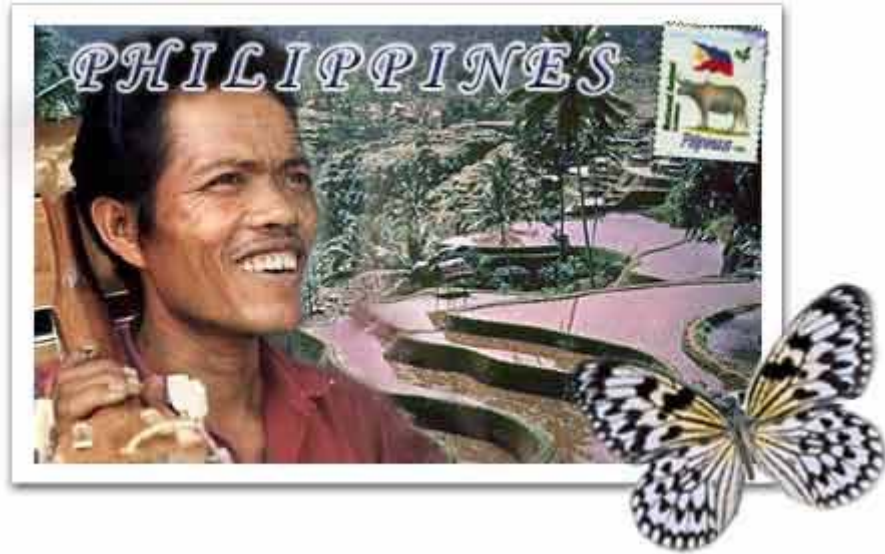


The Philippines in Perspective

An Orientation Guide



Defense Language Institute
Foreign Language Center



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A Brief Profile of the Philippines

Introduction



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Photographer: D. Roger

America's aversion to colonialism differentiates the United States from other great powers throughout history. Since the birth of this nation, the US has had only one colony. That country, which remained in American possession for less than half a century and attained independence and sovereignty in 1946, is the Philippines. Since the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the subsequent US occupation of the Philippines, the two countries have had an intimate but occasionally strained alliance, right up to the present day. "The Philippines in Perspective" will examine this relationship, trace ups and downs, and place it in a broader historical, cultural, and geopolitical context.

The Philippines in Facts and Figures¹

Area

Total: 300,000 sq km (slightly larger than Arizona)
Land: 298,170 sq km
Water: 1,830 sq km
Coastline: 36,289 km
Terrain: mostly mountains with narrow to extensive coastal lowlands

Maritime Claims

Continental shelf: to depth of exploitation
Territorial sea: irregular polygon extending up to 100 NM from coastline as defined by 1898 treaty; since late 1970s has also claimed polygonal-shaped area in South China Sea up to 285 nautical miles (NM) in breadth
Exclusive economic zone: 200 NM

Natural resources

Timber, petroleum, nickel, cobalt, silver, gold, salt, copper

Natural hazards

astride typhoon belt, usually affected by 15 and struck by five to six cyclonic storms per year; landslides; active volcanoes; destructive earthquakes; tsunamis

Population

84,525,639 (July 2002 est.)



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¹ From the website of the CIA World Factbook: <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ph.html>

Age structure

0-14 years: 36.6% (male 15,731,451; female 15,169,264)

15-64 years: 59.7% (male 24,990,500; female 25,478,245)

65 years and over: 3.7% (male 1,399,862; female 1,756,317) (2002 est.)

Population growth rate

1.99% (2002 est.)

Ethnic groups

Christian Malay 91.5%, Muslim Malay 4%,
Chinese 1.5%, other 3%

Religions

Roman Catholic 83%, Protestant 9%,
Muslim 5%, Buddhist and other 3%

Languages

Two official languages - Filipino (based on
Tagalog) and English;
Eight major dialects - Tagalog, Cebuano,
Ilocano, Hiligaynon or Ilonggo, Bicol,
Waray, Pampango, and Pangasinense

Government type

Republic

Capital

Manila

Independence Day

4 July 1946 (from US)

National holiday

Independence Day (from Spain), 12 June (1898); note - 12 June 1898 is the date of independence from Spain, 4 July 1946 is the date of independence from the US

Legal system

Based on Spanish and Anglo-American law; accepts compulsory International Court of Justice (ICJ) jurisdiction, with reservations

Suffrage

18 years of age; universal



Executive branch

Chief of state: President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (since 20 January 2001) and Vice President Teofisto Guingona (since 20 January 2001); note - the president is both the chief of state and



© CIA World Factbook

head of government

Cabinet: appointed by the president with the consent of the Commission of Appointments

Elections: president and vice president elected on separate tickets by popular vote for six-year terms; election last held 11 May 1998 (next to be held 16 May 2004)

Legislative branch

Bicameral Congress or *Kongreso* consists of the Senate or *Senado* (24 seats - one-half elected every three years; members elected by popular vote to serve six-year terms) and the House of Representatives or *Kapulungan Ng Mga Kinatawan* (214 seats; members elected by popular vote to serve three-year terms; note - additional members may be appointed by the president but the Constitution prohibits the House of Representatives from having more than 250 members)

Judicial branch

Supreme Court (justices are appointed by the president on the recommendation of the Judicial and Bar Council and serve until 70 years of age)

Political parties and leaders

Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (New Society Movement) [Imelda Marcos]; Laban Ng Demokratikong Pilipino (Struggle of Filipino Democrats) or LDP [Eduardo Angara]; Lakas [Jose De Venecia, party president]; Liberal Party or LP [Florencio Abad]; Nacionalista Party [Jose Oliveros]; National People's Coalition or NPC [Eduardo Cojuangco]; PDP-Laban [Aquilino Pimentel]; People's Reform Party or PRP [Miriam Defensor-Santiago]



Photo courtesy of Stars & Stripes

Population Economic Data

Population below poverty line: 40% (2001 est.)

Household income or consumption by percentage share:

Lowest 10%: 2%

Highest 10%: 39% (1998)

Inflation rate (consumer prices): 6% (2001 est.)

Labor force: 32 million (2000)

Unemployment rate: 10% (2001)

Labor force - by occupation:

Agriculture 40%, government and social services 19%, services 18%, manufacturing 10%, construction 6%, other 8% (1998 est.)

Industries

Textiles, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, wood products, food processing, electronics assembly, petroleum refining, fishing

Agriculture - Products

Rice, coconuts, corn, sugarcane, bananas, pineapples, mangos, pork, eggs, beef, fish

<i>Island</i>	<i>Regions</i>	<i>Provinces</i>	<i>Products & Industries</i>
Luzon	1: Ilocos	Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, Pangasinan	Furniture, oysters, ceramics, food & fruit processing, fish, prawns, citrus farms, rattan, basketry, bananas, eggs, cattle, chemicals, petrochemicals.
	2: Cagayan Valley	Batanes, Cagayan, Isabela, Nueva Viscaya, Quirino	
	3: Central Luzon	Aurora, Bataan, Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, Pampanga, Tarlac, Zambales	
	4A: Calabarzon	Batangas, Cavite Laguna, Quezon, Rizal	
	4B: Mimaropa	Marinduque, Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Palawan, Romblon	
	5: Bicol	Albay, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Catanduanes, Masbate, Sorsogon	
	CAR (Cordillera Administrative Region)	Abra, Benguet, Ifugao, Kalinga, Apayao, Mountain Province	
	NCR (National Capital Region)	Composed of the cities of Caloocan, Las Piñas, Quezon City, Makati, Manila, Muntinlupa, Parañaque, Pasig, Pasay, Malabon, Mandaluyong, Marikina and Valenzuela and the municipalities of Navotas, Pateros, San Juan and Taguig.	
Visayan Islands	6: Western Visayas	Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Iloilo, Guimaras, Negros, Occidental	Coconut, abaca, food processing, bamboo, bananas, mango, baby's breath, furniture, light engineering, metalworking, cattle, rice
	7: Central Visayas	Bohol, Cebu, Negros Oriental, Siquijor	
	8: Eastern Visayas	Biliran, Eastern Samar, Leyte, Northern Samar, Samar, Southern Leyte	
Mindanao	9: Zamboboanga	Zamboanga Sibugay, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga City, Isabela City	Rubber, seaweed, fish processing, coca, bananas, food processing, wood products, essential oils, orchids, pomelo (grapefruit).
	10: Northern Mindanao	Bukidnon, Camiguin, Misamis Occidental, Misamis Oriental, Lanao del Norte	
	11: Davao Region	Davao City, Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Davao Oriental, Compostela Valley	
	12: Soccskargen	North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, South Cotabato, Saranggani	
	13: Caraga	Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur	
	ARMM (Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao)	Basilan, Sulu, Tawi-tawi, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao	

Debt - external
\$50 billion (2001)

Economic aid - recipient
Official Development Assistance (ODA), \$1.1 billion (1998)

Currency: Philippine peso (PHP)
Exchange rates:
Philippine pesos per US dollar - 51.201 (January 2002), 50.993 (2001), 44.192 (2000), 39.089 (1999), 40.893 (1998), 29.471 (1997)



Telecommunications

Telephones - main lines in use: 3.1 million (2000)
Telephones - mobile cellular: 6.5 million (2000)
Telephone system: General assessment: good international radiotelephone and submarine cable services; domestic and inter-island service adequate
Domestic: domestic satellite system with 11 earth stations
Radios: 11.5 million (1997)
Television broadcast stations: 75 (2000)
Televisions: 3.7 million (1997)

Internet Statistics

Internet country code: .ph
Internet Service Providers (ISPs): 33 (2000)
Internet users: 4.5 million (2002)

Airports: 275 (2001)
Airports - with paved runways: 82
Heliports: 2 (2002)



Military

Branches: Army, Navy (including Coast Guard and Marine Corps), Air Force, paramilitary units
Military manpower - military age: 20 years of age (2002 est.)
Military manpower - availability: Males age 15-49: 21,718,304 (2002 est.)
Military manpower - fit for military service: Males age 15-49: 15,285,248 (2002 est.)
Military manpower - reaching military age annually: Males: 848,181 (2002 est.)
Military expenditures - dollar figure: \$995 million (FY98)
Military expenditures - percent of GDP: 1.5% (FY98)

Disputes - International

Sultanate of Sulu granted Philippines Government power of attorney to pursue his sovereignty claim over Malaysia's Sabah State, to which the Philippines have not fully revoked their claim;

involved in a complex dispute over the Spratly Islands with China, Malaysia, Taiwan, Vietnam, and possibly Brunei

Illicit drugs

Exports locally produced marijuana and hashish to East Asia, the US, and other Western markets; serves as a transit point for heroin and crystal methamphetamine

Geography

Finding the Philippines on the Map

It was the ancient Greeks who coined the term ‘archipelago’ to refer to the myriad islands of the Aegean Sea. The Greeks might as well have been pondering South East Asia and the South China Sea when they came up with this expression, for the combined islands of the Philippines (7,100+) and Indonesia (13,000+) form the greatest island chain on Earth: the Malay Archipelago. The Philippine island group straddles four seas: the Philippine Sea to the east, the South China Sea to the west and north, the Sulu Sea to the Southwest, and the Celebes Sea to the south. Neighbors include



Courtesy of University of Texas Library Map Collection

Taiwan, some 250 miles north of the northern-most city of Aparri; Malaysia, only 50 miles from the southern tip of Palawan; and Indonesia, whose Sunda Islands lie some 150 miles to the south of the Philippine island of Mindanao.

Principal Islands and Island Groupings



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The more than 7,100 islands of the Philippines are conventionally grouped into three sets: the northern group, which includes Luzon and Mindoro; the central Visayan and Palawan Islands, and Mindanao along with the southern Sulu Archipelago. Just eleven islands account for most of the land area and population: Luzon, Mindanao, Palawan, Samar, Negros, Panay, Mindoro, Leyte, Cebu, Bohol, and Masbate.

From the air, these islands appear like a scattering of rocks surrounded by innumerable tiny pebbles and grains. A view from the bottom of the sea, however, would reveal the geological truth that the Philippine Islands form the tops of volcanic mountains rising from the ocean floor. Twenty of these volcanoes are still active. The Mayon Volcano has erupted three times in recent

years: 1993, 2000, and 2001. Mt. Apo is the Philippines' highest volcanic mountain, but the most famous is Mt. Pinatubo, which erupted in 1991 after centuries of slumber.

On 15 June 1991, Mt. Pinatubo, a volcano situated in north-central Luzon, erupted and unleashed five cubic kilometers of molten magma. "In the twentieth century, this (1991) eruption was second in size only to an eruption in Katmai, Alaska, in 1912. [It was] ten times larger than the eruption of Mt. St. Helens in 1980²." Almost 900 people lost their lives as a consequence, but the casualties could have been much worse: thanks to modern science and technology, geologists at the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology were able to predict volcanic activity and the government evacuated the area, thus saving thousands of lives. In a political irony, the US had already agreed to leave Subic Bay Naval Base and the Clark Air Base. The volcano hastened the evacuation, and the destruction that it left in its wake only hastened the US military departure from the Philippines. From an aesthetic viewpoint, Pinatubo spewed a mountain's worth of dust and ash into the atmosphere, resulting in spectacular, deep red sunsets for the next six months round the world³.

Pinatubo is a member of the Zambales Mountains, one of several chains of mostly extinct volcanoes. This range is situated at the western extreme of the Central Luzon Valley. The Sierra Madre, on the other hand, stretches down Luzon's eastern (Pacific) coast. The Cordillera Central range lies roughly parallel, about 50 miles to the west. Mindanao has a similar geological configuration: the principal range is the Diuata Mountains that line the east coast.



With a heavy annual rainfall (70-80 inches)⁴, it comes as no surprise that the Philippines is replete with rivers and lakes. Luzon's rivers include the Cagayan, Agno, Pampanga, Chico, Pasig, and Bicol. The Mindanao River has given that island its name, but it is fed by the Pulangi and Agusan. The Agusan River, in turn, has its source in Lake Lanao. The largest lake in this country, however, is Laguna de Bay, 8 miles southeast of Manila. Lake Taal, 35 miles south of Manila proves that recursion is a natural phenomenon: this lake fills the crater of an extinct volcano. In the middle of the lake, lo and behold, is a small island, in the center of which is yet another crater which contains an even smaller lake!

Climate: Mountain vs. Coastal

Lying so close to the Equator, the climate of the Philippines epitomizes the tropics. In the coastal areas, the temperature usually stays in the mid-80s (all temperatures in °F). In the inland valleys, temperatures may rise to the upper 80s or 90s. High in the mountains, it is cooler. In general, because of the heat and all the surrounding bodies of water, humidity is high, ranging from 70 to 85%. The climate is directly affected by the northeast monsoon from November to April, and the southwest monsoon from May to October. There are three seasons: the (relatively)

² From the website of the US Geological Survey, Cascades Volcano Observatory, http://vulcan.wr.usgs.gov/Volcanoes/Philippines/Pinatubo/description_pinatubo.html

³ For spectacular photographs of the eruption and aftermath, please visit the following web page: <http://kids.earth.nasa.gov/terra/gallery/Originals/pinatuboerupt.jpg>

⁴ From the World Climate website, <http://www.worldclimate.com>

cool dry season from November to February, the hot dry season from March to May, and the wet season from June to October. Climatologists warn that this island nation could face serious problems connected with global warming:



USGS photo

Temperatures are rising over the Philippines and in the surrounding coastal waters. The last decade has been the warmest this century... At the same time as the country has become warmer, the Philippines has also become drier. Annual rainfall has declined by about 6% during the course of the century... There remains a residual rise in sea-level around the Philippines coast, the likely causes of which are warmer ocean waters and melting glaciers in the world's mountain areas⁵.

History

Earliest Human Habitation

It is believed that during the last Ice Age (which ended approximately 10,000 years ago), a land bridge may have connected the Philippines with the Southeast Asian mainland. It was then, goes the theory, that a dark-skinned, short-statured Asian group of hunter-gatherers, the 'Aeta', made their way from the continent to what is now the island of Palawan. Fossilized human bones have been found on Palawan that date back to 22,000 BCE. The remains of prehistoric stone tools date back as far as 30,000 BCE. Thousands of years later, the Spanish would name the descendants of these original Filipinos the 'Negritos,' meaning 'small blacks.' After the Ice Age ended and the land bridge sank, but long before the Spanish, a second group, the Austronesians, arrived by sea from Taiwan. Archaeologists place this date at around 2500 BCE. The Austronesians constituted the founders of the Malay people, who would go on to colonize the Southeast Asian archipelago.



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Hindu Influence: 200 CE

While the Austronesians or 'Proto-Malays' were busy island hopping, an advanced civilization in India, the 'Land of the Veda', was already firmly rooted. And if the Philippine archipelago represents the far eastern edge of south Asia, India signifies the west. In their westward odyssey, the Austronesians would in due course come into contact with China and India. Then a counter-march ensued, fueled by trade: Indians and Chinese began to retrace the steps of their Malay visitors, eventually reaching the Philippine Islands. By and large, neither Vedic nor Buddhist culture sank in very deeply in the archipelago, and never wholly supplanted the indigenous animist beliefs. In fact the Devanagari script used for writing Hindi, and other Sanskrit-based languages, never caught on in business or literature. More importantly, however, the imported

⁵ "Climate Change Scenarios for the Philippines," published by the Climatic Research Unit, University of East Anglia, UK, posted on the website: <http://www.cru.uea.ac.uk/~mikeh/research/philippines.pdf>

agricultural technology did make great inroads. It was from India or China that rice cultivation, the water buffalo, irrigation, and metallurgy were adopted.

The 600-Year Dynasty of Sri Vijaya

Sri Vijaya, a Buddhist kingdom and center of learning, had its start in approximately 650 BCE and was centered in what is now southern Sumatra. Sri Vijaya maintained close contact with, and was nourished by, Nalanda, the hub of Buddhist learning in northern India. Over the centuries, Sri Vijaya became wealthy and powerful, and ruled the Straits of Sunda and Malacca. “By the 12th century AD the powerful Sumatra-based Malay kingdom of Sri Vijaya had extended its considerable influence to the Philippines⁶.” It is important to recall, however, that a millennium ago, there was no ‘Philippines,’ there was no ‘Indonesia,’ and there was no ‘Malaysia.’ There was just this vast archipelago of tropical islands, the largest of which were home to powerful kingdoms such as Sri Vijaya, and others that fell under Sri Vijaya’s hegemony. In 1289 the Mongols invaded Sri Vijaya, demanding tribute. “Kublai Khan’s ambassadors returned to China without their noses⁷.” In 1290 Sri Vijaya came to an end, vanquished by the rival Javanese kingdom of Singhasari. The Mongols would return.

Majapahit Rules the Straits

The Mongols *did* return in 1293 and unwittingly assisted in the founding of a new dynasty in the archipelago: the Majapahit kingdom. The son-in-law of the Singhasari king enlisted the aid of the Mongols to kill the king. The son-in-law then eliminated the Mongols. This new kingdom commanded the Straits of Malacca and Sunda, and might have extended its influence deeper into the islands now known as the Philippines, but a new wave of settlers brought a novel faith from south-central Asia (also known as the Middle East): Islam.



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⁶ "Philippines, Republic of the," Microsoft® Encarta® Online Encyclopedia 2003
<http://encarta.msn.com> © 1997-2003 Microsoft Corporation.

⁷ From the University of Alberta website, <http://www.ualberta.ca/~vmitchel/rev5.html>

Islam Spreads through the Archipelago

Even before the end of Sri Vijaya, Arab merchants had reached Java and Islam began to take hold. During the 14th, 15th, and early 16th centuries, Islam spread throughout the archipelago, arriving as far north as Luzon. In the northern and central Philippine Islands, however, Islam never penetrated beyond the coastal towns and villages. The Prophet Muhammad's message barely made it up the mountains, although it may have had a chance of spreading had Magellan not arrived representing Spain and bringing Christianity.

Magellan and Christianity

History changed forever for the area in March 1521 with the arrival of Ferdinand Magellan, who promptly claimed the archipelago for Spain⁸. The bustling trade cities of the coastal areas appealed to Magellan, as wares from China, India and Arabia were bought and sold in abundance. But Magellan's main goal was to proselytize the population, spreading the word of Christianity using all his force, without any regard to the traditions and ways of the local population. On his visit to the Island of Mactan he met resistance. One of the greatest heroes of ancient Philippine history, the chieftain Lapulapu⁹ emerged to protect his people from the invading forces. The locals fought Magellan and his men, who could not make use of their cannons from their ships that were kept far away by the rocky shores around the island. Magellan was shot by a poisoned arrow and was on his knees when the locals, led by Lapulapu, attacked him and killed him. Only one of Magellan's ships, the Victoria, made the return journey to Spain, bringing back spices from the



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Moluccas—the original reason for Magellan's journey—and only 17 crew survived out of the 250 who left on five ships three years earlier¹⁰.

A Colony of Spain

King Felipe of Spain sent more ships back to the archipelago, which was renamed "Felipinas" in his honor. Miguel Lépez de Legazpi became the first Spanish governor in 1565. Churches and buildings were erected in the Spanish style and Legazpi established a stronghold of Catholicism in the region, defeating the Muslims on Luzon island. Manila became the capital. The following centuries brought more Spaniards and more control to the area. The different tribes were forced to live together, breaking up the geographical boundaries and political isolation, which ultimately led to the development of the Filipino Nationalist Movement and the Katipunan Rebellion that ended the Spanish rule with the outbreak of war in 1899¹¹.



© UNESCO.org
Photographer: D. Roger

Nationalist Rebellion

Andres Bonifacio founded the Katipunan underground group in 1892 in Manila to overthrow the Spanish colonial regime. It was the most organized group against the colonial regime with newsletters, uniforms, initiation rituals and a very determined goal to get rid of the Spanish rulers. The fighting started in 1896 and the Spanish caught and executed many leaders including Jose

⁸ <http://www.ibiscom.com/magellan.htm>

⁹ <http://www.geocities.com/Tokyo/Harbor/1320/bbilapu.html#noteraja>

¹⁰ <http://www.bergen.org/AAST/projects/Philippines/history.htm>

¹¹ Tubangui, Bauzon, Foronda, Ausejo, Casiño, deLeon (1982) *The Filipino Nation*

Rizal, who thought the fight started too early. In 1897 Emilio Aguinaldo emerged as the leader of the newly formed revolutionary government. He ordered the execution of Bonifacio and started organizing his government and the fight against the Spanish.

The Spanish-American War

What do Cuba and the Philippines have in common? They are both island nations in tropical seas, the former in the Caribbean, and the latter in the South Pacific. They are both former colonies of Spain. Both attained independence from Spain, only to find themselves under American occupation. The bond between these two now sovereign states was forged during the Spanish-American War of 1898. Just like the Filipinos, the Cuban people also rebelled against their Spanish colonial masters, seeking independence. And, as they did in the Philippines, the Spanish responded in Cuba with brutal repression. On 15 February 1898, the American battleship USS Maine blew up and sank in Havana harbor. To this day, the perpetrators are not known, but the finger of accusation was pointed at Spanish operatives. The call to “Remember the Maine!” filled the headlines of American newspapers and stirred up war sentiment against Spain. This sensationalistic behavior of the press came to be known as “yellow journalism.”



Meanwhile, Commodore George Dewey, the commander of the US fleet in the Asian Pacific region, held talks with Emilio Aguinaldo, who now led the movement for Philippine independence from exile in Singapore and Hong Kong. Dewey may have promised American recognition of a free and independent Philippines in exchange for the movement’s cooperation in defeating Spain. If so, that promise would be kept only after 48 years of American rule.

The US declared war against Spain on 25 April 1898. The first attack against Spanish forces did not take place in Cuba. Rather, the US Navy destroyed the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay in the Philippines. Aguinaldo returned to the Philippines on 19 May, led his rebel forces to victory over the Spanish army, and declared Filipino independence on 12 June. Geopolitical forces, however, would delay this independence for almost half a century: with the departure of Spain from the archipelago, other European powers saw their chance to fill the vacuum. Britain, France, Germany, and Japan sent warships to Manila Bay. The US was not about to relinquish its newly attained hegemony and the trade interests such a dominion would further. On 10 December 1898, the US and Spain signed the Treaty of Paris. By this agreement, Spain granted Cuba independence and sold the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico to the US for 20 million dollars.

The Filipino-American War

This sell-out enraged Filipino nationalists. For the next two years, Aguinaldo led his guerillas against US forces. Greatly outnumbered and outgunned, the Filipinos lost 16,000 fighters and at least 200,000 civilians. On the American side, 4,234 soldiers were killed. Aguinaldo was captured on 23 March 1901 and was convinced to admit defeat. Most of the guerillas laid down their arms, though pockets of resistance continued until 1903.



The Only American Colony

In comparison with Spain's heavy hand, life under American rule must have come as a great relief to many Filipinos. For one thing, unlike Spain, the US had thrown off its own colonial rulers in a revolution of independence, and Americans did not feel comfortable in reversing the roles. Therefore, the US government went to great lengths to promote free and democratic institutions in its one and only colony. The Taft Commission (1900-1902) "swept away three centuries of Spanish governance and installed in its place the laws and institutions of a modern civil state. It established a code of law, a judicial system and elective municipal and provincial governments¹²."



Even before the Philippines attained the status of commonwealth (1934), the country began to take on the appearance of an independent republic. The first national legislature (1907) was made up of the popularly elected Philippine Assembly along with the Philippine Commission, appointed by the President of the United States. As a result of the Jones Act of 1916, the Assembly's name was changed to the House of Representatives, while the Commission became the Senate, not appointed but elected by the people. Early in the semi-independent life of the Philippines, the *Nacionalista* Party gained political ascendancy over other parties, factions, or groupings. From the start, the *Nacionalistas*, who represented the wealthy elite of Filipino society, publicly called for Filipino independence, but in point of fact, they cooperated actively with the American authorities. This coaptation of the elite was known as the policy of attraction.

The policy of attraction ensured the success of what colonial administrators called the political education of the Filipinos. It was, however, also the cause of its greatest failure. Osmeña and Quezon, as the acknowledged representatives, were not genuinely interested in social reform, and serious problems involving land ownership, tenancy, and the highly unequal distribution of wealth were largely ignored. The growing power of the *Nacionalista* Party, particularly in the period after 1916 when it gained almost complete control of a bicameral Filipino legislature, barred the effective inclusion of non-elite interests in the political system. Not only revolution but also moderate reform of the social and economic systems were precluded. Discussions of policy alternatives became less salient to the political process than the dynamics of personalism and the ethic of give and take¹³.

Commonwealth

The Commonwealth of the Philippines was established in 1935, which further empowered Filipinos to shape their own destiny. Most Filipinos welcomed this step; the Muslims, also known as the 'Moros,' a small but important minority, however, viewed this 'Filipinization' ominously. They correctly anticipated that the Catholic majority would dominate politics and the economy in the Philippines and threaten the Muslim way of life. This is precisely what

¹² From the University of Alberta web page, <http://www.ualberta.ca/~vmitchel/fw5.html>

¹³ From "Philippines: A Collaborative Philippine Leadership," published on the Library of Congress Country Study website, [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query2/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+ph0027\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query2/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+ph0027))

happened. Catholics from Luzon and the Visayan islands flooded the island of Mindanao, and crowded the Moros out of their own homeland. This Catholic encroachment would sow the seeds of animosity and hostility, and later bear the fruit of Muslim separatist movements, including the terrorist group, Abu Sayyaf.

World War II Brings Japanese Occupation

Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on 7 December 1941, effectively destroying much of the US Pacific Fleet. Ten hours later, the Japanese attacked the Philippines. General Douglas MacArthur was the commander of the US Armed Forces in the Asia-Pacific region. The



US Army Quartermaster Museum photo

combined US and Philippine forces were forced to retreat to the Bataan Peninsula and Corregidor at the mouth of Manila Bay. The Japanese occupied Manila on 2 January 1942, but American and Philippine forces kept up their defense until the spring. They finally surrendered Bataan in April and Corregidor in May. MacArthur had already left in March, vowing, "I shall return." The Japanese captured 80,000 prisoners of war and forced them to march to a prison camp 105 kilometers to the north. During this infamous "Bataan Death March," some 10,000 men died as a result of harsh treatment, starvation, and disease.

The Filipinos suffered cruel abuse under the Japanese military administration, even though the Japanese had promised independence. Most of the Philippine elite collaborated with the Japanese:

Philippine collaboration in Japanese-sponsored political institutions--which later became a major domestic political issue--was motivated by several considerations. Among them was the effort to protect the people from the harshness of Japanese rule... protection of family and personal interests, and a belief that Philippine nationalism would be advanced by solidarity with fellow Asians¹⁴.

On 20 October 1944, MacArthur fulfilled his pledge to return, but the Japanese clung tenaciously to their positions. It was not until the very last day of the war, the day of Japan's unconditional surrender, that the Japanese put down their weapons in the Philippines. The cost was 60,628 American lives, 300,000 Japanese, and at least 1,000,000 Filipinos.

While the Philippine elite collaborated with the Japanese, the majority of common Filipinos did not. More than half a million Filipinos engaged in resistance operations, assisting the US forces to defeat the Japanese. One of the largest anti-Japanese militias, the Huks had 30,000 members. "Formed in 1942, the Hukbalahaps or Huks (short for *Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon*, or People's Anti-Japanese Party), were one of the most effective guerrilla groups. The Huk forces were primarily the rural poor of central and southern Luzon¹⁵." After the allied victory, the Huks and other resistance groups fully expected recognition and the opportunity to participate in the

¹⁴ *ibid*, [http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query2/r?frd/cstdy:@field\(DOCID+ph0033\)](http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query2/r?frd/cstdy:@field(DOCID+ph0033))

¹⁵ "Philippines, Republic of the," Microsoft® Encarta® Online Encyclopedia 2003 <http://encarta.msn.com> © 1997-2003 Microsoft Corporation.

governance of the Philippines. This did not happen. Instead, the US government restored the former commonwealth leaders to power.

Independence

The Philippines became a sovereign and independent republic on 4 July 1946. Sixteen years later, however, President Diosdado Macapagal would proclaim 12 June as the official national holiday of independence, in commemoration of General Emilio Aguinaldo's declaration of independence on 12 June 1898. Ongoing turmoil between the Huks and the government marred the first 8 years of independence. The Huks eventually lost their popularity, their leader surrendered, and the group withered away. The Liberal and *Nacionalista* Parties held most of the political power during the first two decades of independence.

Marcos' 20-Year Rule

Ferdinand Marcos was elected President of the Philippines in 1965, and re-elected in 1969. In his first term, he implemented a vast array of public works programs and infrastructure improvements. During his second term, however, two ongoing insurrections – the socialist New People's Army and the secessionist Moro (Muslim) National Liberation Front (MNLF) – threatened national security, and Marcos imposed martial law from 1972 to 1981. Citing the "communist threat," he shut down the Philippine Congress and all opposition newspapers, sent 30,000 political opponents to concentration camps, and prohibited criticism of the government. Meanwhile, accusations of deep corruption surrounded the Marcos family.

People Power!

Among President Marcos' political rivals, Benigno Aquino stood front and center. Aquino hailed from the same socio-economic strata – the elite – as Marcos, and differed little in ideology. Nevertheless, Marcos saw Aquino, a popular politician, as a threat to his regime and ordered his imprisonment. In 1980, after seven years behind bars, Aquino received permission to travel to the US for medical treatment. In 1983, as he stepped off the plane from his return flight to Manila, he was gunned down by soldiers. This assassination enraged many Filipinos, and Benigno's widow, Corazon Aquino, stepped in to lead the opposition to Marcos. The 'People Power' movement picked up steam for the next three years, winning the support of many traditional politicians and business leaders, along with the Catholic Church. Meanwhile a parallel movement was growing in the military, consisting of young officers who were disgusted with Marcos' corruption and who sought to restore professionalism to the armed forces.



Photo courtesy of bnl.gov

On 7 February 1986, President Marcos won another term in office in elections that were universally considered fraudulent. Two weeks later, Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, along with General Fidel Ramos, Commander of the Philippine Constabulary, demanded Marcos' resignation. At the same time, an increasing number of military personnel turned against Marcos and joined the opposition. Marcos ordered the army to put down the insurrection, but hundreds of thousands of Filipinos flooded the streets and joined forces with rebel troops. This non-

violent sequence of events, which finally toppled Ferdinand Marcos from power on 22 February, came to be known as the 'People Power' Revolution.

Post-Marcos 1986 to the Present

Corazon Aquino came to power amid great hopes for reform and progress. She released all political prisoners, lifted censorship, initiated the endeavor to recover the billions of dollars stolen by the Marcos family, and endorsed a new constitution limiting the president to one term of six years and re-establishing a bicameral legislature. What Aquino did not do, however, was to address the issue of land reform. When 15,000 Filipinos demonstrated for land reform, government troops opened fire and killed at least 20 of them. On the other hand, the president did negotiate with the Moro National Liberation Front in Mindanao, and with the New People's Army, a latter-day reincarnation of the Huks. Aquino lost support from the left because of her inaction on land reform, and from the right because of her so-called appeasement of the Muslims and the NPA. She survived several coup attempts and endorsed Fidel Ramos in the subsequent presidential election.



US Dept. of Defense photo

Fidel Ramos won the presidential election in 1992 and dedicated himself to rebuilding the Philippine economy, as Aquino had rebuilt democracy. In 1998, movie star Joseph Estrada was elected to succeed Ramos, but charges of corruption and incompetence led to his downfall on 20 January 2001. Nine days later, Estrada's vice president, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, was sworn in as president. President Arroyo, a Ph.D. economist, has faced a struggling economy in which a small wealthy minority owns most of the land and controls the means of production, while the majority live below the poverty line. Add to this a new player on the terrorist scene: the Abu Sayyaf group, an Islamic separatist organization that uses kidnapping and demands for ransom to fund their objectives. To date, the die-hard Estrada supporters have refused to support Arroyo. On 30 December 2002, Arroyo announced that after completing the term vacated by Estrada, she would step down from the presidency and not seek office in her own right.

Economy

Introduction

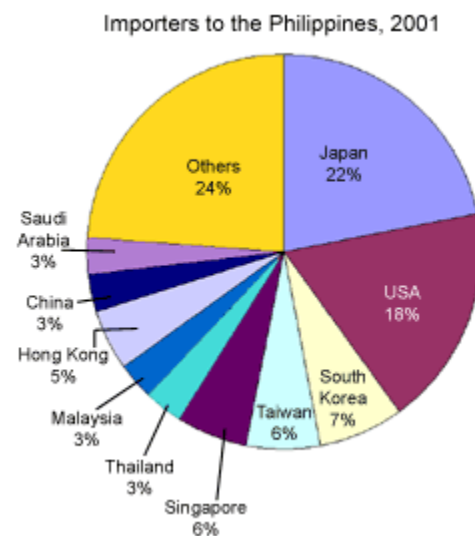
The Philippine economy has historically been based on commerce. During the Spanish era, Manila became a transit hub for the exchange of merchandise between China and Mexico. During American occupation, the main products were textiles and sugar. The export of labor started in the 1960s and continues to this day, with Filipinos streaming out across the globe to find jobs as guest laborers. While the Philippines lacks the mineral resources to attract significant foreign investment, the mercantile tradition persists and continues to be a source of great income for this nation.

Foreign Investment

Traditionally, the Philippines is considered to hold fiftieth place in the international competition to attract foreign investments. The period from 1996-2002 saw an annual USD1-1.5 billion influx in these investments, which were strategically used by the Arroyo government to bolster the country's infrastructure. Transportation and energy in particular benefited from this increased attention.

In 2000 the three biggest foreign investors were Philips Semiconductors (USD 520 mil.), Rohm Apollo (USD 150 mil.), and Amkor Technology (USD 127 mil.). However, the flow of investment supporting low-tech spare parts was redirected to China because of lower wages and resulting lower production costs. Therefore, the Philippines is seeking other alternatives such as banking distribution, public services, and telecommunications.

According to the World Bank, foreign investment sources in the Philippines are geographically diverse. Summing up the last five years, Japan emerges at the top of the list (USD 1077 mil.), followed closely by the United States (USD 882 mil.), the Netherlands (USD 882 mil., Philips), Switzerland (USD 786 mil., Nestlé), and Singapore (USD 654 mil.).



Trade

Philippine international trade has booked a significant increase in exports due to the marked success of the electronics industry. As a result of a highly specialized electronic industry the exchange structure of the Philippines is not that typical of emerging countries with its trade scale leaning in favor of the exports. Thus, fluctuation in export numbers continues to be closely related to the fluctuations in the electronics market.

After a decrease of 15% in 2001, 2002 showed a 9% increase in exports, with 70% of total exports being electronic products. Semiconductor equipment topped the list of export

commodities. Other significant export products are clothing, spare parts for automobiles, and foodstuffs.

Many products are imported to the Philippines to be finalized before being exported again. These products include textiles, semi-conductor components, and computers. Petroleum imports, which had skyrocketed in 2000 (a 61% increase), have decreased noticeably.



Exports to the United States account for 24% of the total, the remaining percentage goes to Japan, other ASEAN countries, and greater China (China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong). As far as imports are concerned, both the U.S. and Japan top the list, followed by ASEAN and greater China.

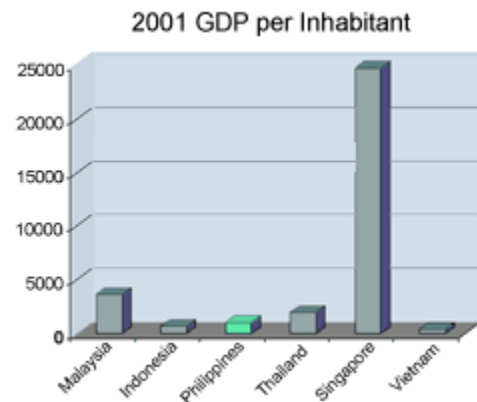
In reaction to the Asian crisis of 1997, the Philippines launched reforms that consolidated the banking system and privatized many public services. The restructuring that has taken place is shaking up the inherited traditional institution and creating a painful need for a

fast adjustment. However, the nation has sound fundamentals, which are translated into an increase in the growth of the national economy.

Major Companies

According to a recent study (National Economic and Development Authority, February 2003), the share of food expenditures at home has decreased (from 39.5% in 1997 to 38.7% in 2000), while the food consumed outside the home increased (5.0% in 2000 compared to 4.7% in 1997).¹⁷

The agribusiness in the Philippines is dominated by five holdings—Pure Foods Corp., Jollibee Foods Corp., Universal Robina Corp., Republic Floor Mills, and San Miguel Corp.—even though these are not the only actors in the field. A few multinational companies have infiltrated the market and formed joint ventures, such as Nestlé Philippines, Dole Philippines, Alaska Milk Corporation, and three companies of the Lucio Tan group—Tanduy Distillers, Fortune Tobacco, and Asia Brewery. The current trend is to group several companies into a holding and then to diversify the product line. Over all, most agribusiness firms continue to be ill-equipped and consequently food production consists mainly of fresh items (fruits, vegetables, coffee, tea, and coconuts). The country also manufactures processed foods based on ingredients such as meat, milk, sauce, and condiments.¹⁸



¹⁷ <http://www.neda.gov.ph/PressReleases>

¹⁸ <http://www.dree.org/philippines>

Political instability in the Philippines has not disturbed economic activity in the highly populated areas around Manila and Cebu. Even in Mindanao international food companies are able to operate without major difficulties. The lack of continuing major investment in rural infrastructure is a greater disadvantage. However, opportunities are still available in distribution, the food processing sector, and greater needs exist in transportation and energy.

Tourism

Tourists in the Philippines will find a wide range of sightseeing opportunities and adventures. Metro Manila, a cosmopolitan city by any standard, is replete with 16th century Spanish cathedrals and churches, shrines, museums, galleries, parks, shops, restaurants, and nightclubs. As an archipelago of tropical islands with vast stretches of white sand and blue sea, the Philippines attracts thousands of surfers, scuba divers, and sun-worshipping vacationers each year.



Society, Culture, and Social Customs



East and West

The Filipinos embody a true blend of East and West. The Malay background, mixed with the Spanish influence of over 300 years, the influence of the growing Chinese population, and the American presence of four decades have created a culture that is exceptional in many ways. Filipinos are hospitable and generous people who treat their guests like VIPs. The Latin-style passions and emotions set the Filipino society apart from other Asian cultures, known for a closed and more withdrawn way of life²². Filipinos are family-oriented, religious people. Family and community values take precedence over personal choices.

Social Customs

Three centuries of Spanish authority, followed by a half century of American occupation, have left their mark on the social customs of the Philippines, particularly in the area of courtship, marriage, and family life. In the rural areas, dating takes place, but only with the supervision of a chaperone. In big cities such as Manila, unmarried couples may date without chaperone. Pre-marital cohabitation is unthinkable, either in big city or small village. In both villages and cities, marriage is based on the mutual interest of the young man and woman, not on parental pre-arrangements. The couple will seek their parents' approval, but the choice



²² <http://www.bergen.org/AAST/projects/Philippines/culture1.htm>

is still the couple's. While some wealthy families may insist that their children marry the children of other wealthy Filipino families, marriage with foreigners is not uncommon.

Most Filipinos are church-going Roman Catholics and tend toward religious conservatism. In general, the public display of affection between male and female is restricted to holding hands or a brief embrace. The exception to this rule is between parents and small children. Philippine society extols the virtues of male-female equality and the statistics for high school and university attendance differ little between male and female students. Furthermore, women are entering the work force and professions in increasing numbers. Nevertheless, in family decisions the man of the house has the last word. Also, the women – even those who work outside the home – still bear most of the burden of household responsibilities.

Ethnic Groups



Spread across 7,107 islands, Filipinos represent many different cultures, languages and traditions. Some anthropologists claim that at least 45 ethnographically different groups exist in the area according to their languages and customs. The Visayans, who live in the sugar-rich central islands, are usually subdivided into three major groups: Cebuano, Samar-Leyte, and Hiligaynon. Their lifestyle is the closest to the Spanish ways with a carefree approach to life through their music and dances.

In the provinces near Manila on the island of Luzon, the Tagalogs represent the most family-oriented and most learned. The Ilocanos of northern Luzon are more energetic and migratory, and the Pampanguenos are famous for their clever ways in trading. The Muslims, also referred to as Moros, on the southern islands represent the most independent group of Filipinos. Three main Muslim groups emerge as the most important in the area: the Tausog, Maranaw, and Magindanao.

Religions

The long centuries of Spanish rule established a stronghold of Roman Catholicism, which manifests itself clearly in the 83 percent Catholic Malay population. American missionaries brought Protestantism during the 20th century; today 9 percent of the population belongs to various Protestant sects. Muslims, who comprise 5 percent of the population, are concentrated mostly in Mindanao. The remaining 3 percent of Filipinos are Buddhists or members of indigenous religions.

Primary and Secondary Education

Six years of elementary instruction is followed by four years of high school in the Philippines. Since the 1970s the percentage of people finishing elementary school has grown from about 20 percent to around 60 percent and about 30 percent of the population attends high school²⁴. The literacy level for population above age 15 is around 90 percent.



© UNESCO.org, Photographer: D. Roger

²⁴ <http://call.army.mil/products/handbook/02-8/02-8ch6.htm>

Higher Education

At latest count, 67 universities serve the higher education needs of the Philippines, and this number is supplemented by hundreds of colleges, technical institutes, and training centers. It comes as no surprise that highly educated Filipinos can be found throughout the world in positions of authority, working as doctors, scientists, scholars, and engineers. The University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University and the Asian Institute of Management appear in the “Asia Top 100 Universities” list. The oldest university in Asia, the University of Santo Tomas in Manila, was founded some 350 years ago.

The Arts



NIH photo

According to Dr. Lilia Quindoza-Santiago²⁶, the early Philippine alphabet, the Baybayin, was a simplified version of the Devanagiri script in which ancient Sanskrit was written. Songs, riddles and stories, at first only passed along through oral traditions, survived later in transcriptions using the Roman alphabet. Tagalog riddles usually carry strong rhythm and rhyme and a metaphoric image:

Hindi hari, hindi pari

Neither king nor priest

Ang damit ay sari-sari

But has a variety of clothes

(*Sagot: sampayan*)

(Answer: clothesline)

The pre-colonial songs, lullabies, folk narratives, epic stories, and the connected rituals under Spanish colonialism gave way to religious prose and poetry. Filipino ‘pasyons’ date back to the early 18th century, but the 19th century brought dramatic changes. Filipino intellectuals who traveled and were educated in Europe—the *ilustrados*—brought back the seeds of the uprising against the Spanish colonialists. Rizal’s novels were a major contribution to the Philippine nationalist movement. The American era brought the English language and free verse to the Philippines through the words of Jose Garcia Villa. Contemporary Philippine literature features poetry, short stories, novels and essays, all of which flourish and are supported by a host of literary awards²⁷.

Current Political Issues

Poverty

Poverty continues to plague the Philippines and no government has been able to attack the problem at the causal level: the grossly uneven distribution of wealth. In the Philippines, one percent of the population owns and controls the lion’s share of the land and means of production, while 56 percent of Filipinos struggle to survive in abject poverty. An additional one-third of the people hover just above the poverty line. About one-tenth of the population is middle class.

²⁶ <http://www.ncca.gov.ph/culture&arts/cularts/arts/literary/literary-early.htm>

²⁷ <http://www.ncca.gov.ph/culture&arts/cularts/arts/literary/literary-forms.htm>

Over a third of the eight million people crammed into Manila live precariously, often homeless or in makeshift housing. Two-thirds of the rural population are landless. Tribal people have been driven off their ancestral and untitled lands, and fishing communities see their livelihoods destroyed by mechanized trawlers²⁸.



Before they degenerated into a gang of bandits, the Huks had posed a formidable threat to the wealthy aristocracy of the Philippines. The Huks had demanded land reform and economic dignity for the poor Filipinos. The government responded with suppression and eventually wiped out the organization. The New People's Army started out with the same lofty goals and also seems to have deteriorated into a bunch of hooligans. Meanwhile, none of the mainstream political parties have made any serious inroads in the area of economic justice or land reform. Part of the problem is that Philippine political parties are not policy oriented, but rather are bound up with particular personalities.

When Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was inaugurated as President of the Republic of the Philippines on 20 January 2001, she addressed the issue directly:

We must be bold in our national ambitions, so that our challenge must be that within this decade, we will win the fight against poverty... In doing so, I will refer to one of my core beliefs, that of the need for new politics. Politics and political power as traditionally practiced and used in the Philippines are among the roots of the social and economic inequities that characterize our national problems. Thus, to achieve true reforms, we need to outgrow our traditional brand of politics based on patronage and personality. Traditional politics is the politics of the status quo. It is a structural part of our problem. We need to promote a new politics of true party programs and platforms, of an institutional process of dialogue with our citizenry. This new politics is the politics of genuine reform. It is a structural part of the solution²⁹.

The new politics has not arrived during Arroyo's administration. Little has changed in the life of the Filipino peasant, and Arroyo has vowed to step down when her term ends in 2004.

The Islamic Split

Islam was established in the Philippines two centuries before Christianity arrived. Spain conquered Luzon and the Visayas, but failed to vanquish Islam in the southern island of Mindanao. It was neither the Spanish nor the Americans, but the independent Republic of the Philippines that encouraged Christian Filipinos to move down to Mindanao and tip the religious balance in Mindanao to a Christian majority. Muslims soon saw their way of life being threatened and eventually began to resist and call for secession.

²⁸ From a review of *The Philippines: In Search of Justice* by Charlie Pye-Smith, published on the Oxfam website: <http://www.oxfam.org.au/publications/books/philippines.html>

²⁹ From the official website of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, <http://www.kgma.org/>

Today there are three main Muslim secessionist groups: the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), and the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). The MNLF was founded in 1969 by young people of Tausug ethnicity in Jolo, and led by Nour Misswari, who was educated at the University of the Philippines. Originally, the MNLF

moved to identify itself with the worldwide Muslim ummah [identity] and consolidated an important foundation for the Moro vision. As a result, the project was able to rely on the social apparatuses that supported Islam for generations. Abroad, it was able to draw on crucial support from Islamic countries. In time, it gained formal status as an observer in the powerful and influential Organization of Islamic Conference... [it] ...drew its strength principally from two goals it came to be associated with: Islamization and the attainment of social justice. Islam was the central defining and unifying concept of Moro identity. Without it, there would be little that would bind together the 13 or so ethno-linguistic groups considered as comprising the Moro nation³⁰.

In 1984, however, a split took place among the Moros. Nour Misswari leaned towards a secular, nationalist movement. One member of the MNLF was Hashim Salamat, educated at Al-Azhar University in Egypt, the oldest institution of Islamic learning in the world, and one of the most orthodox. Salamat differed from other MNLF members in two ways: first, he belonged to the Magindanao ethnic group, not the Tausugs; second, he favored an expressly Islamic orientation. He broke off from the MNLF and organized the MILF. In 1996, the MNLF signed a peace agreement with the Philippine government that afforded them some limited autonomy and gave power to Nour Misswari. The Islamic fundamentalist MILF, however, found itself on the sidelines but is nevertheless alive and well, and still cleaves to its secessionist ideology.



USAID photo

Abu Sayyaf and the War on Terrorism



US Dept. of State photo

After the 11 September 2001 terrorist attacks against the US, the first Asian leader to support America's war on terrorism was President Arroyo of the Philippines. She also opened up Philippine air space to the US for possible counter-attacks. Just four months later, on 10 January 2002, 660 US troops arrived in Mindanao to assist the Philippine Army in the hunt for members of Abu Sayyaf³¹.

Throughout the late 1990s, Abu Sayyaf perpetrated acts of terror against Christian villages in the south. The crime that hurled Abu Sayyaf into the headlines was the April 2000 kidnapping of western tourists and Asian workers at a Malaysian resort, then fleeing to the Philippine island of Jolo.

³⁰ Gutierrez, Eric, "The Re-Imagination of the Bangsa-Moro: 30 Years Hence," published on the website of the Institute for Popular Democracy: http://www.ipd.ph/pub/wip/reimagining_bangsamoro-e_gutierrez.shtml

³¹ Who or what is Abu Sayyaf? The name is Arabic, meaning "Sword Bearer." This is a radical Muslim organization founded in the early 1990s by Abdurajak Janjalani, a fundamentalist trained in Libya. He would later die in a shootout with Philippine troops, only to be replaced by his brother Khadaffy.

Eventually most of the captives were released, but Abu Sayyaf struck again in May 2001, taking 20 more hostages – including three Americans – off the island of Palawan. This group included Martin and Gracia Burnham, American missionaries. Again, most of the hostages were ultimately freed, but two Americans – Martin Burnham and Guillermo Sobero – and at least four Filipinos were killed. In August of that year, Abu Sayyaf kidnapped again, this time 35 Filipinos. Ten were beheaded.

From an original deployment of 660 troops, the number of American forces rose to 1300, whose main duties are advising and training. In early 2003, however, 1700 more US troops were sent to the south Philippines, and this mission has gone beyond advice and training to combat. “The operation will last as long as necessary to disrupt and destroy the estimated 250 members of the extremist Abu Sayyaf group, one official said, and marks a sharp escalation in the war against terror³²...”

While the Abu Sayyaf group numbers in the low hundreds, the MILF boasts a membership of 12,000, and *Time Magazine*'s Phil Zabriskie wonders, “The U.S. takes its war on terrorism to the Philippines. But is it taking on the right bad guys³³?”

Looking Forward: the Author's Opinion

The Philippines faces a plethora of vexing predicaments in the areas of politics, economics, ecology, society, and security. Poverty is rampant, the population keeps exploding, the sea level is rising, the climate is changing, the ‘new politics’ envisioned by President Arroyo remains just a vision, and the communist New People's Army is revolting, while the MILF is struggling for the secession of Mindanao. If one as well



intentioned as Gloria Macapagal Arroyo cannot resolve these issues, who can? The answer will ultimately come from the Filipinos themselves. For over a century, they have strived to assert their independence. Twice in recent history, Filipinos have exercised non-violent “people power” to rectify political wrongs. Furthermore, Philippine society is highly literate, open-minded, and forward looking. Meanwhile, Filipino entrepreneurs, engineers, and technocrats are going to great lengths to claim the Philippines' slice of the digital pie. The prospects may be uncertain, but the Filipino qualities of resilience, resourcefulness, and faith will serve the nation indispensably on its journey into the future.

³² Reprinted from the *New York Times* and published on the website of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/chronicle/archive/2003/02/21/MN66799.DTL>

³³ From the website of the Asian edition of *Time Magazine*: <http://www.time.com/time/asia/news/magazine/0,9754,203598,00.html>