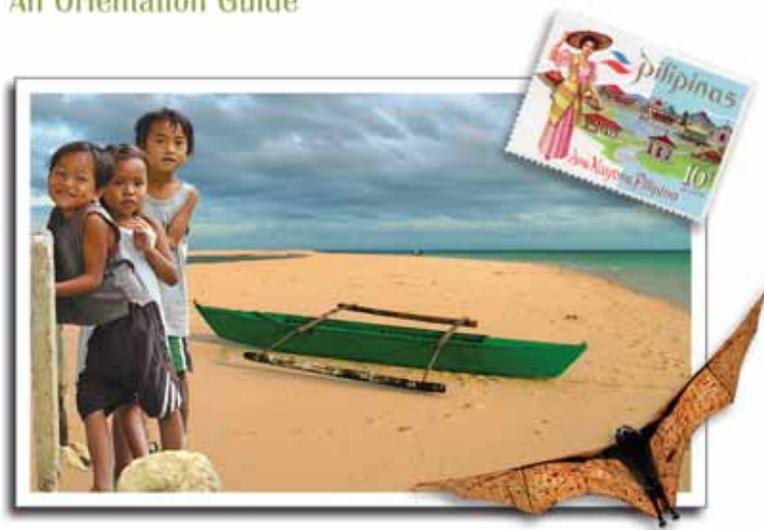


Philippines in Perspective

An Orientation Guide



Curriculum Development Division
Educational Technology Department
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DEFENSE LANGUAGE INSTITUTE FOREIGN LANGUAGE CENTER

Table of Contents

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
CHAPTER 1: PROFILE	4
INTRODUCTION	4
FACTS AND FIGURES	4
CHAPTER 2 GEOGRAPHY	11
AREA	11
CLIMATE	11
PRINCIPAL ISLAND GROUPS	11
LUZON	12
MINDANAO	12
VISAYAS	13
MAJOR CITIES	13
MANILA	13
DAVAO CITY	13
CEBU CITY	14
QUEZON CITY	14
BODIES OF WATER	14
VOLCANOES	15
ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS AND HAZARDS	16
CHAPTER 3 HISTORY	17
EARLIEST HUMAN HABITATION	17
HINDU INFLUENCE: 200 C.E.	17
THE 600-YEAR DYNASTY OF SRI VIJAYA	17
MAJAPAHIT RULES THE STRAITS	18
ISLAM SPREADS THROUGH THE ARCHIPELAGO	18
MAGELLAN AND CHRISTIANITY	18
A COLONY OF SPAIN	19
NATIONALIST REBELLION	19
THE SPANISH–AMERICAN WAR	19
THE FILIPINO–AMERICAN WAR	20
THE AMERICAN COLONY	20
COMMONWEALTH	21
WORLD WAR II BRINGS JAPANESE OCCUPATION	21
INDEPENDENCE	22
MARCOS’ 20-YEAR RULE	23
PEOPLE POWER!	23
PRESIDENCY OF CORAZON AQUINO	24
POST-AQUINO POLITICS	24
RECENT EVENTS	25

PHILIPPINES TIMELINE	27
CHAPTER 4 ECONOMY	31
INTRODUCTION	31
AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY	31
FOREIGN INVESTMENT	32
TRADE AND THE INTERNATIONAL DIVISION OF LABOR	33
THE ROLE OF ETHNIC CHINESE IN THE ECONOMY	34
TOURISM	35
CHAPTER 5 SOCIETY	36
EAST AND WEST	36
ETHNIC GROUPS	36
EDUCATION	37
RELIGION	37
SOCIAL CUSTOMS	38
CUISINE	39
TRADITIONAL DRESS	39
THE ARTS	40
SPORTS AND RECREATION	41
SIPA	41
ESKRIMA	41
COCKFIGHTING	42
CHAPTER 6 SECURITY	43
U.S.–PHILIPPINE RELATIONS	43
FROM INDEPENDENCE TO 9/11	43
THE POST-9/11 SECURITY ALLIANCE	44
NEIGHBOR STATE RELATIONS	44
CHINA	45
JAPAN	45
MALAYSIA	46
INDONESIA	46
INTERNAL THREATS	47
ISLAMIC SEPARATIST GROUPS	47
COMMUNIST GROUPS	49
POVERTY	49
ARMED FORCES	50

Chapter 1: Profile

Introduction

During 300 years of Spanish colonial rule, the economy of the Philippine archipelago was oriented toward the export of products produced on plantations.¹ Following the Spanish-American War, the United States made the Philippines its only colony. During this time, the Filipinos were introduced to public education, Western healthcare, and public works programs.² The challenges for the Philippines since independence in 1946 have been, and continue to be, sustaining economic development and creating a stable political environment.



© noel / flickr.com
Spanish fort in Palawan

Facts and Figures³

Area: slightly larger than Arizona

total: 300,000 sq km (115,830 sq mi)

land: 298,170 sq km (115,124 sq mi)

water: 1,830 sq km (706.5 sq mi)

coastline: 36,289 km (14,011 sq mi)

terrain: mostly mountains with narrow to extensive coastal lowlands

Maritime claims:

Territorial sea: An 1898 treaty defined the territorial sea as an irregular polygon extending up to 100 nautical miles (nm) from coastline. Since the late 1970s, the Philippines has also claimed a polygonal-shaped area in South China Sea up to 285 nm (ca. 328 miles / 527 km) in breadth.

Continental shelf: to depth of exploitation nm

Exclusive economic zone: 200 nm (ca. 230 miles/ 370 km)

Natural resources:

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

Natural hazards:

Since the country sits astride a typhoon belt, the islands are usually affected by about 15 storms and directly struck by five to six cyclonic storms per year. In addition, landslides, active volcanoes, destructive earthquakes, and tsunamis occur.

¹ Field Museum. "Negros Island: A Study in Deforestation." 2002.

http://www.fieldmuseum.org/vanishing_treasures/Deforestation_2.htm

² *Sentimental Imperialists: The American Experience in East Asia*. Stanley, Peter W., John Curtis Perry and James C. Thomson. 1981. New York: Harper and Row.

³ All statistics are 2008 estimates as found on the website of the CIA World Factbook unless otherwise noted. "Philippines." 21 August 2008. <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ph.html>

Population: 92,681,453 (July 2008 est.)

Age structure:

0-14 years: 34.1% (male 16,121,508/female 15,487,841)

15-64 years: 61.7% (male 28,524,176/female 28,652,155)

65 years and over: 4.2% (male 1,690,006/female 2,205,767)

Life expectancy at birth:

total population: 70.8 years

male: 67.89 years

female: 73.85 years

Birth rate: 24.07 births/1,000 population

Population growth rate: 1.728%

Literacy:

definition: age 15 and over can read and write

total population: 92.6%

male: 92.5%

female: 92.7% (2000 census)

Ethnic groups:

Tagalog 28.1%, Cebuano 13.1%, Ilocano 9%, Bisaya/Binisaya 7.6%, Hiligaynon Ilonggo 7.5%, Bicol 6%, Waray 3.4%, other 25.3% (2000 census)

Religions: Roman Catholic 80.9%, Muslim 5%, Evangelical 2.8%, Iglesia ni Kristo 2.3%, Aglipayan 2%, other Christian 4.5%, other 1.8%, unspecified 0.6%, none 0.1% (2000 census)

Languages:

two official languages: Filipino (based on Tagalog) and English;

eight major dialects: Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilocano, Hiligaynon or Ilonggo, Bicol, Waray, Pampango, and Pangasinense

Major infectious diseases:

degree of risk: high

food or waterborne diseases: bacterial diarrhea, hepatitis A, and typhoid fever

vectorborne diseases: dengue fever and malaria are high risks in some locations

Country name:

conventional long form: Republic of the Philippines

conventional short form: Philippines

local long form: Republika ng Pilipinas

local short form: Pilipinas



© noel / flickr.com
Grandmother and grandson at the mall

Government type: Republic

Capital: Manila

Administrative divisions: 81 provinces and 136 chartered cities

provinces: Abra, Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Aklan, Albay, Antique, Apayao, Aurora, Basilan, Bataan, Batanes, Batangas, Biliran, Benguet, Bohol, Bukidnon, Bulacan, Cagayan, Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur, Camiguin, Capiz, Catanduanes, Cavite, Cebu, Compostela, Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Davao Oriental, Dinagat Islands, Eastern Samar, Guimaras, Ifugao, Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, Iloilo, Isabela, Kalinga, Laguna, Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, La Union, Leyte, Maguindanao, Marinduque, Masbate, Mindoro Occidental, Mindoro Oriental, Misamis Occidental, Misamis Oriental, Mountain Province, Negros Occidental, Negros Oriental, North Cotabato, Northern Samar, Nueva Ecija, Nueva Vizcaya, Palawan, Pampanga, Pangasinan, Quezon, Quirino, Rizal, Romblon, Samar, Sarangani, Shariff Kabunsuan, Siquijor, Sorsogon, South Cotabato, Southern Leyte, Sultan Kudarat, Sulu, Surigao del Norte, Surigao del Sur, Tarlac, Tawi-Tawi, Zambales, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, Zamboanga Sibugay



© Neil Howard
Makati City, Manila

chartered cities: Alaminos, Angeles, Antipolo, Bacolod, Bago, Baguio, Bais, Balanga, Batac, Batangas, Bayawan, Baybay, Bayugan, Bislig, Bogo, Borongan, Butuan, Cabadbaran, Cabanatuan, Cadiz, Cagayan de Oro, Calamba, Calapan, Calbayog, Candon, Canlaon, Carcar, Catbalogan, Cauayan, Cavite, Cebu, Cotabato, Dagupan, Danao, Dapitan, Davao, Digos, Dipolog, Dumaguete, Escalante, El Salvador, Gapan, General Santos, Gingoog, Guihulngan, Himamaylan, Iligan, Iloilo, Isabela, Iriga, Kabankalan, Kalookan, Kidapawan, Koronadal, La Carlota, Lamitan, Laoag, Lapu-Lapu, Las Pinas, Legazpi, Ligao, Lipa, Lucena, Maasin, Makati, Malabon, Malaybalay, Malolos, Mandaluyong, Mandaue, Manila, Marawi, Marikina, Masbate, Mati, Meycauayan, Muntinlupa, Munoz, Naga (Camarines Sur), Naga (Cebu), Navotas, Olongapo, Ormoc, Oroquieta, Ozamis, Pagadian, Palayan, Panabo, Paranaque, Pasay, Pasig, Passi, Puerto Princesa, Quezon, Roxas, Sagay, Samal, San Carlos (in Negros Occidental), San Carlos (in Pangasinan), San Fernando (in La Union), San Fernando (in Pampanga), San Jose, San Jose del Monte, San Juan, San Pablo, Santa Rosa, Santiago, Silay, Sibalay, Sorsogon, Surigao, Tabaco, Tabuk, Tacloban, Tacurong, Tagaytay, Tagbilaran, Taguig, Tagum, Talisay (in Cebu), Talisay (in Negros Occidental), Tanauan, Tandag, Tanguib, Tanjay, Tarlac, Tayabas, Toledo, Tuguegarao, Trece Martires, Urdaneta, Valencia, Valenzuela, Victorias, Vigan, Zamboanga (2007)

Independence Day: 12 June 1898 (independence proclaimed from Spain); 4 July 1946 (from the U.S.)

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 U.S.

Legal system: The legal system is based on Spanish and Anglo-American law and 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)

note - The president is both the chief of state and head of government.

Cabinet: The cabinet is appointed by the president with the consent of the Commission of Appointments.

Elections: The president and vice president (Manuel "Noli" De Castro) were elected on separate tickets by popular vote for a single six-year term. Elections were last held on 10 May 2004 (next to be held in May 2010).



© Jeff Werner
Campaign posters and flyers

Legislative branch:

Bicameral Congress or *Kongreso* consists of the Senate or *Senado* (24 seats - one-half elected every three years; members elected at large by popular vote to serve six-year terms) and the House of Representatives or *Kapulungan Ng Mga Kinatawan* (as a result of May 2007 election it has 237 seats including 218 members representing districts and 19 sectoral party-list members representing special minorities elected on the basis of 1 seat for every 2% of the total vote but limited to 3 seats; members elected by popular vote to serve three-year terms).

note - The Constitution prohibits the House of Representatives from having more than 250 members.

elections: Senate elections were last held on 14 May 2007 (next to be held in May 2010). House of Representatives elections were last held on 14 May 2007 (next to be held in May 2010).

election results: Senate - percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - Lakas-Kampi 4, LP 4, NPC 3, Nacionalista 2, independents 4, others 6; note - there are 23 rather than 24 sitting senators because one senator was elected mayor of Manila; House of Representatives - percent of vote by party - NA; seats by party - Lakas 86, Kampi 46, NPC 29, LP 21, Party-list 21, others 36

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]

Genuine Opposition or GO (coalition of opposition parties formed to contest the 2007 elections); Kabalikat Ng Malayang Pilipino or Kampi [Ronaldo Puno]; Laban Ng Demokratikong Pilipino (Struggle of Filipino Democrats) or LDP [Edgardo Angara]; Lakas Ng Edsa (National Union of Christian Democrats) or Lakas [Jose De Venecia]; Liberal Party or LP [Franklin Drilon/Eli Quinto]; Nacionalista [Manuel Villar]; National People's Coalition or NPC [Frisco San Juan]; PDP-Laban [Aquilino Pimentel]; People's Reform Party [Miriam Defensor Santiago]; PROMDI [Emilio Osmena]; Pwersa Ng Masang Pilipino (Party of the Philippine Masses) or PMP [Joseph Estrada]; Reporma [Renato De Villa]

International organization participation (partial list):

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Asian Development Bank (ADB), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Colombo Plan (CP), East Asia Summit (EAS), Food and Agriculture Org. (FAO), Group of 24, Group of 77, Intl. Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Intl. Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) (IBRD), Intl. Civil Aviation Org. (ICAO), International Criminal Court (ICCt (signatory), Intl. Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (ICRM, Intl. Development Association (IDA), Intl. Fund for Agricultural Development IFAD, Intl. Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies(IFRCS), Intl. Monetary Fund (IMF), Intl. Maritime Org. (IMO), Intl. Criminal Police Org. (Interpol), Intl. Org. for Standardization (ISO, Intl. Telecommunication Union (ITU), Intl. Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Multilateral Investment Geographic Agency (MIGA), Nonaligned Movement (NAM), Org. of American States(OAS), (observer), Org. for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), United Nations (UN), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Industrial Development Org. (UNIDO), World Confederation of Labor (WCL), World Customs Org. (WCO), World Health Org. (WHO), World Trade Org. (WTO)



© Ron Nieuwsma
Typhoon Durian damage in Naga

GDP - composition by sector:

agriculture: 13.7%

industry: 31.4%

services: 54.8% (2007 est.)

Labor force: 36.22 million (2007 est.)

Labor force - by occupation:

agriculture: 35%

industry: 15%

services: 50% (2007 est.)

Unemployment rate: 7.3% (2007 est.)

Population below poverty line: 30% (2003 est.)

Industries: Electronics assembly, garments, footwear, pharmaceuticals, chemicals, wood products, food processing, petroleum refining, fishing

Agriculture products: Sugarcane, coconuts, rice, corn, bananas, cassavas, pineapples, mangoes; pork, eggs, beef; fish



© Storm Crypt / flickr.com
Rice Terraces of Ifugao

Exports - commodities:

Semiconductors and electronic products, transport equipment, garments, copper products, petroleum products, coconut oil, fruits

Exports - partners:

China 29.4%, US 13.4%, Japan 11.8%, Hong Kong 7.9%, Singapore 7.9% (2006)

Imports - commodities:

Electronic products, mineral fuels, machinery and transport equipment, iron and steel, textile fabrics, grains, chemicals, plastic

Imports - partners:

Japan 14.8%, US 12%, China 11.1%, Singapore 9.5%, Taiwan 7.5%, South Korea 5.7%, Saudi Arabia 5.1%, Thailand 4.5%, Hong Kong 4.1% (2006)

Currency: Philippine peso (PHP)

Exchange rates: Philippine pesos per U.S. dollar - 46.148 (2007), 51.246 (2006), 55.086 (2005), 56.04 (2004), 54.203 (2003), 51.604 (2002)

Telecommunications:

Telephones – main lines in use: 3.633 million (2006)

Telephones – mobile/cellular: 42.869 million (2006)

Internet access:

Internet country code: .ph
Users: 4.615 million (2005)

Airports: 255

Airports - with paved runways: 84
Airports – with unpaved runways: 171
Heliports: 2

Railways: 897 km (557 mi)

Military:

Branches: Army, Navy (including Coast Guard and Marine Corps), Air Force, paramilitary units

Military service age and obligation:
18–25 years of age (officers 21–29) for compulsory and voluntary military service; applicants must be single male or female Philippine citizens (2007)

Military manpower availability for service:

males age 16-49: 23,547,252
females age 16-49: 23,177,487



© Daniel Y. Go
PMA Cadets in a marching drill

Chapter 2 Geography

Area

It was the ancient Greeks who coined the term “archipelago” to refer to the myriad islands in the Aegean Sea. The Greeks could 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 (over 7,100) and Indonesia (over 13,000) form the greatest island chain on Earth: the Malay Archipelago. The Philippine island group is entirely surrounded by four tropical 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. Neighbor states include Taiwan, some 402 km (250 mi) north of the northern-most city of Aparri; Malaysia, only 80 km (50 mi) from the southern tip of Palawan; and Indonesia, whose Sunda Islands lie some 241 km (150 mi) to the south of the Philippine island of Mindanao.



© Mike Rosales
Beach near Samal city

Climate

Due to its close proximity to the Equator, the climate of the Philippines epitomizes the tropics. In the coastal areas, the temperature usually hovers around 27°C (mid- to upper 80°F). In the inland valleys, temperatures may rise to the 27–32°C (upper 80s to low 90s°F). Farther up in the mountains, the average temperature is cooler. In general, because of the heat and 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) cool dry season from November to February, the hot dry season from March to May, and the wet season from June to October.

Principal Island Groups

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. However, only 1,000 of these islands are populated. The majority of the landmass, 94%, is made up by just eleven islands: Luzon, Mindanao, Palawan, Samar, Negros, Panay, Mindoro, Leyte, Cebu, Bohol, and Masbate. Luzon and Mindanao, compared to half of the islands that measure less than 2.5 sq km (0.96 sq mi), measure 105,000 sq km (40,541 sq mi) and 95,000 sq km (36,680 sq km) respectively.⁴

The geological partitioning of the present-day Philippines into a series of islands contributed to the evolution of endemic species of wildlife, or those which are indigenous to a particular place, owing to the physical isolation of their habitat.⁵

⁴ Federal Research Division, Library of Congress. *Philippines: A Country Study*. “Philippines: Geography.” 1991. <http://countrystudies.us/philippines/31.htm>

⁵ Field Museum. Alcala, Angel C. “The Philippine Rainforest.” 2002. http://www.fieldmuseum.org/vanishing_treasures/foreword.htm

Luzon

The largest and most populated island in the Philippines is the northernmost island of Luzon. Manila, the capital city and large metropolitan area, and Quezon City are situated on the south end of the island. Industries, such as textile and metal manufacturing, are located around the metropolitan area. The main industry, agriculture, can be found in the center of Luzon where the mountainous and jagged coastline leads into a flat, fertile interior. This plain produces the majority of the Philippines rice and much of the sugarcane.⁶



© Preetam Rai
Rice fields in central Luzon

Luzon's topography is characterized by a ragged coast, two mountain ranges, and plains. The ragged coast that surrounds the island houses numerous resorts that bring in tourists interested in exploring the diverse ocean life. Located on the southern portion of Luzon are Manila Bay, the Taal Volcano, the Philippines' largest lake Laguna de Bay, and Mayon Volcano.⁷ The northern portion of the island is more mountainous and is drained by the Cagayan River. The Sierra Madre Mountains, located along the eastern side, make up the longest mountain range in the country. Running parallel to it on the west, the Cordillera Central range includes Mount Pulog, the highest peak at 2,928 m (9,606 ft).⁸ The Zambales Mountains are west of the Central Luzon Valley. Pinatubo, the most famous Philippine volcano, is located in this range.

Mindanao

The second largest island, Mindanao, is located at the southern end of the archipelago. With approximately one-quarter of the country's total population, the island is home to a variety of cultures.⁹ The irregular shape of Mindanao houses numerous bays, such as the port of Davao. Forests and mountains cover much of the Island. Mount Apo, the highest peak in the country and an active volcano, reaches a height of 2,954 m (9,690 ft).¹⁰ Mindanao has a similar geological configuration as Luzon with the principal range, the Diuata Mountains, lining the east coast.

Its location outside the typhoon belt, along with its fertile soils, enables Mindanao to support a large agricultural industry. All of the nation's rubber, 91% of the pineapple, 90% of the cacao, and over 50% of the coconut, coffee, corn, and banana are grown here.¹¹

⁶ Highbeam Encyclopedia. The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition. "Luzon." 2007.
<http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1E1-Luzon.html>

⁷ MSN Encarta Online Encyclopedia. "Laguna de Bay." 2007.
http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761579345/Laguna_de_Bay.html

⁸ Highbeam Encyclopedia. The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition. "Luzon." 2007.
<http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1E1-Luzon.html>

⁹ Mindanao Economic Development Council (MEDCo). "Mindanao." 2004.
<http://www.medco.gov.ph/medcweb/mindanao.asp>

¹⁰ Highbeam Encyclopedia. The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition. "Mindanao." 2007.
<http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1E1-Mindanao.html>

¹¹ Mindanao Economic Development Council (MEDCo). "Mindanao." 2004.
<http://www.medco.gov.ph/medcweb/mindanao.asp>

Visayas

The Visayan Islands are situated between Luzon and Mindanao. They are typically divided into three sub-regions: Western Visayas, Central Visayas, and Eastern Visayas--the latter of which is the least populated and least developed owing to the fact its location makes inhabitants vulnerable to the full brunt of a typhoon. The eastern islands also act as a geographical weather buffer for the western and central islands, explaining their more developed economies.¹²

The Central Visayas are among the most densely populated in the island archipelago. The labor-intensive sugar industry, developed by the Spanish, originated on large Negros Island which is divided by a mountain range between west and central. The prospect of work attracted migrants from other islands.¹³ Both the western and central regions remain agricultural centers which continue to produce sugar as well as finished products such as furniture made from Philippine mahogany. Intensive agriculture has devastated the natural environment, however.

Major Cities

Manila

Manila, on central Luzon Island, became the capital of the Philippines under Spanish colonial rule. The bombing that took place during World War II left few examples of colonial architecture. In addition to government offices, the Makati financial district has gleaming office towers and modern shopping malls. Many residents of the city live in squatter settlements that often exist in close proximity to the residential areas of the wealthy.¹⁴ (Population: 11.29 million, 2005 est.;¹⁵ metropolitan area in excess of 15 million¹⁶).



Davao City

Davao City, on Mindanao Island, is the largest city in the Philippines in terms of geographical size. It does not fall under the authority of a provincial government but has the equivalent status in dealings with the national government. It has become a thriving center of commerce and trade for the island. (Population: 1.33 million, 2005 est.).

¹² Encyclopedia of Modern Asia. "Visayan Islands." 2006. <http://www.bookrags.com/research/visayan-islands-ema-06/>

¹³ Field Museum. "Negros Island: A Case Study in Deforestation." 2002. http://www.fieldmuseum.org/Vanishing_Treasures/Deforestation_2.htm

¹⁴ National Public Radio. Sullivan, Michael. "Manila Eyes Eviction of Poor From the Cemetery." 8 August 2007. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=12577727>

¹⁵ 2005 population figures for Manila, Davao City and Cebu City taken from U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Philippines." October 2007. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2794.htm>

¹⁶ Metropolitan Manila's population is expected to grow to 22 million by 2010 making it a "mega-city." Manila Times, Special Report. Llorita, Dave. "Long Commute Means P100-B Down the Drain." 11 November 2002. <http://www.manilatimes.net/others/special/2002/nov/11/20021111spe1.html>

Cebu City

Cebu City, on the island of Cebu, is the oldest city in the country. It had developed from a fishing village into a trading port prior to the arrival of the Spanish who initially made it their capital. Its origins as a major urban center lie in its role as a port which became an important stop in carrying goods between Spain and Mexico. (Population: 0.82 million, 2005 est.)¹⁷

Quezon City

Ten km (6 mi) north of Manila, fast-growing Quezon City has become an extension of the capital metropolitan area. It is home to the Philippine's premier university.

Architecturally, it is a representative example of the island nation's Spanish colonial legacy. (Population: 2.1 million, 2000 est.)¹⁸

Bodies of Water

The annual rainfall is over 1,000 mm (39 inches) throughout the archipelago, much of it delivered in the form of typhoons.¹⁹ This amount of precipitation means the Philippines is replete with rivers and lakes. In all, the Philippines is home to 412 primary river basins, of which 19 are major rivers.²⁰ Luzon's rivers include the Cagayan, Agno, Pampanga, Chico, Pasig, and Bicol. Mindanao's rivers include the Rio Grande de Mindanao and the Agusan River.



© Jun Acullador
Manila Bay

However, owing to the fact that the Philippines is comprised of islands, river travel never developed into a major form of transportation. The Mindanao River, which gives the island its name, is the major exception. It serves as a commercial transportation artery for inland communities.²¹

The largest lake in this country is Laguna de Bay, 13 km (8 mi) southeast of Manila, with an area of 922 sq km (356 sq mi).²² This shallow lake, with an average depth of 2.8 m (9 ft), provides water for agriculture along its banks. In addition, the lake has long been a

¹⁷ 2005 population figures for Manila, Davao City and Cebu City taken from Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Philippines." October 2007. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2794.htm>

¹⁸ Figure from 2000 national census cited in 2002 Press Release, "Quezon City: The Philippines' Largest City." 8 October 2002. <http://www.census.gov.ph/data/pressrelease/2002/pr02171tx.html>

¹⁹ National Environment Agency. "The Climate of the Philippines." <http://app.nea.gov.sg/cms/htdocs/article.asp?pid=1101>

²⁰ Water Environment Partnership in Asia. Philippines Environment Monitor 2003. "Philippines. River Basins." No Date. <http://www.wepa-db.net/policies/state/philippines/riverbasins.htm>

²¹ Encyclopedia Britannica. "Mindanao River." <http://concise.britannica.com/ebc/article-9372202/Mindanao-River>

²² Encyclopedia Britannica. "Laguna de Bay." 2007 <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9013844/Laguna-de-Bay>

resource for fisherman. However, intense urbanization and industrialization along the edges have lead to an increase in water pollution.²³

Another lake on Luzon, Lake Taal, is situated 50 km (30 mi) south of Manila. It proves that recursion is a natural phenomenon: this lake fills the crater of an extinct volcano. In the middle of the lake is a small volcanic island, in the center of which is yet another crater that contains an even smaller lake called Yellow Lake. Lake Taal is the deepest lake in the Philippines and is 244 sq km (94 sq mi) in size.²⁴

Manila Bay, one of the finest natural harbors in the world, figured prominently in the Spanish decision to make Manila the site of their capital. Located on the west side of Luzon, this bay has an area of 2,000 sq km (770 sq mi) and is almost completely landlocked.²⁵

Volcanoes

From the air, the Philippine 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 that these islands form the tops of volcanic mountains rising from the ocean floor. At least 17 of these volcanoes are still active. The Mayon Volcano erupted in 1814 resulting in 1,200 fatalities and the destruction of several towns.²⁶ It has erupted three times in recent years: 1993, 2000, and 2001 but without approaching its earlier level of destructiveness. Although Mt. Apo is the Philippines' highest volcanic mountain, the most famous is Mt. Pinatubo, which erupted in 1991 after many dormant centuries.

On 15 June 1991, Mt. Pinatubo, a volcano situated in north-central Luzon, erupted and unleashed 5 cubic km (1.2 cubic mi) of molten magma. "In the 20th 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 1980."²⁷ Almost 900 people lost their lives in this natural disaster. Without the expertise of geologists at the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, who were able to predict volcanic activity resulting in a government evacuation of the area, casualties would have been much higher. Ironically, the U.S. had already agreed to leave Subic Bay Naval Base and the Clark Air Base. The volcano and the destruction that it left in its wake only hastened the U.S. military's departure. From an aesthetic viewpoint, Pinatubo spewed a mountain's worth of dust and ash into the



© Mike Rosales
Taal Volcano

²³ Blackwell Synergy. *Lakes and Reservoirs: Research and Management*, Vol. 6 (3). Oledan, M.T.T "Challenges and opportunities in watershed management for Laguna de Bay (Philippines)." 2001.

<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/abs/10.1046/j.1440-1770.2001.00154.x?journalCode=Ire>

²⁴ Encyclopedia Britannica. "Taal Lake." 2007. <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9070826>

²⁵ Encyclopedia Britannica. "Manila Bay." 2007. <http://www.britannica.com/eb/article-9050545/Manila-Bay>

²⁶ VolcanoWorld. "Mayon Volcano, Philippines: Eruptive History." 7 August 2006.

http://volcano.und.edu/vwdocs/current_volcs/philippines/mayonvol.html

²⁷ U.S. Geological Survey. Cascades Volcano Observatory,. "Mount Pinatubo, Philippines." 02 August 2005. http://vulcan.wr.usgs.gov/Volcanoes/Philippines/Pinatubo/description_pinatubo.html

atmosphere, resulting in spectacular, deep red sunsets for the next six months which could be seen around the world.²⁸

A long time ago, a large eruption took place on the Island of Luzon and formed a crater lake known as Taal Lake. Inside of this lake, the Taal Volcano grew forming the island referred to as Volcano Island. Taal Volcano's proximity to metropolitan Manila means eruptions pose a potential threat to large numbers of people, many of whom live in makeshift housing. Since 1572, Taal has erupted over 30 times, most recently in 1965.²⁹ Since 1991, Taal Volcano has been monitored due to earthquakes, ground fracturing, and an increase in the water temperature of the crater lake. Volcanologists are watching to see if this activity points toward a future eruption.³⁰

Environmental Concerns and Hazards

Temperatures are rising in the Philippines and in the surrounding coastal waters. The final decade of the 20th century was the warmest on record. At the same time as the country has become warmer, the Philippines has also become drier. Annual rainfall declined by about 6% during the course of the last 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 areas.³¹

Natural disasters such as volcanoes and typhoons are the result of the Philippines topography and geographic location. Due to the rapid population growth, which has increased the size of urban areas, and unsustainable farming practices, both volcanoes and typhoons have the potential to create environmental catastrophes.³² In particular, loss of ground cover owing to massive deforestation and desertification increases the likelihood of flooding with the resultant damage to property.³³



© David Lee
Typhoon damage

Overcrowding in urban areas, particularly metropolitan Manila, has created environmental hazards in the form of raw sewage disposal, leading to water source contamination, and air pollution.³⁴

²⁸ For a photograph of the eruption, see NASA:
<http://kids.earth.nasa.gov/terra/gallery/Originals/pinatuboerupt.jpg>

²⁹ Volcano World. University of North Dakota. "Taal: The Philippines." No Date.
http://volcano.und.edu/vwdocs/volc_images/img_taal.html

³⁰ Volcano World. University of North Dakota. "Taal Volcano, Philippines." No Date.
http://volcano.und.edu/vwdocs/volc_images/img_taal1.html

³¹ ³¹ Climate Research Unit. World Wildlife Fund. "Climate Change Scenarios for the Philippines." October 1999. <http://www.cru.uea.ac.uk/~mikeh/research/philippines.pdf>

³² Field Museum, The Causes and Effects of Deforestation. Heaney, Lawrence. "Negros Island: A Case Study in Deforestation." 2002. http://www.fieldmuseum.org/vanishing_treasures/Deforestation_2.htm

³³ Disaster Mitigation and Management. Srinvas, Hari. "Environmental Management and Disaster Reduction-An Introduction." <http://www.gdrc.org/uem/disasters/disenvi/intro.html>

³⁴ USAID, Philippines. "Energy and Environment." <http://philippines.usaid.gov/oe.php>

Chapter 3 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, according to this view, 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 B.C.E. The remains of prehistoric stone tools date back as far as 30,000 B.C.E. Thousands of years later, the Spanish would call 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 2,500 B.C.E. The Austronesians were of Malay stock and they would go on to colonize the Southeast Asian archipelago.

Hindu Influence: 200 C.E.

While the Austronesians or “Proto-Malays” were engaged in a continuous migration from island to island, a well developed civilization, the “Land of the Veda,” had already evolved in India. 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 countermarch 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 established deep roots in the archipelago and neither succeeded in supplanting indigenous animist beliefs. The Devanagiri script used for writing Hindi, and other Sanskrit-based languages, never became the written language of commerce or literature. By contrast, the imported agricultural model did displace indigenous farming practices that relied on rain. Irrigated wet rice cultivation plowed by water buffalo, still a common sight in the Philippines today, has its origins in continental Asia.

The 600-Year Dynasty of Sri Vijaya

Sri Vijaya, a Buddhist kingdom and center of learning, got its start in approximately 650 C.E. It was centered in what is now southern Sumatra. Sri Vijaya maintained close contact with, and received intellectual sustenance from, 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 dawn of the 12th century C.E., the Sumatra-based Malay Kingdom of Sri Vijaya had enjoyed significant success in extending its influence to the vast archipelago of tropical islands, inhabited by a variety of peoples which comprise the present-day Philippines. In 1289 the Mongols invaded Sri Vijaya,



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Sri-Vijayan architecture in Borobudur, Indonesia

demanding tribute. “Kublai Khan's ambassadors returned to China without their noses.”³⁵ In 1290, Sri Vijaya was 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 had not a new wave of settlers brought a novel faith from south-central Asia (also known as the Middle East): Islam.

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. To be precise, the Prophet Muhammad’s message barely made it up the mountains. But if Spanish explorers had not opened the door to the spread of Christianity, Islam might have found favor in the rest of the Philippines.

Magellan and Christianity

In March 1521 the arrival of Ferdinand Magellan was a prelude to colonization. He promptly claimed the archipelago for Spain.³⁶ The bustle of commerce in the coastal enclaves appealed to Magellan, as wares from China, India and Arabia were bought and sold in abundance. Magellan’s main goal, however, was to proselytize the population, spreading the word of Christianity by utilizing all of his powers of persuasion without regard for traditions and local ways. On his visit to the Island of Mactan he encountered resistance. One of the legendary heroes of Philippine history, the chieftain Lapulapu, emerged to protect his people from the invading forces.³⁷ The locals fought Magellan and his men, who could not make use of the cannons from their ships which were kept far at sea by the island’s rocky coastal line. Magellan was shot by a poisoned arrow and was on his knees when the locals, led by Lapulapu, attacked and killed him. Only one of Magellan’s ships, the *Victoria*, made the return journey to Spain, bringing back spices from the Moluccas, the original reason for Magellan’s journey. Out of the 250 who left on five ships from Spain three years earlier, only 18 survived.³⁸



© Judhi Prasetyo
Statue of Lapulapu in Cebu

³⁵ University of Alberta. *A Centennial History of Philippine Independence, 1898-1998*. Weir, Frasier. “Sri Vijaya 650-1377.” No date. <http://www.ualberta.ca/~vmitchel/rev5.html>

³⁶ Eye Witness to History. “The Death of Magellan, 1521.” 2001. <http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/magellan.htm>

³⁷ Microsoft Encarta Online Encyclopedia. “Lapulapu (chief).” 2007. [http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761584238/Lapulapu_\(chief\).html](http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761584238/Lapulapu_(chief).html)

³⁸ Suite101. Crandall, John. “Magellan’s Voyage Around the World.” 29 October 2006. http://transportationhistory.suite101.com/article.cfm/magellan_s_voyage

A Colony of Spain

King Felipe of Spain dispatched more ships to the archipelago, which was renamed “Felipinas” in his honor. Miguel López de Legazpi became the first Spanish governor in 1565. Churches and buildings were erected in the Spanish style and Legazpi established a foothold for Catholicism in the region, defeating the Muslims on the island of Luzon. Manila became the capital. The ensuing centuries brought more Spaniards and greater administrative control. The different tribes were forced to live together, breaking up the territorial boundaries and political isolation, which ultimately led to the development of the Filipino Nationalist Movement and the Katipunan Rebellion that ended Spanish rule with the outbreak of war in 1896.³⁹

Nationalist Rebellion

Andres Bonifacio founded the Katipunan underground group in 1892 in Manila to overthrow the Spanish colonial regime. Although members had different visions for the future, it was a highly organized group with its own initiation rituals and a membership that wore uniforms. When fighting broke out in 1896, the Spanish caught and executed many leaders of this and other groups, including Jose Rizal, mistaking him for a radical when in fact he favored reform under continued colonial rule. In 1897, Emilio Aguinaldo emerged as the head of the newly formed revolutionary government. He ordered the execution of Bonifacio, a rival for power who also advocated the creation of an independent republic, and started organizing his government and the fight against the Spanish.⁴⁰



Courtesy of Wikipedia
Katipuneros

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. As in the Philippines, the Cuban people rebelled against their Spanish colonial masters, seeking independence. As in the Philippines, the Spanish responded 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.”

³⁹ *The Encyclopedia of World History: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern. Sixth Edition.* Stearns, Peter and William Leonard Langer, Eds. “The Philippines, 1800–1913 [p. 577].” 2001. Boston, Mass: Houghton Mifflin.

⁴⁰ U.S. Library of Congress, Federal Research Division. “The 1896 Uprising and Rizal’s Execution 1991. <http://countrystudies.us/philippines/12.htm>

Meanwhile, Commodore George Dewey, the commander of the U.S. 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 U.S. declared war against Spain on 25 April 1898. The first attack against Spanish forces did not take place in Cuba. Rather, the U.S. Navy destroyed the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay, 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.



DoD photo
General Aguinaldo boards the U.S.S Vicksburg, 1900

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 U.S. was not about to relinquish its newly attained strategic advantage and the trade interests such a position would further. On 10 December 1898, the U.S. and Spain signed the Treaty of Paris. By this agreement, Spain granted Cuba independence and sold the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico to the U.S. for USD 20 million.

The Filipino–American War

This sellout enraged Filipino nationalists. For the next two years, Aguinaldo led his guerillas against U.S. forces. Greatly outnumbered and outgunned, the Filipinos lost 16,000 fighters, and at least 200,000 civilians. 4,234 American 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 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 U.S. had thrown off its own colonial rulers in a revolution of independence, and Americans did not feel comfortable in reversing the roles. Therefore, the U.S. government went to great lengths to promote free and democratic institutions in their 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 governments.”⁴¹

Even before the Philippines attained the status of commonwealth (1935), 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

⁴¹ University of Alberta. *A Centennial History of Philippine Independence, 1898-1998*. Weir, Frasier. “American Colony and Philippine Commonwealth 1901–1941.” <http://www.ualberta.ca/~vmitchel/fw5.html>

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 co-optation of the elite was known as the policy of attraction.



© Storm Crypt / flickr.com
Corregidor Island Parade Ground

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 reforms 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 take.⁴²

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. Indeed, this is precisely what 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 U.S. Pacific Fleet. Ten hours later, the Japanese attacked the Philippines. General Douglas MacArthur was the commander of the U.S. Armed Forces in the Asia-Pacific

⁴² Library of Congress. A Country Studies: Philippines. Seekins, Donald. “A Collaborative Philippine Leadership.” June 1991. <http://memory.loc.gov/frd/cs/phtoc.html>

region. The combined U.S. 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 km (65 mi) 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 Asians.*⁴³

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 on 2 September 1945, that the Japanese put down their weapons in the Philippines. In human terms the cost was 60,628 Americans, 300,000 Japanese, and at least 1,000,000 Filipinos.

While the Philippine elite collaborated with the Japanese, ordinary people did not for the most part. More than half a million Filipinos engaged in resistance operations, assisting the U.S. 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 forces. The Huks recruited heavily among tenant farmers in central and southern Luzon."⁴⁴ After the allied victory, the Huks and other resistance groups fully expected recognition and the opportunity to participate in the governance of their own country. This did not happen. Instead, the U.S. government restored the former commonwealth leaders to power.

Independence

The Philippines became a sovereign and independent republic on 4 July 1946. Sixteen years later, President Diosdado Macapagal proclaimed 12 June as the national day of independence, commemorating General Emilio Aguinaldo's declaration of independence

⁴³ Library of Congress. A Country Studies: Philippines. Seekins, Donald. "World War II, 1941–45." June 1991. <http://memory.loc.gov/frd/cs/phtoc.html>

⁴⁴ Rand Corporation. Mitchell, John Edward. "The Huk Rebellion: An Econometric Study." January 1969. http://www.rand.org/pubs/research_memoranda/RM5757/

on 12 June 1898. Ongoing strife between the Huks, which morphed into a communist-led insurgency, and the government marred the first eight years of independence. The Huks eventually lost popular support, 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. Over the course of 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, imprisoned 30,000 political opponents, and prohibited criticism of his government. Tales of corrupt business deals and lavish lifestyles dogged his family throughout his tenure in office.



© angust / flickr.com
Bust of Marcos near Baguio

People Power!

Among Marcos' critics, Benigno Aquino stood out. As a member of the landowner class, Aquino hailed from the same background as Marcos and differed little in political outlook. Nevertheless, Marcos viewed Aquino's popularity as a threat to his hold on power and had him imprisoned. In 1980, after Aquino had spent seven years behind bars, the Marcos government granted its most famous dissident permission to travel to the U.S. for medical treatment. Fully aware of the risks, Aquino decided to return home three years later. As he stepped off the plane in Manila on 21 August 1983, he was gunned down by soldiers.

This assassination enraged many Filipinos.⁴⁵ Aquino's widow, Corazon, stepped in to lead the opposition to Marcos. The “People Power” movement continued to gather backers over 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 the corruption of the Marcos government and who sought to restore professionalism to the armed forces.

On 7 February 1986, President Marcos won another term in office. The elections were universally dismissed as fraudulent. Two weeks later, Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, along with General Fidel Ramos, Commander of the Philippine Constabulary, demanded Marcos' resignation. 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

⁴⁵ AsiaWeek. “The Martyr: Benigno ‘Nino’ Aquino.” 2001.
<http://www.pathfinder.com/asiaweek/95/20greats/aquino.html>

with rebel troops. This non-violent sequence of events, which forced the president from power on 22 February, came to be known as the “People Power” movement.

An ailing Marcos and his high-profile wife, Imelda, along with other relatives, were granted refuge in Hawaii where he died in 1989. Filipino history from colonization to the end of the Marcos era has been summed up by Filipinos in the following way: “Three hundred years in a Spanish convent, 50 years of Hollywood, and 20 years of ‘his and hers.’”⁴⁶ The joke encapsulated the hope that the People Power revolution, which toppled Marcos, represented a distinct break with the country’s past.

Presidency of Corazon Aquino

Corazon Aquino came to power amid great hopes for reform. This was buoyed by her release of all political prisoners, endorsement of a new constitution limiting the president to a single six-year term and revival of a bi-cameral legislature. To close the Marcos era, she lifted the censorship restrictions he had put in place under martial law and initiated efforts to recover the hundreds of millions of dollars of ill-gotten gains which had disappeared into his family coffers. What



DoD photo
Corazon Aquino

Aquino did not do, however, was to address the contentious issue of land reform which remains the primary source of income inequality in the Philippines.

This lack of progress on land reform is reflected in the change of designations used to refer to the Philippines’ first female president. Initially Aquino was considered a “revolutionary.” As hopes for change faded she became known as a “reformer.” Finally, at the end of her term, she was dismissed as a “restorationist” who had delivered little of the change her ascendance to power initially heralded.⁴⁷

Her enduring legacy should not be discounted, however. She oversaw the complicated process of restoring democracy after the Marcos era and presided over the creation of a new constitution designed to prevent the subversion of power by a future dictator. Over the course of her six-year term she survived more than five coup attempts and endorsed Fidel Ramos, her defense secretary and a graduate of West Point, in the subsequent presidential election.

Post-Aquino Politics

Fidel Ramos won the presidential election in 1992 and dedicated himself to rebuilding the Philippine economy, just as Aquino had rebuilt a democratic system of governance. He was considered successful in restoring investor confidence in the Philippines. Nicknamed “Steady Eddy,” he implemented several deregulation and anti-monopoly measures which Aquino had been unable to get through the legislature.

⁴⁶ New York Times. Gibney, Frank. “Everybody’s Colony: Review of *Dusk* by Sionel Jose.” 2 August 1998. <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9A06E2D61339F931A3575BC0A96E958260>

⁴⁷ Federal Research Division. Library of Congress. “The Aquino Era.” http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Tagalog/Tagalog_Default_files/Philippine_Culture/aquino_era.htm

In 1998, movie star Joseph Estrada was elected to succeed him. Charges of corruption dogged Estrada from his first day in office. He became the first Philippine president to face impeachment proceedings. Ultimately he was forced from office in early 2001 through a combination of insider political maneuvering and massive street protests organized via mobile phone text messaging.⁴⁸ His short-lived presidency underscored how weak Philippine political institutions remain, making it easy for elected officials to succumb to the favors those in the private sector are in a position to dispense.⁴⁹ Nine days later, Estrada's vice president, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, was sworn in as president.

President Arroyo, a Ph.D. economist and daughter of a former Philippine president, confronted an ailing economy in which a small wealthy minority continued to own most of the land while the majority, who hover near the poverty line, remain trapped in a subsistence livelihood.

Recent Events

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. Yet she did not, and charges of rigging the 2004 election dogged her. While she enjoyed some success in generating greater tax revenues, her husband's questionable business dealings created a storm of protest leading to calls for her resignation a year after she had been reelected.⁵⁰ Further controversy ensued when she pardoned Estrada, who'd been sentenced to a life term after his conviction for corruption on a massive scale in September 2007, a month later.⁵¹ More significantly, both insurgent activity and extra-judicial murders by government forces have increased during her watch.⁵²



© Keith Kristoffer Baongoo
President Gloria Arroyo

Arroyo also faces continuing challenges from within the military. The most recent coup attempt against her government occurred in November 2007. It was led by a group of renegade soldiers already on trial for a 2003 mutiny.⁵³ While the coup was suppressed, it reflects the uneven support for Arroyo within the ranks of the armed forces. This is

⁴⁸ Christian Science Monitor. Farrell, Michael. "Who's Taping Whom?" 15 September 2004. <http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0915/p16s01-usju.html>

⁴⁹ International Herald Tribune. Bowring, Philip. "A Return of Corrupt Habits Could Hold Back the Philippines." 21 July 1999. <http://www.iht.com/articles/1999/07/21/edb0w.t.php>

⁵⁰ International Herald Tribune. Conde, Carlos. "Filipinos Step Up Pressure on Arroyo." 1 July 2005. <http://www.iht.com/articles/2005/06/30/news/phils.php>

⁵¹ New York Times. Conde, Carlos. "Filipino Ex-President Pardoned." 26 October 2007. <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/26/world/asia/26filip.html>

⁵² Asian Godfathers: Money and Power in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia. "Index: Cast of Characters [p. 286]." Studwell, Joe. 2007. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.

⁵³ BBC News, "Philippines: Timeline." http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/country_profiles/1264117.stm

problematic given the military's role in combating both terrorist groups as well as groups which advocate violence as a means to address economic grievances.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Export Development Canada. "Philippines: Economics." 2008.
http://www.edc.ca/english/docs/gphilippines_e.pdf

Philippines Timeline

30,000 B.C.E. - Earliest prehistoric inhabitants, the “Aeta,” arrive in the area.

2,500 B.C.E. - Austronesians, the Malay, take over the area by sea from the mainland.

200 C.E. - Hindu-Buddhist culture spreads in the Straits.

650 C.E. - Sri Vijaya Dynasty is established in the area.

13th Century - Muslim influence gains strength in the region.

1290 - The Javanese Singhasari king conquers the Sri Vijaya Dynasty.

1293 - Mongols enter the scene and help the Singhasari son-in-law kill the king. The son-in-law, now the new king, slaughters the Mongols and establishes the Majapahit Empire.

1475 - The Moluccan Islands of Ternate and Tidore convert to Islam, strengthening the Muslim population in the region.

1521 - Magellan explores the archipelago and introduces Christianity to the local population.

1542 - Spanish soldiers claim the whole area for Spain and name the region “the Philippines” after the Spanish King Philip II.

1834 - The Spanish open Philippine ports to international free trade.

1841 - Philippine priests want to be part of the religious orders and revolt against the Spanish. In turn the Spanish execute the Philippine leader, Brother Apolinario.

1869 – Governor De la Torre abolishes censorship and Filipinos are given the freedoms of speech and assembly.

1871 - De la Torre is replaced by a new governor, who takes back the rights to free speech and assembly, marking the start of new rebellions.

1872 - An uprising against the Spaniards in Cavite is quashed. Three Filipino priests are executed.

1886 - Jose Rizal publishes his book, *The Lost Eden (Noli Me Tangere)*, which rekindles the spirit of Philippine nationalism.

1892 - Rizal is arrested and exiled. Andres Bonifacio founds the Katipunan underground group in Manila to overthrow the Spanish colonial regime.

1896 - Filipinos are now in open rebellion and fighting starts. The Spaniards capture and execute many insurgent leaders, including the reformist Rizal.

1897 - Emilio Aguinaldo emerges as the leader of the newly formed revolutionary government and organizes the fight against the Spanish.

1898

April 25 - The U.S. declares war against Spain after the USS Maine explodes in Havana Harbor, Cuba.

May 1 - The U.S. Navy destroys the Spanish fleet in Manila Bay.

June 12 - Filipino independence is declared.

December 10 - The U.S. and Spain sign the Treaty of Paris. Spain agrees to cede the Philippines to the U.S. for \$20 million. The sale outrages Filipino nationalists, who engage U.S. forces in guerilla warfare for the next two years.

1900 - The Taft Commission establishes a civilian government, with William H. Taft becoming the first civilian governor.

1901 - The Philippines becomes an American colony. Aguinaldo, leader of the Katipunan rebels, is captured on 23 March and convinced to admit defeat.

1903 - The last of Aguinaldo's guerillas lay down their arms.

1907 - An elected Filipino legislature is inaugurated.

1916 - A bicameral congress is inaugurated under the Jones Act.

1934 - The Philippines attains the status of commonwealth.

1941

December 7 - The Japanese attack Manila, ten hours after attacking Pearl Harbor.

1942

January 2 - Japanese troops occupy Manila.

March - General Douglas MacArthur leaves the Philippines with the vow "I shall return."

April - The infamous Bataan Death March commences after American and Philippine forces are forced to surrender Bataan and Corregidor to the Japanese.

1944

October 20 - MacArthur retakes the Philippines.

1946

July 4 - **The Philippines becomes a sovereign and independent republic.**

1965 - Ferdinand Marcos is elected President.

1969 - Marcos is re-elected.

1972 - **Martial law is imposed due to the growing threat from socialist and Muslim nationalist insurgents, and will stay in place until 1981.**

1973 - Marcos imprisons his political rival Benigno Aquino.

1980 - Aquino is released from prison and travels to the U.S. for medical treatment.

1983 - Aquino is assassinated by soldiers immediately upon his return to the Philippines. His widow, Corazon Aquino, begins to lead the “People Power” Movement against Marcos.

1986

February 7 - Marcos wins another term as President, but two weeks later, several ministers and members of the military demand his resignation.

1991 - Mount Pinatubo erupts, killing 700 people and leaving over 200,000 homeless. Global temperature is cooled by 1.5°C (2.7°F) due to volcanic ash in the atmosphere.

February 22 - **Ferdinand Marcos is toppled from power by the non-violent “People Power” Revolution. Corazon Aquino replaces him as Philippine head of state.**

1992

May 11- Fidel Ramos, a former general, wins the presidential election.

November 24- **The United States ends almost a century of military presence in the Philippines by turning over Clark Air Base and Subic Bay Naval Base to the Philippine government.**

1998

May - Movie star Joseph Estrada is elected president by the biggest vote margin in Filipino history.

December - Abdurajik Abubakar Janjalani, founder of the Philippine Islamic terrorist group Abu Sayyaf, is killed in battle.

2001

January 20 - Estrada resigns amid allegations of corruption and incompetence.

January 29 - Estrada's vice president, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, is sworn in as president.

2004

May 10 - Arroyo is re-elected.

2006

August - Arroyo weathers an effort to impeach her over allegations of official misconduct which include corruption, human rights abuses and electoral fraud in her 2004 re-election.

2007

January - Tests confirm that a body found in a remote area is that of Abu Sayyaf militant Khadaffy Janjalani, who succeeded his late brother as leader of that Islamic terrorist group. The army reports he died during a clash with Philippine troops in September 2006.

2007

September - Ex-president Estrada is found guilty of massive corruption and sentenced to life in prison. In response Arroyo issues a presidential pardon.

Chapter 4 Economy

Introduction

After World War II, the Philippines was the second-wealthiest country in Asia after Japan. Now it is one of the poorest.⁵⁵ This is reflected in its large informal economy in which urban squatters, often landless farmers, typically eke out a subsistence living. Still, job creation has not kept up with high population growth. As a result, the economy has become heavily dependent on the billions of dollars remitted each year by Filipinos who have sought work overseas.⁵⁶ As of December 2004, an estimated 10% of the population is employed outside the Philippines, dispersed among 200 some countries.⁵⁷ This has been facilitated by government information and embassy services to reduce the red-tape for employers in other countries seeking to hire Filipino nationals.⁵⁸ Indeed, in 2001 the government set a goal of sending one million people a year abroad for work.

Agriculture and Industry

The agricultural sector, which includes forestry and fisheries, has historically been the backbone of the nation's economy. It remains the largest employer in the Philippines. Primary products are rice for domestic consumption, and sugar, bananas, and pineapples for export. Yet, agriculture accounts for less than 5% of foreign earnings, because of low productivity gains and limited diversification away from staple food crops sold within the local market.⁵⁹



© IRRI Images
Rice paddies in Laguna Province

Achieving greater efficiency in output is difficult owing to the pervasive pattern of inequitable land ownership. Owners of estates typically rent out small plots to sharecroppers, who turn over a large share of their harvest to the typically absentee owner. Poverty among small-scale cultivators is high, and efforts to introduce land reform have been blocked by powerful interest groups that benefit from the current system.

Industry is largely concentrated around the metropolitan Manila area, where infrastructure allows for a smooth flow of production from raw materials to finished products.⁶⁰ Food processing, finished wood products, automobile parts, and textiles are

⁵⁵ Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Philippines." October 2007. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2794.htm>

⁵⁶ BBC News. "Country Profile: Philippines." 25 October 2007. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/country_profiles/1262783.stm

⁵⁷ Migration Information Source, Country Profiles. Assi, Maruja M.B. "The Philippines' Culture of Migration." January 2006. <http://www.migrationinformation.org/Profiles/display.cfm?ID=364>

⁵⁸ *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It*. Collier, Paul. [p. 61] 2007. New York: Oxford University Press.

⁵⁹ World Bank. "Philippines: Agriculture and Industry." 31 August 2007. <http://www.worldbank.org/ph/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/EASTASIAPACIFICEXT/PHILIPPI NESEXTN/0,,contentMDK:20534354~menuPK:333013~pagePK:1497618~piPK:217854~theSitePK:332982,00.html>

⁶⁰ Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, U.S. Department of State. "Background Note: Philippines." April 2008. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2794.htm>

among the most important industries. Attempts to increase the percentage of manufactured products for export has been stalled by the higher wages Filipino workers draw, compared to prevailing wage levels in surrounding countries with a similar natural resource base.⁶¹

Foreign Investment

Developing countries such as the Philippines are dependent on foreign capital for investment to improve their productive capacity. Foreign investors, however, are looking for evidence of societal stability to safeguard their investments. In this regard the Philippines has not fared well in recent decades. Under Ferdinand Marcos' leadership the country had incurred enormous debt. The numerous coup attempts against his successor Corazon Aquino were not taken as promising signs for a stable future despite the restoration of democracy. Indeed, foreign direct investment slowed during the political upheavals of the 1980s.⁶²



© Mike Rosales
Office buildings in Manila

Aquino's immediate successor as well as the current president, Gloria Arroyo, are credited with having improved the investment environment. Economic reforms enacted to enhance the island nation's attractiveness to foreign investors include deregulating the foreign exchange market, liberalizing the banking system, and reducing tariffs. Foreign investors are now allowed to invest in the retail trade sector as well as the power industry.⁶³

Yet this has all taken place against the backdrop of the rise of the People's Republic of China which has sucked investment away from other countries.⁶⁴ The relatively low level of foreign investment in the Philippines has been attributed to several factors: 1) inadequate infrastructure which raises production and transportation costs; 2) the high cost of unskilled labor in comparison to neighboring countries; 3) a conflicting array of investment schemes which is indicative of multiple levels of bureaucracy.⁶⁵

The Islamic insurgency based on Mindanao Island has also caused concern on Wall Street. Here the ascendance of China has proven beneficial. Chinese companies are

⁶¹ Asian Development Bank. "Philippines: Moving Toward a Better Investment Climate." 2005. <http://www.adb.org/Statistics/ics/pdf/Brochure-PHI.pdf>

⁶² Asia Society. Cuisia, Jose. "Philippines: New Opportunities and Prospects for Foreign Investment." 26 February 1999. <http://www.asiasociety.org/speeches/cuisia.html>

⁶³ Suite101. Elliot, Gary. "Erratic Philippine Economic Growth: Mismanagement, Corruption, and Political Instability Cause Downturns." 21 December 2007. http://philippines.suite101.com/article.cfm/erratic_philippine_economic_growth

⁶⁴ Rand Corporation. "China and Globalization." Testimony of William H. Overholt to the U.S.-China Economic Review and Security Review." 19 May 2005. www.rand.org/pubs/testimonies/2005/RAND_CT244.pdf

⁶⁵ World Bank. Bhargava,, Vinay. "Private Solutions for Infrastructure: Opportunities for the Philippines." [p. 4] 2000. <http://books.google.com/books?id=xayTgG2Y8CoC&pg=PA4&lpg=PA4&dq=foreign+direct+investment+philippines&source=web&ots=pCBhhkvTYt&sig=vuBSZqYyjKUu1yUbdnPaqJ9AnTY>

investing in the Philippines, which is viewed as a source of both agricultural commodities to feed the growing Chinese population and raw materials needed to fuel continued economic growth.⁶⁶

Trade and the International Division of Labor

The Philippine economy has historically been based on international trade. During the Spanish era, Manila became a transit hub for the exchange of merchandise between China and Mexico. Throughout the American colonial era, the main exports were textiles and sugar. More recently, the archipelago nation has become part of the international division of labor, where materials used in consumer goods destined for store shelves in North America and Europe are imported into the Philippines duty-free and then assembled for re-export. Even low-technology items, for example toy dolls, are comprised of materials such as plastic, nylon hair and clothing fabric. These materials are sourced from different parts of the world.⁶⁷



The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) manages four such government-owned zones and oversees a number of privately established free trade areas.⁶⁸ Export processing is profitable owing to the low cost of labor in the countries where goods from electronics to clothing and toys are assembled.⁶⁹ To attract such investment, host governments typically exempt export processing zones from local labor laws. In the Philippines this has led to efforts to organize trade-zone workers, which have met with swift retribution from the government.⁷⁰

In addition to providing jobs, export-oriented manufacturing was originally seen as a means for a country to climb up the international division of labor. Local firms, over time, were expected to progress into higher value-added, technology-intensive production following in the footsteps of Japan. Yet it hasn't worked out that way for late-developing countries like the Philippines which have gained little technical know-how from assembly work.⁷¹

⁶⁶ International Herald Tribune. Javier, Luzi Ann. "Chinese investments grow in the Philippines." 15 January 2007. <http://www.iht.com/articles/2007/01/15/bloomberg/sxchiag.php>

⁶⁷ UC Davis. Feenstra, Robert. "Integration of Trade and Disintegration of Production in the Global Economy." April 1998. <http://www.econ.ucdavis.edu/faculty/fzfeens/pdf/jep2.pdf>

⁶⁸ Kish Trade Promotion Center. "Free Trade Zones." 2002. http://www.kishtpc.com/Free-En/free_philippine.htm

⁶⁹ International Labour Organization, International Institute for Labour Studies. "Global production and local jobs: new perspectives on enterprise networks, employment and local development policy." 16 March 2004. <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inst/papers/confrence/gps/heerden.htm>

⁷⁰ Maquila Solidarity Network. "Violent Attacks Continue in [sic] in Cavite Export Processing Zone, Philippines." 20 September 2007. <http://en.maquilasolidarity.org/en/node/714>
<http://en.maquilasolidarity.org/en/node/714>

⁷¹ World Politics. Bernard, Michael and John Ravenhill. Vol.47. January 1995. "Beyond Product Cycles and Flying Geese: Regionalization, Hierarchy, and the Industrialization of East Asia [pp. 171–209]."

The U.S. is the major market for the archipelago's exports. This means that an economic downturn in the U.S. creates ripple effects for the Philippine economy. In 2007, its export sector was stymied by a combination of high electricity rates, rising oil prices and a strong peso which put 9% of the country's exporters out of business. "While a recession in the U.S. will be a drag on exports in the short-term, it is the high cost of power, triggered by a surge in crude oil prices, that has drastically eroded the viability of the exports sector," according to the head of a Philippine trade association.⁷²

The Role of Ethnic Chinese in the Economy

Filipino commerce has long been dominated by the nation's ethnic Chinese minority. While they are a numerically insignificant presence comprising one to two percent of the population, they are said to control 60% of the private economy.⁷³ This includes the four major airlines as well as all the major financial institutions and business conglomerates.⁷⁴ Dubbed a "market dominant minority"⁷⁵ to describe their



© MK Albano
Chinese temple in Baguio

success in business, Filipino Chinese have benefited from a tradition of monopoly distribution rights, a system introduced during the early days of Spanish colonial rule when exclusive trading rights were awarded to specific individuals and well-connected families. This system continued into the 20th century in the form of trading monopolies for imports and marketing monopolies for local crops such as sugar and coconuts.

While Ferdinand Marcos was in power, one individual benefited from a new levy on coconut production which underwrote the United Coconut Planters Bank. He was made president of the bank which in turn bought up most of the nation's coconut milling facilities. The profits enabled him to branch out into other lines of business, earning him the public nickname "Mr. Pacman" after the video character who eats everything in his path.⁷⁶

While this system has been disbanded in theory, it remains easy for wealthy individuals to subvert the intent of the law to serve their own interests. Given that many of these individuals are ethnic Chinese, it has engendered some hostility to them on the part of the

⁷² Forex News. "Philippine export growth weaker in 2008 on US worries, high energy prices." 29 January 2008. <http://www.fxstreet.com/news/forex-news/article.aspx?StoryId=e57b4d7b-a440-47c9-a349-19341e8ffea6>

⁷³ Txtmania.com. "The Philippine Economy." No date. <http://www.txtmania.com/trivia/economy.php>

⁷⁴ UC Berkeley, Institute of International Studies. Kreisler, Harry (Yale University) "The Myths of Globalization--Conversation with Amy Chua." 22 January 2004. <http://globetrotter.berkeley.edu/people4/Chua/chua-con2.html>

⁷⁵ Social Science Research Council. Abstract of World on Fire: How Exporting Free Market Democracy Breeds Ethnic Hatred and Global Instability Chua, Amy. 2002. New York: Doubleday.

http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=388461

⁷⁶ *Asian Godfathers: Money and Power in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia*. Studwell, Joe. "Chapter Three: How to be a Godfather, #2: Core cash flow. [p. 67]." 2006. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press.

local population. Moreover, Filipinos of Chinese extraction are the preferred targets of kidnapers usually lacking a political agenda.⁷⁷

Tourism

Tourism is a big business in the Philippines which offers something for everyone. Metro Manila is replete with 16th century Spanish cathedrals and churches, shrines, museums, galleries, parks, shops, restaurants, and nightclubs. The numerous tropical islands with vast stretches of white sand and blue sea offer surfers, scuba divers, and sun-worshipping vacationers a worldly paradise. Yet the industry remains underdeveloped. Thailand remains a much more popular Southeast Asian destination, particularly for Europeans.⁷⁸ Geography is probably a factor, once visitors arrive in Manila they must pay airfare to island hop making it a more expensive destination for those on a budget.

More informally the Philippines is known for sex tourism.⁷⁹ Billboards in Japanese and English direct some international visitors to the many red-light districts scattered throughout the archipelago.⁸⁰ Given the bleak employment prospects for those entering the labor market, it is difficult to eradicate what is a thriving industry that even illicitly employs minors. Foreign ownership of many of these businesses, however, has made it an international issue given that the employees are often heavily in debt to the management.⁸¹



© Sacha Chua
Tourists take a tour in a kalesa

⁷⁷ New York Times. Mydans, Seth. "Kidnapping of Ethnic Chinese Rises in Philippines." 17 March 1996. <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C05E4D61639F934A25750C0A960958260&sec=&spon=&pagewanted=print>

⁷⁸ Ground Report. "Philippine Tourism Industry Losing Competition to Neighbors." 20 October 2007. http://www.groundreport.com/Arts_and_Culture/Philippine-tourism-industry-losing-competition-to-

⁷⁹ Manila Standard. De la Cruz, Roderick "Sex industry throbs with tourism boom." 29 March 2006. http://www.manilastandardtoday.com/?page=business04_mar29_2006

⁸⁰ International Christian University Center for Gender Studies. Yoshinari, Aiko "Travel and sexual industries in Thailand and the Philippines." 28 June 2006. <http://subsite.icu.ac.jp/cgs/article/0504010e.html>

⁸¹ Global Policy Forum. Perlmutter, David. "Sex Slavery: International Steps are Needed to Combat What Has Become a Global Scourge." 10 July 2001. <http://www.globalpolicy.org/soecon/inequal/0710sexslavery.htm>

Chapter 5 Society

East and West

Filipinos are family-oriented, religious people whose hospitality toward international visitors is reflected in the way they welcome them into their homes and invite them to attend fiestas. The Philippines has long been regarded as a Latinized part of Asia. Inhabitants are known for their outgoing qualities which contrast with the more reserved public demeanor of people in other parts of Asia. The communal orientation (*bayanihan*)⁸² is said to be part of their Malaysian heritage. Close family ties, associated with Chinese immigrants, also reflect an indigenous tribal culture in which Filipinos relied on their kin for survival. Individual acts can bring shame (*hiya*) to the extended family and serve as a strong deterrent to wrong-doing.⁸³ Piousness is a legacy of their Spanish colonial heritage.⁸⁴ The American legacy is reflected in the fact that the archipelago nation is the third-largest English speaking country in the world.

Ethnic Groups

Filipinos are of Malay racial stock. Their ancestors migrated to the archipelago by boat. Only the oldest residents, the Negritos, who are distinguished by their shorter stature, darker skin and curly hair, are believed to be descendants of people who crossed land bridges from mainland Asia. Spread across 7,107 islands, where residents had little contact with those living on other islands, culture and traditions, along with language, diverged widely. Indeed, inhabitants did not think of themselves as a homogenous race. Instead identity was associated with regional ethnicity.⁸⁵ Anthropologists have identified some 45 ethnographically distinct groups, based on language and culture.



© Myleen Hollero
Igorot men and women, northern Luzon

The term Visayan refers to people who trace their roots back to the sugar-rich central islands of the Visayan region. High population density as well as official encouragement prompted some to migrate to Mindanao where they continue to identify themselves as Visayan.⁸⁶ Their lifestyle is considered closest to that of the Spanish; Cebu, a Visayan Island where the Spanish first landed, has well-preserved Spanish-era colonial architecture. In the provinces near Manila on the island of Luzon, the Tagalogs are considered the most family oriented and most learned, while the Ilocanos of northern Luzon have a history of emigration and achieving success overseas. The Pampangueños are renowned for their skill in commerce. The Muslims, also referred to as Moros, on the

⁸² Project Bayanihan. "Bayanihan." No date. <http://www.cag.lcs.mit.edu/bayanihan/bayanword.html>

⁸³ Kwintessential Cross Cultural Solutions. "Philippines: Language, Culture, Customs and Etiquette." No date. <http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/global-etiquette/philippines-country-profile.html>

⁸⁴ Learn in Asia. "Philippines History and People." c.2003–2008. http://www.learn-in-asia.com/philippines_people_history.htm

⁸⁵ The Philippine History Site. "Ethnicity and the Creation of National Identity." No date. <http://opmanong.ssc.hawaii.edu/filipino/ethnicity.html>

⁸⁶ University of Hawaii at Manoa, Center for Philippine Studies. Colmenares, Serafin. "The Visayans in Hawaii." August 2003. <http://www.hawaii.edu/cps/visayans.html>

southern islands represent the most culturally autonomous group of Filipinos. Three main Muslim groups emerge as the most important in the area: the Tausug, Maranaw, and Maguindanao.

Education

Primary and Secondary

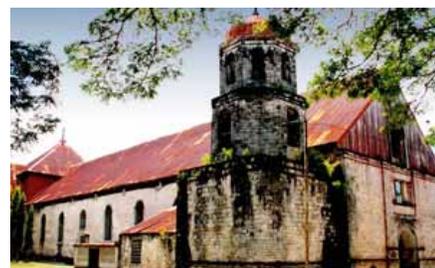
Six years of elementary instruction is followed by four years of high school in the Philippines. The American colonial government laid the foundation for an educational system that was open to everyone. By 1970 the Philippines had achieved universal primary school enrollment. National averages obscure wide regional differences, however. Almost all children enrolled in Manila schools, for example, finish primary school whereas in Mindanao and the Eastern Visayan Islands fewer than 30% complete sixth grade.⁸⁷ Although enrollment is free, students are typically required to contribute money for building maintenance and teaching supplies. Those from poorer households are often forced to drop out either owing to the ad hoc fees or because their families cannot afford to do without their labor. The fees for high school are steeper because the government concentrates its resources on funding primary school education.

College and University

Over 1,600 institutions of higher learning, most of them private, enrolled students during the 2005–06 academic year, which runs from June to March in the Philippines.⁸⁸ Attrition is a significant problem, however. In the words of an education specialist at the Asian Development Bank, “One thousand enter the first year, 300 graduate, 50 take the exam, 20 pass.” This indicates quality problems familiar to most countries that offer mass access to higher education.⁸⁹ 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 is the University of Santo Tomas, located in Manila and founded some 350 years ago.

Religion

The Philippines lays claim to being the only Christian nation in Asia. Spanish colonial rule converted the majority to Catholicism, the faith now practiced by 85% of the population.⁹⁰ Protestant missionaries later made some converts, amounting to some 9% of the population. Muslims, based predominantly in the southern island of Mindanao comprise some 5% of the population. The rest of the population is either



© Storm Crypt / flickr.com
San Isidro Labrador Church, Lazi

⁸⁷ World Education News and Reviews. Clark, Nick. “Education in the Philippines.” November/December 2004. <http://www.wes.org/ewenr/04Nov/Practical.htm>

⁸⁸ Inocentes, Antonio. “The Future of Higher Education in the Philippines.” No date. http://www.internationalead.org/ForumPresentations/Presentation_Inocentes.ppt

⁸⁹ Chronicle of Higher Education. Walfish, Daniel. “Higher Education in the Philippines: Lots of Access, Little Quality.” 7 September 2001. <http://chronicle.com/weekly/v48/i02/02a06001.htm>

⁹⁰ Figures taken from U.S. Department of State. “Background Note: Philippines.” October 2007. <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2794.htm>

Buddhist or practitioners of indigenous religions. Islam, in fact, had been introduced earlier in 1350. The arrival of the Spanish in 1565 interrupted the spread of Islam throughout the archipelago.⁹¹

Social Customs

Social customs not only vary between groups, but also between city and rural residents. Not surprisingly, the latter are more traditional. In rural areas for example, pre-marital courtship is common, but only under the supervision of a chaperone. In big cities such as Manila, unmarried couples may date without a chaperone. Pre-marital cohabitation is unthinkable regardless of locale. In both villages and cities, marriage is based on the mutual consent of the young man and woman, not on parental pre-arrangements. The couple will seek their parents' approval, but the choice is still the couple's. While some wealthy families steer their children toward seeking partners among the offspring of other wealthy Filipino families, marriage with foreigners is not uncommon.

Most Filipinos are church-going Roman Catholics who tend toward religious conservatism. As a consequence, the government is reluctant to push family planning initiatives for fear of antagonizing the Catholic Church which opposes all artificial forms of birth control.⁹²

In general, public displays of affection between men and women are confined 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 by gender.

Gender Issues

Filipinas have long been part of the work force. By 2006, they significantly outnumbered men in management level positions. Specifically, there were 2.2 million female managers to 1.6 million male managers.⁹³ Nevertheless, in family matters, the man of the house usually has the last word. Moreover, women—even those who work outside the home—still bear most of the burden for household responsibilities. It is common, however, for the wealthy and even members of the urban middle class to have hired help, usually referred to as “helpers” not servants.



© Mike Dumiao
Filipinas in New York

Since the late 1970s Filipinas, many of them married women, have responded to the poor job market at home by going overseas as contract laborers filling both skilled and

⁹¹ Northern Illinois University, Center for Southeast Asian Studies. Miller, Jack. “Religion in the Philippines.” 1982.

http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Tagalog/Modules/Modules/PhilippineReligions/article_miller.htm

⁹² BBC News. “Country Profile: Philippines.” 25 October 2007. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/country_profiles/1262783.stm

⁹³ GlobalNation. Uy, Veronica. “Women Rule Philippine Workforce.” 2 August 2007. http://globalnation.inquirer.net/news/breakingnews/view_article.php?article_id=80157

unskilled occupations.⁹⁴ In such cases, young children left behind are cared for by female members of the extended family.⁹⁵

Cuisine

Philippine cuisine is as diverse as the many different groups which inhabit the archipelago. It also shows traces of Malay, Spanish, and Chinese influence. Rice is a food staple and over 20 different varieties are cultivated.⁹⁶ It is referred to by different names depending on its preparation status: unhusked (*palay*), husked but uncooked (*bigas*), and fully cooked and ready to eat (*kanin*).⁹⁷ Tropical fruits are also part of the daily diet. Ginger is used in soups and stews.



© matroyal / flickr.com
Breakfast in the Philippines

Owing to the fact that the islands are sugar producers, many dishes are sweet. Fresh fish is a source of protein along with poultry and livestock, particularly pork in the north. There are few northern Filipino dishes spiced with chilies or other types of hot peppers. In the south it is more common.

Actual cooking is typically done in a wok. Food preparation usually involves the liberal use of salt, vinegar, and garlic. Filipino methods of preparation allow cooked foods to last several meals in the absence of refrigeration. Specifically, food cooked *adobo* (prepared in vinegar, soy sauce and garlic) or *sinigang*-style (boiled with vegetables or tamarind, which is a sour fruit) are a means to preserve leftovers in a tropical climate.⁹⁸

Traditional Dress

The different groups in the Philippines wore a great variety of indigenous-style clothing. Generally male legs were exposed to allow for work in muddy and wet environments. The quintessential male formal attire is the pocketless *barong tagalog* shirt.⁹⁹ The elegantly stitched garment evolved out of the shirt that was part of the attire of Tagalog men before the arrival of the Spanish. Contact with Europeans extended the laced part of the shirt. Among those who dealt with expatriates during the American colonial era, men quickly donned suits although the *tagalog* made a comeback after independence. For public functions women who opt for an indigenous style are usually attired in the *terno*, a

⁹⁴ Australian National University, Department of Human Geography. McKay, Deirdre. "Performing Identities, Creating Cultures of Circulation: Filipina Migrants Between Home and Abroad." July 2004. <http://coombs.anu.edu.au/SpecialProj/ASAA/biennial-conference/2004/McKay-D-ASAA2004.pdf>

⁹⁵ Washington Monthly. Rowe, Jonathan. "Review of Nicole Constable's *Maid to Order: the Third World women who leave their children to take care of ours*." July–August 2003. http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1316/is_7-8_35/ai_106096925/pg_4

⁹⁶ Food by Country. "Food in the Philippines." 2007. <http://www.foodbycountry.com/Kazakhstan-to-South-Africa/Philippines.html>

⁹⁷ Howard Hilman's World Cuisine Guide. "Why Philippine Cuisine is Special." 2008. http://www.hillmanwonders.com/cuisines/philippine_cuisine.htm

⁹⁸ Filipino Americans.net. Alejandro, Reynaldo. "The Basics of Philippine Cooking." No date. <http://www.filipinoamericans.net/cooking.shtml>

⁹⁹ Northern Illinois University, Center for Southeast Asian Studies. "Barong Tagalog." No date. http://www.seasite.niu.edu/tagalog/Cynthia/costumes/barong_tagalog.htm

dress identifiable by its butterfly sleeves which came to be associated with former First Lady Imelda Marcos.¹⁰⁰

The Arts

Literature

The pre-colonial Philippine alphabet, the *Baybayin*, appears to be a simplified version of the Devanagiri script in which ancient Sanskrit was written.¹⁰¹ 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 *pasyon*¹⁰² date back to the early 18th century, but the 19th century brought dramatic changes. Filipino intellectuals who traveled and were educated in Europe—the *illustrados*—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 awards.¹⁰³

Music and Dance

Filipino musical instruments include bamboo flutes, an indigenous type of violin with human hair (*mangyan git-git*) strings and a two-string lute (*tboli hagalong*). The *kulintang*, a set of eight bossed gongs of graduated size and pitch, is akin to a



© mdl / flickr.com
Dancers performing the Singkil

¹⁰⁰ Solidarity Philippines Australia Network. Roces, Mina. “Women, Citizenship and the Politics of Dress in Twentieth-Century Philippines.” (January-February-March 2005).

<http://cpcabrisbane.org/Kasama/2005/V19n1/PoliticsOfDress.htm>

¹⁰¹ National Commission for Culture and Arts. Quindoza-Santiago, Lilia. “Early Philippine Literature.” 2002.

http://www.ncca.gov.ph/about_cultarts/comarticles.php?artcl_Id=132

¹⁰² *Pasyon* refers to the verse narrative of the sufferings of Jesus according to the Christian tradition..

¹⁰³ Northern Illinois University, Center for Southeast Asian Studies. Godinez-Ortega, Christine. “The Literary Forms in Philippine Literature.” 2002.

http://www.seasite.niu.edu/Tagalog/Literature/literary_forms_in_philippine_lit.htm

xylophone.¹⁰⁴ It is part of Muslim cultural heritage, typically played by female musicians at wedding celebrations and fiestas.¹⁰⁵

There are many different types of Filipino dances often accompanied by music. One of the oldest folk dances in Mindanao depicts the story of a princess lost in the middle of a forest. The forest fairies cause an earthquake. Only by avoiding falling trees, in the company of her slave, is she finally rescued unharmed by a prince. Females of royal descent are still required to learn this dance known as the *singkil*.

The best known dances are those which originated in the agricultural lowlands. The *Binasuan* is a dance from Bayambang which showcases the dexterity of professional performers, who are hired to perform at birthdays and weddings, as they handle glasses which are partially filled with rice wine. *Maglalatik* opens with mock fighting and concludes with a dance of reconciliation. Originally staged as a battle between Christians and Moros, it is also performed as a show of respect for San Isidro de Labrador, the patron saint of farmers who is said to watch over their crops as they mature in the field.¹⁰⁶

Sports and Recreation

Sipa

Although it goes by different names, *sipa*, played throughout Southeast Asia, is a cross between soccer and volleyball and a fiesta favorite in the Philippines. Instead of a ball, a shuttle made of paper and leaves with a steel washer wrapped inside is in play.¹⁰⁷ Players cannot touch it with their hands; instead they earn a point each time they hit it with their feet, legs, head, shoulders or elbows. The goal is to keep it from landing on the ground as it is volleyed back and forth across a net.



© fadedmilkway / flickr.com
Sipa ball made from a leaf

Eskrima

Eskrima, adapted from the Spanish word for fencing, is a form of martial arts practiced in the Philippines. It draws on fighting styles introduced by Indonesian, Malaysian, and Chinese sea traders in the 2nd century C.E. In contrast to other forms of martial arts, each strike can be utilized in three different ways: as a hand gesture, with a wooden dagger, or a rattan baton.

¹⁰⁴ Terry L. Baldrige. "Playing Philippine Instruments." No date.
<http://lion.mnu.edu/%7Etblaldrige/Philippine.html>

¹⁰⁵ Citizen and Immigration Canada. "Philippines: Arts and Literature." No date. <http://www.cpc.ca/english/philippines/index.html>

¹⁰⁶ AsiaInfo. "Performing Arts in the Philippines." 27 January 2008.
http://www.asianinfo.org/asianinfo/philippines/performing_arts.htm

¹⁰⁷ St Bernard School. "Arts and Sports." No date.
<http://www.stbernardcs.org/Arts%20&%20Sports%20Page%204-17-01.htm>

The weapons that practitioners wielded against Ferdinand Magellan, the first European explorer to land on one of the islands in the 16th century, killed him. Under subsequent Spanish colonial rule martial arts was banned, so the movements were disguised as a dance form enabling them to be passed down to future generations. After the Spanish ceded control of the archipelago to the U.S. in the late 19th century, the ban was lifted but devotees opted to retain an air of secrecy about their sport. The swift weapon and sword synchronized movement associated with Eskrima were later utilized against the Japanese in World War II to compensate for the Filipinos lack of fire power. It is said the Philippine military continues to train in these techniques.¹⁰⁸

Cockfighting

Reputedly introduced by the Spanish in the 16th century, cockfighting (*sabong*) has been described as a national pastime in the Philippines that can claim tens of thousands of legal and unregistered cockpits scattered throughout the islands. Matches are far bloodier than in other countries. Even the best birds usually only survive a few fights because razor-sharp spurs are tied to their legs which prove lethal in a matter of minutes.¹⁰⁹ Male spectators bet through intricate hand signals from the pentagon-shaped arena. Birds bred for their “kamikaze-like courage” and formidable wing span are imported from the United States to fight.¹¹⁰ They are said to be better fed than the owner’s children before being sent into the pit, where big money is often waged. The matches attract international visitors whose governments have outlawed cockfighting as well as foreign bird breeders looking to expand their business into the archipelago nation.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ History.com. “Eskrima Stickfighting.” No date.

http://www.history.com/minisite.do?content_type=Minisite_Generic&content_type_id=55000&display_order=3&sub_display_order=6&mini_id=54986

¹⁰⁹ Associated Press, Cortez. Claro. “Cockfighting craze takes wing: The Philippine national betting pastime goes international.” No date. http://www.mangossubic.com/cock_fighting.htm

¹¹⁰ Straits Times. “Cockfighting is King of Sports in Philippines.” 15 March 1994. <http://webhome.idirect.com/~boweevil/kingsports.html>

¹¹¹ “Blood sport with chance to win big money attracts many in the Philippines.” 4 February 2000. http://www.mangossubic.com/cock_fighting.htm#Blood%20sport%20with%20chance%20to%20win%20big%20money%20attracts%20many%20in%20Philippines

Chapter 6 Security

U.S.–Philippine Relations

From Independence to 9/11

After granting independence to its sole colony in 1946, the United States and the Philippines signed a Mutual Defense Treaty. In 1947, a Military Base Agreement (MBA) accorded Washington front-line troop deployment rights in the archipelago nation. Approximately 20 U.S. bases made the Philippines a linchpin in America’s Cold War security umbrella.

Specifically, these bases proved useful after the Korean War (1950–53) broke out and subsequently, from 1965 to 1972, during the peak of U.S. military involvement in Vietnam. Their presence also allowed the Japan-based U.S. Seventh Fleet to logistically straddle important sea lines of communication and afforded periodic deployments in the Indian Ocean despite the lack of permanent base rights anywhere in that large basin.¹¹²

Over the years the MBA was modified more than 40 times in an effort to reconcile U.S. military needs with Philippine sovereignty.¹¹³ The abrupt cessation of Cold War hostilities in the early 1990s, after the USSR was disbanded, left American policy makers scrambling to arrive at a consensus on what security requirements the U.S. would need in a unipolar world.¹¹⁴

Washington opted not to rebuild Clark Air Force Base, the largest American base in the world, after it incurred significant damage as a result of the June 1991 Pinatubo volcanic eruption.¹¹⁵ This hastened the U.S. military’s scheduled departure after the Philippine National Assembly decided not to renew the base leases. Subic Naval Base, through which most of the supplies used in the First Persian Gulf War had come, was closed as well.¹¹⁶ The reversal of



DoD photo
Carrier entering Subic Bay Naval Station, 1982

¹¹² National Defense University, Institute of Strategic Studies. “The Philippine Republic.” <http://www.ndu.edu/inss/books/Books%20-%201998/Military%20Geography%20March%202008/milgeoch12.html>

¹¹³ Heritage Foundation, Asian Studies Backgrounder #78. Fisher, Richard D. “A Strategy for Keeping the U.S. Bases in the Philippines.” <http://www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/asb78.cfm>

¹¹⁴ So unexpected was this development it prompted an influential scholar to pen an essay proclaiming we had arrived at a historical endpoint. National Interest. Fukuyama, Francis. “The End of History.” Summer 1989. http://www.marion.ohio-state.edu/fac/vsteffel/web597/Fukuyama_history.pdf

¹¹⁵ Global Security. “Clark Air Force Base.” 26 April 2005. <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/clark.htm>

¹¹⁶ The Virginian-Pilot. Sizemore, Bill. “U.S.-Philippine Relations: How is ‘Life After the Bases’? It was painful at first, but the Philippines economy could end up stronger in the long run.” 16 February 1995. <http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/VA-news/VA-Pilot/issues/1995/vp950216/02160346.htm>

long-standing policy on the part of the Philippine government reflected nationalist sentiments which had been percolating since the collapse of the Marcos government in 1986.

The Post-9/11 Security Alliance

The MBA was abolished in 1991.¹¹⁷ A decade later, the events of 9/11 refocused attention on the importance of the Philippine–American security relationship.¹¹⁸ The Philippines became the third largest recipient of U.S. International Military Education and Training (IMET) funding.¹¹⁹ President Gloria Arroyo was granted an eight-day state visit, which confers a higher level of formality, in May 2003. In the wake of her visit, Washington committed an additional USD 85 million in military and economic aid to be used for equipment and training of the Philippine armed forces. Several months later, in October 2003, the Philippines became part of a select group of nations accorded “major non-ally” status of the U.S. Membership confers a range of military benefits including priority in receiving defense equipment, stockpiling of U.S. military hardware, and participation in various research programs.

The United States provides training to Philippine armed forces rather than directly engaging terrorist groups.¹²⁰ What makes this difficult is the physical topography of the Philippines; an archipelago nation-state with a variety of conflicts in areas with diverse types of social organization driven by groups with different goals including self-determination, the establishment of an Islamic state, as well as addressing the plight of the rural poor.



DoD photo
Philippines and U.S. in joint exercise, 2004

Neighbor State Relations

The Philippines faces no external threat from its neighboring states. The ongoing issue of contention concerns the 51 Spratly Islands in the South China Sea.¹²¹ Many of these islands are in reality little more than submerged islets, rocks, and reefs which pose a hazard to seafaring traffic. Yet they have strategic importance. Most important, an undetermined amount of oil may lie beneath them.

¹¹⁷ Army War College, USAWC Strategy Project. Felix, Victor. “Philippine-US Security Relations: Challenges and Opportunities after 9/11.” March 2005.

<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/ksil18.pdf>

¹¹⁸ PBS, Online News Hour. “Widening the War.” 16 January 2002.

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/asia/jan-june02/rosario_1-16.html

¹¹⁹ Harvard Asia Quarterly. Kuhonta, Erik. “U.S. Foreign Policy in Southeast Asia: The Imperative of Institutions.” Autumn 2004. <http://www.asiaquarterly.com/content/view/full/150/40/>

¹²⁰ Yale University Law School. The Avalon Project. “September 11, 2001: Attack on America. Adm. Dennis C. Blair Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Command Remarks to Korean American Association American Chamber of Commerce, Republic of Korea Seoul, Republic of Korea; February 7, 2002.”

http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/sept_11/blair_005.htm

¹²¹ Global Security. “Spratly Islands.” c.2000–2008.

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/spratly.htm>

A Filipino businessman who inspected the islands in 1956 renamed them *Kalayaan* (Freedomland) and asked the Philippine government to make them a protectorate. Approximately 44 of the islands are now claimed and occupied by a number of regional governments including the Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia, Vietnam, China and Taiwan.¹²²



Spratly Islands in the South China Sea

This is a winner-take-all dispute. The law of the sea confers exclusive ownership rights over all resources, including oil, which falls within a 200-nautical-mile radius of that point, regardless of whether it is a rock formation or suitable for human habitation, to any country whose claims of sovereignty are internationally recognized.¹²³ Control would be especially beneficial to the Philippines since it is wholly dependent on imported oil.

Manila has periodically tried to extract a commitment from Washington that it would defend the Philippines' claim to the Kalayaans as part of the bilateral Mutual Defense Treaty. Yet the U.S. has steadfastly refused to extend its treaty obligations to the defense of Filipino claims on the Spratly Islands.

China

The dispute over the Spratly Islands dominated relations between mainland China and the Philippines for several decades. From the vantage point of Southeast Asian capitals, China's decision to station troops on several islands represented a litmus test for the People's Republic of China's (PRC) regional ambitions.¹²⁴ More recently, bilateral relations have improved, driven in no small part by Chinese investment in the Philippines. In addition, Manila has acquiesced to the "One China" policy which prohibits any government recognizing the PRC from engaging in diplomatic activity with Taiwan.¹²⁵

Japan

Japanese wartime occupation of the Philippines left bitter memories of cruelty and hardship in the generation that fought with the United States against Japan. By contrast, negativity toward Japan in the post-war generation is non-existent. Japan has been a major investor in the Philippines and plays a dominant role in the multilateral Asian Development Bank, headquartered in Manila.

¹²² ICE Case Studies. "Spratly Islands Dispute." May 1997. <http://www.american.edu/ted/ice/spratly.htm>

¹²³ Country Studies. "Relations with Neighbor States." June 1991. <http://countrystudies.us/philippines/93.htm>

¹²⁴ The Jamestown Foundation, China Brief. Storey, Ian. "China and the Philippines: Moving Beyond the South China Sea Dispute." 16 August 2006. http://www.jamestown.org/publications_details.php?volume_id=415&issue_id=3837&article_id=2371392

¹²⁵ People's Daily Online. "No Taiwan Official Allowed to Visit Philippines: Foreign Minister." 9 September 2005. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200509/09/eng20050909_207459.html

Malaysia

A long-running dispute over Sabah, or North Borneo as it was known under colonial rule, has bedeviled Malaysian–Philippine relations.¹²⁶ Resource-rich Sabah is one of Malaysia’s 13 states. Driven in part by recognition that Sabah was administratively part of Malaysia, President Corazon Aquino submitted legislation to the Philippine congress in 1987 to withdraw her country’s claim. This claim was based on Sabah being part of the Sulu Sultanate, a powerful Muslim state whose capital was on Jolo Island near Mindanao at the time of Spanish colonization. The legislation did not become law, but Sabah is not included in the 1987 post-Marcos Constitution’s territorial definition of the Philippines.¹²⁷



© autan / flickr.com
Ocean view in Sabah

Indonesia

Both the Philippines and Indonesia opposed the creation of Malaysia.¹²⁸ Yet bilateral relations between Jakarta and Manila were not close throughout the Cold War period. Indonesia played a prominent role in the Non-Aligned Movement while the Philippines maintained a close relationship with the United States. More recently, bilateral relations have grown stronger and are dominated by the war on terror.¹²⁹ Mindanao, in the southern Philippines, has been engulfed in a low-intensity conflict over Muslim political and cultural autonomy since the late 1960s.¹³⁰ There is credible evidence that Philippine Muslim insurgent groups have provided training camps and given safe haven to members of *Jemaah Islamiyah* (JI), the terrorist group responsible for the 2002 and 2005 Bali bombings and the 2004 attack on the Australian Embassy in Jakarta.¹³¹

¹²⁶ University of Michigan, Bentley Historical Library. “Williams, G. Mennen, 1911-.”

http://bentley.umich.edu/research/guides/philippines/philipp_search.php?id=105

¹²⁷ U.S. Library of Congress, Federal Research Division. “Relations with Asian Neighbors.” 1991.

<http://www.country-studies.com/philippines/relations-with-asian-neighbors.html>

¹²⁸ *Middle Power Statecraft: Indonesia, Malaysia and the Asia-Pacific* [p. 194.]. Ping, Jonathan. 2005. London: Ashgate Publishing.

<http://books.google.com/books?id=FGM1zEdCOmAC&pg=PA194&lpg=PA194&dq=indonesia+%22non+aligned%22+philippines+usa&source=web&ots=vqFxWINhiY&sig=1pZGQfLBxoh7BK6JjkpQOPYLvs>

¹²⁹ New York Times. Schmitt, Eric. “Experts See Gains Against Asian Terror Networks.” 9 June 2008.

http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/09/world/asia/09terror.html?_r=1&scp=1&sq=indonesia%20philippines%20terror&st=cse&oref=slogin

¹³⁰ Association for Asian Research. Agrasada, Don. “Peace derivatives and probabilities in Muslim Mindanao (Part 1).” Fall 2003. <http://www.asianresearch.org/articles/1498.html>

¹³¹ International Crisis Group, Asia Briefing. “Indonesia: Jemaah Islamiyah’s Current Status.” 3 May 2007. <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4792>

Internal Threats

Political stability concerns prompted President Arroyo to briefly invoke emergency rule powers akin to martial law in 2006.¹³² In the summer of 2007, a new law was put in place giving authorities more power to prosecute those who are deemed terrorists. It has prompted criticism from human rights groups owing to limited oversight.¹³³

Islamic Separatist Groups

The Philippines has a long history of Islamic separatism that is usually traced to post-independence politics. An example is Manila's decision to encourage large-scale migration of Christians from densely populated areas in the north and central regions to sparsely-inhabited Mindanao, viewed as an agricultural frontier that was predominantly Muslim. Christian settlers received official assistance, while Muslim farmers had to make do with far fewer government services. Moreover, the Muslims found themselves outnumbered in their ancestral land, which was incorporated into trading networks with the migrants' home communities.¹³⁴



© Keith Bacongao
MILF rebels in Maguindanao

Calling their homeland the “Moro Nation” (*Bangsa Moro*), Mindanao Muslims viewed themselves as under foreign occupation. Their primary allegiance was to Islam and not to the newly sovereign Philippine nation-state.¹³⁵ By 1969, clashes were a common occurrence between Muslims and the Philippine military in various parts of the historically Islamic south. Armed conflict increased dramatically the next year after private militias entered the fray. In 1972, control of the rebel Muslim movement was consolidated by the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) under the leadership of Nur Misuari.¹³⁶ It gained international backing from Muammar Kaddafi in Libya, who supplied arms through Malaysia.¹³⁷

In 1976, the two sides reached a cease-fire, known as the Tripoli Agreement, which laid out the creation of an autonomous, as opposed to independent, Muslim zone in the south. This turned out to be only a temporary truce, however. Disputes over implementation led to a resumption of the civil war within six months. The government in Manila under

¹³² Straits Times. “Philippines: Philippine Security Officials Ease Security Alerts.” 3 March 2006. <http://www.asiamedia.ucla.edu/article.asp?parentid=40205>

¹³³ Amana Media Initiative. “Philippine Security Law Sparks Controversy.” 6 August 2007. http://www.arf-asia.org/amana/prod/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=3115&Itemid=68

¹³⁴ Asia Society, Asia Source. “Q & A With Thomas McKenna.” March 2002. http://www.asiasource.org/news/special_reports/philippine.cfm

¹³⁵ Council on Foreign Relations. Pan, Esther. “New Focus On U.S.-Southeast Asia Military Ties.” 2 February 2006. http://www.cfr.org/publication/9742/new_focus_on_ussoutheast_asia_military_ties.html

¹³⁶ International Institute for Counter Terrorism. “Islamic Terrorism in the Philippines: An Updated Perspective.” <http://www.ict.org.il/apage/5178.php>

¹³⁷ Military Review. Turbiville Jr., Dr. Graham H. “Bearers of the Sword of Radical Islam, Philippines Insurgency, and Regional Stability.” March–April 2002. <http://www.smallwars.quantico.usmc.mil/search/LessonsLearned/philippines/bearers.asp>

Marcos did not appear ready to accept ethnic regionalism as an enduring phenomenon, instead viewing assimilation as the ultimate goal.¹³⁸

Part of the MNLF broke away in 1977 to form the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) which advocated a more deeply Islamic way of life and had a larger number of clerics in its ranks. Hashim Salamat, leader of the MILF, was expelled from the Philippines. He surfaced in Pakistan from where he has continued to direct the group's activities.



A MILF rebel in the southern Philippines

The MNLF negotiated a political settlement with the government in September 1996, thus ending the 24-year old civil war which claimed an estimated 120,000 lives.¹³⁹ The prospect for peace was complicated by the emergence of another breakaway group, *Abu Sayyaf* (Bearer of the Sword), in 1991.¹⁴⁰ Founded by Abdurajik Abubakar Janjalani, who cut his teeth in the anti-Soviet Northern Alliance *mujahideen* movement in Afghanistan, its membership includes former MNLF members who were unhappy with the accord. *Abu Sayyaf* (ASG) has distinguished itself in the Filipino public consciousness through high profile bombings, kidnappings, and beheadings. The first victims were Filipino Christian residents of the South. More recently Westerners, who offer the prospect of substantial ransom payments, have been targeted for kidnapping.¹⁴¹ Both the MNLF and MILF have condemned these tactics.¹⁴²

The Philippine Army has enjoyed some success against ASG. Its founder, Abdurajik Janjalani, was killed during a gun battle in December 1998.¹⁴³ His younger brother, Khaddafy Janjalani, named for the Libyan leader who supported the Moro cause, took over until he was killed in a clash with Philippine troops in 2006. Despite the loss of other top leaders and a core cadre consisting of approximately 300 fighters, ASG has not been written off as a spent force.¹⁴⁴ Its reputed links to Al Qaeda brought it to the

¹³⁸ Cultural Survival Quarterly. Kiefer, Thomas. "The Tausug and Martial Law." 31 December 1984. <http://www.cs.org/publications/CSQ/csq-article.cfm?id=304>

¹³⁹ Conciliation Resources. Stankovitch, Mara and Andy Carl. "One Step Towards Peace: The 'Final Peace Agreement' in Mindanao." March 1999. <http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/philippines-mindanao/step-towards-peace.php>

¹⁴⁰ Council on Foreign Relations. "Abu Sayyaf Group (Philippines, Islamist Separatists)." 23 January 2007. <http://www.cfr.org/publication/9235/>

¹⁴¹ Center for Defense Information, Terrorism Project. Clark, Emily. "In the Spotlight: Abu Sayyaf." 5 March 2002. <http://www.cdi.org/terrorism/sayyaf.cfm>

¹⁴² Anti-Defamation League. "The Philippines and Terrorism." April 2004. http://www.adl.org/Terror/tu/tu_0404_philippines.asp

¹⁴³ Military Review. Turbiville, Graham. "Bearers of the Sword Radical Islam, Philippines Insurgency, and Regional Stability." March–April 2002.

<http://www.smallwars.quantico.usmc.mil/search/LessonsLearned/philippines/bearers.asp>

¹⁴⁴ BBC (International News). McGeown, Kate. "Is this the end for Abu Sayyaf?" 23 January 2007. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/6290805.stm>

attention of Washington, which has provided various types of support for the Philippine counterinsurgency effort.¹⁴⁵

Communist Groups

Since 1969, the Maoist-inspired Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed forces, the New People's Army (NPA), have been engaged in an effort to overthrow the government and replace it with a Marxist state. While it's not strong enough to hold territory, government forces have been unable to vanquish it either. The end of the Cold War did little to alter its fortunes.¹⁴⁶

It is not difficult for the communists to find support in the impoverished countryside where the NPA provides an alternative form of justice. "If someone steals your *carabao* (water buffalo), the police are unlikely to be able to do anything about it. But the NPA might," explained the Manila-based head of an international NGO.¹⁴⁷ The strength of the communist insurgency is evident all over the Philippines, including Mindanao, although most sympathizers are Filipino transplants, not *Moro*-descended residents.

Poverty

Although there have been short periods of high economic growth over the past four decades, the Philippines registered an average annual increase of 1.2 percent a year from 1961 to 2004. This is much lower than the 5.4 percent average growth rate achieved in its East Asian neighbors which industrialized through manufacturing.¹⁴⁸ In 2003, 44 % of the Philippine population made do on less than USD 2 a day. High levels of income inequality make their destitution all the more evident.



© Ron R. Aviles
Slum in Quezon City

The concentration of land ownership in the hands of a few has never been successfully addressed by any political leaders since "People Power!" brought an end to the Marcos dictatorship in 1986. Successive coup attempts have forced elected presidents from Aquino to Arroyo, to put their immediate political survival ahead of long-term planning

¹⁴⁵ Congressional Research Service Report for Congress. Nicksch, Larry. "Abu Sayyaf: Target of Philippine-U.S. Anti-Terrorism Cooperation." 25 January 2002. <http://www.fas.org/irp/crs/RL31265.pdf>

¹⁴⁶ Defense Technical Information Center. Ligot, Jacinto C. "Communist Insurgency in the Philippines" (master's thesis. Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, 1994). Abstract. <http://stinet.dtic.mil/oai/oai?verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=ADA283972>

¹⁴⁷ Christian Science Monitor Dela Pena, Rolex. "In Capitalist Asia, Philippines Still Grapples with Communists." 7 December 2005. <http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/1207/p04s01-woap.html>

¹⁴⁸ Australian Government, AusAID. "Overseas Aid: Philippines." August 2007. <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/country/country.cfm?CountryID=31>

in the national interest.¹⁴⁹ This has enabled the small land-owning elite to evade the intent of whatever redistribution programs have been implemented.¹⁵⁰

In the countryside, agriculture has registered few productivity gains despite having to support ever growing numbers of people. Government investment in rural infrastructure and the provision of social services is hampered by national debt repayment obligations.¹⁵¹ There is little to stem the steady migration of people from the countryside to the metropolitan areas, where newcomers typically find homes in a shantytown and may eke out a living scavenging in smoldering dumps. With half the population under the age of 20 and expected to double every 29 years if current demographic trends are not altered, the dearth of employment options represent a great source of instability.¹⁵²

Armed Forces

The Armed Forces (AFP) of the Philippines includes the Philippine Army (66,000 members), Philippine Air Force (16,000), Philippine Navy (24,000 members including 7,500 marines)¹⁵³ and the Philippine Constabulary, the oldest of the four branches, which was absorbed into a civil police force in 1991. It is responsible for enforcing domestic laws, particularly in remote locales, and has played a prominent role in fighting both NPA communist insurgents and *Moro* separatists.¹⁵⁴ Active duty forces are supplemented by 130,000 reservists. Another organization, the 6,000-member National Capital Region Command, created in November 2003, is responsible for defending the elected president against coup attempts.



© Daniel Y. Go
Philippine Military Academy cadets, Baguio City

The country was divided into four military areas in 1950. Three decades later, after an upsurge in insurgent activity, a major restructuring ensued in the early 1980s to create smaller units of responsibility which aligned with the twelve national administrative divisions.¹⁵⁵ Fighting capacity remains hampered by antiquated equipment.

¹⁴⁹ Washington Post. Sipress, Alan. "In Twenty Years Since Marcos, Little Stability for the Philippines." 24 February 2006. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/02/24/AR2006022400184.html>

¹⁵⁰ Institute of Development Studies. "Has Land Reform Changed Land Ownership Concentration?" 2007. <http://www.eldis.org/go/display&type=Document&id=33348>

¹⁵¹ BBC News (International Version). Doyle, Mark. "Philippines Suffers Poverty Divide." 14 September 2005. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/4245422.stm>

¹⁵² Windows on Asia. "Philippines Geography." <http://asia.msu.edu/seasia/Philippines/geography.html>

¹⁵³ Mongabay. Library of Congress. "Philippines: National Security." 2005.

http://www.mongabay.com/reference/new_profiles/384.html

¹⁵⁴ Library of Congress. "Philippines: Philippine Constabulary." June 1991.

<http://memory.loc.gov/frd/cs/phtoc.html>

¹⁵⁵ Philippine Armed Forces. "History of the Armed Forces of the Philippines." c.2005.

<http://www.afp.mil.ph/0/history.php>