucial to the consolidation of Spanish power in the Philippines" (Raphael 1988:7). In the same vein, the "re-Christianization" of Marinduque, proposed by Bishop Lim (1981), is crucial as the basis for resistance to now established power relations, as it offers understandings of power, authority and justice through the medium of new Christian interpretations and meanings which challenge existing inequalities and legitimize protest. While these understandings are not simply adopted locally, where they complement existing knowledge and values, they enrich those understandings.

Furthermore, although the struggle against Marcopper did not result in a clear victory for the BCC activists of Calancan Bay it has fermented a powerfully committed core of villagers who have been transformed through their action and are ready to struggle again should the opportunity arise. As the BCC-CO organization is well aware, committing to action is at

least as powerful a means of conversion and personal transformation as the more intellectual process of adopting and internalising a social thesis. As Levine (1989:207) has pointed out:

Even if 'power' is not 'taken,' the experience of discussion, organization, struggle, and action can nurture an independent popular consciousness and in this way make possible continued resistance to authority and sustained struggle for change. This is what lays down a cultural foundation for change, and undergirds long term transformations in the meaning and possibilities 'politics' holds for popular groups....

There is no doubt that the establishment of a BCC in Botilao, especially given the dramatic action its participants became involved in, has radically changed the lives of those involved and has had an impact on power balances, social arrangements, and traditional thinking about the Church and about protest in the village at large. On an even wider scale, one may then suggest that the BCC-CO movement, as one of many progressive movements working at the "grass roots" level in the Philippines, while winning some battles and losing others, is influencing the shape of Philippine politics by offering an alternative way of analyzing everyday reality and of responding to it.

A hopeful sign of change that may be coming about in this way are the recent (1992) elections in the Philippines. While at the national level the

political picture was still dominated by the established political elite, at a number of local level elections there was a remarkable shift away from traditional candidates to more progressive ones. According to the Institute for Popular Democracy in Manila an important reason for this shift may be found in the growing influence of progressive NGO's that are active at the local level (Hautvast 1992).

NOTES

1. I am referring to such recent publications as Voltair's Bastards: The Dictatorship of Reason in the West (1992) by John Ralston Saul and Bryan Appleyard's book Understanding the Present: Science and the Soul of Modern Man (1992).

GLOSSARY

Albularyo	herbal healer, also faith healer
Anting-anting	magic amulet
Antipo	penitential practice; in Marinduque the flagellation on Good Friday that starts at 12:00 noon.
Aswang	supernatural evil beings that share some characteristics with witches
Bahala ang Diyos	leave it to God; trust or faith in God's grace and assistance, relying on God
Bahala na	an attitude indicating a lack of concern or willingness to take responsibility
Balanggot	leaf hat made of buri palm, used in penitential practices
Balete	a large tree, a favorite dwelling place of supernatural beings
Balis	an illness believed to be brought on unintentionally through the interaction of two people
Banca	narrow native boat with outriggers
Barangay	political term for the smallest government unit; also used as another word for barrio
Barong Tagalog	man's formal wear
Barrio	village
Barrio babad	used in Marinduque to describe the "immersion" of priests in the villages

Batasang Pambansa	National Assembly
Batikan	a specialist; someone who is expert in or famous for something
Bayan	town; country; fatherland
Buhos	to pour; baptism ritual performed by a lay person
Buri	leaves of the buri palm
Camangan	myrrh
Karosa	carriage for religious statues, or float
Cavan	measure of 75 litres; sack of unhusked rice weighing about 46 kilos
Centro	the centre, especially of a municipality
Convento	presbytery
Despedida	farewell party
Duwende	dwarf, elf
Engkanto	enchanted, non-human beings
Fiesta	feast in honour of a patron saint
Flagelantes	those who flagellate themselves, usually for religious reasons and during Holy Week
Gaya gaya	a competitive desire to maintain or achieve social prominence
Hermana/Hermano	a very religious woman/man, one who is "always going to the church"; prestigious Catholic ritual position held by a woman/man which entails responsibility for public ritual events, usually related to the devotion to a saint
Hiya	shame, embarrassment

Kaingin	slash and burn agriculture
Kalbaryuhan	dramatization of Christ's nailing to the cross; in Marinduque this word is often used as sinakulo is in other places
Kanya kanya	an attitude indicating a primary concern for self and close others such as immediate family
Kapre	a giant, or ogre, believed by many to be malicious and dangerous
Katang	crab
Komadre/Kompadre	a ritual co-mother/co-father through the sponsorship of child in baptism, confirmation or wedding. The parent of the child and the sponsor address each other with these terms; also a term used between close friends or to create the impression of closeness
Kubol	tent; a temporary structure erected for the purpose of sheltering the pasyon singers.
Kulam	the curse or spell of a mangkukulam
Laban	to fight
Mabuhay	a greeting, to wish someone a long or good life
Manana (attitude)	tomorrow; (having the tendency to procrastinate)
Mangkukulam	someone who is able to place a curse on others, either out of anger or as a paid service to someone else.
Mayayabang	braggarts
Misa de gallio	dawn mass, or mass of the cock
Moro	term used for Muslim Filipinos, especially from Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago

Nazareno	the image of Christ used during Holy Week; this image frequently has a crown of thorns and maroon tunic with gold trim and carries the cross
Negritos	general term used to refer to the various indigenous groups thought to be the original inhabitants of the Philippines
Ningas kugon (or cogon)	easily losing interest in something
Nipa	leaves of the nipa palm
Nito	tough dark brown vine
Padikan	glued
Pagi	sting-ray
Pakikipagkapwatao	treating other people as yourself, with the dignity deserving of human beings
Pakikisama	positive or harmonious interpersonal relationships and willingness to accommodate others to achieve this harmony
Palay	the rice plant; unhusked rice
Panata	vow, usually religious
Panlalawigan	province
Pasyon	the long, poetic native text that recounts the history of the world from creation through the life and death of Christ and a few events thereafter; the ritual enactment of this text during Lent; the passion and death of Christ
Pilanombre	alum
Po	a form that indicates respect or politeness; sir/ma'am
Poblacion	the town proper, the centre of the municipality

Pugutan	beheading; in Marinduque the part of the Longinus ritual where Longinus is beheaded
Putong	to crown; In Marinduque ritual in which a celebrant is crowned
Romero	medicinal plant
Salubong	to meet or greet someone; ritual performed at dawn on Easter morning that enacts the meeting of Mary and the risen Christ
Santo Rosario	the image of Mary of the Holy rosary
Santos	saints and their statues
Sara-sari	small store selling a wide variety of everyday items
Sinakulo	folk drama based on the pasyon text that is climaxed by the re-enactment of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ
Sitio	hamlet
Suwerte	luck
Talisay	a tree that is the common dwelling place of supernatural beings such as engkanto, this tree also provides products, leaves, seeds, sap that help to guard against supernatural beings
Tao	person, human being
Tawas	alum
Tianak	an evil supernatural being that takes the form of a crying baby that will kill anyone who tries to care for it, especially a woman who tries to breast feed it
Tuba	alcoholic beverage made from the stem of the coconut flower

Utang na loob	literally inner debt, or debt of gratitude
Via Crucis	way of the cross; ritual enactment of Christ's way to the cross

NOTE: This glossary follows the spelling used in this thesis. Many Tagalog words may be correctly spelled using foreign letters and diphthongs or their Tagalog substitutes. Some words may be spelled in a wide variety of ways, e.g. Karosa (Tagalog letters and spelling), or carrosa (Demetrios 1978:337), or carroza (Fernandez 1980:213).

ABBREVIATIONS

ABAKADA	<u>Anti Base Kilusang Demokratiko</u> (Democratic Anti-Base Movement)
AI	Amnesty International
AMRSMP	Association of Major Religious Superiors of Men in the Philippines
AMRSP	Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines
AMRSWP	Association of Major Religious Superiors of Women in the Philippines
ANP	Alliance for New Politics
ASI	Asian Social Institute
BBC	Bishops-Businessmen's Conference (for Human Development)
BCC-CO	Basic Christian Community - Community Organizing
BEC	Basic Ecclesial Communities
BISIG	<u>Bukluran Para sa Ikauunlad ng Sosyalistang Isip at Gawa</u> (Association for the Advancement of Socialist Theory and Practice)
CACC	Christian Anti-Communist Crusade
CAF-GU	Citizens' Armed Forces - Geographical Unit
CAP	Catholic Action of the Philippines
CARP	Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program
CBCP	Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines

CCP	Christian Communities Program
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CLO	Congress of Labour Organization
CNL	Christians for National Liberation
CPAR	Congress for a People's Agrarian Reform
CPP	Communist Party of the Philippines
DECS	Department of Education Culture and Sports
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
EAPI	East Asian Pastoral Institute
ECD	Ecumenical Centre for Development
EDSA	Epifanio de los Santos Avenue
EMB	Environmental Management Bureau
EMJP	Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace
FIDOC	Filippijnen Informatie en Documentatie Centrum
FDC	Freedom from Debt Coalition
FFF	Federation of Free Farmers
FFW	Federation of Free Workers
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ICCO	Dutch protestant development organization
ICSI	Institute on Church and Social Issues
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPC	Institute of Philippine Culture
ISO	Institute of Social Order
JICA	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
KASAPI	<u>Kapupungan ng mga Sandigan ng Pilipinas</u> (Assembly of the Pillars of the Philippines)

KMU	<u>Kilusang Mayo Uno</u> (May first movement)
LAKASDIWA	<u>Lakas ng Diwang Kayumanqqi</u> (people power)
LAPVIIR	Laymen's Association for Post Vatican II Reforms
LFI	Lay Formation Institute
LIC	Low Intensity Conflict
LOI	Letter of Intent
LUSSA	Luzon Secretariat for Social Action
MNLF	Moro National Liberation front
MSFC	Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Conference
NAPRU	National Priests and Religious Union
NASSA	National Secretariat for Social Action
NCSO	National Census and Statistics Office
NDCP	National Defense Committee of the Philippines
NDF	National Democratic Front
NEDA	National Economic Development Agency
NMCL	National Movement for Civil Liberties
NPA	New People's Army
NFCC	National Pollution Control Commission
NPDSP	<u>Nagkakaisang Partido Demokratikong Sosyalistang Pilipinas</u> (United Democratic Socialist Party of the Philippines)
NWAPCC	National Water and Air Pollution Control Commission
PAB	Pollution Adjudication Board
PAHRA	Philippine Association of Human Rights Advocates
PBSP	Philippine Business for Social Progress

PCPR	Promotion of Church People's Rights
PDO	Poor, Deprived and Oppressed
PEC	People's Economic Council
PECCO	Philippine Ecumenical Committee for Community Organization
PISA	Priests' Institute for Social Action
PKP	Pagpupulong sa Kristiyanong Pamumuhay (BEC Gospel Reflection Guide)
PO	People's Organization
PPI	Philippine Priests Inc.
SAC	Social Action Centre
SIR	Smooth Interpersonal relationships
SPP	Socialist Party of the Philippines
UNIDO	United Democratic Opposition
UP	University of the Philippines
UST	University of Santo Tomas
WB	World Bank
YUPPEACE	Young Professionals for Peace

APPENDIX I: Socio-Economic and Political Statistics

1. Employment Status by Sex and Urban-Rural (1987)

(unit:in 1,000)

<u>Province</u>	<u>Both Sexes</u>				<u>Male</u>				<u>Female</u>			
	<u>Total</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>U</u>	<u>L.F.</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>U</u>	<u>L.F.</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>U</u>	<u>L.F.</u>
Marin- duque	123	65	11	48	58	42	7	9	64	22	3	39
Urban	18	9	3	6	8	4	1	3	10	5	13	3
Rural	105	55	8	42	50	38	6	6	55	17	2	35

Source Integrated Survey of Households, NCSD, Oct. 1988

Note: Each figure may not add up to total because of rounding

E = Employed

U = Unemployed

L.F. = Labour Force

2. Sectoral Distribution of Labour Force (1980)

<u>Sector</u>	<u>Gainful Workers</u>	<u>Share (%)</u>
<u>Primary</u>		
Agriculture	26,935	59.0
(Crop Production)	22,074	48.4
(Fishery)	4,700	10.3
(Others)	161	0.3
<u>Secondary</u>		
Mining	3,060	6.7
Manufacturing	2,364	5.2
Utility	178	0.4
Construction	1,434	3.1
<u>Tertiary</u>		
Commerce	2,520	5.5
(Wholesale)	302	0.7
(Retail)	2,218	4.8
Transportation	1,517	3.3
Services	6,704	14.7
Others	942	2.1
<u>Total</u>	<u>45,654</u>	<u>100.00</u>

Source: 1980 Census of Population and Housing, Marinduque
 Note: "Others" signify activities not adequately defined

3. Cropped Acreage, Production and Yield

Crop	Harvested Area (ha)	Unit Yield (ton/ha)	Production (ton)
1. Paddy (Including upland rice)	10,894	1.524	16,606
2. Corn	1,020	0.626	639
3. Banana	5,791	0.714	4,135
4. Mango	67	0.555	37
5. Papaya	52	1.923	100
6. Citrus (calamansi)	48	1.833	88
7. Mungbean	130	0.677	88
8. Coconut (1)	33,200	0.988	32,814

Source: Department of Agriculture (1988)
(1) Philippine Coconut Authority (1987)

4. Supply and Demand of Rice

(unit: metric ton)

Year	Demand (estimate)	Production in Marinduque	Supply by NFA	Commercial Inflow
1984	19,904	10,052	3,282	5,468
1985	20,333	10,719	3,736	6,157
1986	20,757	11,486	270	9,226
1987	21,172	12,995	841	7,531
1988	21,581	8,717	2,894	10,941

Source: National Food Authority, Marinduque

Note: 1. Rice demand is estimated at per capita consumption of 103 kg.

2. Production of rice in Marinduque is estimated from production data of the provincial office of the Department of Agriculture Region IV. A conversion rate of 0.65 is used for conversion from palay to milled rice.

5. Flow of Agricultural Commodities (1987)

Commodity		Quality in Ton	
		Balanacan	Santa Cruz
Rice	In	1,324.4	1,442.9
	Out	1.6	0
Corn	In	2.1	0
	Out	4.9	3.5
Banana	In	2.1	0
	Out	239.5	171.2
Vegetables	In	570.3	232.4
	Out	37.0	11.5
Sugar	In	342.5	395.5
	Out	0	0.8
Copra	In	7.0	0
	Out	5,226.0	3,036.4
Animal	In	0	0
	Out	91.2	182.2
Flour	In	207.7	405.3
	Out	0	0

Source: 1. Port Authority Office, Balanacan Port
2. NCSO, Manila

Of the 5,600 ton outflow from Balanacan Port 93% is copra, 4% is bananas, and 3% is other.

Of the 2,456 ton inflow at Balanacan Port 54% is rice, 23% is vegetables, 14% is sugar, 8% is flour, and 1% is other.

Of the 3,405 ton outflow from Santa Cruz Port 89% is copra, 5% is bananas, 5% is animals, and 1% is other.

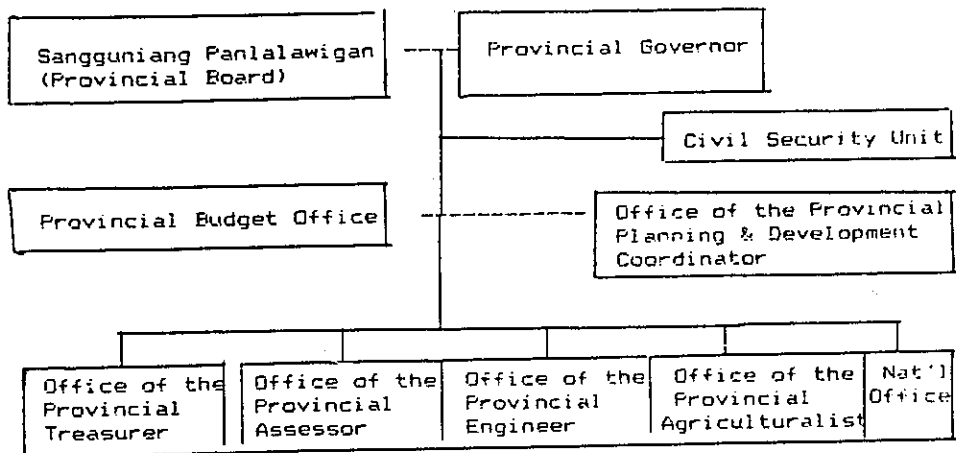
Of the 2,476 ton inflow at Santa Cruz Port 58% is rice, 16% is sugar, 12% is flour, 9% is Vegetables, and 5% is other.

6. Topographical Data

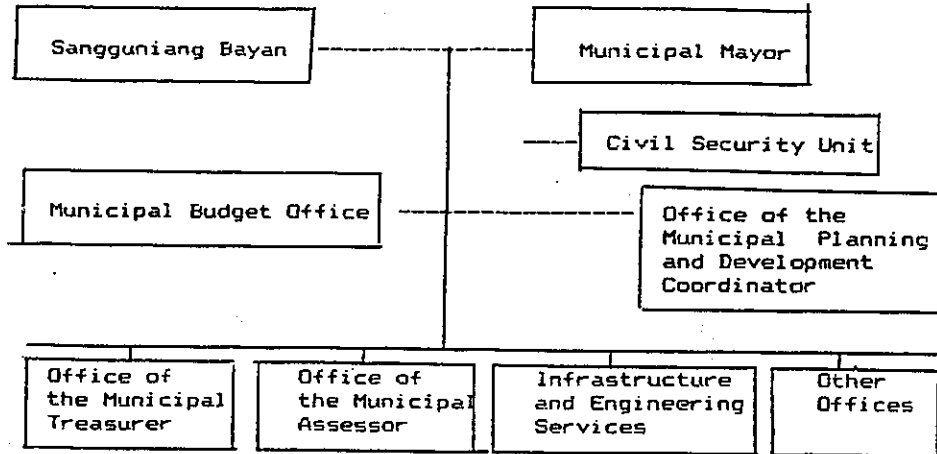
<u>Slope</u> degree	<u>Acreage</u> ha.	<u>Ratio</u> %
0	4,700	5.8
0-3	8,300	10.3
3-8	7,200	9.0
8-15	12,500	15.5
15-18	17,600	21.9
> 18	30,200	37.5

Source: JICA Interim Report 1989 p.18.

i Provincial Political Structures



ii Municipal Political Structures



iii Village Political Structures

Barangay Captain

1. Officer (Kagawad)
2. Officer
3. Officer
4. Officer
5. Officer
6. Officer

iv. Results of 1986 Snap Presidential Election in Marinduque

	<u>Marcos</u>	<u>Aquino</u>
Boac	11,495	5,489
Mogpog	4,979	5,626
Sta. Cruz	6,833	16,447
Torrijos	2,983	5,635
Buenavista	2,830	2,379
Gasán	5,344	4,605
Total	34,464	40,181

APPENDIX II: Letter Left at a Statue of Mary in Santa Cruz (1989)

March 1989

Dearest Mother Mary

I am writing you a letter because through this letter I would like to share my feelings, especially now. I need your help and understanding, and through you, please let your dearest Son Lord Jesus know about my feelings and problems. Mother Mary help me to understand all that is happening in my life. I believe that all these things have a reason, that is why I am asking you to increase what is remaining of my strength and hope. I need some light in my life, why are things as they are? Even though there is a little light in my life it often turns to darkness. Now I am slowly feeling the weakness, I need more strength of will. Please pity me. Help me to pray to your beloved son and dear Lord Jesus. You are the only hope in my life. Help me to change my life. Please have mercy on me and do not abandon me, as well as all those I love in my life. Pity us all, do not let them be apart from me. All of them are very important to me to live happily. I am always crying. I need your sympathy my Mother Mary and Lord Jesus. I need you, I know that I have many sins to you. Please understand what I feel.

Your Child

APPENDIX III: BCC-CO Lay Leaders Survey

The following is the text of the Tagalog questionnaire I distributed, with the assistance of the six BCC-CO core leaders, to local level BCC-CO participants in Marinduque from 8 parishes. I received 66 responses to this questionnaire. English glosses of the questions have been added in brackets.

- 1) Pangalan (name)_____
- 2) Parokya (parish)_____
- 3) ___lalaki (male); ___babae (female) (tsek) (check)
- 4) Gulang (age)_____
- 5) Saan Ipinanganak (where were you born): barangay (village) _____ bayan (town)_____lalawigan (province)_____
- 6) Tirahan (present residence): barangay (village)_____ bayan (town)_____
- 7) ___may asawa (married); ___kasal sa pari (married by priest); ___kasal sa huwes (married by a justice of the peace); ___walang asawa (single); ___biyuda/balo (widowed); ___hiwalay (seperated); ___magkapisan (living common law); ___nag-asawang muli (remarried)
- 8) Bilang ng mga anak (number of children):_____
- 9) Ang iyong Edukasyon (About your education):
- Elementarya (elementary) (ilang taon) (how many years): _____ - Mataas na paaralan (High School) (ilang taon) (how many years)_____ - Kolehiyo (college) (ilang taon)____. Nakatapos (completed degree)? ___oo (yes) ___hindi (no)
- 10) Ikaw ba ay (are you): ___napakahirap (extremely poor); ___mahirap (poor); ___hindi gaanong mahirap (not exactly poor, can manage); ___may kaya (well off); ___mayaman (rich)
- 11) Ikaw ba ay (are you): ___manggagawa (kasama o tauhan) (tenant); ___may ari ng sakahan (landowner)

(kung ganong ilang ektarya) (if so, how many hectares)? _____

12) Sa anong paraan ka kumikita ng ikabubuhay (what is your primary source of income)? _____

13) Ikaw ba ay miyembro ng (are you a member of): *
Barangay Council? ___oo (yes); ___hindi (no)
___muling inihalal (re-elected)? ___bagong halal
(newly elected)?

* Pastoral Council? ___oo; ___hindi. ___pang barangay
(of the village); ___pag-bayan (of the town). Anong
taon nagsimula (since what year)? _____.

* Samahan ng mga MAGKAKABALIKATAN (The Federation of
Workers)? ___oo; ___hindi. Anong taon nagsimula (since
what year)? _____.

* Samahan ng mga kababaihan maliban sa magkakabalikatan
(The Federation of Women other than Magkakabalikatan)?
___oo; ___hindi. Anong taon nagsimula (since what
year)? _____.

* Samahan ng mga magsasaka at mangingisda (The
Federation of Farmers and Fishermen)? ___oo; ___hindi.
Anong taon nagimula (since what year)? _____.

14) Ikaw ba ay katekista (Are you a catechist)?
___oo; ___hindi. Anong taon nagsimula (since what year)?
_____.

15) Anong taon mo naunang narinig ang tungkol sa BCC-
CO (what year did you first hear about BCC-CO)? ___;
BCC-KRISKA? _____.

16) Anong taon ng unang dumalo ka sa iyong BCC seminar
(What year did you attend your first BCC seminar)?
___BCC-CO; ___BCC-KRISKA? _____(tsek) (check). Taon
(year) ___. At saan (And where) _____ Sinong nagbigay
(given by whom) _____.

17) Anong taon ng maging aktibo ka sa BCC (Since what
year have you been active in the BCC)? ___ BCC-CO;
___BCC-KRISKA.

18) Ilang BCC Seminars ang nadaluhan mo na sa iyong
parokya (how many BCC seminars have you attended in
your parish)? ___. Ilang beses sa iba't ibang lugar sa
Marinduque (How many in other places in Marinduque)? At
saan (And where)? _____. Ilang beses sa labas ng
Marinduque (How many outside of Marinduque)? _____. At
saan (And where)? _____.

19) Saang Barangay kayo mayroon BCC (In which barrio is
your BCC)? _____ At ilang pamilya ang kasapi (and how

many families are members)?_____.

20) Alin sa mga sumusunod sa seminars nagkaroon ang inyong BCC (Which seminars has your BCC had)?
 ___BOS; ___BCC-CD orientation; ___Faith-life Integration;
 ___Skills Training; (___communication skills;
 ___problem solving; ___decision making; ___planning
 skills; ___organizing skills); ___Trainers Training;
 ___project management; ___program management;
 ___cooperative seminar; ___research, communication, and
 documentation seminar.
 Sinu-sino ang nagbigay ng mga seminars na ito (who gave
 these seminars)? _____.

21) Ilang kasapi ng inyong BCC ang mayroon BCC- Socio-
 economic projects (how many members of your BCC have
 BCC - Socio-economic projects)?_____.

22) Gaano kandalas bawat buwan nagkakaroon ang inyong
 BCC ng (how often per month does your BCC have): Bible-
 sharing_____; Block Rosary _____.

23) Anong iba't ibang gawain mayroon ang inyong BCC
 (what other activities does your BCC have)? _____.

24) Sa mga sumusunod, alin ang pinakamalaking suliranin
 na nararanasan ng inyong BCC (Of the following, which
 are the biggest obstacles facing your BCC)? Pumili
 lamang ng lima at ihanay sila ng naaayon sa kahalagahan
 (Number 1-5 in order of importance).

___Madalas na pagpapalit ng mga pari sa parokya
 (frequent re-shuffling of the parish priest).

___Pinahahalagahang Kultura ng mga Pilipino katulad ng
 (Philippine cultural values such as): Kanya-kanya,
 utang na loob, ningas kugon, pakikisama.

___Kahirapan ng mga tao na nagiging dahilan upang
 mawalan sila ng panahon tungkol sa BCC (The poverty of
 the people prevents them from spending time on BCC
 events).

___Kakulangan ng mga sininay na lay leaders (lack of
 skilled lay leadership).

___Kakulangan ng kakayahan ng mga pari sa BCC upang
 magtatag at magpalakad sa parokya (lack of
 organizational and motivational skills of the parish
 priest).

___Ayaw ng mga taong magsama-sama upang lumaban sa
 pang-aapi kawalang katarungan o iba't ibang suliranin
 (The people do not like to organize to fight oppression
 or injustices or other problems).

___Kakulangan ng suporta mula sa mga may kaya (lack of
 support from the wealthy).

___Kakulangan ng suportang salapi mula sa samahan (lack of funding in the organization (BCC-CO)).

___Ang kinasanayang kaugalian sa releyhiyon ng mga tao sa barangay (the religious traditions of the barrio people).

___Kalayuan ng barrio mula sa bayan o kahirapan at kakulangan ng mga sasakyan (the remote location of the barrio or transportation difficulties).

___iba pa (other)_____

25) Magbigay ng paliwanag sa inyong napiling tatlong pinakamabigat na sagabal (Please discuss your first three choices at greater length).

1. - _____
2. - _____
3. - _____

The following provides a schematic summary of the answers given to the above survey questions in so far as these are not discussed and analyzed in chapter nine of the text.

3) male respondents: 12
 female respondents: 52
 no answer (n/a): 2

4) 12 respondents were in their 20s
 19 respondents were in their 30s
 13 respondents were in their 40s
 8 respondents were in their 50s
 1 respondent was 64
 12 respondents did not give their age

5+6) 59 of the 66 respondents now live in the same municipality where they were born.
 2 live in a different municipality of Marinduque.
 4 came to Marinduque from another province.
 1 respondent did not provide information.

7) 55 respondents indicated that they were married by a priest.
 6 respondents indicated that they were married by a justice of the peace.
 2 respondents were married but did not elaborate on who married them.
 1 respondent indicated being widowed
 1 respondent indicated to be living common-law
 1 respondent did not provide information.

- 8) 9 respondents had 1 child
 9 respondents had 2 children
 8 respondents had 3 children
 11 respondents had 4 children
 10 respondents had 5 children
 6 respondents had 6 children
 5 respondents had 7 children
 4 respondents had 8 children
 1 respondent had 9 children
 3 respondents did not provide information.
- 9) 34 respondents had completed 6 years of elementary school; 5 respondents had completed 4 years of elementary school; 1 respondent had completed one year of elementary school.
 12 respondents had completed 4 years of High School; 4 respondents had completed 2 years of High School.
 4 respondents had completed 1 year of college; 5 respondents had completed 2 years of college.
 One respondent did not provide information.
- 10) 5 respondents labeled themselves as "extremely poor"
 38 respondents labeled themselves as "poor"
 21 respondents labeled themselves as "not exactly poor"
 2 respondents labeled themselves as "well off."
- 11) 23 respondents indicated that they are tenants
 7 respondents indicated that they are landowners (averaging about 2 ha.)
 8 respondents indicated that they are both landowners and tenants
 28 respondents did not answer this question.
 The high number of respondents who did not answer this question may be related to the fact that most respondents are women who may not consider themselves landowners or tenants.
- 12) 12 respondents listed farming, copra making, and tuba gathering as their main source of income
 3 mentioned animal husbandry
 8 mentioned fishing
 12 named a combination of the above.
 4 respondents named doing laundry as a primary source of income
 9 mentioned other kinds of activities 7 of which entailed selling food.
 18 respondents did not answer this question.

13) 13 respondents indicated that they had been members of their barangay council

21 respondents indicated that they have been members of their pastoral council

28 respondents indicated that they are members of women's organization MAGKABALIKATAN

24 respondents indicated that they were members of the Federation of Women other than Magkabalikatan

17 respondents indicated that they are members of the Federation of Farmers and Fishermen.

14) 28 respondents indicated that they are catechists

17 respondents did not answer this question

All respondents indicated that they became catechists in the 1980s

15) 18 respondents indicated that they had first heard of BCCs between 1982-1985

32 respondents indicated that they had first heard of BCCs between 1986-1989

16 respondents did not answer this question

16) In the cases of respondents who answered this question and the previous one (50), their first BCC seminar was taken within years of first hearing about BCCs and it was held in their own municipality. The people who first introduced the respondents to BCC ideas ranged from Fr. Sunpayco and Sr. Aida Velasquez from Manila to past and present local core lay leaders (see chapter nine) religious sisters (some of whom are no longer in Marinduque) and past and present parish priests of Marinduque.

17) The 45 respondents who answered this question as well as the previous one indicated becoming active in the BCC around the time of their first BCC seminar.

18) Of the 54 respondents who answered this question 20 indicated that they had only taken seminars in their own parish. 32 respondents indicated that they had taken seminars in their own parish and in other parts of Marinduque. And 2 indicated that they had taken seminars in their own parish, in other parts of Marinduque, and outside of Marinduque.

19) The 33 respondents who answered the first part of this question always indicated that their BCC was in the village of their residence. 25 respondents also answered the second part of this question. The number of families they estimated to be involved in their BCC was:

7	(one respondent)
15	(3 respondents)

17	(2 respondents)
22	(2 respondents)
35	(3 respondents)
40	(5 respondents)
100	(one respondent)

Seven respondents simply said "many" and one said "I don't know."

20) For a review of the seminars taken by the 66 participants to this survey see chapter nine.

21), 22), 23) These questions were answered by less than five respondents each.

24), 25) While respondents were asked to number their responses 1-5 in question 24) many placed checks or did not respond making a tabulation of these responses unhelpful. 52 respondents did, however supply extended comments through which they discussed their views about the main obstacles to building BCCs in their area. These comments form the basis for an extended analysis which may be found in chapter nine.

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