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The Tide is Turning: Environmental Scarcity, Regime Type, and Conflict in the Philippines

by
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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the links among environmental scarcity, regime type, and conflict. This is accomplished by integrating two separate research agendas: environmental conflict and regime type and conflict. The connection between these avenues of study is investigated through an analysis of the impact of democratization on environmentally-induced conflict in the Philippines. The findings of the case study indicate that regime type can influence the relationship between environmental scarcity and conflict. The advent of formal democracy has a primarily psychological, short term impact, making violence a less acceptable option. Further democratization — democratic deepening — then addresses the root causes of the conflict, a combination of closely interlinked environmental, social, and political factors. This opens up opportunities for peaceful change, and can help bring about a long term reduction in levels of conflict.

In Memory of

Peter Blitt
(1942-1995)

this thesis is dedicated to my father

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
CADT	Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title
CALT	Certificate of Ancestral Lands Title
CARL	Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law
CBFM	Community-Based Forest Management
CFMA	Community Forest Management Agreement
CFP	Community Forestry Program
CPP	Communist Party of the Philippines
CSC	Certificates of Stewardship Contract
DENR	Department of Environment and Natural Resources
DPA	Deep Penetration Agents
ICC	Indigenous Cultural Communities
IP	Indigenous People
IPRA	Indigenous Peoples Rights Act
ISF	Integrated Social Forestry
LGC	Local Government Code
LGU	Local Government Unit
NDF	National Democratic Front
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NIC	Newly Industrialized Country
NPA	New People's Army
NUC	National Unification Commission
OPAPP	Office of the Presidential Advisor on the Peace Process
PKP	Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (Philippine Communist Party)
PO	Peoples Organization
RD	Relative Deprivation
TLA	Timber License Agreement

INTRODUCTION

This thesis investigates the impact of democracy and democratization on environmentally-induced violent conflict in the Philippines. To do so, it brings together two separate, but complimentary, research agendas. The first focuses on the links between environmental scarcity and conflict. Researchers in this field argue that environmental scarcity is a cause, though not necessarily a proximate one, of conflict. The second area of study encompasses work on the impact of regime type on conflict and analyses of democracies and democratizing polities. Most theories in this field maintain that democracies are more pacific, while democratizing regimes can be prone to conflict. Both the environment-conflict and regime type-conflict research agendas are of particular relevance to developing nations, whose growing populations are often reliant upon diminishing natural resources and democratizing political regimes. Their integration provides a more comprehensive manner in which to study these nations.

Purpose

This investigation of the links among the environment, regime type and conflict responds to a prevalent criticism of environmental conflict scholarship. It has been argued that this research ignores the political variable, assuming that environmental scarcity leads to conflict regardless of the political system in place in the country (or countries) in question.[1]

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[1]See, for example, Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Armed Conflict and the Environment: A Critique of the Literature," *Journal of Peace Research* 35, no. 3 (1998): 389. As Gleditsch himself acknowledges, this research does not ignore political factors completely; issues such as legitimacy, state capacity, and corruption play a role in some of the more developed models. They do not, however, explicitly include notions such as 'democracy' and 'autocracy'. Ibid.

A similar criticism could be made of democracy scholars who concentrate exclusively on the impact of political processes, to the detriment of other sources of analysis. By combining the two areas of research, this paper intends to overcome both problems.

Structure of Paper

A comprehensive literature review is the first step in bringing together the two research agendas. Such a review — the focus of Chapter One — will provide the parameters of the analysis. This will be accomplished through an in-depth investigation of environmental scarcity, and its connections to conflict. Proposed linkages between regime type and conflict will be explored, concentrating specifically on the impact of democracy and democratization. Research exploring the connection between political regime and environmental protection will also be outlined. Finally, the civil conflict literature will be drawn upon in order to expose the potential causes of conflict. The importance of both grievances and opportunity structure will be highlighted, including the impact that environmental scarcity and regime type can have on these variables.

Chapter One will conclude by proposing the central hypothesis of this investigation: that regime type moderates the relationship between environmental scarcity and conflict. In other words, that 'generally, environmental scarcity tends to promote violent political conflict; however, the extent to which it does is enhanced or constrained by regime type'.[2]

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[2]As will be noted in Chapter One, the structure of this hypothesis has been taken from Kurt Schock's work on economic discontent and political opportunity. See, Kurt Schock, "A Conjunctural Model of Political Conflict: The Impact of Political Opportunities on the Relationship Between Economic Inequality and Violent Political Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 40, no. 1 (March 1996).

In Chapter Two, the methodological framework of the research will be outlined. The debate between quantitative and qualitative theories will be explored, as well as the reasons for undertaking a case study approach using process tracing. The quantitative manner in which the Philippines was chosen as a case study will then be explained. Given the democratic transition that the country has undergone since 1986, in the context of substantial environmental scarcity and an insurgency, the Philippines was deemed a good initial case for an analysis based upon the three key variables of interest — environmental scarcity, regime type, and conflict.

Chapter Three will examine the variables within the context of the Philippines. Concentrating on the years prior to 1986, the political history, environmental situation, and insurgency will be surveyed. This will illustrate the connection between environmental scarcity and conflict in the Philippines. Looking at President Ferdinand Marcos' authoritarian regime, some preliminary assessments as to the impact of regime type on environmentally-induced conflict will be made. This will provide the basis for later discussions regarding the interactions following the return to formal democracy in 1986.

The impact of democracy and democratization on environmental scarcity and conflict in the Philippines will be studied in Chapter Four. This analysis will be divided into two integrally connected parts: the return to formal democracy and democratic deepening. Both processes affect levels of conflict, in conjunction with other factors. The former has an impact that is principally psychological in nature, while the latter has the potential to bring about concrete long term change. The overall tendency is a decrease in levels of conflict — thus supporting the assertion that democracies are more pacific. Yet, the tenuous nature of much

of the change, and the difficulty in bringing it about, illustrates that the situation is far more complex than is often suggested.

The concluding chapter will summarize the key findings from each chapter, and assess their theoretical implications. It will also consider the future prospects for democracy, environmental scarcity, and conflict in the Philippines.

Definitions

The environmental conflict literature that will comprise the core of this analysis is that of Thomas Homer-Dixon. His definitions of key terms form an important component of the literature review in the next chapter, and so will not be addressed here. The literature on regime type and conflict is not as straightforward. As will be made clear in the following chapters, an abundance of imprecise definitions of 'democracy' and 'semi-democracy' abound in this research. Many conflict theorists dealing with regime type — particularly those undertaking quantitative analysis — tend to ignore the issue, assuming that their measures of democracy are uncontroversial. They often proceed to use differing indicators to represent their terms — purely institutional ones *versus* those focusing on civil and political liberties — leading to contradictory results. In the interest of clarifying the analysis, this paper will use the research of democracy theorists to establish some basic definitions.

Authoritarian regimes

Briefly, 'regime type' refers to whether a regime is a democracy, an autocracy, or something in-between. In its theoretical analysis, this paper will deal with regime type in a

general sense, while focusing particularly on democracy and democratization in the case study. Nonetheless, a basic definition for authoritarian regime is necessary — "[a] traditional authoritarian system...is characterized by a single leader or small group of leaders, no party or a weak party, no mass mobilization, possibly a 'mentality' but no ideology, limited government, 'limited, not responsible, political pluralism,' and no effort to remake society and human nature."[3] Absolute monarchies, military dictatorships, fascist regimes, and personal despotism, to name a few, all fall within this general category.[4]

Democratic regimes

Since 1974, the international system has been experiencing what is commonly known as the "third wave of democratization."[5] This wave has swept across approximately thirty countries in Europe, Latin America and Asia, bringing about transitions to some form of democracy. However, this does not herald some inexorable spread of stability and happiness throughout the world. The two previous waves were followed by reversals that eliminated some of the recent transitions to democracy.[6] There is no reason to suppose that the third

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[3]Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 12. This definition is in contrast to totalitarian systems, which "are characterized by: a single party, usually led by one man; a pervasive and powerful secret police; a highly developed ideology setting forth the ideal society, which the totalitarian movement is committed to realizing; and government penetration and control of mass communications and all or most social and economic organizations." Ibid.

[4]Ibid. The term autocracy, also commonly used, is simply a "more neutral term" for authoritarian regimes. Ted Gurr, Keith Jaggers and Will Moore, "The Transformation of the Western State: The Growth of Democracy, Autocracy, and State Power Since 1800," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 25, no. 1 (spring 1990): 84.

[5]"A wave of democratization is a group of transitions from nondemocratic to democratic regimes that occur within a specified period of time and that significantly outnumber transitions in the opposite direction during that period of time." Huntington, *Third Wave*, 15.

[6]Ibid., 21-26.

wave is fundamentally any more stable than the other two. It is these new, fragile, democracies, increasingly prevalent around the world, that form the core of this analysis.

Despite a degree of consensus on the existence of this 'third wave', there is a great deal of debate on exactly what constitutes a democracy.[7] A useful manner of making sense of the plethora of definitions referring to this term is outlined by Maxwell Cameron. He proposes that theories be thought of as existing along a spectrum. At one end are the minimalist theories, which "'travel' further and, by reducing the number of attributes of democracy, expand the number of cases available for analysis — but at the cost of depth and complexity."[8] At the other end are the maximalist theories, which incorporate a greater number of dimensions, and therefore refer to a smaller set of cases.[9] Cameron specifically places three principal theories into this spectrum — electoral democracy, liberal democracy, deliberative democracy — though others could be placed within it as well.

'Electoral democracy' is the most minimalist of democratic theories, requiring little more than the existence of contested elections. In the middle of the spectrum lies 'liberal democracy', which accepts the importance of free and fair elections, but further stresses the necessity of civil and political rights. Finally, 'deliberative democracy', found at the maximalist end of the continuum, moves beyond elections to view democracy as a deliberative

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[7]"Democracy is what philosopher W.B.Gallie terms an *essentially contested concept*. This refers to a concept in which different and competing definitions exist, such that terms themselves are problematic since they are not reducible to 'primitives'. Each definition yields different interpretations of social reality." William L. Robinson, *Promoting Polyarchy: Globalization, US Intervention, and Hegemony* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 49.

[8]Maxwell Cameron, "Presidential 'Self-Coups' in Latin America and Soviet Successor States: Lessons for Democratic Theory," *Kellogg Institute Working Paper*, 1998, 5.

[9]Ibid. Cameron describes a second 'positive/normative' dimension. For the purposes of this paper, however, the minimalist/maximalist continuum is illustrative enough of the range of definitions.

process, a "system of governance in which those exercising power offer public reasons for their actions and defend them against criticism."[10] A further 'type' of democracy that would find itself at the maximalist end of the spectrum is 'popular democracy'. This definition is much more normative in nature, unwilling to accept that a political system in which power is concentrated in the hands of the few could be considered a democracy:

> Popular democracy...posits democracy as both a process and a means to an end - a tool for change, for the resolution of such material problems as housing, health, education, access to land, cultural development, and so forth. This entails a dispersal of political power formerly concentrated in the hands of elite minorities, the redistribution of wealth, the breaking down of the structures of highly concentrated property ownership, and the democratizing of access to social and cultural opportunities by severing the link between access and the possession of wealth.[11]

Samuel Huntington argues that, prior to World War II, theorists tended to define democracy in an essentially normative manner. The major break came in 1942 with Joseph Schumpter's definition of democracy as "that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote." The debate that this radical rethinking of democracy produced essentially ended in 1971 with the publication of Robert Dahl's *Polyarchy*, which argued that democracy (or polyarchy) involved only two dimensions: contestation and participation.[12]

In recent years, democracy theorists have increasingly tended to follow Dahl and use those definitions of democracy that can be found in the first half of the spectrum. Definitions

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[10]Ibid., 6-16.

[11]Robinson, *Promoting Polyarchy*, 57-58.

[12]Huntington, *The Third Wave*, 6-7. See also, Robinson, *Promoting Polyarchy*, for a critical approach to the Schumpterian tradition. For Schumpter and Dahl's theories see, Joseph Schumpter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1942); and Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971).

of democracy that depend *solely* on elections, when they are neither free, fair nor inclusive, are generally considered too limited to be helpful.[13] At the same time, most theorists seem to shy away from overly involved meanings that imply some ideal of democracy to be strived for:

> Fuzzy norms do not yield useful analysis. Elections, open, free, and fair, are the essence of democracy, the inescapable sine qua non. Governments produced by elections may be inefficient, corrupt, shortsighted, irresponsible, dominated by special interests, and incapable of adopting policies demanded by the public good. These qualities may make such governments undesirable, but they do not make them undemocratic.[14]

In the interest of analytical clarity, this paper will not deviate from the current proceduralist tradition — at least insofar as defining the minimal conditions of democracy — and, like Huntington, define a regime as democratic:

> to the extent that its most powerful collective decision makers are selected through fair, honest, and periodic elections in which candidates freely compete for votes and in which virtually all the adult population is eligible to vote...It also implies the existence of those civil and political freedoms to speak, publish, assemble, and organize that are necessary to political debate and the conduct of electoral campaigns.[15]

This definition is essentially that of an electoral democracy, with an emphasis on the inclusion of those civil and political liberties that make 'free and fair' elections a reality. An extremely minimalist definition, it says little about the living conditions of the citizens in these democracies.

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[13]"This fallacy has been called 'electoralism' or 'the faith that merely holding elections will channel political action into peaceful contests among elites and accord public legitimacy to the winner'." Philippe Schmitter and Terry Lynn Karl, "What Democracy Is...and Is Not," in *The Global Resurgence of Democracy*, 2nd edition, ed. Larry Diamond and Marc Plattner (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 52.

[14]Huntington, *Third Wave*, 10.

[15]Ibid., 7.

> [A]t the end of 1998 there were 117 *electoral democracies* representing over 61 percent of the world's countries and 55 percent of its population...Despite the emergence of electoral democracy as the world's predominant form of government, major violations of human rights and civil liberties remain the norm in a majority of countries containing some three-fifths of the world's population. This disjunction arises from the fact that many electoral democracies fall short of being Free...As the year [1998] drew to a close, [only] 88 of the world's 191 countries (46 percent) were rated as Free, meaning that they maintain a high degree of political and economic freedom and respect basic civil liberties.[16]

In other words, 'level of democracy' and 'regime repressiveness', two notions that are often conflated by conflict theorists, have very different meanings. While certainly connected, these concepts must remain analytically distinct if the implications of democratization are to be studied.

The limits to the minimalist definition that will be used here cannot be avoided.[17] This necessitates a means of describing the further democratization, or democratic deepening, that can occur *after* democracy is in place.

Larry Diamond maintains that "[r]ather than viewing democracy as merely present or absent..., it is more fruitful to view democracy as a spectrum, with a range of variation in degree and form. Only by doing so can we comprehend the prospects of and requirements for, consolidating democracy..."[18] Huntington would disagree with this conception; given his focus on the transition from a nondemocratic system to a democratic one, he explicitly

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[16]Adrian Karatnycky, "The Decline of Illiberal Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 10, no. 1 (January 1999): 115, 112.

[17]According to Robinson, polyarchy is "a system in which a small group actually rules and mass participation in decision-making is confined to leadership choice in elections carefully managed by competing elites." Robinson, *Promoting Polyarchy*, 49.

[18]Larry Diamond, "Degrees, Illusions, and Directions for Consolidation," in *Beyond Sovereignty: Collectively Defending Democracy in the Americas*, ed. Tom Farer (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 53.

proposes a dichotomous approach that divides the two.[19] In contrast, this paper is concerned with what occurs after the advent of formal democracy, particularly with regard to already existing conflicts and environmental problems. This is best undertaken by combining Diamond's and Huntington's approaches. Democracy is 'present' in all cases that satisfy the minimum requirements. However, the democratic deepening that the basic democracy can then undergo is an inherently fluid process.

Guillermo O'Donnell has argued that there are two transitions from authoritarian rule. First comes the defeat of authoritarianism and the transition to democracy. This is then followed by a transition to a consolidated democracy.[20] It is during the first transition that the term 'semi-democracy' becomes relevant. As will be seen, this notion tends to be used in widely divergent ways. It will be used here to refer to those polities that have not completed their first transition to democracy.[21] They are regimes in which

> the effective power of elected officials is so limited or political party competition is so restricted, or the freedom and fairness of elections so compromised that electoral outcomes, although competitive, do not produce true popular sovereignty and accountability, or in which civil and political liberties are uncertain that some political orientations and interests are unable to organize and express themselves peacefully, without fear.[22]

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[19]Huntington, *Third Wave*, 11-12.

[20]This description of O'Donnell's ideas can be found in Scott Mainwaring, "Transitions to Democracy and Democratic Consolidation," in *Issues in Democratic Consolidation: The New South American Democracies in Comparative Perspective*, ed. Scott Mainwaring, Guillermo O'Donnell and J. Samuel Valenzuela (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 296.

[21]As usual there is no concrete way to distinguish between 'categories' of democracy — is a democracy that mostly protects liberties a semi-democracy or a very limited democracy? These caveats must be kept in mind when making any assessment of democracy and democratization.

[22]Larry Diamond, Juan Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset, "Introduction: What Makes for Democracy?" In *Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy*, 2nd edition, ed. Larry Diamond, Juan Linz and Seymour Martin Lipset (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995), 7-8.

The second transition — democratization or democratic deepening — moves the democracy toward consolidation.

> Democratic deepening improves the quality, depth, and authenticity of democracy in several dimensions: fairer, freer, more vigorous, and more extensive political competition; broader, more autonomous, and more inclusive participation and representation; more comprehensively and rigorously protected civil liberties; and more systematic and transparent accountability... [D]eepening is essential for generating the broad, intrinsic political legitimacy that is the sine qua non of consolidation [the normalization of democratic politics through behavioural and institutional changes].[23]

A number of theorists dislike the notion of consolidation. O'Donnell, in contrast to his own statement regarding the two transitions, is chief among them. He dislikes the "strong teleological flavour" of an argument that presupposes that a democratizing country is moving *toward* some defined ideal type of institutionalized 'democracy'.[24]

Another problem raised by discussions of democratic deepening is articulated by Andreas Schedler in a recent article on democratic consolidation. He argues that,

> [b]oth the concepts of 'democratic quality' and 'democratic deepening' are still unclear and controversial. While we have tons of literature as well as a great deal of consensus about liberal democracy's minimum standards, discussion about the standards of democratic quality is still very preliminary. Therefore in the current state of debate, conceptualizing democratic consolidation as democratic deepening amounts to inviting a free-for-all. It permits importing into the definition of democratic consolidation, in a subjective and arbitrary way, any kinds of goals and criteria that one deems to be indispensable for a high-quality and thus 'consolidated' democracy (which becomes just another vague label for 'real' democracy).[25]

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[23]Diamond, "Degrees, Illusions, and Directions," 54.

[24]Guillermo O'Donnell, "Illusions About Consolidation," *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 2 (April 1996): 38.

[25]Andreas Schedler, "What is Democratic Consolidation?" *Journal of Democracy* 9, no. 2 (April 1998): 104.

Schedler is clearly uncomfortable with qualitative notions of democratic deepening, and any attempts to equate deepening with consolidation.[26] Both his concerns and O'Donnell's are valid and present some of the difficulties in discussions of democratic consolidation.

In order to sidestep these potential problems, this thesis concentrates on democratic deepening in and of itself, rather than consolidation or any particular ideal end type of democracy. It is not being argued that polities should undergo democratic deepening for democracy's sake, nor that all polities necessarily undergo this transformation. A number of new democracies stagnate at the level of a very limited democracy or even regress into semi-democracy or authoritarianism. However, many other democracies do undergo a process of further democratization, and theorists need a language with which to describe that change. In the context of this investigation, notions of democratic deepening and consolidation are useful in that they facilitate the analysis of the impact of democracies and democratization on environmentally-induced conflict.

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[26]He prefers a more 'negative' understanding of consolidation, one that equates it with "securing achieved levels of democratic rule against authoritarian regression." Ibid, 103.

CHAPTER ONE:
LITERATURE REVIEW AND SYNTHESIS

This chapter hypothesizes a manner in which the linkages among the environment, regime type and conflict might operate. An overview of environmental security scholarship provides the basis for a discussion of environmental conflict theory. Criticisms of this school of thought are then addressed, namely the absence of a variable focusing on the role of regime type. The importance of including such a variable is highlighted through an exploration of two key arguments: democracies are better for the environment, and democracies are more pacific. Finally, by including the contribution of civil conflict literature, a more nuanced explanation of the causes of conflict and the interaction of the key variables emerges.

Environmental Security

The First Wave — Environment and Security

There is little doubt that the meaning of security has changed significantly since the end of the Cold War. "Increasingly, security is being defined as the security of individuals as human beings as such, and not only as citizens of a particular state. To preserve security, the entire human environment is being taken into consideration, including the need to resolve environmental problems and ensure a sustainable future."[1] This has led a number of theorists and practitioners to argue for the explicit inclusion of the environment into the security discourse.[2] It is believed that by placing the environment firmly in the realm of 'high politics'

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[1]Nina Græger, "Environmental Security?" *Journal of Peace Research* 33, no. 1 (1996): 109.

[2]See, for example, Richard Ullman, "Redefining Security," *International Security* 8, no. 1 (summer 1983): 129-153; and Jessica T. Mathews, "Redefining Security," *Foreign Affairs* 68, no. 2 (spring 1989): 162-77.

— traditionally the domain of strict statist military concerns — interconnections that were previously ignored or overlooked will be revealed, facilitating the search for innovative solutions to increasingly complex problems.

Nonetheless, the question of whether or not to explicitly include the environment into the security discourse is one that has generated a significant amount of debate. Two principal arguments tend to be made against this widening of the concept of security. The first focuses on the danger of a "militarization of our thinking about the relationship between humanity and the environment."[3] It is feared that such a 'securitization' of the environment would ensconce it too firmly in the world of traditional security concerns, limiting the generation of creative responses in favour of *status quo* military thinking. This could be counter-productive as "the military penchant for secrecy and 'we versus they' thinking is antithetical to the interdependent nature of many environmental problems that require information sharing and cooperation to be resolved."[4]

The second argument is based on the belief that incorporating too many variables into the concept of security will render it analytically meaningless. In essence, "[i]f everything is a security matter, then nothing is."[5] Some theorists conclude from this that the environment, and other 'non-traditional' concerns, must be kept out of the security dialogue entirely. Others take a more balanced approach and simply maintain that the term 'environmental security' must be carefully defined so that it is limited to key areas of concern.[6]

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[3]Græger, "Environmental Security?" 111.

[4]Richard Matthew, "Rethinking Environmental Security," in *Conflict and the Environment*, ed. Nils Petter Gleditsch et al. (The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997), 76.

[5]Lothar Brock, "The Environment and Security: Conceptual and Theoretical Issues," in *Conflict and the Environment*, ed. Nils Petter Gleditsch et al. (The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997), 20

[6]See Matthew, "Rethinking Environmental Security," for such a suggestion.

Nina Græger, in her survey of the literature on environmental security,[7] offers a potential solution to the above debate. She argues that,

> [a] perspective that focuses on the relationship between the environment and conflict rather than security overcomes some of the problems of methodological rigour. Such an approach facilitates rich case-studies, which in turn can contribute to making the environmental dimension of security more empirical and therefore more applicable to the political community. The environmental conflict perspective is less ambitious but also more precise.[8]

Carsten Rønnfeldt makes a similar distinction between analyses that focus more generally on the environment as a security issue, and those that specifically look at environment and conflict. In so doing, he draws upon Marc Levy's conception of 'waves' of research. The scholarship that focuses on broadening the definition of security to include environmental concerns is seen as the first wave, while the more recent work that explicitly looks at the connection between the environment and conflict is the second.[9]

In light of the division of current scholarship into two waves, the logical focus of a number of researchers has been to propose the launch of a third wave, which would presumably focus attention on matters overlooked by the previous two. Not surprisingly, these proposed 'third waves' tend to be closely connected to their own current research. Marc Levy, unhappy with what he sees as a singular focus on environmental causes of conflict,

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[7]A number of excellent literature reviews have been undertaken recently. See, for example, the first six chapters of *Conflict and the Environment*, ed. Nils Petter Gleditsch et al. (The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997). This section does not purport to undertake anything quite extensive. Rather, its aim is to highlight the principal areas of research within this scholarship, focusing specifically on those directly relevant to the arguments that will be advanced in this paper.

[8]Græger, "Environmental Security?" 113.

[9]Rønnfeldt argues that the waves are chronological, but only in the sense that the second began after the first, not because one replaced the other. They have become two parallel streams of research and, he maintains, any third wave should be equally complementary. Carsten Rønnfeldt, "Linking Research on the Environment, Poverty and Conflict," in *Research on Environment, Poverty and Conflict*, ed. Dan Smith and Willy Østreng, 1997, full-text electronic version, www.prio.no/Frmiddle.htm, 8.

proposes a shift towards a more general investigation of the causes of regional conflict.[10] Similarly, in his chapter "Linking Research on the Environment, Poverty and Conflict," Rønnfeldt argues that, "[t]he task for a third wave is to address more explicitly the causes of environmental scarcity, placing poverty issues at the centre."[11] Finally, Wenche Hauge and Tanja Ellingsen assert that "[a]lthough a fair amount of work has been conducted on the relationship between poverty and conflict, income inequality and conflict, political regime and conflict, as well as on the relationship between environment and conflict, little work links all four factors. This should be the highest research priority if we are to obtain a more realistic understanding of the causal pathways to conflict."[12]

While acknowledging the importance of the debates of the first wave, this paper does not seek to address them. Instead, as Græger suggests, it focuses on the more precise question of the relationship between environment and conflict. In so doing, this analysis situates itself at the intersection of the second and third waves, grounded in the research of the second but responding to its critics by incorporating some important new variables into that research.

The Second Wave — Environment and Conflict

'Second wave' environmental security scholarship is more empirically grounded than that of the first wave. Begun in the early 1990s, it is "based on case-studies focusing on

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[10]Marc Levy, "Time for a Third Wave of Environment and Security Scholarship?" in *Environmental Change and Security Project Report*, Issue 1 (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center, 1996), 45.

[11]Rønnfeldt, "Linking Research," 11.

[12]Wenche Hauge and Tanja Ellingsen, "Beyond Environmental Scarcity: Causal Pathways to Conflict," *Journal of Peace Research* 35, no. 3 (May 1998): 314.

whether environmental degradation could lead to conflict, and, if so, how? The basic aim [is]...to identify the causal pathway from environmental degradation to conflict."[13] Before investigating what sort of causal pathways were discovered, however, the concepts of environmental degradation and environmental conflict must be defined.

Environmental Degradation

In this paper, 'environmental degradation' refers to the degradation of renewable, rather than nonrenewable, resources. In traditional security thinking, it is nonrenewable resources that tend to be considered the most important, and therefore the most likely causes of conflict. However, "[a]n important paradox to bear in mind when examining natural resource trends is that so-called nonrenewable resources — such as coal, oil, and minerals — are in fact inexhaustible, while so-called renewable resources can be finite."[14] It is the very thing that makes these resources renewable — their ecological integration "in a feedback circle system which guarantees their replacement or the preservation of their quality"[15] — that makes them so fragile.

Non-renewable resources are not integrated into the ecosystem in the same way, and can therefore only be depleted, not degraded. "The extraction of oil, for example, does not mean *by itself* an environmental degradation. Even the total depletion of oil stocks would not cause any destabilization of the ecosystem; but it would, of course, represent a serious

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[13]Rønnfeldt, "Linking Research," 8.

[14]Jessica T. Mathews, "The Environment and International Security," in *World Security: Challenges for a New Century*, ed. M. Klare and D. Thomas (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 276.

[15]Stephan Libiszewski, "What is an Environmental Conflict?" ENCOP Occasional Paper No. 1, 1992, full-text electronic version, www.fsk.ethz.ch/encop/1/libisz92.htm, 3.

economic problem. Therefore, conflicts over the possession of or the access to oil cannot be regarded as environmental conflicts. They are originally economic or social conflicts."[16] This realization has led much of the research, in both the first and second wave of the environmental security discourse, to focus on 'renewable resources' such as water, forest, and soil.

Environmental Conflict

The literature diverges on the issue of what kind of renewable resource conflicts should be considered. "Conflicts involving renewable natural resources are of two kinds: those in which resource depletion is the direct objective of the conflict and those in which it is an indirect cause of the conflict."[17] It is the former — disputes over shared waters or fisheries, 'resource wars' — that most often comes to mind when the notion of environmental conflict is considered. While these are admittedly important issues, they are by no means the only, or even the most prevalent, type of conflict due to the environment. This analysis will focus on the latter issue — environment as an indirect cause of conflict.

The term 'environmentally-induced conflict' has been proposed as a useful means of differentiating this type of conflict from the former. This term

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[16]Ibid., 3-4.

[17]Gareth Porter, "Environmental Security as a National Security Issue," *Current History* 94, no. 592 (May 1995): 220.

> helps to make the necessary distinction between the causes of conflict and the issues that are being fought over. Unlike conflicts over non-renewable resources or 'resource wars', where the resources themselves are the object of contention, environmentally-induced conflicts often are not a unique kind of conflict but rather are typically disputes over traditional grievances (ethnic, relative deprivation) that have environmental components.[18]

While not specifically using the term 'environmentally-induced conflict', it is this type of conflict upon which Thomas Homer-Dixon and the Toronto Group — key researchers of the second wave — have focused.

Homer-Dixon and the Toronto Group[19]

Thomas Homer-Dixon's model outlining the links between environmental scarcity and violent conflict will form the basis of the theoretical framework of this paper. It is acknowledged as being "one of the most cited sources of research in this area,"[20] and clearly outlines many of the key issues involved in environment and conflict theory.

Homer-Dixon's independent variable — environmental scarcity — is comprised of three distinct but interrelated components: (1) supply-induced scarcity; (2) demand-induced scarcity; and (3) structural scarcity.

The first element has already been briefly discussed. *Supply-induced scarcity* — or environmental change — is the degradation or depletion of renewable resources. This leads to a decrease in the supply of the resource, or a shrinking of the resource 'pie'. Supply-

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[18]Geoffrey Dabelko, "The Environment and Conflict in the Third World," in *Causes of Conflict in the Third World*, ed. Ketil Volden and Dan Smith (Oslo: PRIO & North/South Coalition, 1997), 55.

[19]The material in this section is taken from Thomas Homer-Dixon and Jessica Blitt, "Introduction: A Theoretical Overview,"in *Ecoviolence: Links Among Environment, Population, and Security*," ed. Thomas Homer-Dixon and Jessica Blitt (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1998).

[20]Dabelko, "The Environment and Conflict in the Third World," 55.

induced scarcity can take a varied number of forms, most of them interlinked: deforestation, for example, can lead to changed hydrological cycles, soil erosion, siltation of local waterways, and a decrease in the productivity of local fisheries. All of these are instances of environmental change and are, in part, determined by ecosystem sensitivity. In other words, the amount of change is a function of the fragility of the resource in the first place. Agricultural activity will cause soil erosion more rapidly on a mountainside than it will on flat land. This latter point is important because it highlights the fact that environmental scarcity is not solely a function of human activity.

Demand-induced scarcity is caused by population growth, or a per-capita increase in consumption of the resource. In either case, an increase in demand for the resource. More people compete for a piece of the resource pie, thus shrinking each person's individual slice.

Finally, *structural scarcity* is brought on when the resource is distributed unequally, with the majority of the populace experiencing shortages due to the concentration of the resource in the hands of the minority. In this case, most of the resource pie is divided into a few large pieces, leaving the remainder to be partitioned into a large number of smaller slices.

Homer-Dixon describes two types of interactions among these three sources of scarcity: ecological marginalization and resource capture. *Ecological marginalization* occurs when structural scarcity interacts with demand-induced scarcity to cause supply-induced scarcity. Due to a lack of access to resources and a growing population, groups are forced to migrate to fragile, marginal lands, which are easily degraded. *Resource capture* is a process by which structural scarcity is brought about in reaction to supply- and demand-induced scarcities. In this instance, powerful groups within a society shift the distribution of resources

in their favour in anticipation of a diminishment of the resource through population growth and degradation.

Adaptation to these scarcities is possible — albeit difficult — if enough social and technical ingenuity can be generated by a society.[21] However, a number of factors — including market failure, social friction, limited capital availability, and constraints to science — can limit the supply of ingenuity while simultaneously increasing the requirement for it. Market failure and social friction will briefly be explored here as they highlight potential interactions between regime type and environmental conflict.

A belief in the power of markets has led many neoclassical economists to downplay the potential damaging role of environmental scarcity. It is assumed that demand- and supply-induced scarcity will bring about changes in market prices, thus encouraging societies to generate the necessary ingenuity to mitigate the problem. However, markets can fail to accurately reflect the costs of resource use due to two principle problems. The first is the 'open-access' nature of resources like hydrological cycles and fisheries. This makes them vulnerable to an overexploitation often uncontrollable by markets. The other, 'negative externalities', arises because a number of the effects of resource use are simply not incorporated into their market prices. For example, the price of lumber taken from steep hillsides does not reflect the soil erosion and loss of agricultural productivity caused by its extraction. The state has an essential role to play in establishing the institutions to generate

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[21]For a more detailed discussion of ingenuity see Thomas Homer-Dixon, "The Ingenuity Gap: Can Poor Countries Adapt to Resource Scarcity?" *Population and Development Review* 21, no. 3 (1995): 587-612; and Thomas Homer-Dixon, *The Ingenuity Gap* (Knopf, forthcoming).

the necessary ingenuity both to alleviate market failure and respond to resource scarcity.[22] This highlights one of the problems many new democratizing nations face — lacking established institutions they have a much more difficult time supplying the necessary ingenuity to reform those very institutions and mitigate scarcity.

Environmental scarcity can also "generate 'social friction' that impedes the supply of social ingenuity in the form of new and reformed institutions, such as markets."[23] Building on Mancur Olson's work,[24] Homer-Dixon argues that scarcity can cause small, yet powerful, groups — narrow distributional coalitions — to protect their own interests to the detriment of society. These groups "hinder efforts to reform existing institutions when these reforms do not coincide with their own interests,"[25] thus impeding the generation of solutions to scarcities. Once again, it is the new or unstable democracies without strong political institutions that tend to be the most affected by these narrow coalitions, and the least suited to stand up to them.

Homer-Dixon outlines five possible social effects, which can occur if a society cannot adapt to scarcity: (1) constrained agricultural productivity; (2) constrained economic productivity; (3) migration; (4) social segmentation; and (5) disruption of legitimate institutions. He does not argue, however, that these effects are caused solely by environmental scarcity; its interaction with contextual factors — economic, cultural, and political — is also extremely important.[26] The role of these contextual factors, particularly the political ones, in

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[22]Homer-Dixon, "The Ingenuity Gap," 12-13.

[23]Ibid., 14.

[24]Mancur Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982).

[25]Homer-Dixon and Blitt, "Introduction," 8.

[26]For a more detailed description of the social effects, see Thomas Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence*, Chapter 5 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

generating both social effects and conflict will be discussed in greater detail below.

Finally,

> [b]y making some people poorer and weaker and others richer and more powerful, by causing people to move to new locations where they are often not wanted, and by weakening key institutions such as the state, environmental scarcity boosts grievances and changes the structure of opportunities facing challenger groups. This conjunction of grievance and opportunity in turn raises the probability of major civil violence, such as insurgency, ethnic clashes, and coups d'etat. Research shows that this violence tends to be subnational, diffuse, and persistent — exactly the kind of violence that conventional military institutions have great difficulty controlling.[27]

A Third Wave? — Criticisms of Environment and Conflict Research

A number of criticisms have been levied against 'second wave' researchers. In his recent assessment of environmental conflict scholarship in the *Journal of Peace Research*, Nils Petter Gleditsch outlines nine common problems which marr most of the research in this area.[28] Some of them have already been addressed in this paper, one other, which is directly relevant to this research, will be explored here.

Gleditsch argues that, "[f]ar too many analyses of conflict and the environment are based not only on bivariate analysis but also on overly simplistic reasoning. The greatest

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[27]Homer-Dixon and Blitt, "Introduction," 11.

[28]Gleditsch's nine criticisms are: "(1) there is a lack of clarity over what is meant by 'environmental conflict'; (2) researchers engage in definitional and polemical exercise rather than analysis; (3) important variables are neglected, notably political and economic factors which have a strong influence on conflict and mediate the influence of resource and environmental factors; (4) some models become so large and complex that they are virtually untestable; (5) cases are selected on values of the dependent variable; (6) the causality of the relationship is reversed; (7) postulated events in the future are cited as empirical evidence; (8) studies fail to distinguish between foreign and domestic conflict and (9) confusion reigns about the appropriate level of analysis." Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Armed Conflict and the Environment: A Critique of the Literature," *Journal of Peace Research* 35, no. 3 (1998): 387-88.

weakness in this respect is that much of this literature ignores political, economic, and cultural variables...It is tacitly assumed that resource conflicts have a high potential for violence, regardless of the countries' political system or economic orientation."[29] Other recent analyses have similarly focused on the importance of explicitly tracing the role of the political variable.

Günther Baechler, the director of the Swiss Peace Foundation in Berne, and one-time co-director of the Environment and Conflicts Project (ENCOP), argues that:

> passing the threshold of violence definitely depends on *sociopoltical* factors and not on the degree of environmental degradation as such. Critical sociopolitical factors include the lack of institutional capacities for peaceful conflict settlement, the readiness and/or capacity of authorities and leaders to organize and mobilize collective actors, the (mis-) perception of alternatives to resorting to violence, the preferences and opportunities of actors, and actor limitations. These topics have to be examined in more detail to better understand when and at what point environmental conflicts turn violent.[30]

And, it should be added, how and when environmental conflicts can be resolved.

Gleditsch continues his criticism of environmental conflict scholarship by focusing on the work of the Toronto Group. He argues that, despite demonstrating more sensitivity to these issues than most other studies in the field, they nonetheless never explicitly use variables of democracy and autocracy in their models. "The reports [of the Toronto Group] frequently hover around the idea that democratic procedures might have something to do with the level of conflict. Yet, none of the reports clearly state that democracy matters, or in what way."[31] This argument is, in fact, raised by Homer-Dixon himself in the concluding chapter of his

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[29]Ibid., 389.

[30]Günther Baechler, "Why Environmental Transformation Causes Violence: A Synthesis," in *Environmental Change and Security Project Report*, Issue 4 (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center, 1998), 32.

[31]Gleditsch, "Armed Conflict and the Environment," 389.

book, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence.* Discussing future avenues of research, he states that,

> [p]articular deserving of study is democracy's effect on the connections between environmental scarcity and violence. Although recent decades have seen a surge of democratization around the world, the term *democracy* is used too loosely by lay commentators and experts alike. It commonly encompasses an extraordinarily variegated set of social phenomena and institutions that have complicated and multiple effects on the incidence of social turmoil and violence.[32]

However, there is also a danger of overemphasizing the role of regime type. As Homer-Dixon points out, "some skeptics claim...that political, economic, and social factors are actually the ultimate causes of environmental scarcity. Environmental scarcity is therefore subordinate to these factors; it never plays an independent causal role. Consequently, it is of little fundamental interest to policymakers concerned about the causes of violence in our world."[33] Yet, assigning a hierarchy of importance to variables within an interactive equation is unhelpful. It is true that environmental scarcity does not act alone, but this fact does not diminish its importance within the equation. Much research has been undertaken — by Homer-Dixon and the Toronto Group, the Environment and Conflicts Project (ENCOP), and the Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO), to name but a few — that clearly illustrates the linkages between environmental scarcity and conflict in many developing countries. Instead of abandoning that work in the interest of a parsimonious, yet empty, theory of political violence, what needs to be done is to carefully trace the manner in which the contextual factor of regime type affects the linkages between environmental scarcity and violence.

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[32]Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence*, 182.
[33]Ibid., 178.

In his *Journal of Peace Research* article critiquing the literature, Gleditsch outlines some of the research that has already been conducted in this area. Specifically, he examines the case of democratic systems, and their interactions with the environment and conflict. He maintains that democracies are more pacific — both towards each other and internally — and tend to be less environmentally destructive. Therefore, there is little reason to suppose that environmental conflicts are likely to be generated within these countries. He concludes that "democracy may have a double effect in preventing armed conflict over the environment; it generates fewer serious problems, *and* it provides other means of conflict resolution once these problems have arisen."[34]

This last statement requires closer examination, as it is by no means undisputed. It can be broken down into two assertions: democracies are more environmentally benign and democracies are more pacific (externally and internally).

Democracy and the Environment

Theoretically, positions on the issue of democracy and the environment can be divided into two camps. Gleditsch's argument focuses on the positive impact that democracies can have on the environment. Drawing upon the work of previous researchers,[35] he traces out six mechanisms found in democracies that have positive environmental consequences:

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[34]Gleditsch, "Armed Conflict and the Environment," 389.

[35]For example, Rodger Payne, "Freedom and the Environment," *Journal of Democracy* 6, no. 3 (July 1995): 41-55. Payne outlines five slightly different aspects of a democracy that improve its ability to safeguard the environment: individual rights and the open marketplace of ideas; regime responsiveness; political learning; internationalism; and open markets.

1. *Freedom of information and expression* (which allows the formation of environmentalist pressure groups, as well as technological innovation);
2. *Pluralism* (which makes it possible to mobilize counterforces against environmentally destructive policies);
3. *Pragmatic trial-and-error* (which facilitates environmental learning);
4. *International cooperation* (which encourages environmental treaty-making and adjustment to standards set by international organizations);
5. *A market-oriented economy* (which permits the pricing of environmental values and environmental bargaining); and
6. *Greater respect for human life* (which ensures intervention into environmental problems before they assume life-threatening proportions).[36]

In many ways, this is a rather idealized and optimistic depiction of the mechanisms available to democracies. Nonetheless, it is useful in that it highlights the manner in which democracies can *potentially* operate in an environmentally benign fashion. One of the questions that this paper addresses is whether such mechanisms are relevant for the particular situation of developing countries undergoing democratization.

The opposing school of thought — that "democracy has failed ecology" — was prevalent during the late 1960s and early 1970s. Supported by such theorists as Paul Ehrlich and Garrett Hardin, it "suggests that individual and free-market behavior associated with liberal democracy is inimical to environmental protection."[37]

This position has been articulated more recently by Val Plumwood. Her argument is not based on a belief that authoritarian or military regimes are better for the environment. In

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[36]Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Environmental Conflict and the Democratic Peace," in *Conflict and Environment*, ed. Nils Petter Gleditsch et al. (The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1997), 96-97.

[37]Manus Midlarsky, "Democracy and the Environment: An Empirical Assessment," *Journal of Peace Research* 35, no. 3 (1998): 343. See also, Paul Ehrlich, *The Population Bomb* (New York: Ballantine, 1968); and Garrett Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science* 162, no. 3859 (1968): 1243-48.

fact, Plumwood maintains that "[m]ilitary regimes are neither responsive nor accountable, and have a record of gross environmental destructiveness which parallels their record of gross human destructiveness."[38] She goes on to argue that it is exactly that which differentiates democracies from autocracies — their capacity to adapt and correct — which makes them the best system to detect and respond to environmental problems. Nonetheless, she remains critical of the actual behaviour of democracies, especially liberal democracies. Plumwood maintains that liberal democracies are radically unequal,[39] and that this inequality is an indicator:

> not only of the capacity of its privileged groups to distribute social goods upwards and to create rigidities which hinder the corrective, democratic reshaping of social institutions, but also an indicator of their capacity to redistribute ecological ills downwards and to create similar rigidities in dealing with ecological ills. If the capacity to correct and reshape ecologically destructive institutions is thus hindered in liberal democracy by the rigidities resulting from its protection of privilege, the elements of an ecologically responsive democracy will never be sufficiently available in liberal democracy.[40]

While her attack of liberal democracies is somewhat extreme at times, Plumwood provides an important critique of the optimistic notion that the free-market, individualistic nature of liberal democracies are an unmitigated good for the environment. As well, the inequalities that she refers to are certainly a function of many new democracies in developing countries with entrenched elites.

A relevant investigation of the relationship between the environment and democracy

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[38]Val Plumwood, "Has Democracy failed Ecology?" in *Ecology and Democracy*, ed. Freya Mathews (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1996), 136.

[39]Ibid., 137-41.

[40]Ibid.,141.

was recently conducted by Manus Midlarsky, using quantitative indicators.[41] His findings are not entirely consistent with Gleditsch's arguments. For example, deforestation was found to increase with the level of democracy, even when economic development was controlled for. Midlarsky attempts to explain this with reference to "the sensitivity of democratically elected governments to the land needs of their populations in many Third World countries. Fearful of being ejected from office by a disgruntled land-poor peasantry, elected politicians in Third World countries may accede to the demands for land of a substantial portion of the electorate."[42] However, given the historic disregard for the 'land-poor peasantry' in most developing nations, it seems illogical that they should be blamed for continued deforestation during democratization. Far more likely is Midlarsky's alternate hypothesis that high rates of deforestation pertain to "the permeability of Third World democracies to the efforts of large cattle ranchers, farmers, and multinational corporations involved in agribusiness."[43] All told, Midlarsky finds the relationship between democracy and the environment to be principally negative (in the case of deforestation, CO_2 emissions, and soil erosion by water) or non-existent. He concludes by suggesting in-depth case study research as a means of exploring these interactions more closely.[44]

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[41]He uses six environmental indicators: (1) deforestation; (2) air quality; (3) soil erosion by water; (4) protected land area; (5) freshwater availability; and, (6) soil erosion by chemicals, as his dependent variables, and three democracy indicators: (1) Gastil's political rights index; (2) Bollen's liberal democracy index; and, (3) Jaggers & Gurr's institutionally focused Polity III index, as his independent variables, and seeks to establish the relationship between them through multivariate analysis. See Kenneth Bollen, "Liberal Democracy: Validity and Method Factors in Cross-National Measures," *American Journal of Political Science* 37, no. 4 (1993): 1207-30; Raymond Gastil, *Freedom in the World: Political Rights and Civil Liberties 1987-1988* (New York: Freedom House, 1988); Keith Jaggers and Ted Gurr, "Tracking Democracy's Third Wave with the Polity III Data," *Journal of Peace Research* 32, no. 4 (November 1995): 469-482.

[42]Midlarsky, "Democracy and the Environment," 352.

[43]Ibid., 352.

[44]Ibid., 358-59.

Midlarsky observes that the seemingly anomalous negative relationship between environmental degradation and democracy is probably due to his inclusion of all democratic polities, rather than solely the Western industrialized ones, as tends to be the case.[45] There are dynamics at work in democratic developing nations that are completely inapplicable to industrialized nations, and vice versa. Once again, the problems with the term 'democracy' are apparent. When Gleditsch speaks of democracy, he seems to be implicitly referring to a highly institutionalized industrial democracy, hardly the more limited variety encompassed in this study by the term democracy. This has a bearing on the applicability of his argument to the case of democratizing developing countries.

Democracy and Conflict

Gleditsch's second statement is somewhat less controversial, based upon a number of detailed investigations. Arguments regarding the pacific nature of democracies have been made relative to both interstate and internal conflict. At the system level of analysis, this has led to democratic peace theory — the assertion that democracies do not go to war with each other.[46] Democratic peace theory will not be addressed in this paper, however, as its focus is on *intra*state conflict. At this level, Gleditsch's argument that democracies are more peaceful is most often articulated by quantitative conflict theorists who maintain that there is an inverted U-curve relationship between regime type and conflict — democracies and autocracies are more pacific, and semi-democracies are more conflict prone (see Figure 1.1).

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[45]Ibid., 358.

[46]See, for example, Bruce Russell, *Grasping the Democratic Peace* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).

Tanja Ellingsen & Nils Petter Gleditsch undertook one of the recent studies investigating the relationship between regime type and conflict.[47] They used two indicators as their independent measures of regime type. The first is Jaggers & Gurr's Polity III dataset, a strictly institutional indicator of democracy, which "is derived from subjective codings of the competitiveness of political participation, the openness and competitiveness of executive recruitment, and the level of constraints on the chief executive. Other aspects of plural democracy, such as the rule of law, systems of checks and balances, freedom of the press, and the like, are treated as means to, or manifestations of, these institutional structures."[48] To rectify the absence of these latter notions, they used the Freedom House measures of civil liberties and political rights as a second democracy indicator.[49]

When using the Polity III data, Ellingsen & Gleditsch's findings are as they anticipated, with conflict occurring most in semi-democracies, and less in autocracies and democracies. However, there is a slight divergence when using the Freedom House, rights-oriented indicators. In this case, an S-shaped pattern emerged; in other words, the most repressive countries were found to be almost as conflictual as countries with semi-repressive regimes (see Figure 1.2). This finding, which the researchers found "puzzling," points to a

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[47]The basis of most quantitative investigations exploring the role of regime type in conflict is a 1990 article by Edward Muller and Weede. In it, they argue that "the severe costs of rebellion in an extremely repressive political system inhibit resource mobilization by dissident groups, the availability of reasonably effective peaceful means of political action in a nonrepressive political system makes rebellion an undesirable strategy of opposition for most people, but rebellion is likely to be the preferred strategy of opposition for many dissident groups in the context of a semirepressive political system in which resource mobilization is possible and peaceful opposition typically is ineffective." Edward Muller and Erich Weede, "Cross-National Variation in Political Violence: A Rational Actor Approach," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 34, no. 4 (December 1990): 627. Muller and Weede look at the *repressiveness* of a society, while this paper is more interested in the *level of democracy*, therefore, the work of these scholars will not be explicitly considered here.

[48]Jaggers and Gurr, "Tracking Democracy's Third Wave," 471.

[49]See, Freedom House, *Freedom in the World* (New York: Freedom House Press, annual).

number of important problems with this research.

First, it demonstrates that there is indeed a difference between 'level of democracy' (Polity III data) and 'repressiveness' (Freedom House data), though researchers continue to use them interchangeably. Second, it once again illustrates the problems raised by imprecise definitions. It is unclear how the quantitative data sets fit in to the terminology employed by the qualitative theories. Does Polity III's highest democracy score correspond to a basic level of democracy, or something more consolidated? If it is the latter, than where does something like electoral democracy fit on their scale? Where do democratic regimes in the process of consolidation appear in their model? Clearly, this research is important to undertake and presents some interesting insights regarding the relation between democracy and conflict, on a larger scale. However, these questions — just some of the many raised by this work — demonstrate the necessity of further developing this theory before it can be of use in qualitative analysis.

In general, Ellingsen & Gleditsch's work provides some interesting conclusions:

> [r]egardless of whether the relationship is A-shaped [inverted U] or S-shaped, our findings lead us to expect that a continued spread of democracy initially might lead to more civil wars as some of the most repressive countries democratise, while eventually the tide of democratisation should turn towards less armed conflict. Autocratic regimes do not become fully democratic overnight. The transition from non-democracy to democratic rule is a long, complicated, and often turbulent process.[50]

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[50]Tanja Ellingsen and Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Democracy and Armed Conflict in the Third World," in *Causes of Conflict in the Third World*, ed. Ketil Volden and Dan Smith (Oslo: Prio & North/South Coalition, 1997), 79.

Figure 1.1: Inverted U-curve Hypothesis

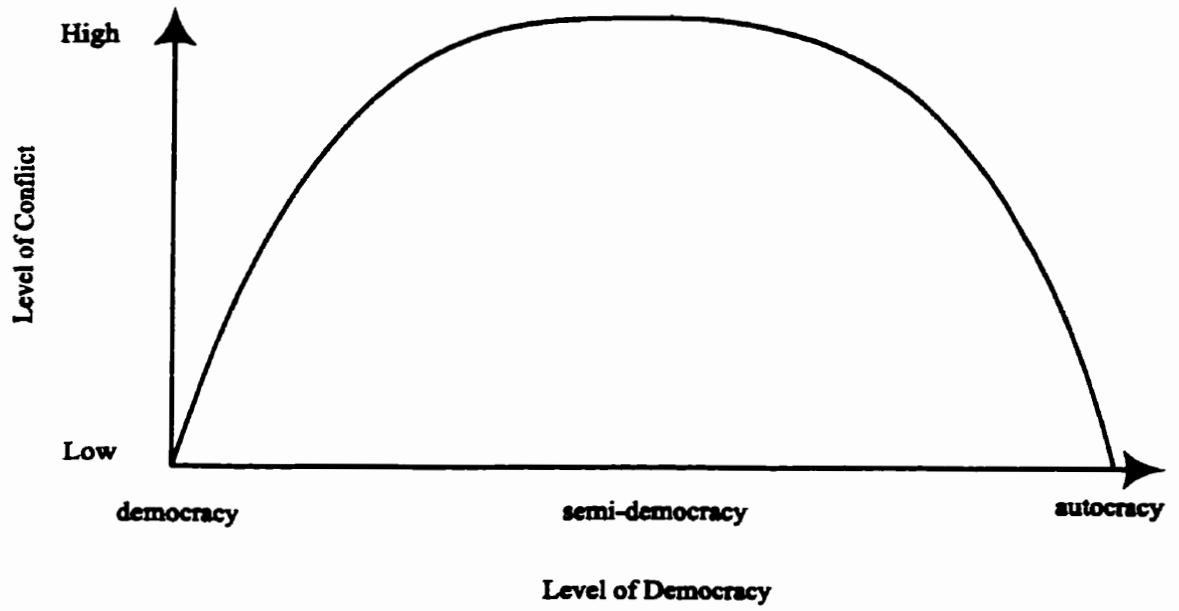
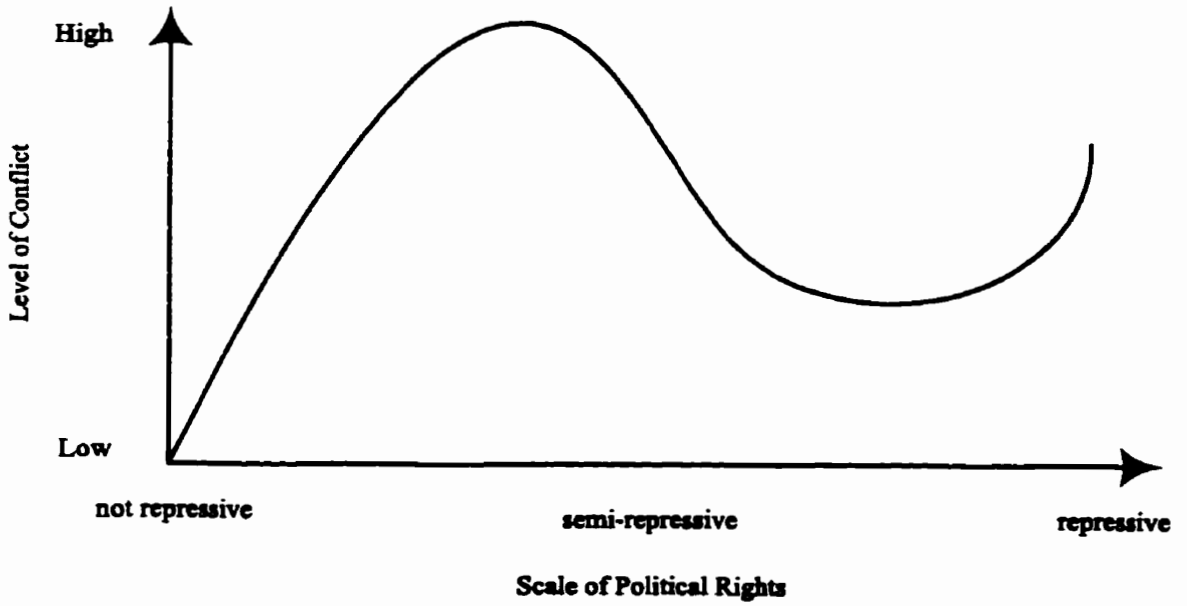


Figure 1.2: S-curve Hypothesis



Source: Adapted from Tanja Ellingsen and Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Democracy and Armed Conflict in the Third World," in *Causes of Conflict in the Third World*, ed. Ketil Volden and Dan Smith (Oslo: PRIO & North/South Coalition, 1997).
This figure is a generalization based upon Ellingsen & Gleditsch's diagrams.

One other quantitative study — undertaken by Wenche Hauge & Tanja Ellingsen — is relevant to this research. They set out to determine whether it is the environmental, political or economic independent variables that have the highest explanatory ability when it comes to the dependent variable of domestic armed conflict. Their environmental variables, following Homer-Dixon, are broken into supply-induced, demand-induced and structural scarcity.[51] Polity III data is used to determine the type of political regime, and GNP per capita determines the level of economic development.[52]

Deforestation, high land-degradation, and low freshwater availability per capita were all found to have a positive relationship with conflict, particularly low-level conflict. This, as they point out, is a confirmation of Homer-Dixon's expectations that environmental scarcity leads principally to violence that is diffuse and subnational. They also find, as they expected, that semi-democracies are the most likely to experience conflict, and democracies the least likely.[53]

Hauge & Ellingsen conclude that "environmental degradation does stimulate the incidence of conflict, but less so than political or economic variables and the severity of such conflicts is better accounted for by military spending."[54] Their finding of a link between environmental degradation and conflict is an important one, though their additive rather than interactive approach[55] succeeds in minimalizing that connection in favour of other factors. As

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[51]These differ somewhat from Midlarsky's. They are: annual change in forest cover; land degradation; freshwater availability per capita; population density; and income inequality. Hauge and Ellingsen, "Beyond Environmental Scarcity," 306-8.

[52]Ibid., 308.

[53]Ibid., 310-12.

[54]Gleditsch, "Armed Conflict and the Environment," 386-87.

[55]The distinction between additive and interactive models will be explored in Chapter Two.

Gleditsch points out, however, their results also indicate that "environmental disruption generates serious violence only in semi-democracies (and decaying autocracies), particularly those that are also poverty-stricken."[56] This conclusion is once again limited by unclear descriptions of what constitutes a democracy and additive undertones, which seem to assume that regime type is 'more important' than environmental scarcity. It is nonetheless interesting in that it actually seeks to integrate the environment, conflict and regime type literatures.

Having studied the conclusions arrived at by conflict theorists — that democracies and autocracies experience less conflict and 'semi democracies' more conflict — it is possible to ask whether democracy theorists also arrive at the same results. In many instances, the answer is no. For example, in contrast to the inverted U-curve model, Huntington argues that:

> In the modern world democratic systems tend to be less subject to civil violence than are non-democratic systems. Democratic governments use far less violence against their citizens than do authoritarian ones. Democracies also provide accepted channels for the expression of dissent and opposition within the system. Both government and opposition thus have fewer incentives to use violence against each other. Democracy also contributes to stability by providing regular opportunities for changing political leaders and changing public policies...Revolution, as Che Guevara once said, cannot succeed against a government that 'has come into power through some form of popular vote, fraudulent or not, and maintains at least the appearance of constitutional legality'.[57]

This bears some similarities to the inverted-U curve model in that it also maintains that democracies are more pacific. However, it significantly diverges from the findings of the conflict theorists by arguing that nondemocratic regimes are conflict prone. Larry Diamond adds nuance to the analysis, by focusing in on the transformations that democratic regimes

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[56]Gleditsch, "Environmental Conflict and the Democratic Peace," 100.
[57]Huntington, *Third Wave*, 28.

themselves often experience. He points out that, paradoxically, the very "*process* of deepening democracy...typically involves heightened conflict."[58] This recognizes that formal democracy is not the be all and end all, but often just the first step in the democratization process. Democracies are not automatically peaceful, but can actually find themselves destabilized by the change and reform involved in democratic deepening.

Civil Conflict — Grievance and Opportunity

Before embarking on the task of linking environmental scarcity, regime type and conflict, it is necessary to explore the civil conflict literature. It is one thing to say that environmental scarcity increases conflict or that democracies decrease it, yet this does not fully explain *how* they affect conflict. Muller & Weede, the 'pioneers' of the inverted U-curve, maintain that their theory supports the rational action hypothesis. They argue that it is the opportunity structure presented by the level of repression of the regime that determines the likelihood of rebellion against that regime.[59] In contrast, Ellingsen & Gleditsch propose such causes of conflict as ethnic fragmentation, the degradation of the environment, the unstable nature of new political regimes, and finally, that "the transition to democracy may give rise to widespread hopes for better days ahead, but not necessarily lead to economic growth in the short run. A gap may develop between what people expect to get, and what they actually receive — thus creating relative deprivation."[60]

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[58]Larry Diamond, "Degrees, Illusions, and Directions for Consolidation," in *Beyond Sovereignty: Collectively Defending Democracy in the Americas*, ed. Tom Farer (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 54.

[59]Muller and Weede, "Cross-National Variation in Political Violence."

[60]Ellingsen and Gleditsch, "Democracy and Armed Conflict in the Third World," 72.

To understand these differing explanations for the basis of civil strife, it is necessary to delve more closely into the ongoing debate that continues to divide the civil violence discourse: the grievance theorists vs. the political opportunity theorists. It will then be possible to look at recent compromise initiatives, and the role that these theories have in expanding the environmental conflict literature.

Grievances

Essentially, "[i]n their strict versions, the discontent-oriented theories maintain that inequality is the basis of all rebellion and that if economic inequality is high, then violent political conflict will occur."[61] Economic inequality is not the only source of grievances, however. The most common of the grievance theories is relative deprivation, which assumes that frustration underlies acts of aggression and violence. It posits "a standard of comparison by which people evaluate their circumstances, along with an aggressive response when people see the crucial standard violated."[62] More specifically, Ted Gurr, one of the key proponents of this school of thought, defines relative deprivation as "actors' perception of discrepancy between their value expectations [what they believe they would be justified in attaining] and their value capabilities [what they believe they will be capable of attaining]."[63]

Juha Auvinen argues that possible indicators of relative deprivation include economic performance, ethnic dominance and competition, level of economic development,

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[61]Kurt Schock, "A Conjunctural Model of Political Conflict: The Impact of Political Opportunities on the Relationship Between Economic Inequality and Violent Political Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 40, no. 1 (March 1996): 99.

[62]James Rule, *Theories of Civil Violence* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 201.

[63]Ted Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 24.

urbanization, and type of political regime.[64] The last element, of most relevance to this paper, influences relative deprivation in terms of regime legitimacy — to what extent is the regime accepted by the people. This legitimacy is both materially and politically defined. Material deprivation, and a corresponding loss of legitimacy, occurs if a government cannot deliver material goods.[65] Political deprivation arises "if the regime prevents a meaningful participation in the making of political decisions, whether this participation is prevented by law or through repression. In effect, a constant and frequent use of repression indicates lack of legitimacy and political capacity."[66]

According to relative deprivation theory, grievances arise when a gap develops between what people expect to receive, and what they see themselves as actually being able to attain. In new democracies, people's expectations dramatically increase. If these expectations are unmet by increases in attainment, as can happen in democratizing polities, which are often institutionally unable or unwilling to provide for the needs of their people, a gap may develop between people's expectations and their capabilities. This can lead to relative deprivation and an increased potential for conflict. In contrast, as democratic deepening occurs — moving the democracy away from its strict, minimalist parameters — the government is more able to respond to increased expectations, thus raising levels of attainment, and decreasing the potential for conflict.

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[64]Juha Auvinen, "Political Conflict in Less Developed Countries," *Journal of Peace Research* 34, no. 2 (May 1997): 178-81.

[65]Ibid., 180.

[66]Ibid.

Political Opportunity

Sidney Tarrow, in his book *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics*, explains the arguments of political opportunity theorists. He maintains that, while 'early scholars' believed that collective action was based on factors such as deprivation, in truth these sorts of preconditions tend to remain essentially constant. "What varies widely from time to time, and from place to place, are political opportunities, and social movements are more closely related to the incentives they provide for collective action than to underlying social or economic structures."[67] The existence of grievances is acknowledged, but relegated to the position of underlying stressor. This attitude is summarized in Tarrow's assertion that "[p]olitical opportunities cannot make the poor conscious of grievances of which they were formerly unaware, but it can help them to detect where and how the system is most vulnerable, enabling them to overcome their habitual disunity and lack of information."[68]

Tarrow outlines four principal facets of opportunity structure that are highlighted by theorists: "the stability or instability of political alignments; the presence or absence of allies and support groups; and divisions within the elite or its tolerance or intolerance of protest;...[and] the extent to which formal political institutions are open or closed to participation by groups on the margins of the polity, as conditioned by the presence or absence of repression. "[69] He argues that it is this last variable that is the most important, and that it is "partially opened access that encourages protest."[70] The advent of formal democracy

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[67]Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 81.

[68]Sidney Tarrow, *Struggle, Politics and Reform*, Occasional Paper No. 21 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Center for International Studies, Cornell University, 1991), 36.

[69]Ibid., 34.

[70]Tarrow, *Power in Movement*, 86.

should open up participation to marginal groups, thus reducing their need to resort to violence. However, such a political system often remains principally elite-dominated. This can create a situation of 'partially opened access'. In this case, levels of conflict are increased, rather than decreased. A less minimalist level of democracy might have to be reached before the opportunity structure becomes truly closed to violence and open for peaceful protest.

While not advocating an exclusive reliance on political opportunity structure to understand conflict, Kurt Schock nonetheless also illustrates its importance in determining levels of violence. In his analysis, he examines two components of political opportunity structure — regime repressiveness and state strength — the latter factor subdivided into political institutionalization and military sovereignty. He concludes by suggesting that "when aggrieved dissidents confront semirepressive political structures or weak states, it is more likely that discontent and grievances produced by economic inequality will be translated into political violence."[71] This assessment indicates some of the factors (for example, whether it is a weak state) that will influence the impact of various regimes on conflict.

Bridging the Divide

While there continues to be deep divisions between these two schools of thought, recent efforts have attempted to bridge the divide. In *Minorities at Risk*, Gurr investigates the roots of ethnopolitical rebellion. He maintains that "ethnopolitical activism is motivated by people's deep-seated grievances about their collective status in combination with the situationally determined pursuit of political interests, as articulated by group leaders and

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[71]Schock, "A Conjunctural Model," 124.

political entrepreneurs."[72] In this way, he explicitly incorporates both relative deprivation and political opportunity structure[73] to create a stronger, more nuanced, theory.

A similar approach has been taken in some of the environmental conflict literature as well. As was noted in the earlier description of his work, Homer-Dixon explicitly looks at both grievance and opportunity structure in his model. He argues that

> [c]ivil strife is a function of both the level of grievance motivating challenger groups and the opportunities available to these groups to act on their grievances. The likelihood of civil conflict is greatest when multiple pressures at different levels of society interact to increase grievance and opportunity simultaneously. Our third hypothesis [of the Project on Environmental Change and Acute Conflict] says that environmental scarcity will change both variables, by contributing to economic crisis and by weakening institutions such as the state.[74]

Finally, Schock has also attempted to find common ground. Instead of striving to prove that one perspective is more accurate than the other, Schock demonstrates the manner in which the theories relate to each other, and to conflict. He argues that, while economic discontent — his measure of grievances — is closely related to the potential for violent challenge, "political structures and processes are more proximate to the occurrence of violent political conflict and are also determinants of political violence."[75] From this he proposes a 'conjunctural model' of political conflict. This model suggests that political opportunity

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[72]Ted Gurr, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflict* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993), 123.

[73]Gurr uses the term 'group mobilization' rather than 'political opportunity structure'. In this instance, however, they can be used interchangeably, given that he defines group mobilization as a theory emphasizing "leaders' calculated mobilization of group resources in response to changing political opportunities." Ibid., 124.

[74]Homer-Dixon, "Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases," *International Security* 19, no. 1 (summer 1994): 25-26. Homer-Dixon goes on to discuss a number of other factors that also influence grievance and opportunity.

[75]Schock, "A Conjunctural Model," 99.

structures have a *moderating* effect on the relationship between economic inequality and political conflict.[76] He concludes that "[g]enerally, economic inequality tends to promote violent political conflict; however, the extent to which it promotes violence is enhanced or constrained by the political opportunity structure."[77]

Schock's conclusion provides some insight into the possible relationship among grievance, opportunity structure, and conflict. Whether his theory of a moderating influence is borne out in further research or not, his work adds another voice to the literature striving to explain civil strife with reference to both grievance and opportunity structure. Once it has been acknowledged that both of these factors are important for conflict, the possible impact of regime type — specifically formal democracies undergoing further democratization — on conflict becomes clearer. If some regimes have the potential to both increase grievances and provide an opportunity structure conducive to violence and non-conducive to peaceful protest, then it is unsurprising that they face a preponderance of strife. The opposite is also true — grievances and opportunity structure can be changed positively by regime type. Similarly, Homer-Dixon's work demonstrates the manner in which environmental scarcity can influence these two factors. This is another commonality between the regime type-conflict and environment-conflict schools of thought, which lends credence to this thesis' argument that these two research areas must be integrated.

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[76]Schock explicitly distinguishes 'moderation' from 'mediation'. "In a moderated relationship, the direct relationship between A and C differs for different levels of B. In a mediated relationship, A influences C indirectly through its influence on B." Ibid., 100.

[77]Ibid., 124.

Regime Type, the Environment and Conflict — Hypothesis and Conclusion

Schock's conclusion also has a significant implication that is not directly related to his central thesis, but has relevance for the main argument of this study. His model provides important clues for the integration of a regime variable into environmental conflict scholarship. As he speaks of the moderating effect of political opportunity structure on the links between economic inequality and conflict, it is also possible to speak of the moderating[78] effect of regime type on the links between environmental scarcity and violence. It could be said that 'generally, environmental scarcity tends to promote violent political conflict (through the processes described in the Homer-Dixon model); however, the extent to which it promotes conflict is enhanced or constrained by regime type' (see Figure 1.3).

Looking at the relationship in this manner is enlightening in a number of ways. Clearly environmental scarcity and regime type do not affect conflict in exactly the same way, therefore, it would be unhelpful to have a model that assumes their complete parity. As has been argued, in the conflicts explored by much of the environmental scholarship, environmental factors tend to be indirect causes of conflict. This does not mean that they are unimportant, simply that they are not usually proximate. Proximity "is a function of the number of intervening causal steps or variables between the cause and its effect; the larger the number of intervening variables, the lower the causal proximity. The characteristics of proximity and causal strength are sometimes conflated, since a distant cause is often assumed

[78]Moderating is used here in the sense of 'influencing' not 'lowering'. Thus, the relationship can be made stronger or weaker by the moderating variable.

to be weak. But intervening variables do not necessarily weaken the link between a cause and its effect."[79]

In this case, the intervening variable — the one more proximate to conflict — is regime type. Schock makes a similar argument when comparing economic and political sources of discontent. He argues that, "political structures and processes are more proximate to the occurrence of violent political conflict and are also determinants of political violence... [They] provide the rationale, as well as the opportunities, for dissidents to oppose the state or its policies."[80] The notion of proximity makes it possible to acknowledge the importance of regime type without relegating environmental scarcity to the status of an uninteresting, constant, background variable, as many researchers tend to do.

This interaction — where both factors are important, but one more proximate to the occurrence of conflict — is best described through the moderating relationship proposed. The linkages between scarcity and conflict remain independently significant, only the level and type of conflict is influenced by regime type. Thus, it is theorized that some regimes should influence the relationship between environmental scarcity and conflict in a positive fashion (enhancing it), while others should influence the relationship in a negative fashion (constraining it).

The inverted-U curve hypothesis and democracy theory advance somewhat divergent answers to the question of *how* regime type will moderate the environment-conflict

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[79]Thomas Homer-Dixon, *Strategies for Studying Causation in Complex Ecological-Political Systems*, Occasional Paper of the Project on Environment, Population, and Security (Washington, D.C.: American Association for the Advancement of Science and the University of Toronto, 1995), 4.

[80]Schock, 99. Schock is comparing political opportunity structure to economic sources of discontent when he calls the former 'more proximate', however, given the argument regarding the indirect consequences of environmental scarcity, the quote applies equally well in this instance.

relationship. Nonetheless, some preliminary hypotheses can be advanced. Democracies should constrain the relationship between scarcity and conflict — and so reduce the incidence of violence — because they tend to have legitimacy, be able to respond to grievances, and encourage peaceful protest rather than violence. At the same time, if they are indeed better for the environment, then they should decrease conflict based, even indirectly, on environmental scarcity. The effect of democratic deepening is more uncertain. It seems to have the potential to both increase and decrease conflict. The question of authoritarian regimes is the most contested: are they more peaceful because they are more repressive, or more prone to conflict for the very same reason? Only through further analysis will it be possible to reach a clearer understanding of these matters (see Figure 1.4).

As the third wave of the environmental security discourse considers the question of the third wave of democratization, unexplored avenues of research are brought to light. One of these pertains to the inclusion of a political variable of 'regime type' into the analysis. This variable will serve to combine two areas of research that have remained unnaturally separate, allowing for a more nuanced analysis. The hypothesis that regime type enhances or constrains the relationship between environmental scarcity and violent conflict provides an entry into this new discourse, and a manner in which to investigate the dynamic interaction of these factors.

Figure 1.3: Central Hypothesis

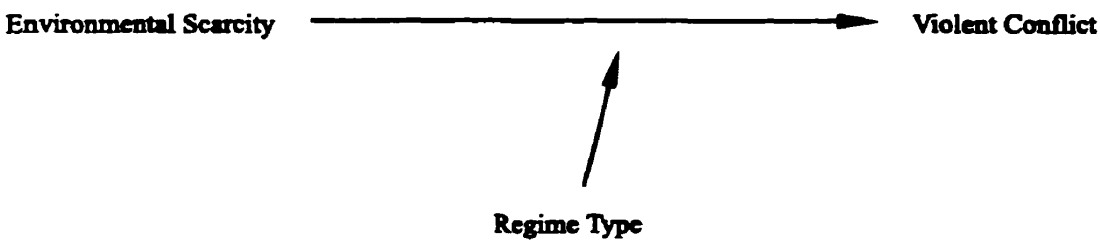
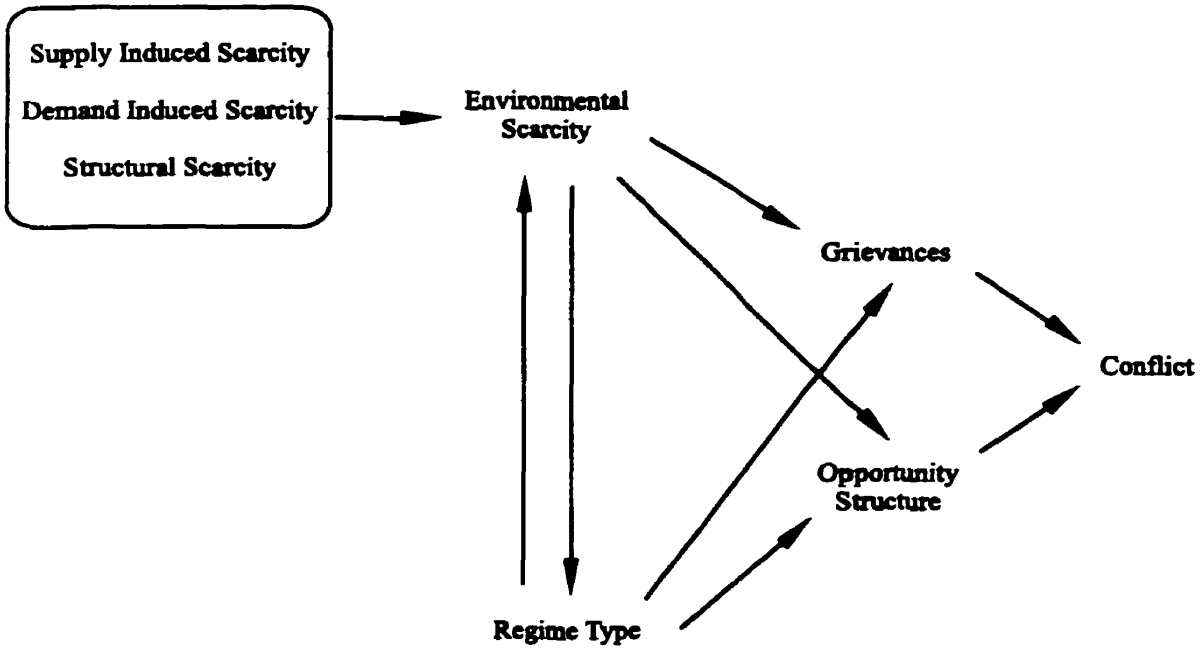


Figure 1.4: Central Hypothesis Expanded



CHAPTER TWO:
METHODOLOGY

The hypothesis advanced in the previous chapter will be investigated through a case study analysis of the Philippines, employing process tracing. This approach was deemed most appropriate for the research at hand based upon a comparison of the methodologies available to political scientists. This chapter outlines that comparison and the manner in which different approaches were integrated to best investigate the topic. It begins with an overview of quantitative and case study research methods. As the former tends to be static and additive in nature, it is argued that a case study is more conducive to an analysis of the fluid processes of democratization. Similarly, the rationale for adopting a process tracing approach instead of controlled case comparison is explored; process tracing is more appropriate for the complex ecological-political systems under study. Finally, the reasons for choosing to study the Philippines are outlined.

Quasi-Experimental / Quantitative Analysis

Variously called correlational analysis (Homer-Dixon), quasi-experimental or statistical studies (George and McKeown), and quantitative analysis,[1] this methodology involves the statistical analysis of a large number of cases. It is the one most often aspired to by researchers seeking an objective and scientific understanding of sociopolitical systems.

Inherent in the quasi-experimental mode of analysis is an assumption that variables and social systems can be quantified and operationalized. It is, however, acknowledged that the

[1]There is likely some variance among the definitions of these terms. Nonetheless, they will be used interchangeably here to exemplify those approaches that rely on large-N statistical analyses.

researcher "lacks the full control over the scheduling of experimental stimuli (the *when* and *to whom* of exposure and the ability to randomize exposures) which makes a true experiment possible."[2] The social world simply cannot be as stringently controlled as the scientific world, upon whose analysis this method is based. Nonetheless, the quasi-experimental analysis continues to attract much support from researchers investigating links between regime type and the environment, regime type and conflict, and the environment and conflict. For example, Carsten Rønnfeldt argues that, "[s]tatistical analysis should be undertaken to indicate the significance of correlation between environmental factors and conflict. This may serve to encourage sceptics to reconsider their firm stand. Equally, enthusiasts over-emphasizing the importance of a linkage may moderate their view on such claims."[3]

Despite its support within the field, however, there are a number of problems with quantitative case study analysis, particularly for the study of ecological-political systems. The most important of these was briefly touched upon in the previous chapter: the fact that quantitative models tend to subconsciously search for an additive solution. Their tendency to ask which factor is *most important* in a given process automatically precludes an interactive answer. However, "[i]nteractivity is a common feature of environmental-social systems...it is meaningless to claim that a given cause in an interactive system is stronger — or should be given more weight in the analysis — than another."[4]

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[2]Donald Campbell and Julian Stanley, *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1963), 34.

[3]Carsten Rønnfeldt, "Linking Research on the Environment, Poverty and Conflict," in *Research on Environment, Poverty and Conflict*, ed. Dan Smith and Willy Østreng, 1997, full-text electronic version, www.prio.no/Frmiddle.htm, 12.

[4]Thomas Homer-Dixon, *Strategies for Studying Causation in Complex Ecological-Political Systems*, Occasional Paper of the Project on Environment, Population, and Security (Washington, D.C.: American Association for the Advancement of Science and the University of Toronto, 1995), 5.

Rønnfeldt acknowledges this point, but argues that

> it may not be very useful as a basis for formulating recommendations for policy communities concerned with conflict prevention. As resources for such activities generally are difficult to mobilize, policy-makers are likely to be interested in knowing in which areas their resources are most efficiently invested. If it turns out, for example, that different types of environmental factors – such as land erosion as compared to water scarcity – correlate more often with conflict; or that weak governmental institutions correlate more often with conflict than environmental scarcity, this would have different implications for cost-effective use of international assistance.[5]

This is a valid response, and a good justification for quantitative studies. It does not, however, mitigate the importance of a case study approach in elaborating upon the interactions preliminarily arrived at through correlational analysis, or reassessing additive models in a more interactive fashion.[6]

A final problem with depending on quantitative models lies in the oversimplifications necessary to make any series of variables adequately parsimonious. Jaggers & Gurr's Polity III data commonly used by regime type and conflict theorists is a case in point. Putting aside any criticisms regarding the limited, highly institutional, understanding of democracy used in this data set, interpretations of the coding can itself lead to unforseen discrepancies. Arguably, this is what has occurred when theorists have used Jaggers & Gurr's work to look at semi-democracies.

In the *Journal of Peace Research* article explaining their work, the authors specifically consider the case of 'incoherent polities'.[7] The categorization of incoherent polity could be

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[5]Rønnfeldt, "Linking Research," 12-13.

[6]As well, as will be seen, case studies need not only build off of quantitative work, but can themselves be important for theory building.

[7]"By definition, incoherent polities are unconsolidated polities. Incoherent polities denote those political systems which are neither fully autocratic nor democratic in institutional structure. Incoherent democracies denote those political systems with primarily democratic elements that also place substantial

of use to researchers seeking to quantitatively look at semi-democracies, if used consistently. Unfortunately, this is rarely the case. Operationally, Jaggers & Gurr define incoherent autocracies as those with a score [8] of zero to negative six, and incoherent democracies as having a score of one to six. However, in their recent quantitative analysis, Hauge & Ellingsen define their 'semi-democracy' variable as representing those polities with scores of negative five to five.[9] While only a slight deviation from Jaggers & Gurr's operationalization, this serves to demonstrate some of the potential hazards of the quasi-experimental approach. Given that Hauge & Ellingsen, like many of their colleagues, are interested in the linkages between semi-democracies and conflict, and believe they can discover these linkages through the more 'exact' medium of quantitative research, greater precision in defining their terms is essential.[10]

When studying ecological-political systems, there are deficiencies in the quantitative approach. Nonetheless, used in conjunction with other methods — such as case study analysis

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limits on participation, competition, and/or civil liberties. By contrast, incoherent autocracies denote those political systems with primarily autocratic structures that also allow some opportunity for political participation and competition and/or provide for the protection of civil rights." Keith Jaggers and Ted Gurr, "Tracking Democracy's Third Wave with the Polity III Data," *Journal of Peace Research* 32, no. 4 (November 1995): 478.

[8]Jaggers and Gurr generated separate democracy and autocracy scores based on their data. However, in order to make their work consistent with many of the other regime type data sets, they found it useful to also generate "a single summary measure of the institutional characteristics of political regimes by subtracting a state's autocracy score from its democracy score (i.e. DEMOC-AUTOC)." Ibid., 473.

[9]Wenche Hauge and Tanja Ellingsen, "Beyond Environmental Scarcity: Causal Pathways to Conflict," *Journal of Peace Research* 35, no. 3 (May 1998): 308.

[10]Ellingsen & Gleditsch do not explicitly define semi-democracy at all; but, as they group their democracy scale into five levels of democracy, they implicitly use the same -5 to 5 coding system for semi-democracies. In their defence, however, it must be noted that many of these quantitative results are displayed in graph form, thus mitigating some of the problems arising from assigning countries to stringent categories based on their coding. See, Tanja Ellingsen and Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Democracy and Armed Conflict in the Third World," in *Causes of Conflict in the Third World*, ed. Ketil Volden and Dan Smith (Oslo: PRIO & North/South Coalition, 1997).

— quantitative methods can usefully present a generalized depiction of the universe of possible cases, facilitating the choice of an appropriate case for analysis.

Case Study Analysis

Critiques of the case study approach have been prevalent, especially by researchers fond of quasi-experimental analysis. These arguments include accusations of lack of rigour and bias, as well as claims that it is next to impossible to generalize from a single case. Many of these criticisms can, however, be equally applied to quantitative work.[11] In fact, "the controlled comparison method [one type of case study approach] has certain distinct advantages over the statistical method...intensive analysis of a few cases may be more rewarding than a more superficial statistical analysis of many cases. And, in general, the problems of reliability and validity may be smaller for the investigator working with the comparable-cases approach."[12] Furthermore, rather than applying to all types of case studies, most of the criticisms commonly made have bearing only on what Harry Eckstein terms 'configurative-idiographic' studies.

The *configurative-idiographic* study is essentially the idiosyncratic interpretation of a body of observations in order to distinguish a possible pattern. As any number of other patterns could be equally plausible, due to differing interpretations, this approach is hardly conducive to theory building.[13] Yet, this is not the only type of analysis open to researchers.

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[11]Robert Yin, *Case Study Research* (Newbury Park, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1989), 21.

[12]Alexander George, "Case Studies and Theory Development: The Method of Structured, Focused Comparison," in *Diplomacy: New Approaches in History, Theory, and Policy*, ed. Paul Gordon Lauren (New York: The Free Press, 1979), 50.

[13]Harry Eckstein, "Case Study and Theory in Political Science," in *Handbook of Political Science*, vol. 7, ed. Fred Greenstein and Nelson Polsby (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1975), 97-99. It has been

Disciplined-configurative studies do not rely solely on the interpretation of observations. The researcher "describes and analyzes the case in terms of theoretically relevant general variables,"[14] rather than solely in terms of historical observations, thus lessening the chance of idiosyncratic conclusions. Case interpretations are based on theories, which were themselves either derived through the comparative (quasi-experimental) approach or furnished by previous case studies.[15]

Heuristic case studies are similar to discipline-configurative ones, anticipating an even more important role for the case study. While most conceptions of disciplined-configurative studies are that they build off of already existing 'general laws', at times passively contributing to their enrichment, heuristic case studies are deliberately involved in theory building. In these studies, the case "is regarded as an opportunity to learn more about the complexity of the problem studied, to develop further the existing explanatory framework, and to refine and elaborate the initially available theory employed by the investigator in order to provide an explanation of the particular case examined."[16] Cases are often the basis of the preliminary theories, then, through a 'building-block' technique, additional cases are studied to further refine the theory.[17] This approach is by far the richest and most useful method of case study analysis. It is also particularly relevant to the research at hand. In the previous chapter, a new theory was synthesized from existing explanatory frameworks The explanations provided by a heuristic case study are the best way to further refine that theory.

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pointed out that most researchers doing this type of work do not aspire to build theory in the first place. Ibid.

[14]George, "Case Studies and Theory Development," 51.

[15]Eckstein, "Case Study and Theory in Political Science," 99-104.

[16]George, "Case Studies and Theory Development," 52.

[17]Eckstein, "Case Study and Theory in Political Science," 104.

A final relevant type of case study is the *plausibility probe.*[18] "Plausibility here means something more than a belief in potential validity plain and simple, for hypotheses are unlikely ever to be formulated unless considered potentially valid; it also means something less than actual validity, for which rigorous testing is required."[19] The probe can be undertaken through a modest comparative (quasi-experimental) study, or through one or more case studies.[20] Useful at preliminary stages of research, a plausibility probe is relevant here due to the relative newness of the investigation at hand, and the limits imposed by case study analysis. Such an approach allows the researcher to begin refining the theory, without undertaking the rigourous testing that would be inappropriate at this tentative stage of research.

Eckstein's exhaustive work exploring the different types of case studies listed above serves to directly contradict quasi-experimentalists' claims that case studies are unhelpful for theory building and hypothesis testing. However, the disagreement between quantitative and case study analyses is not the only point of contention within the field; equally strong arguments have divided theorists believing in the importance of controlled case comparisons and those who support a process tracing case study approach.

Controlled Case Comparison

For a *controlled case comparison*, the researcher "selects a number of cases for analysis, taking care that the cases differ from one another on some dimensions judged significant by the researcher. The researcher can then compare outcomes in the various cases

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[18]Ibid., 113-23.
[19]Ibid., 108.
[20]Ibid., 108-112.

and attempt to relate the occurrence of differing outcomes to the presence of differing initial conditions, or relate common outcomes to the presence of common initial conditions."[21] For environment-conflict research, this involves selecting cases that vary on the independent variable of environmental scarcity (comparing cases where scarcity is severe with those where it is not), controlling for all other variables, and ascertaining whether there is a concomitant variance in levels of violence. Conversely, levels of environmental scarcity can be kept constant, and cases with different values of the dependent variable — conflict — compared.[22]

Process Tracing

For *process tracing*, "in violation of the strict canons of conventional political science, cases are selected explicitly on both the independent and dependent variables. The aim is to determine if the independent and dependent variables are causally linked and, if they are, to induce from a close study of many such cases the common patterns of causality and the key intermediate variables that characterize these links."[23] Homer-Dixon argues that this methodology is more appropriate than either quantitative or controlled-case comparisons during the early stages of a research program.

> Initially, at least, the researcher can often use research resources to best advantage by examining cases that appear, *prima facie*, to demonstrate the causal relations hypothesized...This narrow focus will allow the researcher to efficiently identify conceptual errors and basic empirical weaknesses in the

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[21]Alexander George and Timothy McKeown, "Case Studies and Theories of Organizational Decision Making," in *Advances in Information Processing in Organizations*, vol. 2, *Research on Public Organizations*, ed. Robert Coulam and Richard Smith (Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, 1985), 25.

[22]Thomas Homer-Dixon and Jessica Blitt, "Introduction: A Theoretical Overview," in *Ecoviolence: Links Among Environment, Population, and Security*," ed. Thomas Homer-Dixon and Jessica Blitt (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1998), 12.

[23]Homer-Dixon, "Studying Causation," 7.

> early hypotheses. Later, as the hypothesis become more refined and as understanding of scope conditions becomes more textured, the hypotheses can be subjected to much more rigorous analysis.[24]

This ties in with Eckstein's notion of a 'plausibility probe' — a case study conducted in the very early stages of research, which is less structured than traditional case study research, but serves to set the stage for later, more stringent, testing.

Homer-Dixon further justifies the use of process tracing for environment and conflict research based on the complexity of the ecological-political systems under study— "complex systems are often characterized by large and unanticipated responses to small changes in variables not initially recognized as important. Under such circumstances, it is almost impossible to conduct truly controlled comparisons of cases — that is, to select cases that are the same on all except the variable of interest."[25] By not attempting to artificially control all but a few variables, process tracing is a broader-based and less sterile method of case study analysis, though one involving a greater data requirement. This is due to the fact that "[d]ocumenting the process by which inputs are converted to outputs requires much more evidence than does simply noting the inputs and outputs and treating what lies between them as a black box."[26] Given the problems inherent in locking away all the variables affecting ecological-political systems into a 'black box', process tracing presents some clear advantages.

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[24]Ibid.

[25]Homer-Dixon and Blitt, "Introduction," 12-13. Gleditsch disagrees that the ecological-political systems under study are particularly complex, arguing that "any social system is as complex as the theory developed to study it." He does, however, admit that it is possible to justify methodological limitation at early stages of a project, as long as the research program eventually moves past them. Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Armed Conflict and the Environment: A Critique of the Literature," *Journal of Peace Research* 35, no. 3 (1998): 392. This seems to support the use of a plausibility probe for the initial stages of research.

[26]George and McKeown, "Case Studies," 41.

Nonetheless, this method of research continues to be criticized by scholars advocating a controlled case comparison approach for the study of the environment and conflict.[27] It is argued that, since most cases chosen to be analyzed tend to exhibit both environmental scarcity and violent conflict, the studies are biased in favour of finding that which the researchers are looking for. Instead, "[c]omparative studies where conflict did and did not break out in the face of similar environmental scarcities may provide a more complete understanding of what role the environmental variable plays."[28]

In many ways, this is a valid criticism, and one that Homer-Dixon himself now acknowledges to be pertinent — given the current stage of the research.[29] However, the essential role that process tracing has played, to date, in furthering understanding of the complex environment-conflict linkages must not be overlooked. While it is true that the field of environmental conflict is overdue for a comparative case study, it is not the aim of this thesis to undertake such an analysis. Rather, it proposes the explicit inclusion of a new variable — the moderating variable of regime type — into the environment-security discourse. At this point in the research it would be counterproductive to use controlled case comparison. Such an approach would involve either varying on the level of environmental scarcity or conflict, or on regime type, while holding the other variables constant. Yet, given the nascent stage at which analyses of the complex relations among the three key variables exists, there

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[27]See, for example, Geoffrey Dabelko, "The Environment and Conflict in the Third World," in *Causes of Conflict in the Third World*, ed. Ketil Volden and Dan Smith (Oslo: PRIO & North/South Coalition, 1997), 59; Gleditsch, "Armed Conflict and the Environment," 391; and Marc Levy, "Time for a Third Wave of Environment and Security Scholarship?" in *Environmental Change and Security Project Report*, Issue 1 (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center, 1996), 45.

[28]Dabelko, "The Environment and Conflict in the Third World," 59.

[29] Thomas Homer-Dixon, *Environment, Scarcity, and Violence* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), 182.

would be no way of knowing *a priori* which intervening variables and scope conditions to control for. These elements can only be discovered through process tracing.

Instead of comparing a limited number of variables and attempting to hold all other components constant, to further theory building it is essential to initially employ a more heuristic approach which builds and forms theory during the investigative process. This latter approach is also more appropriate, given the comparative newness of the theory. This paper will undertake a heuristic plausibility probe employing process tracing. Furthermore, acknowledging the important role that quasi-experimental analysis has played, particularly in regime type and conflict research, quantitative data will be employed to narrow down the universe of countries potentially conducive to a case study. In this way, it is will be possible to focus on one case, and begin to disaggregate the complex interactions among regime type, environmental scarcity, and conflict.

Choice of Case Study

The core hypothesis of this paper — scarcity tends to promote conflict, but the extent to which it does is enhanced or constrained by regime type — could be tested in both a dynamic and a static sense. The latter approach would involve the investigation of the effect of one type of regime *versus* another. This would arguably be more appropriate for a later stage of theory building, conducive as it is to the more focused needs of controlled case comparison. In contrast, the more dynamic version of the hypothesis looks at the moderating relationship in the context of regime *change*. This is best approached by focusing on a country that is experiencing environmental scarcity and conflict, and is undergoing democratization.

In this way, it is possible to trace out whether the change in regime type has been paralleled with a change in the level of environmentally-induced conflict, and, if so, what connection the variables have with each other.

Quantitative indicators were employed at this point in the case selection process. Specifically, Jaggers & Gurr's Polity III data on regime type,[30] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) data on conflict,[31] and more subjective data on environmental scarcity[32] allowed the construction of a simple 2 x 2 matrix, which classified all polities labeled incoherent or 'polity transition'[33] in Asia and Latin America[34] in terms of the existence of

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[30]Polity Data Archive, Polity 3 (May 1996, ICPSR version), ftp://isere.colorado.edu/pub/datasets/polity3/politymay96.data. As has already been stated, there are a number of problems with the Polity III highly-institutional categorization. However, given that it is a frequently used data set and has a high degree of commonality with other democracy data sets (See Jaggers and Gurr, "Tracking Democracy's Third Wave"), it is useful at this preliminary stage of research.

[31]Peter Wallensteen and Margareta Sollenberg, "The End of International War? Armed Conflict 1989-95," Journal of Peace Research 33, no. 3 (1996): 353-370. For information on armed conflicts in 1985 - 1988: *SIPRI Yearbook*, annual, 1987, 1988, 1989 (Oxford: Oxford University Press).

[32]Classification based on: (1) Interpretation of GLASOD map of soil degradation from Global Assessment of Soil Degradation, *World Map on Status of Human-Induced Soil Degradation*, (Nairobi, Kenya/Wageningen, The Netherlands: United Nations Environment Program/ International Soil Reference Center, 1990); (2) Interpretation of 'proportion of land area subject to high human disturbance', 'disappearing forests', and 'natural [population] increase' indicators from Michael Kidron and Ronald Segal, *The State of the World Atlas* (London: Penguin Books, 1995); (3) For the Americas, an indicator looking at the proportion of farmland owned by a limited number of farms was also used. Dan Smith, *The State of War and Peace Atlas* (London: Penguin Books, 1997).

There are serious methodological problems in attempting to quantify environmental scarcity, due to a paucity of uncontroversial data. It is with numerous caveats that countries have provisionally been categorized according to presence or absence of environmental scarcity. See Peter Gizewski with Lars Bromley and Brian Smith, *Environment Scarcity and Violent Conflict: Data Sources*, Occasional Paper of the Project on Environment, Population, and Security (Washington, D.C.: American Association for the Advancement of Science and the University of Toronto, 1995) regarding the problems with many environmental data sources.

[33]Polity transition codes are assigned "for periods in which the institutions of new polities are planned, legally constituted and put into effect. This code is particularly likely to be used in the establishment of democratic or quasi-democratic polities, which are forged through procedures involving constitutional conventions and referenda." Jaggers and Gurr, "Tracking Democracy's Third Wave," ftn. 8, p.480. Polity transition regimes were chosen as they highlight those polities undergoing transition to democratic rule. Incoherent polities were chosen because this paper originally intended to focus on semi-democracies. As more research was conducted it became clear that the democratization stage after the advent of formal democracy would be more appropriate. Some would actually define that as semi-democracy, though this paper has not. Incoherent polities remained in the quantitative analysis because they provide an entry into the analysis of

environmental scarcity and conflict, between 1985 and 1994 (see Figure 2.1). The matrix presents some interesting results at first glance — for example, the preponderance of conflict in incoherent autocracies, as compared to the relative lack of conflict in incoherent democracies.

Given that the hypothesis will be studied in its more dynamic sense, it was necessary to narrow down the possible case studies to those polities facing environmental scarcity that have undergone a change in regime type. Polities that have transformed from an incoherent autocracy with conflict to an incoherent or coherent democracy with a diminished amount of conflict were considered to be of particular interest. While this might seem to predispose the research in favour of finding the interactions sought, at this early stage of research it remains the most appropriate manner in which to proceed. A number of countries thus stand out as being of particular interest: Thailand, Bangladesh, Haiti, Nicaragua, and the Philippines.[35]

Due to the constraints imposed by a study of this length, and the detailed requirements of process tracing, it was only possible to undertake a case study of the events in one of these countries. The existence of literature arguing for the links between environmental scarcity and conflict in the Philippines,[36] and the obvious change in regime and level of conflict that the

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regime change.

[34]Only countries in these two regions were considered due to the magnitude of the task of, even quantitatively, looking at all incoherent polities worldwide.

[35]While perhaps not readily apparent from the matrix — as it does not include coherent democracies — all of these countries are coded as incoherent democracies or coherent democracies for 1994 (the last coding date of the Polity III data).

[36]See, for example, Thomas Homer-Dixon and Valerie Percival, "Brief Case Summaries: The Case of the Philippines," in *Environmental Scarcity and Violent Conflict: Briefing Book* (Washington, D.C.: American Association for the Advancement of Science and the University of Toronto, 1996) and Jose Gerardo A. Alampy, "Revisiting Environmental Security in the Philippines," *Journal of Environment and Development* 5, no. 3 (September 1996): 329-337.

country has undergone since the mid-1980s, make it an interesting choice for exploring the influence of regime transition.

According to the Polity III data, the Philippines was an incoherent autocracy from 1983 to 1986, then a 'polity transition' from 1986 to 1987, and, since then, has been a coherent democracy. There are some obvious problems with this system of labeling, some of which were addressed above. If a coherent democracy is the equivalent of a consolidated democracy, then many researchers would strongly disagree with Jaggers & Gurr's assessment. If a coherent democracy is simply an electoral democracy, however, then the data set completely ignores any further democratization that a country can undergo after it has become a democracy. Yet, regardless of when the Philippines became a coherent democracy, if in fact it has at all, few researchers would disagree that it has undergone a significant transition in regime type since the mid-1980s; from the waning authoritarian Marcos years, through the tenuous early years of the Aquino presidency into the more stable Ramos, and now Estrada, period. At the same time, aside from a slight increase in the late 1980s, the level of conflict has been diminishing. As the country has also been visibly marked by environmental scarcity, it is an interesting preliminary case for an exploration of the potential links among environmental scarcity, regime type, and conflict.

Figure 2.1: Matrix of Environmental Scarcity and Conflict

CONFLICT

ENVIRONMENTAL SCARCITY		YES		NO	
		Incoherent Democracy	*Incoherent Autocracy*	*Incoherent Democracy*	*Incoherent Autocracy*
	YES	Sri Lanka (82-93)*	Thailand (78-88)* Pakistan (85-88)* Philippines (83-86)* Bangladesh (86-91)*	Thailand (88-91, 92-94) Pakistan (88-90, 90-93)	Nepal (81-90)*
		Guatemala (86-91, 91-93, 93-94)	Haiti (89-91)*	Dominican Republic (94)	
			Nicaragua (84-90) Mexico (77-94) Peru (92-93, 93-94)	Nicaragua (90-94) Honduras (85-89, 89-94)	
		Polity Transition		*Polity Transition*	
		Philippines (86-87) Guatemala (85-86)		Thailand (91-92) Haiti (86-88)	
		Incoherent Democracy	*Incoherent Autocracy*	*Incoherent Democracy*	*Incoherent Autocracy*
	NO	Cambodia (93-94)		Fiji (90-94) Mongolia (90-92)	Fiji (87-90) Singapore (65-94) Bhutan (71-94) South Korea (81-85, 85-88)
		Paraguay (89-92)		Guyana (92-94)	Chile (83-88, 88-89) Panama (84-87)
		Polity Transition			
		Cambodia (91-93)			

Research of Case Study

The research requirements of case study analysis are considerably demanding due to the necessity of seeking out each element of the connecting chain of interactions. For this reason, after conducting extensive preliminary research in Canada, the author undertook field research in the Philippines in April 1999.

Extensive research was conducted at libraries, research institutes and government departments in Manila. As well, approximately twenty interviews were conducted with Filipinos belonging to grassroots, national and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), universities, research institutes, and the government (past and present). Through this research, and travel to the countryside, it was possible to begin to arrive at a more informed understanding of the processes at work in the Philippines.

A plausibility probe employing a heuristic, theory building approach is the most appropriate method of analysis for this case. As well, given the complexities inherent in the study of ecological-political systems and the limitations imposed by the preliminary stages of a research program, process tracing stands out as the best manner in which to undertake the necessary hypothesis testing. The case of the Philippines will be used to examine the hypothesized interactions. The following chapter will present an overview of the historical, geographical, political, economic, and conflict situation in that country. This will provide an initial picture of the usefulness of the moderating hypothesis in this case.

[F]or a developing country like the Philippines, the impacts of environmental degradation are much more serious than simply erosion or pollution. In many cases, the social and political impacts are of greater dimension and are more direct. The poor become poorer. And as larger populations are pushed into a desperate struggle for survival, they wrought larger damage to the environment and the cycle continues. There comes a time, however, when this vicious cycle reaches a limit and the fragile fabric of a stressed society starts to unravel. The gun substitutes for the plow. The fire that used to burn forests becomes the fire that will consume society.[1]

CHAPTER THREE:
THE PHILIPPINES PRIOR TO 1986

The Philippines has been the subject of numerous analyses, focusing on different aspects of the country's troubled past and potential for a happier future. The connection between environmental scarcity and conflict is one that, while hardly the most prevalent interpretation, has been made by a number of theorists. At the same time, the effect that the return to democracy and subsequent democratization has had on the country has been frequently explored. As with much of the theoretical literature on conflict, regime type and the environment, however, little attempt has been made to investigate the connection between all three variables. To accomplish this, it is necessary to examine the Philippines' political history, geography and the roots of both environmental scarcity and insurgency. This will serve as the basis for a preliminary assessment of the interaction of Marcos' authoritarian regime with underlying environmental stresses; a process which led to an escalation of grievances and the opening of an opportunity structure conducive to violence.

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[1]Delfin Ganapin, quoted in *Philippine Strategy for Sustainable Development: A Conceptual Framework* (Manila: Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), 1990), 3.

History

Little is written about the Philippines prior to the ill-fated arrival of Ferdinand Magellan to its shores in 1522. This is partly due to a lack of knowledge, and partly to the lack of centralized structures in the country at the time. The southern islands were a much more coherent whole due to their leaders' adoption of Islam, which "helped them to organise states that used the unifying force of religion to incorporate a number of scattered communities into a single political unit."[2] In the northern islands, however, where Islam had as yet made few inroads, the "large village was the essential unit. Authority, as elsewhere in Southeast Asia, rested in the hands of a headman who was through birth and inheritance, or though ability, more prosperous and powerful than his fellow villagers."[3] This lack of centralized structure facilitated the spread of Spanish rule and Christianity throughout those northern regions.

The Philippines was a Spanish colony from the mid-16th century until the end of the 19th century. This did not involve the influx of a significant Spanish population into the country. Spanish rule nonetheless had a significant impact on the Philippines — "Spanish rule defined the modern state of the Philippines, and its social, religious and ideological underpinnings."[4] Religion was a key element of this definition, and one of the principal driving forces behind Spanish colonization of the country. Church and state were integrally connected, and the conversion of the Filipino people to Catholicism was an essential concern

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[2]Milton Osborne, *Southeast Asia: An Illustrated Introductory History* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1988), 48.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Peter Church, ed., *Focus on Southeast Asia* (St. Leonards, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1995), 102.

of Spanish rule. Priests were sent throughout the countryside, spreading Christianity, while they consolidated power for the colonial state.[5] This was primarily successful, except when it came to two distinct groups of people.

The first group is those commonly referred to as the 'indigenous people' (IP). "This distinction originates from history... [During the Spanish era,] the majority of the lowland population of the country was brought under Spanish rule and Christianized. Those people who rejected colonization retreated to the uplands, retaining much of their own culture and ways until way into the 20th Century."[6] In the modern era, the IP, descendants of those who resisted colonization, continue to subsist in the uplands and, as will be seen, are among the most marginalized in the country. The second group is the Moros, "the Muslim peoples who occupy most of western Mindanao and who successfully resisted Spanish, and later US, colonial rule."[7] They too remained distinct, and would continue to challenge successive Filipino governments long after independence.

There were "hundreds of sporadic revolts throughout the Spanish era."[8] These were, "a response to the social transformation and abuse imposed by Spanish civilian and church authorities, by their own native elite, and by economic conditions."[9] They gradually coalesced into "a series of historic rural mobilizations...through these and other organized expressions of incipent peasant discontent, the principles of self-sufficiency and egalitarianism, along with

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[5]Ibid., 100-102.

[6]Sheila S. Coronel, "The Endangered," in *Saving the Earth: The Philippine Experience*, ed. Cecile C. A. Balgos (Pasig City, Manila: Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism, 1997), 194.

[7]Ibid.

[8]David Timberman, *A Changeless Land: Continuity and Change in Philippine Politics* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1991), 7.

[9]Richard Kessler, *Rebellion and Repression in the Philippines* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 6.

aspirations for access to land, were slowly being forged into a broader ethic of 'peasant justice'."[10] Eventually a nationalist struggle, which "began in the 1870s and exploded into open rebellion in 1896,"[11] emerged.

At its inception, the Philippine nationalist movement was principally driven by the landed elite, not the peasantry. Primarily Chinese and Spanish-descended *mestizo* (people of mixed ancestry), these wealthy landowners chafed under Spanish rule and wanted to take control of their own country. Their brand of nationalism was essentially non-violent; armed insurrection was not the means intended. In 1896, however, a more extreme group (*Katipunan*) — this one principally mass-based — launched an armed revolt. When the Spanish army fought back, both moderates and extremists were targeted, martyring them[12] and creating a hitherto non-existent alliance between the two movements.[13] "The Katipunan movement...was a historic watershed in the linking of nationalism with peasant unrest, bringing together peasant aspirations for religious salvation and bourgeois yearnings for national independence."[14]

The nationalist struggle was woefully ill-equipped to pose a serious challenge to Spanish rule. Nonetheless, it remained a thorn in Spain's side until a peace pact was signed at the end of 1897. According to the agreement, Spain paid the leader of the movement — Emilio Aguinaldo — to go into exile with 33 others, while also providing assurances of

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[10]Jennifer Franco, "Elections and Democratization in the Philippines," unpublished dissertation, Brandeis University, Department of Politics, February 1997.

[11]Timberman, *Changeless Land*, 8.

[12]Church, *Focus on Southeast Asia*, 104.

[13]David Steinberg, *The Philippines: A Singular and a Plural Place* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1990), 62.

[14]Kessler, *Rebellion and Repression*, 10.

reforms. None of these were implemented, but by the middle of 1898 Philippine history entered a new phase.[15]

In April of 1898 the United States declared war on Spain,[16] launching the Spanish-American war. In order to ensure that the Spanish Pacific fleet was unable to join its Caribbean one (a possibility, it was later realized, that was extremely unlikely given the decrepit nature of the Spanish fleet in the Philippines), the United States defeated Spanish forces in Manila Bay and laid siege to Manila. The arrival of the American forces in the Philippines on May 1, 1898 was followed a few weeks later by the return of Aguinaldo and his followers. He sailed to the Philippines on an American ship, bringing arms bought with Spanish cease-fire funds and American assistance, and reintroduced resistance to Spanish rule. On June 12, 1898, he declared independence for the Philippines. Unfortunately for Filipino nationalism, however, a secret treaty between the U.S. and Spain was signed and, on December 10, 1898, Spain ceded the Philippines to the U.S. The United States had no intention of quietly withdrawing from its newly acquired colony. It refused to recognize either the declaration of independence or the January 1899 constitution that was drafted.[17]

On February 4, 1899 fighting broke out between American and Filipino forces; the war continued until 1903, with a military death toll of 4,000 Americans and 16,000 Filipinos, as well as an estimated civilian death rate of 200,000.[18] By other estimates, "perhaps more

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[15]D. R. SarDesai, *Southeast Asia Past and Present* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1997), 154-55.

[16]A move precipitated by American involvement in Cuba's rebellion against its Spanish colonizers. Church, *Focus on Southeast Asia*, 104.

[17]SarDesai, *Southeast Asia Past and Present*, 155-57; Kessler, "Chronology," *Rebellion and Repression*, 202 and 10.

[18]Kessler, "Chronology," *Rebellion and Repression*, 202. The date of the ending of hostilities is somewhat a matter of interpretation. For example, it is argued by some that "[m]ost hostilities ended in 1901 when the United States effectively bought off the ilustrado elite, promising to maintain their wealth and power

than a million — one-seventh of the total population — were killed before the country was completely 'pacified'."[19]

The disregard for Philippine desires for independence and the blatant imperialist nature of the American occupation is one that "ran counter to their [the American] self-perception as a people who had thrown off the colonial yoke to become the beacon for free, democratic and egalitarian values in the world."[20] It was undertaken for a number of reasons, ranging from an economic desire not to be shut out of the Asian markets by the Europeans, to a belief that it was the "white man's burden" to properly administer for the Filipino people,[21] and bring them to democratic rule.

> From the start the United States made clear that its goal was to lead the Philippines to independence...[Thus], it is not surprising that United States colonial administration stressed the development of education, health and democratic processes. Electoral systems were introduced at all levels of society...By 1934 the United States Congress mandated Philippine independence within twelve years. As a first step, in 1935 a Philippines Commonwealth was established...Political developments in the Philippines were unique in Southeast Asia, though in the long run the effect was to increase the wealth and power of the landed elite.[22]

The elite *mestizos* gained both politically and economically. The representational system of the Congress-style legislature initiated in the Philippines "proved perfectly adapted to the ambitions and social geography of the mestizo *nouveaux riches*. Their economic base lay in the hacienda agriculture, not in the capital city."[23] Under the new system, they faced

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in return for collaboration with American colonial rule." Church, *Focus on Southeast Asia*, 104.

[19]SarDesai, *Southeast Asia Past and Present*, 158.

[20]Church, *Focus on Southeast Asia*, 105.

[21]SarDesai, *Southeast Asia Past and Present*, 156-57.

[22]Church, *Focus on Southeast Asia*, 105.

[23]Benedict Anderson, "Cacique Democracy in the Philippines," *New Left Review* no. 169 (May/June 1988): 11.

little competition within their own districts, yet were still able to come together at the national level to form 'a self-conscious ruling class'. This political growth was facilitated by the increased economic power of the elite, under the new American regime. As well as benefitting from favourable American trading acts, their already considerable economic base expanded because they were in a position to take advantage of the approximately 400,000 acres of former Church land that the Americans put up for auction.[24]

As in the previous century, land and power were increasingly concentrated into the hands of the few, leaving the many as tenants dependent upon their landlords. As urbanization drew those landlords to Manila, the patron-client bond that had historically tied peasant to landlord began to break down, removing any positive element from an exploitive relationship. "They [the peasants] remained serfs but without the previous security of cultural values that had stressed the landlord's responsibilities to his tenants."[25] In the end, "...the primary social result of American colonial rule was to free the rural elite from their dependency upon the loyalty of local people and to encourage the disintegration of landlord-peasant ties."[26] The years leading up to World War II were a time of increased power for the elite, both politically and economically, and growing independence for the country as a whole. It was also a time of both rural and urban peasant and worker unrest.[27] Then, in December 1941, the Japanese army occupied the Philippines.

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[24]Ibid., 10-11.

[25]Kessler, *Rebellion and Repression*, 19.

[26]Linda Nash, "Strategic Insecurity: Environment, Development, and Geopolitics in the Philippines," paper prepared for the Program on Sustainable Resource Management and Global Security of the Pacific Institute for the Studies in Development, Environment, and Security, February 1991, 24.

[27]Kessler, *Rebellion and Repression*, 11-15.

If anything, Japanese occupation further divided the elite and the masses. While the President and Vice-President fled the country, most of the rest of the elite collaborated with the new rulers.[28] At the same time, in the countryside, anti-Japanese guerrilla groups sprang up and "[f]ormer tenants and landless labourers were emboldened to squat on hacienda lands and grow, not sugar, but crops needed for their everyday survival...[In Central Luzon], where rural poverty and exploitation were the most acute, such peasants joined hands with the guerrillas in forming the Hukbalahap armies which harassed the Japanese and assassinated such collaborators as they could reach."[29] Despite attempts by the Japanese to justify their colonization as pan-Asian, anti-white-colonization, few ordinary Filipinos accepted their arguments, especially given the cruelties inflicted upon Filipinos and Americans who resisted the Japanese occupation.[30] In 1944, the Huks (members of the Communist-led Hukbalahap movement) fought alongside the Americans to wrest control of the country away from the Japanese.

In the post-war years, the twin strands of collaboration and resistance would continue to colour Philippine life. Despite some talk of prosecuting the collaborators, the old elite retained power. In the process, the Huks were deliberately disenfranchised from retaining any of the political or social power they had acquired resisting the Japanese. "Convinced that the country's long-term stability depended on restoring prewar elites to their former political dominance, [General] MacArthur refused either to 'to condemn elitist collaborators *en bloc*,' or 'to support all guerrilla leaders who, by harassing the Japanese, had prepared the way for

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[28]Anderson, "Cacique Democracy," 13.
[29]Ibid.
[30]Steinberg, *The Philippines*, 98.

the American reoccupation'."[31] To the people who had resisted the occupation with their lives, "[t]he wartime experience made it seem that to obey authority was to abandon the good fight and to resist government was heroic...The war permitted violence to be institutionalized, and the use of weapons for whatever reason became justified as patriotic. The readiness to resort to force has been a pervasive and disturbing feature of postindependence Philippine society."[32] It is unsurprising that the call to armed resistance would continue to echo throughout the Philippine countryside even as independence became a reality.

As planned before the Japanese invasion, and despite a proclamation of independence in 1943 while still under Japanese control, on July 4, 1946 the Philippines officially became independent:

> [i]n the course of just fifty years — from 1896 to 1946 — the Filipino people went from living as second-class citizens in a Spanish colonial backwater, to being taught American-style civic values, to being caught in the conflagration of World War II...During this same half century, Philippine nationalists produced Asia's first independence movement, led an effective revolt against the Spanish, unsuccessfully fought against American imperialism, and then were co-opted by America's policy of 'benevolent assimilation'.[33]

Despite the increasing repression against them, the Huk-based Democratic Alliance — a political party — attempted to take the democratic route in the 1946 elections. They formed an alliance with Osmeña, the presidential candidate from the Nacionalista Party, and won six congressional seats. However, when Roxas, the opposing presidential candidate, won, all six Congressmen were prevented from taking their seats.[34] Finally, in March 1948,

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[31]Franco, "Elections and Democratization," 79.
[32]Steinberg, *The Philippines*, 101-2..
[33]Timberman, *Changeless Land*, 12.
[34]Franco, "Elections and Democratization," 82-83.

the PKP (the Philippine Communist Party, founded in 1930) and the Huks were declared illegal, and the focus of the movement returned to armed struggle.[35]

It has been argued that the Huk uprising, while initially successful, was hastily planned and lacking in the necessary infrastructure — political, ideological and military — for sustained guerrilla warfare. They soon suffered a serious blow.[36] "With the help of the US, the Philippine government turned the tide in 1951 with a cunning strategy which combined the promise of free land and land reform, counter-guerrilla military operations, 'clean elections', and the successful projection of Ramon Magsaysay as a reformist, populist president."[37]

The 'clean elections' effectively changed the perceived opportunity structure facing Filipinos. At last they were provided with "an opportunity for peaceful political change...[More important than any military operations,] was the confidence Magsaysay exuded and the spirit of reform he represented that offered an alternative to rebellion."[38] He also succeeded in reorganizing the army, establishing a program to resettle ex-Huk combatants, as well as initiating many small projects such as health clinics, wells, and roads. Unfortunately, most of these initiatives remained superficial. Little substantive reform was initiated by a government that remained very much elite-controlled and content with the social *status quo*. However, the PKP/Huk were weakened and ultimately torn apart by internal splits, which were in part fostered by the military's psychological warfare.[39]

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[35]Kessler, *Rebellion and Repression*, 32.

[36]Walden Bello, "The Rebirth of the Philippine Revolution," *Third World Quarterly* 8, no. 1 (January 1986): 263.

[37]Ibid., 262. Magsaysay would become president in the 1953 presidential elections.

[38]Kessler, *Rebellion and Repression*, 33-34.

[39]Ibid., 34-35.

In 1965, Ferdinand Marcos became president of the Philippines. In 1969, in elections "marked by unusually high levels of fraud, violence and vote-buying,"[40] Marcos was re-elected. This was the "first time in Philippine postwar political history that an incumbent president would defy the established pattern of elite competition and be re-elected."[41] As will be seen, 1969 also marked the rebirth of the armed communist insurgency.

In 1972, Marcos declared martial law, ostensibly in order to solve the country's social, economic, and political woes. In reality what occurred was that:

> Congress was closed, key opposition leaders were arrested, existing political parties were banned, newspapers and radio/television stations were closed or nationalised, and a brutal counter-insurgency campaign was unleashed against rural and urban communities alike. All institutions that existed independently of the state and that could potentially mobilise opposition to it, were repressed, driven underground or shut down.[42]

The history of the Philippines is one marked by colonization, first Spanish, then American; conflict between the politically powerful landowning elite and the peasantry; and rural unrest. Many different factors have affected the ongoing political turmoil, which culminated in — but was certainly not ended by — Marcos' declaration of martial law. After outlining the geography of the country, the following section will investigate the environmental issues that would come to play an increasingly important role in conflict in the Philippines.

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[40]Franco, "Elections and Democratization," 97.

[41]Ibid., ftn. 79, p.97.

[42]Gerard Clarke, *Politics of NGOs in Southeast Asia: Participation and Protest in the Philippines* (London: Routledge, 1998), 61.

Geography

"The Philippines is a socially and geographically fragmented nation. It has more than a hundred tribal groups and seventy languages dispersed over a mainly mountainous terrain of about 7,100 islands, volcanic in origin."[43] The land mass of the country is comparable to that of Italy, despite the fact that the islands of the Philippines stretch out over almost 1,150 miles.[44] "Only 462 islands are one square mile or larger; 11 islands contain 94 percent of the total land mass. The three stars on the Philippine flag identify the island of Luzon, with 40,541 square miles, or about 35 percent of the land area; the island of Mindanao, with 36,680; and a cluster of intermediate-size islands in the Visayas including Cebu, Palawan, Samar, Negros, Leyte, Panay, and Bohol"[45] (see Map 3.1). This geographic fragmentation has led to social, political and economic segmentation; "[o]nly gradually has the Philippines knit itself into a nation — a nation still in the process of being formed."[46]

The temperature ranges from 15 to 40 degrees Celsius. Monsoons, in seasonal patterns, are an important component of the yearly cycle in the Philippines. Humidity is high, as is the average rainfall (more than 400 centimetres per year in some regions). These significant levels of precipitation generate the ideal conditions for extensive soil erosion,[47] especially given the mountainous terrain covering a significant proportion of the country (see Map 3.2).

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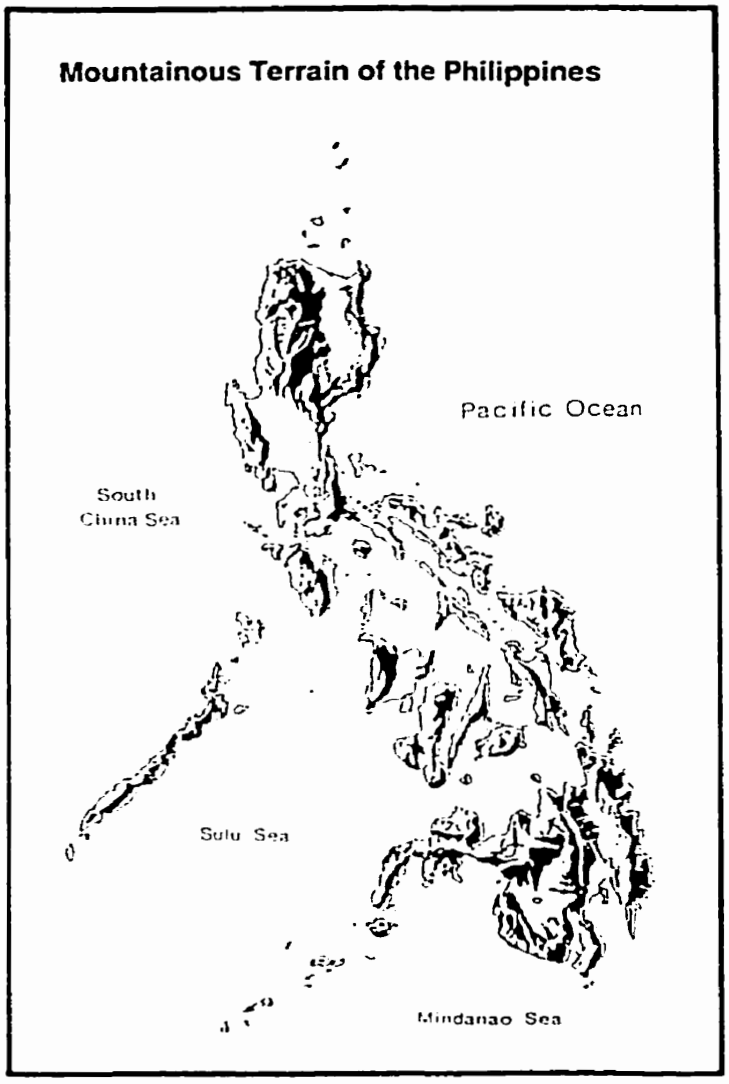
[43]Kessler, *Rebellion and Repression*, 5.
[44]Ibid., 5.
[45]Steinberg, *The Philippines*, 12.
[46]Kessler, *Rebellion and Repression*, 5.
[47]Steinberg, *The Philippines*, 12-14.

Map 3.1

Source: David Timberman, *A Changeless Land: Continuity and Change in Philippine Politics* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1991).

Map 3.2



Source: Jose Maria Sison with Rainer Werning, *The Philippine Revolution: The Leader's View* (New York: Taylor & Francis, 1989).

The pluralistic nature of Philippine geography — as well as Philippine life — makes it extremely difficult to generalize effectively about the environmental situation. The country encompasses uplands, lowlands, coastal regions, mountains, diverse climates, differing tenurial systems, indigenous peoples, migrants, rural, and urban dwellers. The environmental situation in Manila differs from that in the uplands of Northern Luzon, which differs from that in a small *barangay*[48] in coastal Cebu. Yet, some generalizations can, and must, be made in the interest of composing a picture of the overall situation. Similar patterns of unequal access to land, population growth, migration, and environmental degradation have repeated themselves throughout much of the Philippines for decades. The following analysis of environmental scarcity focuses primarily on the years leading up to the return to democracy in 1986.

Environmental Scarcity

As was outlined in Chapter One, the three core components of scarcity in the Homer-Dixon model are: demand-induced scarcity, structural scarcity, and supply-induced scarcity. These variables have interacted in the Philippines to bring about 'ecological marginalization' and environmental scarcity in the uplands.

The focus of this analysis will be upon the upland areas of the Philippines — "they contain the majority of the remaining Philippine forests..., they have been the destination of numerous migrants in the post-war period..., [and] land degradation in the uplands is severe

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[48]" A *barangay* is the smallest administrative division in the Philippines, equivalent to a rural barrio or an urban neighbourhood." Gregg Jones, *Red Revolution: Inside the Philippine Guerrilla Movement* (Boulder, Colo.,: Westview Press, 1989), ftn. 1, p.315.

and widespread."[49] Finally, the uplands are the home to the majority of the indigenous people of the Philippines, and have provided a haven for generations of insurgents.

Demand-Induced Scarcity

The Philippines is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, with an average of more than 200 people per square kilometre. The population growth rate is in the process of declining. Nonetheless, it averaged 2.5 percent between 1985 and 1990, a higher growth rate than countries such as India and Malaysia.[50]

Structural Scarcity

Historically, unequal access to land ownership has been one of the most important problems facing the majority of Filipinos. About 60 percent of the population lives in rural areas.[51] It is estimated, however, that 10 percent of the population owns 90 percent of the agricultural land,[52] an inequitable land tenure system which is one of the legacies of Spanish colonial rule. "Seven out of ten rural producers do not own the land they till and work as tenants, landless rural workers or agricultural workers. Tenancy arrangements remain onerous and agricultural wages low."[53] In the past, the government's response to this problem was to

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[49]David M. Kummer, "Upland Agriculture, the Land Frontier and Forest Decline in the Philippines," *Agroforestry Systems* 18 (1992): 32.

[50]World Resources Institute (WRI), *World Resources 1994-95* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 35.

[51]Timberman, *Changeless Land*, 341.

[52]David Rosenberg, "Sociocultural Developments in the Philippines," in *Democracy and Development in East Asia*, ed. Thomas Robinson (Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 1991), 220.

[53]Nona Grandea, *The Rocky Road to Democracy: A Case Study of the Philippines* (Ottawa: North-South Institute, 1992), 13-14.

encourage peasants to simply clear more of the forests to transform them into agricultural land,[54] or to institute land colonization programs which resettled peasants in areas with lower population densities. "The rural elite accepted colonisation as a means of dealing with peasant unrest, since it opened up land for later appropriation, reproducing unjust property relations."[55]

The importance of land reform to the majority of Filipino people is not difficult to understand. As has been seen, it has formed the core of many of the rural revolts throughout Filipino history. These demands for reform continue to figure prominently in the modern era, with one administration after another making conciliatory promises of change — there have been at least forty Presidential decrees and ten Acts of Congress related to land reform[56] — only to have them wither away. With landlords controlling the political power, one agrarian reform package after another has failed. Many, like President Magsaysay's in the 1950s, were proposed in response to peasant unrest, or the threat of it. They were of a strictly *ad hoc* nature, and little serious thought was given to the possibilities of real structural reform.[57] Structural scarcity, however, is not only important in and of itself; lack of access to land has also led to direct environmental repercussions.

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[54]Robert Repetto, *The Forest for the Trees? Government Policies and the Misuse of Forest Resources* (Washington, D.C.: World Resources Institute, 1988), 65.

[55]Francisco Lara, Jr. and Horacio Morales, Jr., "The Peasant Movement and the Challenge of Rural Democratisation in the Philippines," *The Journal of Development Studies* 26, no. 4 (July 1990): 145.

[56]*The Failed Promise: Human Rights in the Philippines Since the Revolution of 1986* (Geneva: The International Commission of Jurists, 1991), 66.

[57]Jones, *Red Revolution*, 40-42.

Ecological marginalization — Migration to uplands

When high population growth rates combine with significant land inequality, increasing landlessness results. "Because most upland migrants had little or no land before moving, increases in the number of landless agricultural households have tremendous implications for upland settlement."[58] An increase in landlessness translates itself into increased migration, both to urban and fragile upland areas. While the urban migrants are forced to eke out an existence for themselves in already severely overcrowded cities like Manila, the upland migrants find themselves farming increasingly steep slopes with severe environmental and developmental repercussions.[59] This increased pressure on upland areas translates itself into a process which Homer-Dixon refers to as 'ecological marginalization': "inequalities in access to rich agricultural lowlands combine with population growth to cause migration to easily degraded upland areas."[60]

Migration in the Philippines has gone through a series of different phases. Prior to 1970, most migrants moved to frontier destinations, while from 1970 to 1975 migration was principally urban in nature.[61] From 1975 to 1980, upland migration increased again, followed by an influx of migrants into upland areas between 1980 to 1985.[62] "An economic crisis in the early 1980s increased agricultural unemployment and reduced opportunities for alternative

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[58]Maria Concepcion Cruz et al., *Population Growth, Poverty, and Environmental Stress: Frontier Migration in the Philippines and Costa Rica* (New York: World Resources Institute (WRI), 1992), 27.

[59]WRI, *World Resources 1994-95*, 35-36.

[60]Thomas Homer-Dixon, "Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases," *International Security* 19, no. 1 (summer 1994): 15.

[61]This was due to a combination of factors including President Marcos' aggressive campaign against rural populations engaged in shifting cultivation and the "widespread insurgency [which] discouraged movements into remote upland areas." Cruz et al., *Population Growth, Poverty, and Environmental Stress*, 39.

[62]Ibid., 33.

employment in urban and rural industries, which prompted many poor and landless peasants to migrate into the uplands."[63] Despite these fluctuations, it seems clear that the uplands consistently received a significant number of Filipinos with nowhere else to go.

Migration has shifted community balances in the uplands. In 1985, "migrants and their descendants made up an estimated 70 percent of the upland population, while the other 30 percent was comprised of at least 60 indigenous ethnic groups with populations ranging from a few hundred to thousands each."[64] This influx of lowland migrants would eventually contribute to the further marginalization of already disregarded indigenous communities, increasing their level of grievances.

These significant levels of upland migration have combined with high fertility rates to engender an upland population growth rate that is higher than that of the country as a whole —3.2 percent in the uplands (between 1950 and 1985), as compared to 2.8 percent nationally during the same period.[65] By the late 1980s, between one fourth and one third of the Filipino population – approximately 18 million people – were subsisting in the uplands.[66] This has led to population densities of over 300 persons per km^2 in some regions.[67]

"As population density increases, more frequent cropping occurs, which eventually leads to soil erosion and yield declines. Fallow rotations, which benefit the soil but take land out of food production, are shortened, and recent studies indicate that 'shifting' agriculture

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[63]Thomas Homer-Dixon and Valerie Percival, "Brief Case Summaries: The Case of the Philippines," in *Environmental Scarcity and Violent Conflict: Briefing Book* (Washington, D.C.: American Association for the Advancement of Science and the University of Toronto, 1996), 49.

[64]Cruz et al., *Population Growth, Poverty, and Environmental Stress*, 19-21.

[65]Ibid., 19.

[66]Robin Broad with John Cavanagh, *Plundering Paradise: The Struggle for the Environment in the Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 85.

[67]Cruz et al., *Population Growth, Poverty, and Environmental Stress*, 21.

is becoming less common, as more and more uplanders engage in sedentary agriculture.'"[68] These changing cultivation patterns, coupled with incursions into the uplands by other sectors of society, have resulted in increasing supply-induced scarcity.

Supply-Induced Scarcity

> The forest is a focal ecosystem. Its state affects almost all other ecosystems...Forests act as carbon sink that traps carbon dioxide released in the atmosphere...Forests, too, can moderate local climate. Forests serve as efficient watersheds, collecting and regulating the flow of water supply...Forests prevent flash floods. They control soil erosion and water pollution. Aside from being the source of wood and water, forests also supply power. Philippine forests host one of the world's richest plant and animal species...The Philippine forests also harbor around 7.1 million indigenous peoples.[69]

Yet, one of the principal problems facing the upland regions of the Philippines is deforestation.

Fifty-four percent of the thirty million hectares that comprise the land area of the Philippines have slopes of eighteen percent or greater. These lands are officially considered 'forestlands', despite the fact that their forest cover has steadily declined since the early years of colonization[70] (see Table 3.1). Technically, forestlands belong to the public domain. In reality, however,

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[68]Ibid., 21-22.

[69]*The State of the Philippine Environment* (Manila: IBON Foundation, Inc., 1997), 1-2.

[70]Oliver Agoncillo, ed., *Pursuing Development in the Uplands: Contexts, Issues, Initiatives* (Quezon City, Manila: Upland NGO Assistance Committee, 1998), 24.

...even officially this claim is not enforced since a sizeable portion of forest lands has been declared 'alienable and disposable' and titled to support 6.7 million people. The other eleven million of the 17.8 million uplanders, including both indigenous populations and migrants, have no legal title to forest lands. The indigenous populations hold traditional rights to land that are recognized by law, but their lands are continually invaded anyway.[71]

Table 3.1: National forest cover, 1575 - 1995[72]

Year	Forest cover (million hectares)	Percentage of total land area	Deforestation rate (hectares/year)
1575	27.5	92.0	22,917
1863	20.9	70.0	35,088
1920	18.9	64.0	78,571
1934	17.8	57.3	191,667
1970	10.9	36.3	350,000
1980	7.4	24.7	120,000
1990	6.2	20.7	120,000
1995	5.6	18.6	NA

NA: not available
Source: Adapted from, *The State of the Philippine Environment* (Manila: IBON Foundation, Inc., 1997), table 1, p.2.

Causes of Deforestation

There is a danger of focusing all of the blame for environmental degradation, especially deforestation, on the migrants and indigenous communities eking out their

[71]Cruz et al., *Population Growth, Poverty, and Environmental Stress*, 5.

[72]Any figures on deforestation are bound to be controversial because of the lack of coherent statistics on forest cover. They "have long been considered unreliable, due to (a) lack of a national-scale inventory in recent years; (b) a high rate of extra-legal deforestation; and (c) reluctance to acknowledge the extent of deforestation which has occurred." World Bank, *Philippines: Environment and Natural Resource Management Study*, A World Bank Country Study (Washington D.C.: World Bank, 1989), 10.

existence through cultivation on the denuded hillsides. This is a view that has prevailed until very recently. As argued in a recent United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) paper, forest policy in the Philippines in the post-war period was based on the assumption that shifting cultivation was to blame for upland degradation, and that timber concessions were the best approach to conserving and developing the forests.[73] This culminated in the pursuit of "an aggressive program against illegal forest occupants"[74] by the military under the Marcos administration.

This understanding of the cause of environmental degradation is often shared by scholars. As David Kummer argues,

> well respected researchers throughout the world have concluded that population pressure is the most significant cause of tropical deforestation because 'land hunger' is forcing small-scale agriculturists to practice some form of shifting cultivation in forested areas...[a] stylized version of the causes of tropical deforestation puts primary emphasis on three factors: population pressure, small-scale agriculture and shifting cultivation.[75]

In reality, however, the principal cause of deforestation can be found in the interaction between the different stakeholders in the uplands. In other words, deforestation is "a two-step process with loggers converting the primary forest to a degraded secondary forest and small-scale agriculturists converting the secondary forest to farmland."[76] Deforestation is further escalated by government policies — especially under Marcos — of granting resource extraction contracts to large mining and dam-building companies. As well, it has been directly

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[73]Howie Severino, *Opposition and Resistance to Forest Protection in the Philippines*, UNRISD Discussion Paper (Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), 1998), 1.

[74]Cruz et al., *Population Growth, Poverty, and Environmental Stress*, 39.

[75]Kummer, "Upland Agriculture," 31.

[76]Ibid., 41.

boosted by such government policies as the 'land for the landless' program instituted in the 1950s and 1960s. This program encouraged settlement on forest lands in order to expand the agricultural base. In one four-year period, this led to the conversion of 100,000 hectares of forested land per year into agricultural land.[77]

Logging

Historically, commercial logging has played an important role in the upland environmental degradation. In the years after independence, the export of wood products was seen by the government as an important source of revenue. By the late 1960s, a timber boom was leading to harvests nearly three times what they had been 10 to 15 years earlier. As this boom gained momentum, the government found itself increasingly unable to enforce logging regulations or supervise concessions. Most of the profits from the destruction of Filipino forests remained in the pockets of private companies. Outputs only began to drop in 1974, due to world recession and competition from other countries.[78]

> The timber license agreement (TLA) issued by the government
>
> was the main instrument used to exploit the forests. Forest concessions used to be handed out by the different administrations at a frenzied rate. President Ferdinand Marcos, for example, used the TLA to reward supporters, enrich friends and family, and keep politicians under his patronage...Under Marcos, the number of timber licensees leaped from 58 in 1969 to 230 in 1977, the highest recorded figure...Given a permit that would cover from one to 10 years, lumber concessionaires did what was logical from their point of view: cut quick and go.[79]

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[77]Repetto, *Forest for the Trees?*, 63.

[78]Ibid., 59 and 61.

[79]Marites Dañguilang Vitug, *Power from the Forest: the Politics of Logging* (Pasig City, Manila: Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism, 1993), 13-15.

They could never be assured of having their licenses renewed — especially when corruption and limited democratic control ruled the day[80] — and so had little to no incentive to cut sustainably or work towards the regeneration of the forest. Loggers took what they wanted, leaving behind networks of roads and cleared land which paved the way for increased migrant penetration into fragile areas.[81]

Agricultural expansion

As has been seen, it is the upland farmers who have historically been blamed for most of the degradation. This not only absolves loggers of responsibility, it also fails to differentiate between those farmers using sustainable techniques and those who are not. There are many variations in the forms of agriculture practiced in the uplands, and little reliable information regarding which techniques are the most prevalent. The different approaches range from "traditional shifting cultivation (long fallow periods), non-traditional/migrant shifting cultivations (short fallow periods), permanent/intensive agriculture, backyard gardens, grazing or any combination thereof."[82]

Accustomed to farming upland areas, indigenous people have developed sustainable methods of cultivation.[83] *Kaingin* farming[84] is generally practiced through a form of shifting cultivation known as "swidden agriculture". This involves rotating crops and leaving the land

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[80]David Kummer, *Deforestation in the Postwar Philippines*, Geography Research Paper no. 234 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 145.

[81]WRI, *World Resources 1994-95*, 36.

[82]Kummer, "Upland Agriculture," 33.

[83]A historic example of this is the world famous rice terraces of Banaue in Northern Luzon. Built thousands of years ago by indigenous populations, these vast expanses of rice fields are carved into the hillsides, allowing rice cultivation to be undertaken on a flat expanse of land, rather than on slopes.

[84]"'[K]aingin' is a patch of cropland in cleared forestland." World Bank, *Philippines*, 23.

fallow for long periods of time in order to allow it to regenerate.[85] Some groups also employ conservation techniques such as tree planting or intercropping. In many ways, therefore, the indigenous populations must be differentiated from the migrants who have little history working with the land and so neither the skills nor the incentive to work to preserve it. Unfortunately, this distinction has begun to fade. As indigenous farmers are pushed onto increasingly steep slopes by successive waves of lowland migrants and high population growth, fallow periods are shortened and shifting cultivation contributes to soil erosion. In most areas, it is therefore no longer the environmental alternative.[86]

A significant part of the problem facing indigenous peoples until very recently has been the refusal of successive regimes to recognize their historic right to their land. Due to the 'Regalian doctrine' introduced by Spanish colonizers, all public domain land belongs to the state.[87] Since most of the land of the indigenous peoples is situated on mountain slopes — public domain forest land —

> indigenous communities believe that they are squatters in their own lands. Indigenous communities could legalise their presence in classified forest areas by securing permits or tenurial programs for social forestry. Obtaining permits, however, implies that they are leasing land from the state and are not owners of their ancestral lands. Moreover, if title is obtained for released or declared forest land, ownership of land does not include ownership of the natural resources on the land.[88]

"One of the major grievances of the indigenous groups is the non-recognition of their right to ancestral lands."[89]

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[85]Ibid.
[86]Ibid., 23-24.
[87]*Failed Promise*, 83.
[88]Ibid., 83-84.
[89]Ibid., 83.

The issue of insecure land tenure is a problem for the migrant populations as well. "Few landless migrants who move into the uplands obtain secure tenure. This lack of firm titles to land diminishes incentives to invest in soil conservation, encourages short-sighted farming practices, and further contributes to resource degradation."[90]

Finally, due to the slow pace of land classification in the Philippines, another contributing factor to deforestation has been speculators who pay *kaingineros* to clear land, "and then apply for reclassification of cleared forest land as alienable and disposable."[91] In May 1975, *kaingineros* occupying land prior to this date were finally given permits to occupy up to five hectares of the land they tilled. However, due to the quality of the land and continuous cultivation upon it, these plots were often abandoned after a few years and became pasturelands. These lands were then taken over by wealthy families — for whom owning of pastures was a status symbol — and the *kaingineros* were driven away once the permits had been secured.[92]

Effects of Environmental Degradation

It is possible to see the combined detrimental effects that logging and agricultural development can have on the uplands. "The broadest observation is that it is the combination of cover removal [logging] and soil disturbance [cultivation] which creates the largest potential for erosion."[93] Logging facilitates increased cultivation by clearing the land for

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[90]Cruz et al., *Population Growth, Poverty, and Environmental Stress*, 28.

[91]Robert Repetto and Malcolm Gillis, *Public Policies and the Misuse of Forest Resources* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 197.

[92]Ibid., 197.

[93]World Bank, *Philippines*, 26.

migrants, while simultaneously making that cultivation much more difficult by contributing to the degradation of the soil upon which they subsist. "A slope criterion of 30 percent is used as an upper limit for upland cultivation, beyond which excessive soil erosion is unavoidable. Even on moderately sloping lands, however, conservation practices are required because pounding seasonal rains can wash away topsoil."[94]

Deforestation destroys the 'sponge effect' in which forest vegetation catches and holds rainfall and then recycles it back into the atmosphere. Instead, more and more water becomes runoff, leading to floods and increased soil erosion.[95] Undisturbed forest lands typically only have a soil loss of about 1.0 tons (t) per hectare (ha) per year. In contrast, however, decreasing vegetative cover and "a combination of high-intensity rainfall, steep slopes, erodible soil, and poor cover can lead to [soil loss] rates of 300-400 t/ha/year on tilled kaingin plots."[96] In 1990, it was estimated that almost one-sixth of all available agricultural land in the Philippines was 'severely eroded'.[97]

Soil erosion "permanently impairs the country's ability to increase food production... [causing] low agricultural productivity which leads to low income and other socio-economic problems..."[98] Erosion also increases the amount of sediment in rivers and streams which impacts hydroelectric reservoirs and irrigation facilities.[99] "In the upstream areas of watersheds, erosion leads to direct loss of soil and nutrients, abandonment of fields and

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[94]Cruz et al., *Population Growth, Poverty, and Environmental Stress*, 22-23.

[95]James Boyce, *The Philippines: The Political Economy of Growth and Impoverishment in the Marcos Era* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993), 230.

[96]World Bank, *Philippines*, 25.

[97]Linda Nash, *Strategic Insecurity*, 17.

[98]*Soil, Soil Erosion, Land Use and Impacts of Infrastructure*, Primer Series no. 9 (Manila: Lingkod Tao-Kalikasan, 1997), 17-18.

[99]Repetto and Gillis, *Public Policies*, 170-71.

compensatory conversion of forest areas to cultivation. Downstream, erosion and unchecked rainfall runoff contributes to siltation, causes alternate floods and water shortage, and critically reduces the efficiency of water use."[100] This affects productivity in the lowlands, contributing to further upland migration.[101]

Environmental degradation in the uplands, deforestation in particular, can have a number of different consequences: environmental, economic and social; long and short term; near and far away. These include the transformation of hydrological cycles and high rates of soil erosion. As well, destruction of wildlife, loss of secondary forest products, and the destruction of homelands of ethnic groups living in the forests can arise .[102]

Environmental scarcity is a persistent problem in the Philippine uplands. As unequal access to land and job opportunities in the lowlands couple with a growing population, an increasing number of migrants find their way into the uplands where they compete with the indigenous populations and large-scale development projects for access to land. Patterns of structural scarcity, demand-induced scarcity, and supply-induced scarcity begun in the lowlands repeat themselves in the uplands. In other words, a lack of secure tenure to land in the uplands, which is owned by the government and often 'captured' and arbitrarily apportioned to multinational developers, interacts with growing populations to increase environmental degradation there. This degradation, in turn, affects the agricultural yields of the local populace, as well as impacting the economic situation in the country as a whole (see Figure 3.1).

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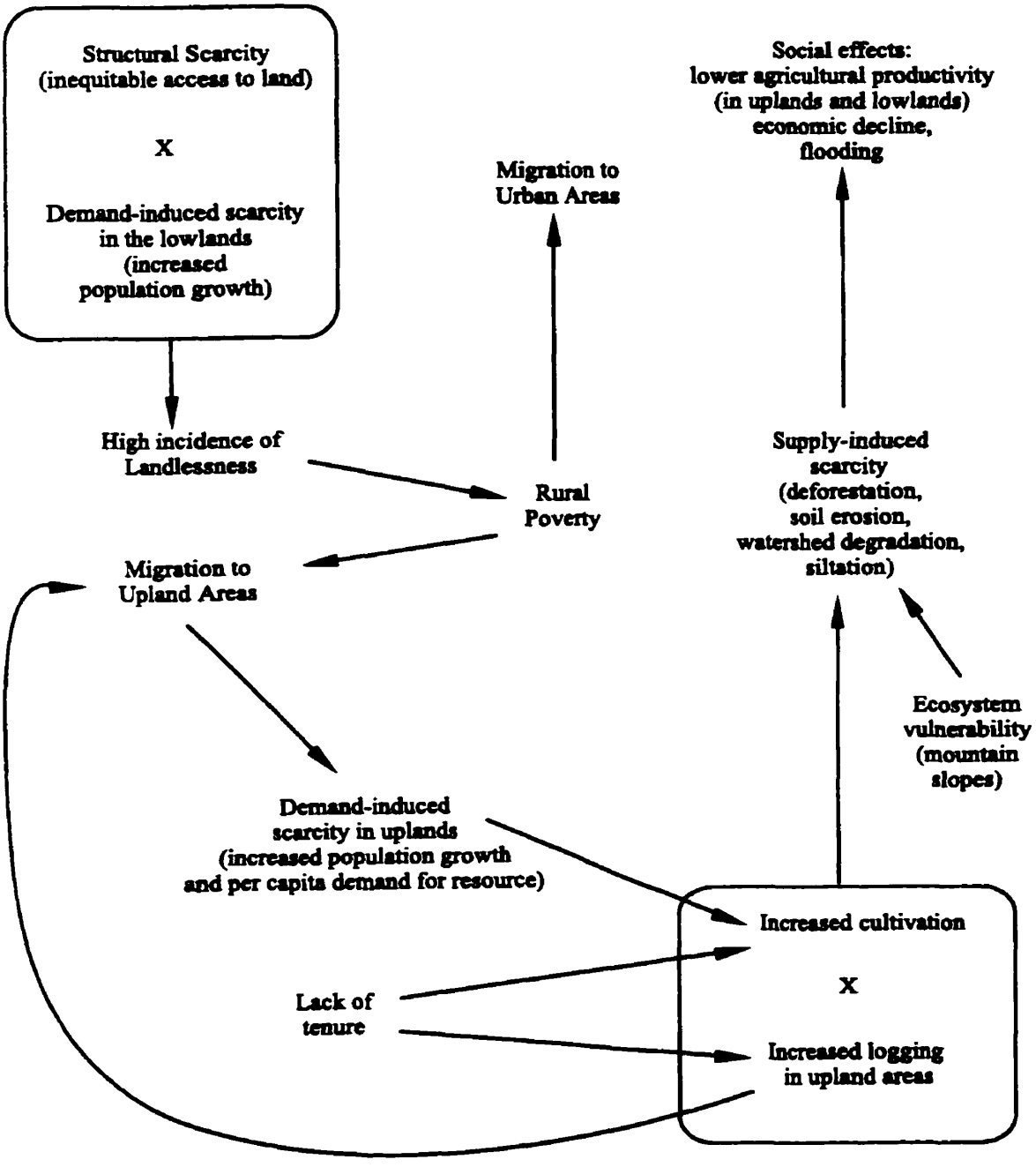
[100]World Bank, *Philippines*, 7-8.
[101]Ibid., 8.
[102]Kummer, *Deforestation*, 41-42.

Figure 3.1: Environmental Scarcity in the Philippines



Yet, while "[r]educed agricultural and economic production can cause objective economic deprivation, which can make grievances stronger in the affected populations[,] ...objective deprivation does not always produce strong grievances."[103] In fact, "[d]isadvantaged people do not necessarily think that inequalities are unjust, nor does their perception of injustice, once awakened, lead inexorably to political movements demanding redress of grievances."[104] A number of specific factors caused objective scarcity to translate itself into conflict in the Philippines. These will be studied through an investigation of the communist insurgency.

Environmental Scarcity and Conflict

Two principal insurgencies have gripped the Philippines throughout the last few decades. One has been concentrated in the south of the country, principally Mindanao. Represented by the Muslim National Liberation Front (MNLF) and, more recently, the Muslim Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), this conflict has been concerned primarily with regional autonomy. The other insurgency has involved the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), its military arm, the New People's Army (NPA), and its political wing, the National Democratic Front (NDF); it extends throughout the Philippine archipelago. The NPA insurgency will be focused upon here. While an argument could be made for the role of

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[103]Thomas Homer-Dixon and Jessica Blitt, "Introduction: A Theoretical Overview,"in *Ecoviolence: Links Among Environment, Population, and Security*," ed. Thomas Homer-Dixon and Jessica Blitt (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1998), 10.

[104]Ted Gurr, *Minorities at Risk: A Global View of Ethnopolitical Conflict* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1993), 61.

environmental scarcity in the growth of both conflicts,[105] its connection to the NPA insurgency is much more developed.

The CPP and the NPA have their roots in the PKP and the Hukbalahap guerrilla movement, which peaked in the 1940s and early 1950s. Jose Maria Sison — the future leader of the CPP — was expelled from the PKP in April 1967, after aiding in the preparation, and possibly the writing, of a critique of the party. He then formed the CPP on December 26, 1968.[106] The NPA was formed on March 29, 1969, a highly symbolic date. It was "the twenty-seventh anniversary of the founding of the World War II Hukbalahap communist guerrilla organization... [By selecting that date], the CPP leader hoped to lend credence to his claim that the new guerrilla movement was actually a continuation of the struggle for agrarian reforms Central Luzon tenant farmers and field hands had begun three decades earlier."[107]

There are also some clear differences between the CPP-NPA movement and earlier uprisings. It was no accident that the CPP was formed on the seventy-fifth anniversary of Mao Tse-Tung's birth[108] — it "began as an intellectual, student-led, highly ideological radicalism based on the teachings and policies of Mao. The origins of the NPA can be found, therefore, in a student movement of the late 1960s, one that surfaced...[on] campuses across

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[105]It has been argued that the MNLF conflict has its roots in the early land colonization programs, which encouraged the migration of Christian peasants from overcrowded regions to the more sparsely Muslim populated south. See Peter Chalk, "The Davao Consensus: A Panacea for the Muslim Insurgency in Mindanao?" *Terrorism and Political Violence* 9, no. 2 (summer 1997): 79-98; and David Wurfel, "Government Response to armed communism and secessionist rebellion in the Philippines," in *Governments and Rebellions in Southeast Asia*, ed. Chandran Jeshurun (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1985), 222.

[106]Kessler, *Rebellion and Repression*, 29-39.

[107]Jones, *Red Revolution*, 31.

[108]Ibid., 17.

the world."[109] In the Philippines, this student movement focused on matters of imperialism and neo-imperialism, issues including the US military bases, social justice, land reform, and the corrupt government of Ferdinand Marcos.[110] From the very beginning, the key elements of the new (or rejuvenated) movement were evident — it would be one firmly rooted in Maoist tradition, concerned with the pressing social issues of the day, and conscious that the route to expanding its base of support lay in addressing rural grievances historically ignored by the elite-led government.

The insurgency was "Communist-led but peasant-based."[111] This description best expresses the dichotomy between the insurgency's ideological roots at the center and its very concrete relevance to the ordinary Filipino in the countryside. One of the key national level strategies of this movement was that of 'protracted people's war', "wherein a proletarian-led peasant army builds up its strength in the Philippine countryside (which contains 70 per cent of the population) and advances 'wave upon wave' to encircle the urban bastions of the Philippine government."[112]

> Peasant recruits were essential for the accomplishment of the CPP's goal.
>
> > The peasantry was seen as so important, first because it made up the majority of the population and the majority of the poor and disempowered. As such, it was from among the peasantry that the party could recruit the bulk of its fighters for the NPA, the armed wing of the CPP, after 1969. Second, the peasantry was important because the 'weakest link' of the state was in the countryside (due to geography and its lack of control over local exploiters)

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[109]Steinberg, *The Philippines*, 124.
[110]Ibid.
[111]Kessler, *Rebellion and Repression*, 2.
[112]Bello, "Rebirth of the Philippine Revolution," 268.

> and it was there that the party and its army could defeat the armed forces of the state and encircle the cities to seize state power.[113]

The inaccessibility of the countryside — especially the mountain regions — to the state's armies was an important factor in recruitment patterns. The uplands were remote and so protected against any sort of large-scale military assault on the rebels, while the remaining forests provided them with cover in which to hide. The mountain terrain was therefore itself a factor in making the opportunity structure conducive to violent protest against the government.

While the kind of recruits and the location of recruitment was determined at the national level, local factors determined the receptivity of rural populations to the insurgents. "It is no coincidence that the insurgency [was]... strongest in areas where there [were]... high levels of tenancy (Central Luzon), large numbers of landless labourers (Negros Occidental and other sugar growing areas), and illegal land grabbing (Mindanao)."[114]

It is the interaction of these two levels of analysis — national and local — that provides the clearest picture. For example, the insurgency was not very strong in Cebu. High rates of deforestation, ever since the days of Spanish colonization, had left it with virtually no natural forest cover and extremely high rates of soil erosion.[115] One would therefore assume that the processes of environmental scarcity described above would have been at their most

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[113]James Putzel, "Managing the 'Main Force': the Communist Party and Peasantry in the Philippines," *Kasarinlan* 11, no 3 & 4 (1st and 2nd quarters 1996): 142. Despite the importance of peasant recruits to the CPP, Putzel makes the interesting observation that the CPP had a strictly instrumental attitude toward the peasantry. In other words, it subordinated the peasantry's struggle to the party's goal of seizing state power, and discouraged the growth of any sort of strong autonomous peasant moment. This, he maintains, was a function of the theory and attitude upon which its communism was based. Ibid., 136.

[114]Timberman, *Changeless Land*, 300.

[115]David Kummer, Roger Concepcion, and Bernardo Canizares, "Environmental Degradation in the Uplands of Cebu," *Geographical Review* 84, no. 3 (July 1994): 267.

pronounced here, and the insurgency the strongest. Yet, the deforestation actually made the island strategically *unattractive* for the simple reason that, with no trees, there was nowhere to hide. This affected the opportunity structure, making insurgency a less practical alternative. At the same time, local factors also came into play. Economically stronger and with no history of feudalism, Cebu did not exhibit the same pattern of grievances as most of the rest of the country, despite the objective environmental degradation.[116] In contrast, in other parts of the Philippines, local and national political and environmental factors coalesced to produce the ideal breeding ground for NPA insurgency.

Environmental Scarcity, Regime Type, and Conflict

Opportunity Structure

"...[S]erious civil strife is likely only when the structure of political opportunities facing aggrieved groups keeps them from peacefully expressing their grievances but at the same time offers them openings for violent action against the perceived cause of their grievances."[117] Such was the structure of political opportunities during the Marcos years.

After declaring martial law, President Marcos moved to crush the insurgency though the same two-pronged approach favoured by leaders throughout Filipino history — a massive military campaign coupled with a program of agrarian reform, the latter designed to respond to peasant demands and so weaken the movement. The fact that the agrarian reform would

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[116]Investigative Journalist, confidential interview by author, Manila, 12 April 1999. Cebu has become highly industrialized, compared to the other islands, and now imports resources, such as rattan and water, from the other islands. President of NGO, confidential interview by author, Manila, 12 April 1999. Whether or not this situation is sustainable in the long term, it has created very different dynamics in that province.

[117]Homer-Dixon and Blitt, "Introduction," 11.

also undermine his main rivals — the elite landowning class — was an important facet of the program as well.[118] Nonetheless, Marcos' land reform project proved to be as ephemeral as those of his predecessors. Martial law had ensured that there were no independent, legitimate, peasant organizations to work for change from the grassroots, and the landlords retained enough power and pressure to block most progress. While, the military campaign initially drove the NPA underground,[119] martial law had the effect of dramatically increasing military corruption. This, coupled with a significant growth in the size of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), resulted in militarization and increased human rights abuses throughout the country.[120]

Gregg Jones argues that, "[b]y the late 1970s, the effects of militarization and human rights abuses by government soldiers had become a primary, if not the single most important, reason that thousands of rural Filipinos joined or supported the NPA."[121] Human rights abuses during Marcos' martial law regime increased the grievances of rural Filipinos. At the same time, militarization, human rights abuses, state repression, and inaccessibility of political involvement, ensured that there was no peaceful way of expressing these grievances. The only opportunities were perceived to arise out of violence, and Filipinos were driven into the arms of the insurgency. This is an interaction that has repeated itself throughout Philippine history — "[t]he history of the peasant movement over the past decades clearly shows the tendency for rebellions to occur where 'legitimate' protest is suppressed."[122]

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[118]Wurfel, "Government Responses to Armed Communism," 228.

[119]Ibid.

[120]Jones, *Red Revolution*, 123-24.

[121]Ibid., 125. While interesting, this statement presents the sort of unifocal analysis that obscures other important reasons for the NPA's growth.

[122]Lara, Jr. and Morales, Jr., "Peasant Movement and the Challenge of Rural Democratisation," 149.

Decremental Deprivation

Relative deprivation (RD) can manifest itself in a number of different ways. One type that is of significance to the case of the Philippines is what Ted Gurr terms 'decremental deprivation' (see Figure 3.2). This occurs when expectations remain constant but perceived capabilities decline. Gurr argues that decremental deprivation is likely more common in 'traditional societies', or traditional segments of transitional societies, and can be brought on by factors ranging from natural disasters to losses of one particular group *vis-à-vis* another over scarce values.[123] Arguably, in the Philippines, decremental deprivation occurred whenever the government licensed a large development project, which would immediately impact upon the upland populations. While this engendered no change in expectations, the negative impacts of the projects were perceived to bring about a definite decrease in capabilities.

Marcos demonstrated a blatant disregard of the upland populations, especially the indigenous peoples. Already affected by the economic and social consequences of environmental degradation, they were forced to bear the brunt of development projects, which would displace them and destroy their ancestral lands, all for the benefit of lowlanders. These projects served as catalysts to transform underlying grievances, which had no peaceful outlet, into support for the NPA. One particular instance of this interaction will be briefly explored below, although other examples abound.

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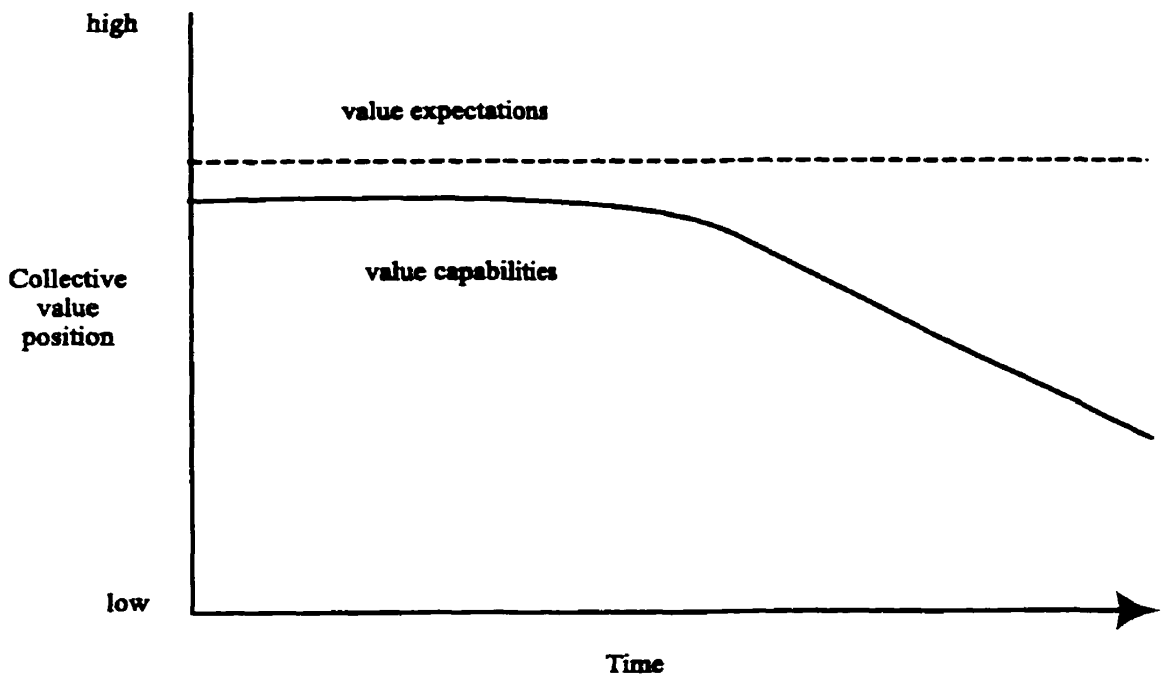
[123]Ted Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 46-50.

Figure 3.2: Decremental Deprivation



Source: Ted Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 47.

Chico River Dam[124]

In the late 1970s, "[w]ith World Bank[125] funding, the state-owned National Power Corporation (NPC) started construction work to build four dams along the Chico river in the Cordillera mountain ranges of Northern Luzon."[126] The purpose of the project was to generate electricity for national development, yet, in the process, it would have flooded and destroyed the ancestral lands of the Bontoc and Kalinga tribes,[127] submerging fifteen villages and "affecting 15,000 families, destroying 2,500 has. [hectares] of coffee and fruit plantations and 2,000 has. of rice terraces."[128]

The affected tribes forged a *Bodong* (peace pact) and joined together to oppose the project.[129] They employed a number of different strategies to prevent construction of the dam, including moving survey markers and displacing equipment during the night. The NPC countered by equipping their survey teams with military escorts. This resulted in a protracted

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[124]The story of the resistance by the Tingguian indigenous peoples against the Cellophil Resources Corporation (CRC) has many similarities with the Chico River Dam. It also occurred during the martial law period, though, in this instance, the resource in question was forests. CRC, "owned by Marcos crony Herminio Disni, received a timber license and proceeded to ravage the forest and build a paper and plastic plant right at the heart of Tingguian land in Abra." Francisco A. Magno, "The Growth of Philippine Environmentalism," *Kasarinlan* 9, no. 1 (3rd quarter 1993): 10. "The CRC operations was viewed by anti-Marcos activists as another attempt by the government to disenfranchise the indigenous people of the Cordillera of their ancestral lands. Cellophil became the rallying point against the excessiveness and greed of the Marcos regime." Eventually, a prominent anti-Cellophil activist joined the insurgency, contributing to its expansion in the Cordillera and abroad. Benjamin Bagadion, "Cellophil vs. the Tingguians (B)," unpublished paper, undated, 1.

[125]Examples of the involvement of the World Bank in large-scale development projects with negative environmental repercussions abound throughout the world, especially in the 1970s and 1980s. "Oblivious to their environmental costs, the World Bank...financed during the period 1979-1983 the construction of hydroelectric dams that resulted in the involuntary resettlement of at least 400,000 people in four continents." Magno, "Growth of Philippine Environmentalism," 9.

[126]Ibid., 9.

[127]Benjamin Bagadion, "People Power in the Philippines," reprinted from *The Philippine Sociological Review* 39, no. 1-4 (January-December 1991): 5.

[128]*Soil, Soil Erosion, Land Use*, 56.

[129]Ibid., 56.

struggle "of mobilization and nerves" between the government and the Kalinga and Bontoc tribes, attracting international attention.[130] Out of desperation, a significant number of indigenous people joined the growing communist insurgency, jump starting the movement in the Cordillera mountains.[131]

In the end, the World Bank abandoned the project in the early 1980s, thus marking a success of sorts for the indigenous peoples. Yet, despite this seeming victory, the Chico River Dam fight, as well as the one around the Cellophil logging concession, and the related assassination of a respected Kalinga leader by the military, served to crystallize feelings of resentment amongst the indigenous peoples against the Marcos regime, its disregard for their welfare, and the virtual futility of peaceful protest. "Cordillerans angered by these developments and who felt no longer safe joined the NPA and the revolutionary mass organizations under the control of the CPP."[132]

Aspirational Deprivation

The second form of RD that is of particular interest here is 'aspirational deprivation' (see Figure 3.3). "Those who experience aspirational RD do not anticipate or experience significant loss of what they have; they are angered because they feel they have no means for attaining new or intensified expectations."[133]

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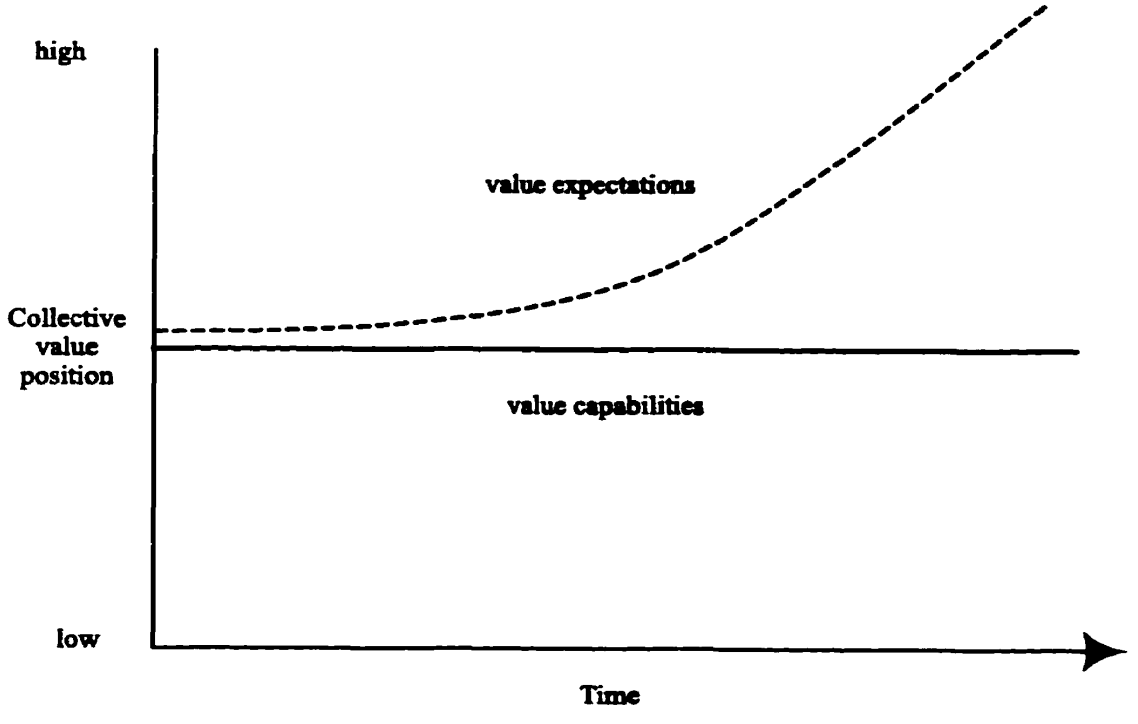
[130]Bagadion, "People Power in the Philippines," 6.

[131]Investigative Journalist; Assistant Vice-President of NGO, confidential interviews by author, Manila, 12 April 1999; 23 April 1999.

[132]Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, ed., *Peace Matters: A Philippine Peace Compendium* (Manila: University of the Philippines, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, Peace, Conflict Resolution and Human Rights Program and the University of the Philippines Press, 1997), 213.

[133]Gurr, *Why Men Rebel*, 50-52.

Figure 3.3: Aspirational Deprivation



Source: Ted Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 51.

While Gurr does not directly make the connection to cognitive liberation, this is seems to be a clear way in which aspirational deprivation could be brought about. "Leaders help bring about 'cognitive liberation' of their groups by helping their followers understand that their situations should and can be changed. Leaders change their followers' conception of justice — that is, their conception of the 'social good' — thus encouraging them to see the current situation as illegitimate and needing change. Consequently, the followers' sense of relative deprivation rises."[134] In the case of the Philippines, many upland dwellers did not have a cogent understanding of what was causing the negative conditions in the countryside. Even if they did, the tendency was to simply endure rather than attempt to agitate for change. 'Cognitive liberation' came about when insurgents entered rural villages and educated them as to the roots of their environmental and social grievances.[135]

"The New People's Army (NPA)...is an effective recruiter of indigenous peoples, peasants, and landless workers into its movement in that it offers a vision of change, a metaphor for liberation."[136] This vision served to increase aspirational deprivation, as local populations began to believe that they deserved more, in a situation that remained static. Once again, when this occurred within the context of an opportunity structure unconducive to peaceful protest or democratic means of social change — as in the Marcos period — the possibility of violent conflict increased.

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[134]Homer-Dixon and Blitt, "Introduction," 11. See Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982) for a more in-depth discussion of 'cognitive liberation'.

[135]While the term 'cognitive liberation' was not specifically used, this explanation stems from comments made by an Investigative Journalist, confidential interview by author, Manila, 12 April 1999.

[136]Antonio P. Contreras, "The Discourse and Politics of Resistance in the Philippine Uplands,"*Kasarinlan* 7, no. 4 (2nd quarter 1992): 42.

In the final analysis,

> ...the peasants supported the NPA because organizations they set up provided real benefits to peasants. Bandits were punished and a rudimentary form of justice imposed where none existed. Land rents and interest rates were lowered and when landlords resisted and brought in the military, lands were confiscated and redistributed...Rudimentary health and educational services are provided and starting in the mid-1980s, more and more socio-economic projects for raising production had been introduced.[137]

Marcos' authoritarian regime served to exacerbate already existing underlying grievances brought about by environmental scarcity in the uplands. With no avenues for peaceful protest in the context of significant human rights abuses, peasants had little choice but to support the insurgency. This process was encouraged by large development projects, which proved in concrete terms the government's disregard for their welfare, and worsened already poor environmental conditions. Finally, education/indoctrination by the NPA provided them with a new way of looking at their lives and the opportunity to try and change them (see Figure 3.4).

Peasant support for the NPA burgeoned in the 1970s and 1980s (see Table 3.2). This was due to a combination of long term (remote) and short term (immediate or proximate) causes. The former included persistent environmental scarcity, such as unequal access to land, insecure land tenure, deforestation, and soil erosion; poverty; and historical marginalization. More proximate causes for NPA support can be found in the development and logging programs and persistent human rights abuses of the Marcos regime, as well as the cognitive

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[137]Joel Rocamora, *Breaking Through: the Struggle Within the Communist Party of the Philippines* (Pasig City, Manila: Anvil Publishing, 1994), 20.

liberation brought about by the NPA recruiters. Already, on an admittedly preliminary basis, it is apparent how an authoritarian regime can affect underlying relations between environmental scarcity and conflict, increasing support for the insurgency and thus levels of conflict.

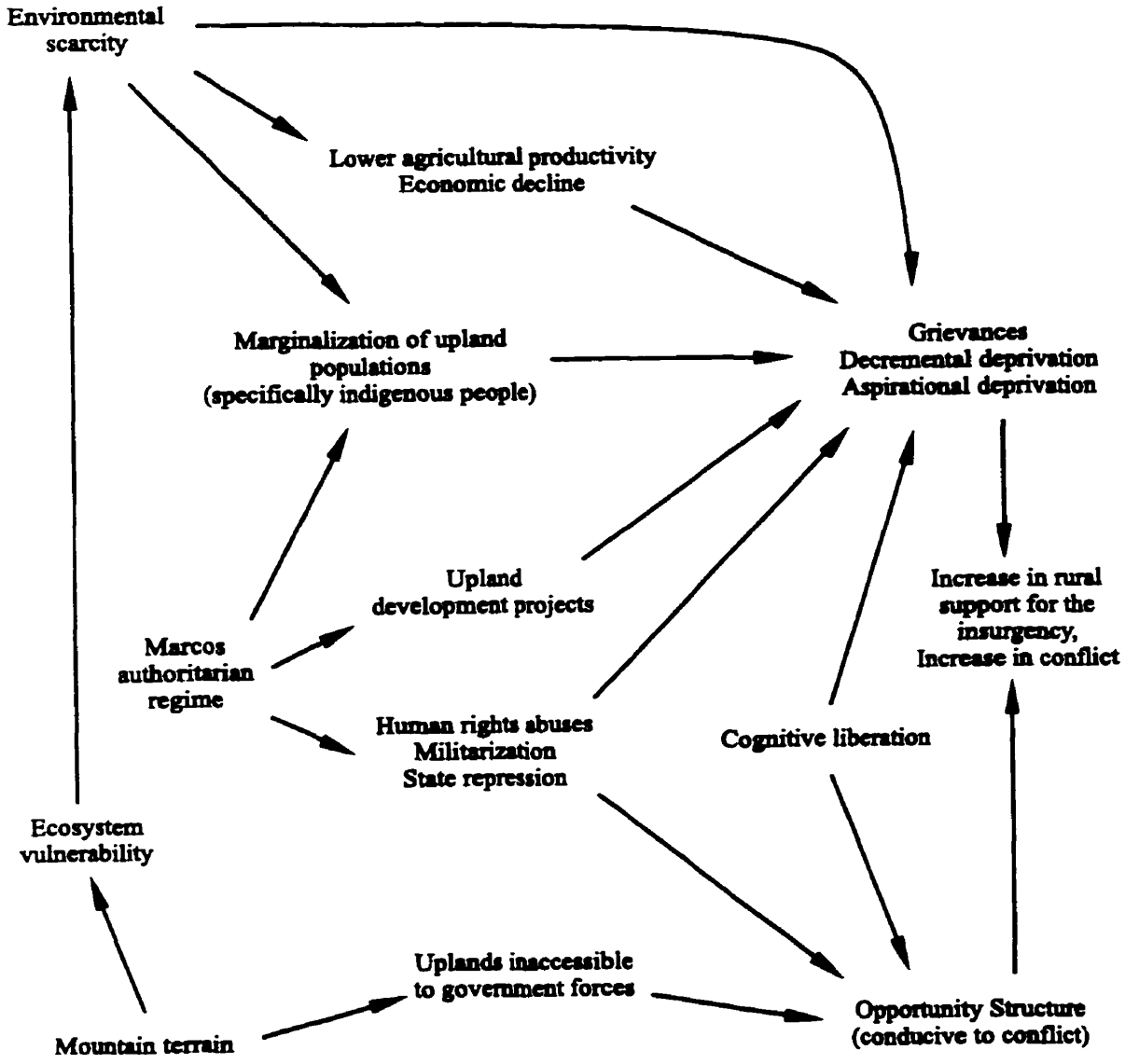
Table 3.2: Strength of the NPA, 1969 - 85

	1969	1972	1976	1980	1983-85
Areas covered:					
Towns	7	43	135	376	NA
Provinces	2	9	31	43	59
Rifles	35	600	1,000	4,000	10,000
Guerrillas (full/part time)	35	1,000	1,500	8,000	30,000[a]

[a] - 1984 figures NA - not available

Source: Adapted from Walden Bello, *US Sponsored Low-Intensity Conflict in the Philippines*, Food First Development Report, no. 2 (San Francisco: The Institute for Food and Development Policy, 1987), 49.

Figure 3.4: Environmental scarcity, regime type and conflict in the Marcos years



CHAPTER FOUR:
DEMOCRACY AND THE PHILIPPINES

In 1986, democracy, or at least some limited form of it, returned to the Philippines. Beginning in the tumultuous years of Corazon Aquino's administration, that democracy began a process of deepening, albeit with many setbacks and reversals. Concurrently, the insurgency experienced a significant setback. Levels of support declined to about 8,000 in early 1994, down from some 13,000 in 1992 and a peak of 25,000 in 1985.[1] Democracy had a twofold effect on conflict in the Philippines. The advent of formal democracy initially diminished grievances and removed some of the rationale for violence. This was not enough to completely stop the insurgency, however. Only through further democratization — political, social, and environmental reforms — could the root causes of the conflict be addressed, grievances further decreased, and the opportunity structure opened to peaceful protest. In conjunction with other factors, democratization in the Philippines has increased the potential for long term peace.

The manner in which democracy and democratization have contributed to the reduction in conflict in the Philippines is outlined below. Initially, the principal elements of the Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos presidencies are described, as well as the important role played by civil society. The new democracy's overall impact on conflict is shown, along with the limitations of a democracy that remains strictly procedural. The importance of democratic deepening to strengthen the democracy, improve environmental conditions, empower marginalized communities, and decrease support for the insurgency is then illustrated.

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[1]Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), *EIU Country Report: Philippines* (London: EIU, 2nd quarter 1994), 8.

Formal Democracy

Corazon Aquino (1986-1992)

Corazon Aquino rode a tide of "people power" to the presidency of the Philippines in February 1986. After 14 years of authoritarian rule masked by a thin veil of legality, President Marcos announced that he would hold snap presidential elections. Contrary to expectations, the opposition managed to put aside its differences at the last minute and unite behind Aquino – the widow of a popular slain opposition leader – and, it is widely agreed, legally won the election. However, through rampant electoral fraud, it was announced that Marcos had won. Despite attempts by the United States to broker some sort of agreement between the two parties, Aquino refused to compromise. Marcos was dealt his final blow by the military. Dissatisfied by Marcos' rule and worried about the continuing insurgency, they had been plotting a coup for some time. On February 22, many rebelled, barricading themselves in the military and constabulary headquarters. Calling on the Church to send people for support, they were soon protected by a human barricade of Filipinos from all walks of life.[2] It was very clear that, "[n]ot only were the poor, the peasants, and the students pressing for [Marcos] to step down, but so too were the church, the military, and the businessmen."[3] With the United States finally adding their voice to the mounting opposition, Marcos had no recourse but to flee to Hawaii on February 25, 1986.

With Corazon Aquino's ascent to power, some form of formal democracy returned

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[2]Richard Kessler, "The Philippines: The Making of a 'People Power' Revolution," in *Revolutions of the Late Twentieth Century*, ed. Jack Goldstone, Ted Gurr and Farrokh Moshiri (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1991), 210-11.

[3]Gretchen Casper, *Fragile Democracies: The Legacies of Authoritarian Rule* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1995), 117.

to the Philippines. During her six years in power, the Philippines [had]: "fair elections, independent legislature and judiciary, free press, free assembly leading to the creation of peoples' organizations and numerous non governmental organizations, to name a few. Democratic space widened, allowing media to proliferate. As prisoners of conscience were freed, peoples' assemblies were allowed."[4] The key facets of democracy were in place, yet many of the new democratic institutions remained very weak.

Aquino swept to power at the head of a fundamentally divided coalition of supporters — a mixture of popular organizations with reform agendas and the traditional powerful conservative elite — whose only commonality was a desire to strip Marcos of power. This tension would colour the entire course of her time in power. Pressured by the United States and the military, who were both worried about the leftist elements in her cabinet, the Aquino regime gradually moved toward the right during her first few years in office.[5]

This is not to say that there was no element of reform in her administration. In 1987, a new Constitution was ratified which, "forbade the new issuance or extension of Timber License Agreements (TLAs), the primary legal instrument granted to loggers. This paved the way for the phase-out of the timber concession system. At the same time, the DENR strengthened enforcement of forestry regulations resulting in the closure or suspension of several timber companies."[6] The Constitution also explicitly recognized the importance of

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[4]Eleanor Gonzalez, "Decentralization and Popular Participation in the Philippines: Experiences and Issues in Societal Transformation," Occasional Paper no. 8. Institute for Popular Democracy, September 1997, 5.

[5]Joel Rocamora, "Lost Opportunities, Deepening Crisis: The Philippines under Cory Aquino," in *Low-Intensity Democracy*, ed. Barry Gills, Joel Rocamora and Richard Wilson (London: Pluto Press, 1993), 196-99.

[6]Howie Severino, *Opposition and Resistance to Forest Protection in the Philippines*, UNRISD Discussion Paper (Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), 1998), 5.

civil society, giving it a role in governance,[7] and stated that: "The State recognizes and promotes the rights of indigenous cultural communities within the framework of national unity and development."[8] While not a concrete pronouncement on indigenous rights, this provided an initial step away from the disenfranchisement of indigenous people.

The 1987 Constitution also acknowledged the importance of agrarian reform. Yet, despite the decree-making powers that Aquino had during her first year in office, she chose not to pass any land reform laws. Instead, she submitted legislation to a landlord dominated Congress when it convened in July 1987. The Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law (CARL) was passed almost a year later.[9] It was immediately rejected by many on the grounds that it went too far, and by many more for not going far enough. Over the next few years, it became clear just how riddled with loopholes the new law was. Gareth Porter argues that:

> By allowing landowners to retain five hectares of land for themselves and three hectares for each dependant fifteen years or older, and to go to court if dissatisfied with compensations, and by allowing up to twelve years for implementation, the law will exempt from transfer most of the land theoretically covered and provide maximum opportunities for landlords to retain even more land.[10]

The lack of any real land reform under Aquino would prove to be one of the major disappointments of her regime, and her biggest betrayal of the popular half of the forces that brought her to power.

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[7]Paulynn Sicam, Director, Peace and Human Rights Desk, Benigno Aquino Foundation, interview by author, Manila, 13 April 1999.

[8]Quoted in *The Failed Promise: Human Rights in the Philippines Since the Revolution of 1986* (Geneva: The International Commission of Jurists, 1991), 82.

[9]Rocamora, "Lost Opportunities," 200.

[10]Gareth Porter with Delfin Ganapin Jr., *Resources, Population and the Philippines' Future: A Case Study*, World Resources Institute (WRI) Paper no. 4 (New York: WRI, 1988), 47.

Fidel Ramos

There tends to be a very positive assessment of President Fidel Ramos' term in office. His peaceful transition to power indicated to many that the democracy was well on its way to being consolidated. The net approval ratings of his administration, while fluctuating somewhat in the face of specific events, remained positive throughout most of his term.[11] Ramos made a concerted effort to institutionalize government-NGO relations — appointing prominent NGO leaders to cabinet positions and forming numerous Councils linking government and NGOs (including the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development in 1992).[12]

In 1993, Ramos launched 'Philippines 2000', a "pro-reform, pro-growth economic platform...that aimed to achieve official status as a Newly Industrializing Country (NIC) by 2000."[13] The principal objectives of this program included a rise in per capita income, economic growth, a drop in levels of poverty, making the export-orientation of the economy stronger, and people empowerment.[14] While all admirable goals, these objectives would prove to be inherently contradictory and lead to the greatest paradox of Ramos' regime — economic development *versus* the environment.

The term 'development aggression' was coined by the human rights community in response to the development programs, and resultant human rights violations, under

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[11]Net approval rating is calculated by subtracting the percentage unsatisfied from the percentage satisfied. For greater detail, see Tony Guidote, "September 1997 Performance Report Card — Part I: Rating the Ramos Administration on Specific Issues," *Social Weather Bulletin* 98-1/2, double issue (January 1998).

[12]Gerard Clarke, *The Politics of NGOs in Southeast Asia: Participation and Protest in the Philippines* (London: Routledge, 1998), 78-79.

[13]Ibid., 77.

[14]Ibid.

Philippines 2000. Development becomes development aggression "when the people become the victims, not the beneficiaries; when the people are set aside in development planning, not partners in development; and when people are considered mere resources for profit-oriented development, not the center of development."[15] Repercussion of development aggression include displacements of people due to development projects, land conversions, mining activities and logging operations.[16] These issues continue to serve as a sobering counterpoint to many of the positive economic, social, environmental, civil society, and conflict-reducing programs of the Ramos administration, and highlight the continued prevalence of environmentally-based grievances.

Civil Society

This thesis focuses primarily on the state, and its role in affecting environmentally-induced conflict. Nonetheless, the essential role of civil society and state-society relations in cementing formal democracy and furthering democratic deepening should not be overlooked.

> Civil society is the realm of organized social life that is voluntary, self generating, largely self-supporting, and independent of state and political parties. It encompasses independent interest groups, civic organizations, churches, social movements, mass media, and cultural and intellectual networks acting in the public sphere to express their ideas and interests, achieve collective goals, make demands on the state and hold state officials accountable.[17]

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[15]Definition from a poster of the Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates. Quoted in Ramon Casiple, "Human Rights vs. Development Aggression," *Human Rights Forum* VI, no. 1 (July-December 1996): 43.

[16]Philippine Human Rights Resource Centre, *Growth 2000: Selective Prosperity, Human Rights Report on the Fourth Year of the Ramos Administration* (Manila: Philippine Alliance of Human Rights Advocates (PAHRA), 1997), 49-57.

[17]Larry Diamond, "Degrees, Illusions, and Directions for Consolidation," in *Beyond Sovereignty: Collectively Defending Democracy in the Americas*, ed. Tom Farer (Baltimore and London: The Johns

Civil society can affect every stage of the process of regime change: "[a] robust civil society, with the capacity to generate political alternatives and to monitor government and state, can help start transitions, help resist reversals, help push transitions to their completion, and help consolidate and deepen democracy." [18] Robert Putnam maintains that social capital — trust, norms, and networks of civic engagement — makes coordinated action easier, thus making society more efficient. This serves to strength both the state and the economy: a strong society means a strong state.[19]

> On the demand side, citizens in civic communities expect better government and (in part through their own efforts), they get it. They demand more effective public service, and they are prepared to act collectively to achieve their shared goals...On the supply side, the performance of representative government is facilitated by the social infrastructure of civic communities and by the democratic values of both officials and citizens. Most fundamental to the civic community is the social ability to collaborate for shared interests...Building social capital [is]...not easy, but it is the key to making democracy work.[20]

Civil society was a powerful positive force during both the Aquino and Ramos administrations. Martial law initially slowed the proliferation of NGOs, but by the mid-1970s "a new generation of NGOs emerged, stimulated by rising rural poverty and political marginalisation."[21] The civil society leaders who emerged from the martial law period helped to write the 1987 Constitution and brought civil society to life in the post-authoritarian

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Hopkins University Press, 1996), 91-92.

[18]Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, "Toward Consolidated Democracies," *Journal of Democracy* 7, no. 2 (April 1996): 18.

[19]Robert Putnam with Robert Leonardi and Raffaella Nanetti, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 167-76. For an opposing view, see Joel Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

[20]Putnam, *Making Democracy Work*, 182, 185.

[21]Clarke, *Politics of NGOs*, 67.

period. NGOs were quick to recognize the powers given to them by the Constitution and push their involvement to the limits.[22] Meanwhile, their numbers continued to grow — in 1995 there were some 14, 398 NGOs and POs (peoples organizations) in the Philippines.[23]

Networks of civil society worked to overcome some of the more conservative tendencies of the new governments, using the increased democratic space and greater opportunities for participation in governance to push forward reform. This helped to advance the process of democratic deepening. Ramos' institutionalization of NGO involvement in state affairs further strengthened the power of civil society, thus improving the prospects for further democratic deepening.

Democracy and Conflict I

The Aquino and Ramos administrations marked the return to democracy — procedurally defined — in the Philippines. Both were democratically elected, though Aquino in a restrictive environment, and restored the civil and political liberties necessary to allow citizens to exercise their votes. As outlined earlier, Huntington argues that the very advent of formal democracy should result in less conflict. In many ways, this is what occurred in 1986.

In the initial euphoria after 'people power' swept Aquino into government, it seemed that the insurgency was essentially over. In the days leading up to the election, the CPP had

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[22]Paulynn Sicam, Director, Peace and Human Rights Desk, Benigno Aquino Foundation, interview by author, Manila, 13 April 1999.

[23]Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, ed., *Civil Society Making Civil Society*, vol. III, *Philippine Democracy Agenda* (Diliman, Quezon City: Third World Studies Center, 1997), 1.

called for a national boycott, arguing that Aquino was just as much a member of the elite as was Marcos. Nonetheless, the populace turned out in droves to vote for Aquino. When she came to power, the left found itself inexplicably marginalized. After years of armed struggle to eliminate Marcos, the CPP initially had no clear role to play in the post-Marcos era.[24] It is ironic that "the mass movement which had prided itself for adhering to what it called 'the mass line,' and which had built a mass base by being in touch with the needs and aspirations of the people, should adopt a policy that was so clearly against the temper and will of the Filipino people."[25]

This reversal of fortunes for the insurgency has historical precedent in the Philippines. As explored in the previous chapter, the Huk rebellion suffered a setback after elections that were widely perceived to be legitimate and democratic.[26] For both the Huks and the NPA, "significant changes occurred in the political environment that had been crucial for their growth in the first place. This does not mean the system changed to become totally acceptable to rebels. In most cases it changed only enough to make rebellion no longer sensible for a significant number of guerrillas and their supporters."[27]

The decline in support for the NPA insurgency was largely due to the expectations engendered by the new democracy, a member of the human rights community in Manila recently explained. Prior to martial law, people believed in the democratic process. It was only

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[24]Gregg Jones, *Red Revolution: Inside the Philippine Guerrilla Movement* (Boulder, Colo.,: Westview Press, 1989), 155-59.

[25]Benjamin Pimentel, Jr., "Where the People Are," in *Critical Decade: Prospects for Democracy in the Philippines in the 1990s*, ed. Dolores Flamiano and Donald Goertzen (Berkeley: Philippine Resource Centre, 1990), 27.

[26]Patricio N. Abinales, ed., *The Revolution Falters : the Left in Philippine Politics after 1986* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, 1996), 20.

[27]Ibid., 19.

during martial law that people had to look for an alternative — the insurgency. After the return of democracy, there was something to hope for again. That expectation was enough to turn many away from the insurgency.[28]

In the long term, these increased expectations could prove to be dangerous, if they are not met with continued increased capabilities. Grievances do not disappear in a democracy, they are simply held in abeyance for a while. In the short term, however, it seems that an important change in opportunity structure is brought about by the advent of a more democratic regime, with violence beginning to be perceived as less of a valid option. "One assumes the legitimacy of new regimes; there is, so to speak, a period of grace, a time to build support."[29]

> The ideological impact of the restoration of formal democratic processes cannot be underestimated. The autocracy is gone. In the perception of the people, the restoration of the freedoms of speech, the press, and assembly has, on the whole, reopened the avenues of peaceful dissent...No matter how flawed or limited the restored democratic system turns out to be, it is not easy to propose its overthrow through armed revolution...[30]

Even though extensive disillusionment had set in by the end of Aquino's regime,[31] brought on by "[s]ix years of political and economic mismanagement..., no social volcano erupted. The people bid their time in silent anger...The [1992 presidential] election thus became the popular

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[28]Paraphrased from Paulynn Sicam, Director, Peace and Human Rights Desk, Benigno Aquino Foundation, interview by author, Manila, 13 April 1999.

[29]Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars* (New York: BasicBooks, 1992), 98.

[30]Rene Ciria-Cruz, "Why the Philippine Left Must Take the Parliamentary Road," *Kasarinlan* 7, no. 4 (2nd quarter 1992): 56-57.

[31]Between 1986 and 1990, Aquino's net approval rating never dropped below +35%, and was as high as +72% in late 1986. However, between 1990 and Ramos' election in 1992, her approval rating fluctuated between +7% and +13%. Mahar Mangahas, "Democracy and Economic Progress: the Filipino People's Perspective," *Social Weather Stations Occasional Paper*, presented at the XIII World Congress of Sociology, Bielefeld, Germany, 18-23 July 1994, table 2, p.11.

expression of a six-year rage against total national immobility for which traditional politicians were faulted."[32] This demonstrates the psychological power of elections. The very process of democratically changing administrations became a non-violent outlet for expressing national grievances.

Aquino, and later Ramos, benefitted from the fact that the presence of a democratically elected government serves to moderate levels of conflict. It does not, however, magically bring an immediate end to all conflict. Arguments that 'democracies are more pacific' must be tempered by an understanding of the difficulties faced by many Third Wave democracies, the Philippines included.

In the early days of the Aquino administration, the CPP and the NPA found themselves divided between those who wanted to continue the armed struggle and those who thought an alliance could be formed with this new government.[33] The Aquino government was similarly divided. Nonetheless, Aquino's belief in negotiations prevailed — "[n]egotiations are necessary and a political settlement possible, Aquino said, because the real roots of these rebellions are social injustices which her government would now address."[34] In the end, however, the government neither addressed the social injustices, nor seriously entered into negotiations.

"By the time that a ceasefire was in place and negotiations with the NDF started in December 1986, it was already clear that a political settlement was not possible in the face

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[32]Josef Leroi Garcia, "No Left Turn," *Kasarinlan* 7, no. 4 (2nd quarter 1992): 5-6.

[33]Jones, *Red Revolution*, 159-62.

[34]Joel Rocamora, *Breaking Through: the Struggle Within the Communist Party of the Philippines* (Pasig City, Manila: Anvil Publishing, 1994), 46.

of US and military opposition...[Despite provocations from the military]..., the NDF went ahead with the ceasefire, but the negotiations proper quickly ground to a halt."[35] Then, on January 22, 1987, peasants who had come to present their demands for land reform to the government were fired upon, killing between thirteen and nineteen people, and wounding a hundred or more, an event now known as the Mendiola Massacre. This prompted the NDF to withdraw from the talks, which allowed Aquino to "unsheathe the sword of war."[36]

The conflict escalated in the years to come as military influence grew, both reaching their peak in 1989.[37] While the military's campaign served to weaken the insurgents militarily, it also substantially increased human rights violations in both rural and urban areas.[38] Thus, despite the positive impact that the advent of democracy had on the expectations of the Filipino people, the conflict continued.

This observation illustrates the importance of not focusing exclusively on the impact of regime type. Levels of conflict increased in the late 1980s, despite the reduction in norms of violence that is associated with formal democracy. Similarly, factors other than regime type played a role in the eventual decrease in the insurgency, in the early 1990s. As outlined above, the military's counter-insurgency campaign and intelligence operations proved extremely effective in harrying the NPA.[39] Another significant reason for the decline of the insurgency lay in mistakes made by their central command.

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[35]Ibid., 48-49.
[36]Ibid., 49.
[37]Clarke, *Politics of NGOs*, 75.
[38]Rocamora, *Breaking Through*, 49.
[39]Ibid., 91.

The boycott of the 1986 elections is the explanation most often referred to, but two others also deserve mention. The first was a series of internal purges undertaken to try and rid the movement of the military's "deep penetration agents" (DPA) throughout the 1980s. Campaigns against DPA led to the torture and execution of hundred of cadres. This reverberated throughout the movement, destroying the bonds of trust essential to an underground movement.[40] The insurgency was further weakened by the very public split in 1992-93 between the "reaffirmists" and the "rejectionists" over tactics and strategies of the armed struggle, rural *versus* urban mobilization, and decision-making within the CPP.[41]

Negotiations have also had an important impact on the conflict. After Aquino's failed attempt, negotiations were not initiated again until Ramos' entry into office. Exploratory talks went on for two and a half years before formal talks were convened in Brussels in July 1995 and the *Agreement on the Formation, Sequence and Operationalization of the Reciprocal Working Committees* reached. Talks were suspended shortly thereafter and only resumed a year later. At that point the *Additional Implementing Rules* were signed, frameworks clarified, and the text for the preamble of the *Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law* agreement decided upon.[42] Finally, in 1998, "[t]he Philippine government and Communist rebels concluded a human rights accord, the first breakthrough in the peace talks aimed at ending the insurgency. The accord is to be followed by agreements on social rights and development. Since negotiations on the accord have already taken six years and are still

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[40]Ibid., 92.

[41]See, Abinales, ed., *The Revolution Falters*, Chapter One.

[42]Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, ed., *Peace Matters: A Philippine Peace Compendium* (Manila: University of the Philippines, Center for Integrative and Development Studies, Peace, Conflict Resolution and Human rights Program and the University of the Philippines Press, 1997), 177 and 186-90.

without practical results, there is not much optimism when it comes to lasting peace being achieved."[43]

Economic factors have also played an important but often overstated role. A recent article on environmental security in the Philippines illustrates the dangers of overemphasizing the impact of one element in an analysis, in this case the economy. The author, Jose Gerardo Alampay, obviously believes that there exists a connection between environmental scarcity and the NPA insurgency in the Philippines, but cannot equate this with the improved political stability that the country has experienced since the early 1990s. Looking at its improved economic performance during that period, he is therefore forced to conclude that short term economic growth — even at the expense of environmental protection — has generated this political stability. He further states that "...without sound environmental management, economic progress will not be sustainable. Any stability acquired by short-run economic returns can be threatened when the harm to the environment begins to exact its toll."[44]

While this argument might be valid, it reads as the sort of groundless portentous statement for which environmentalists are most often criticized. Furthermore, its emphasis on economics obscures some very important dynamics. While the role of an economic variable cannot be ignored, Alampay would have been much more insightful had he also included an independent political variable into his analysis. Suddenly the increased stability since the early 1990s is not quite so apocryphal. It could be linked to such factors as democratization and

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[43]European Platform for Conflict Resolution and Transformation, *Prevention and Management of Violent Conflict* (Utrecht: European Platform for Conflict Resolution and Transformation, 1998), 275.

[44]Jose Gerardo A. Alampay, "Revisiting Environmental Security in the Philippines," *Journal of Environment and Development* 5, no. 3 (September 1996): 334.

positive government policies, both related and unrelated to the economy, and the consequences of increased government legitimacy for grassroots grievances and support for the insurgent movement.[45]

All of the above elements have played an important role in the course of the NPA insurgency since the Marcos period. In the long term, however, successive governments have realized that these factors cannot be relied upon exclusively. At the heart of the peace process begun during the Ramos administration has been the understanding that counter-insurgency operations and negotiations are not enough, "but the primary path to any peace is reform, very very wide ranging reform — socio-political, socio-economic, judicial, police and military reforms."[46]

The decrease in conflict was not solely brought about due to military campaigns, mistakes of the insurgents, negotiations, or economic factors. It could also not depend entirely on the legitimacy of a democratic government, especially one which showed itself as equally willing as its predecessor to engage in human rights abuses, not follow through on land reform, and bring 'total war' to the people. The most basic level of formal democracy brings about only the most basic decrease in conflict. For long term change, the root causes of conflict must be addressed, responding to raised expectations, concretely decreasing grievances and opening the opportunity structure to peaceful challenge.

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[45]Similar examples of unifocal analysis can be found within the other streams of research as well. Concentrating exclusively on military repression or NPA mobilization strategies — while both important factors — serves to obscure the long term environmental and structural imbalances at the heart of peasant upland life.

[46]Senior government employee, confidential interview by author, tape recording, Manila, 29 April 1999.

Root Causes

In late 1992, shortly after assuming the office of the presidency, Fidel Ramos created the National Unification Commission (NUC). The NUC was an "ad hoc advisory body to the President tasked to 'formulate and recommend, after consulting with the concerned sectors of society, to the President...a viable general amnesty program and peace process that will lead to a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the country'."[47] After public consultations, conducted nation-wide, a series of commonly expressed root causes of the conflict were identified:

> a. Massive and abject poverty and economic inequity, particularly in the distribution of wealth and control over the resource base for livelihood
> b. Poor governance, including lack of basic social services, absenteeism of elected local officials, corruption and inefficiency in government bureaucracy, and poor implementation of laws, including those that should protect the environment
> c. Injustice, abuse of those in authority and power, violations of human rights, and inequity, corruption and delays in the administration of justice
> d. Structural inequities in the political system, including control by an elite minority, traditional politicians and political dynasties, and enforcement of such control through private armies
> e. Exploitation and marginalization of Indigenous Cultural Communities, including lack of respect and recognition of ancestral domain and indigenous legal and political systems.
>
> Serious concerns were also expressed about, among others, the destruction of the environment...[48]

Many of the issues that had led to support for the insurgency during Marcos' time, and were explored in the previous chapter, had not disappeared six years later. Most of the root causes identified by the NUC — poverty, destruction of the environment, absentee

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[47]Republic of the Philippines, National Unification Commission (NUC), "Recommendations for a Comprehensive Peace Plan," 1 July 1993, 1.

[48]Ibid., 2-3.

landlords, lack of a voice in the political system... — focus on the situation experienced by the poor in the Philippines, with particular emphasis on indigenous people. In fact, "[g]overnment failure to respond effectively to the poverty and powerlessness of the rural majority has provided fertile ground for the continued growth of the NPA and the revolutionary movement in general, even after the fall of Marcos."[49] Recognizing this, the NUC proposed six 'paths to peace' to achieve a *comprehensive and lasting* peace. The first of these is "[t]he pursuit of social, economic and political reforms that address the root causes of the armed conflict."[50] The necessity for these reforms illustrate the fact that, even in 1992, democracy in the Philippines was still lacking some essential elements that would be essential for the resolution of the conflict.

Democratic Deepening

The NUC recommendations are not the only basis on which to judge that democracy in the Philippines was lacking in some important respects. The Philippines has been called, among other things, a "delegative democracy"[51] and an "elite democracy."[52] Both of these notions exemplify the limited nature of the democracy in 1986 and after. They also illustrate

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[49]Francisco Lara, Jr. and Horacio Morales, Jr., "The Peasant Movement and the Challenge of Rural Democratisation in the Philippines," *The Journal of Development Studies* 26, no. 4 (July 1990): 153.

[50]NUC, "Recommendations," 2. The other five paths are: "building consensus and empowerment for peace; pursuit of a peaceful, negotiated settlement with the different armed rebel groups; establishment of programs for honorable reconciliation and reintegration into mainstream society; addressing concerns that arise out of the continuing armed hostilities; and nurturing a positive climate for peace." Ibid., 3-4.

[51]Delegative democracies are unrepresentative, unconsolidated democracies. Guillermo O'Donnell, "Delegative Democracy," *Journal of Democracy* 5, no. 1 (January 1994): 56.

[52]Robert Stauffer, "Philippine Democracy: Contradictions of Third World Redemocratization," *Kasarinlan* 6, nos. 1 & 2 (3rd and 4th quarters 1990).

some of the problems inherent in minimalist conceptions of democracy, and the reason that further democratization is often necessary.

The impact of democracy at the grassroots level is one that is frequently ignored by procedural democracy theorists, who concentrate on the more straightforward world of national level politics. While this, for the reasons outlined in Chapter One, tends to be more precise and useful for the sake of analysis, it obscures important issues. None of the more minimalist definitions of democracy address "the analytically distinct problem of how the competitive electorate is expanded to include the entire citizenry...Instead, the politics that takes place in national capitals is simply assumed to extend uniformly system-wide, and persistent patterns of authoritarianism treated as ad hoc exceptions."[53]

'Free and fair elections' do not necessarily automatically translate to the local level: "against this [regular presidential elections] must be counterpoised the socioeconomic reality that many voters are beholden to landlords or employers. Preoccupied with subsistence, they sell or give away their votes. This situation allows the provincial dynasties to continue to treat entire provinces as their personal fiefdoms."[54] This disenfranchisement from political participation and any possible redress of grievances remains an important root cause of conflict. While the concept of popular democracy is often dismissed as idealistic and far too normative for cogent analysis, there are concrete reasons that such a level of popular involvement is essential; "...without democratic control of resources and without

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[53]Jennifer Franco, "Elections and Democratization in the Philippines," unpublished dissertation, Brandeis University, Department of Politics, February 1997, 5.

[54]Clark Neher and Ross Marlay, *Democracy and Development in Southeast Asia* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1995), 65.

participation, the formal democracy that exists in the Philippines and much of the rest of the world means very little to the poor people who are the majority in these countries."[55]

Democratic deepening is essential in improving the quality and genuineness of democracy for the populace, especially at the grassroots level. Formal democracy might technically be in place, but if it has little to no effect on the life of the majority, then there is something missing. Democratic deepening involves "...democratizing political parties and local governments, strengthening legislative and judicial branches, developing grassroots civic movements, empowering the poor, punishing corruption and human rights abuses, and subjecting the military to civilian control..."[56] Not only does this further democratization strengthen the quality of the political system, it also serves to diminish levels of conflict. In the Philippines, programs resulting from democratization are the best equipped to target the root causes of conflict outlined by the NUC.

Who is to blame?

An important first step in the process of deepening democracy is the realization that upland poor are not solely to blame for the environmental situation in which they struggle. As was seen in the previous chapter, this negative perception of the upland farmer was prevalent during the Marcos era, and did not change immediately with the advent of democracy. It only began to be reversed once more in-depth and realistic analysis of the environment was undertaken. As Plumwood pointed out in her analysis of the impact of

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[55]Robin Broad with John Cavanagh, *Plundering Paradise: The Struggle for the Environment in the Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 140.

[56]Diamond, "Degrees, Illusions, and Directions," 54.

democracy on the environment, this is the sort of analysis rarely attempted by an authoritarian regime that is uninterested in information that might put its policies in a bad light and is capable of silencing "messages that those in power do not wish to hear..., as indifferent to gross damage to the surrounding natural world as it is to gross damage to the social world."[57]

When the first Secretary of DENR appointed by Aquino, Fulgencio Factoran, took the post he immediately set out "to get basic, coherent and factual information on the state of the environment, particularly the forests. He needed statistics that reflected the reality, not bloated reforestation figures drummed up during the Marcos years."[58]

In the early years of democratization, the change in thinking in the government regarding the environment was due in part to Factoran's efforts.[59] Prior to his time, small farmers who were caught illegally cutting trees were fined and/or jailed, while the big loggers were allowed to break laws with impunity. As soon as Factoran joined DENR, however, he made a formal statement that he did not intend to have any *kaingineros* brought to court. He did this despite the fact that, like many of his forestry people, he continued to believe *kaingin* or swidden agriculture was the major destroyer of the environment because it was the final act in a long chain of environmental destruction.[60] Factoran explained the reasoning behind his actions in a recent interview:

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[57]Val Plumwood, "Has Democracy Failed Ecology?" in *Ecology and Democracy*, ed. Freya Mathews (Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1996), 137.

[58]Marites Dañguilan Vitug, *The Politics of Logging: Power from the Forests* (Pasig City, Manila: Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, 1993), 48.

[59]Obviously, he was not the only one agitating for change on the environment. A burgeoning environmental NGO movement would also prove to be very influential. Nonetheless, as head of DENR, Factoran had the capacity to move environmental thinking ahead or stall it. He chose the former.

[60]Fulgencio Factoran, former Secretary of DENR, interview by author, tape recording, Manila, 13 April 1999.

> ...the emphasis prior to my time was really to excise the *kaingineros*, to blame everything on them. And the evidence of political will was manifested by the number of *kaingineros* you arrested and brought to jail. I said, I will not bring any single *kainginero* to jail. That was a dramatic statement at the time. And I never did. So I said instead, what we'll do is give them the alternatives, show them that what they're doing is bad for them. Not bad for us, not bad for the environment, but bad for them who are forest dwellers. And by saying that I was consciously trying to negate the attraction, attractiveness of the insurgency to the farmers.[61]

This changing attitude of the Philippine government toward the upland dwellers is finally illustrated in the *Philippine National Development Plan*, released in 1998. In sharp contrast to previous analyses of deforestation, it lists some causes of forest destruction, in *decreasing* order of significance, as:

> (1) the bias of state policies for commercial utilization of natural resources up to the seventies; (2) the promotion of development projects such as plantations, ranches, dams, and mines at the expense of prime forests; (3) the use of weak 'command and control' schemes of forest management where the government lays down standards but weakly enforces compliance; (4) the inadequacy of pricing schemes and instruments to reflect true scarcity values of forest resources; and (5) inequities that force the landless in the lowlands to migrate to the uplands, putting pressure on the forest and competing with long-term residents and indigenous peoples.[62]

Perceptions regarding the causes of deforestation have changed significantly since Marcos' time. With this has come changes in policies relating to the people subsisting in the uplands. The Local Government Code (LGC), Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM), and the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) are three examples of democratization that directly affect rural populations, and their level of support for the insurgency.

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[61]Ibid.

[62]National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), *The Philippine National Development Plan: Directions for the 21st Century*, Republic of the Philippines, 1998, 4-3.

Local Government Code — Decentralization

"The passage of the 1991 Local Government Code is one of the most remarkable changes that has taken place in the Philippines since the restoration of democracy in 1986."[63] Prior to the LGC, local politics was founded on personalism at best, warlordism at worst. Even those who were interested in long term socio-economic development, as opposed to short term material benefits, "were largely helpless in the face of a centralized system of planning, budgeting, and expenditure. National officials and government agencies decided on major development projects with little or no attention to local government views."[64]

Decentralization tends to be undertaken for two possible reasons: "[f]irst, decentralization hastens decision-making processes by decongesting central government and decreasing red tape. Second, and perhaps more important, it increases citizen participation, and empowers them, thereby leading to a more open and democratic government."[65] For post-authoritarian regimes, decentralization can be an effective way of furthering the democratization process. In the Philippines, "[a]nti-Marcos sentiment fueled a determination to dismantle the mechanisms of central control instituted by the deposed president. It was argued that bringing real authority and responsibility closer to constituents was inherently more democratic."[66] The Local Government Code was an important step toward further democratization and people empowerment at the local level.

The LGC had a number of concrete goals: strengthening self-reliance of local

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[63]Steven Rood, "Decentralization, Democracy, and Development," 116.

[64]Ibid., 114-15.

[65]Alex Brillantes, Jr., "Decentralization, Devolution, Democratization: Old Concepts, Contemporary Applications," *Kasarinlan* 12, no. 1 (3rd quarter, 1996):84.

[66]Rood, "Decentralization, Democracy, and Development," 116-17.

governments; making them more accountable to the public; and institutionalizing an 'active partnership' between NGOs, POs, the private sector and Local Government Units (LGUs).[67] It devolved to LGUs, "the authority and responsibility to deliver basic services, [including] health, social welfare, environment and agricultural services. It also...[devolved] to LGUs the enforcement of certain regulatory functions, e.g., enforcement of forestry laws...[and it increased] financial resources available to LGUs..."[68]

Included in the Code is "the 'right of the people to a balanced ecology, in their respective territorial jurisdictions'."[69] The LGC allows local control over the environment, and, by incorporating NGOs and POs into the local government system, accepts the 'comparative advantage' of these organizations (such as, trust, flexibility, and responsiveness) when it comes to responding to the needs of local people.[70] This further strengthens civil society, which reinforces the process of democratic deepening.

The LGC has not been an unmitigated good, however. A lot of Filipinos continue to have mixed feelings about it. Many problems have arisen during the implementation process due to inefficiency at both the local and national levels. For example, "[a] number of governors assigned newly devolved forestry personnel to process mining permits and collect taxes, thereby reducing the time they spent in upland communities. The governors saw no immediate revenue potential for local governments in community forestry, and thus neglected

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[67]Adrian Cristobal, Jr., "How the Local Government in Valencia, Negros Occidental Views Democracy and Citizenship," in *Democracy and Citizenship in Filipino Political Culture*, ed. Maria Serena I. Diokno, vol. I, *Philippine Democracy Agenda* (Diliman, Quezon City: Third World Studies Center, 1997), 258-59.

[68]Alex Brillantes, Jr. "NGOs and Local Development in the Philippines: An innovation in Local Governance," *Go-NGO Watch*, nos 6-7 (Jan-May 1995): 4-5.

[69]Gonzalez, "Decentralization and Popular Participation," 7.

[70]Brillantes, "NGOs and Local Development," 5.

it."[71] Simply devolving environmental protection to the local level will not guarantee positive change. Much continues to depend on the character of particular LGUs. However, given the increased accountability that comes with rural democratization, as well as the growing role granted to civil society, those local governments that continue to focus on revenue over sustainability will find themselves being increasingly called to task by their electorate.

Furthermore, in tandem with examples of LGUs failing the environment and their local communities, there are many examples of the opposite occurring. For example, in a recent Rapid Field Appraisal (RFA)[72] of the LGC, it was concluded that "[d]ecentralization under the 1991 Local Government Code has been an overall success. Despite transition difficulties encountered at the beginning of implementation in 1992, and administrative systems that are often holdovers from pre-Code centralized procedures, redefinition of governance has allowed local governments to better serve their communities." An "illustrative list of some innovative LGU practices to local environmental problems" was included in the overview of the RFA, listing positive environmental programs of some 90 LGUs.[73]

In the end, "the Code is considered one of the main vehicles for democratic consolidation. It contains, recognizes, and establishes the major institutions and processes that would create the environment for a viable democracy."[74] It also demonstrates the fluidity of the democratization process — Aquino passed the bill, but Ramos implemented it.

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[71]Severino, *Opposition and Resistance*, 3.

[72]These appraisals were begun in 1992 by the USAID-assisted Local Development Assistance Program (LDAP). They track the implementation of the LGC on a yearly basis. Currently they are being undertaken by the Governance and Local Democracy Project (GOLD). From, GOLD, "Overview: Seventh Rapid Field Appraisal of Decentralization," prepared for *Beyond Breakthroughs: LGU Performance After Decentralization*, Manila, the Philippines, 27-29 January 1998.

[73]Ibid.

[74]Cristobal Jr., "How the Local Government," 259.

Community-Based Forest Management

The DENR *1992 Annual Report* states that, "[t]he Department has consistently pursued the policy of people empowerment in environment and natural resources management. As such, it has espoused the management of forest resources by local communities and the empowerment of local communities to democratize access to resources and undertake resource management."[75] While many would be somewhat skeptical of such lofty goals from a government department, a number of DENR's projects since 1986 have indeed centered around community empowerment. The Community-Based Forest Management (CBFM) program, composed of a number of different projects, including the Community Forestry Program (CFP) and the Integrated Social Forestry (ISF) program, has been at the center of this new, progressive approach to sustainable forestry.[76]

As Secretary Factoran stated in a 1992 speech, CBFM is based on the principle: "that the communities themselves are in the best position to manage and protect the forests. However, before they can fully assume this role, the problems of poverty and tenure must be addressed first, so that these communities can be convinced to assist government."[77] Initiated in 1990, "[t]he Community Forestry Program (CFP) grants privileges to farmer residents of upland communities to utilize, process and sell forest products within residual forests through a 25-year Community Forest Management Agreement (CFMA) renewable for another 25 years."[78] In so doing, it not only returns control over the forests to upland dwellers, but

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[75]DENR, *1992 Annual Report* (Manila: DENR, 1992), 1.

[76]Gilbert Braganza, "Philippine Community-Based Forest Management," in *Environmental Change in South-East Asia*, ed. Michael Parnwell and Raymond Bryant (London: Routledge, 1996), 317.

[77]Fulgencio Factoran, "Five year report of Secretary Factoran," University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City, 23 March 1992, transcript of speech.

[78]DENR, *1993 Annual Report* (Manila: DENR, 1993), 7.

provides them with some degree of security of tenure, and a means of income. Furthermore, the process of CFP brings together DENR, local communities, and NGOs, who all form an important part of the program.[79] As with the LGC, this institutionalization of NGO involvement serves to further strengthen civil socity and the democratization process.

The ISF program is based on similar principles to CFP. It "aims to address the problems of deforestation, poverty and landlessness through the issuance of Certificates of Stewardship Contracts (CSCs) over parcels of denuded forest lands, with the condition that reforestation as well as agro-forestry and other livelihood activities will be undertaken in said parcels of land."[80] This program was one of the ones devolved to the Local Government Units in 1993, with DENR retaining the model sites, which would be eventually converted into training laboratories.[81] Unfortunately, this was a less than successful endeavour. DENR "did not devolve to the LGUs the authority to issue tenurial instruments. It devolved the personnel and the funds and forgot all about it, until now...Many social forestry sites have been left unattended"[82]

Other problems with both forestry programs have surfaced. These include failures by the central government bureaucracy to promote the programs, continued illegal logging, and the inexperience of communities in financial management.[83] Nonetheless,

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[79]Braganza, "Philippine Community-Based Forest Management," 318.

[80]DENR, *1989 Annual Report* (Manila: DENR, 1989), 18.

[81]DENR, *1993 Annual Report*, 8 and DENR, *1996 Annual Report* (Manila: DENR, 1996), 8.

[82]NGO personnel, confidential interview by author, tape recording, Manila, 14 April 1999.

[83]Marites Dañguilan Vitug, "The Politics of Community Forestry in the Philippines," *Journal of Environment and Development* 6, no. 3 (September 1997): 337. Vitug is actually referring specifically to community-based forestry, but the issues apply equally to ISF.

> [a]s can be seen from the Aquino and Ramos administrations, democracy – in contrast to Marcos's authoritarian rule – spawned reforms in the logging industry. Obstacles to forest protection and rehabilitation policies lie not so much on disagreements or disputes in the Cabinet, or even contradictory thinking from the Office of the President, but in their implementation. What blocked implementation or made it difficult were, and continue to be, pressures from vested interests in Congress and other politicians, corruption, and a bureaucracy not yet fully tuned into the new demands of a DENR shifting to community needs.[84]

The change in thinking about upland farmers and their role in deforestation has translated itself into concrete programs in which, "[u]pland farming communities are...seen by the government as potential stewards of the remaining forests; timber companies are viewed more as villains than protectors."[85]

Indigenous Peoples Rights Act

One of the five root causes of conflict in the Philippines according to the NUC is the 'exploitation and marginalization' of indigenous peoples (IP). The effect of this marginalization on conflict was seen in the preceding chapter. Throughout Philippine history, the IP have consistently borne the brunt of environmental degradation and government disregard. Pushed ever higher into the mountains by migrants from the lowlands, without a secure claim to the land on which they have lived for centuries, and a continuing target of development aggression, the IP have little reason to feel positively about their government.

Yet, democratization has brought with it some notable steps in the advancement of IP rights.

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[84]Ibid., 339-40.

[85]Severino, *Opposition and Resistance*, 1-2.

> Partly because of the high-profile resistance in the 1970s, the framers of the 1987 Philippine constitution recognized the indigenous peoples' claims to their ancestral land, but a law defining ancestral domain still has to be passed by Congress. Since 1995, however, the environment department has begun giving out certificates of ancestral domain claims, which recognize indigenous ownership of land they and their ancestors have occupied since 'time immemorial'... Environmentalists hope that once an ancestral domain law is passed, indigenous groups can use these certificates to legalize their claims to the land.[86]

One of the most important changes that democratization has brought to the IP has been the passage of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA) in October 1997. A landmark legislation, at least on paper, it allows indigenous peoples to formally certify the ownership of their land by applying for a Certificate of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) or Certificate of Ancestral Lands Title (CALT).[87] At last, IP have been given a legal claim to their land in such a way that their historical right to it is recognized, unlike other tenurial instruments of the state, which are implicitly based upon the state's right to grant tenure over *its* land. The IPRA also provides IP with priority rights to harvest or develop the natural resources in the ancestral domains, given certain environmental considerations.[88]

This Act is a substantially weakened version of what was originally proposed in consultation with representatives of the indigenous communities. Importantly, claimed areas

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[86]Sheila S. Coronel, "The Endangered," in *Saving the Earth: The Philippine Experience*, ed. Cecile C. A. Balgos (Pasig City, Manila: Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism, 1997), 196.

[87]Oliver Agoncillo, ed., *Pursuing Development in the Uplands: Contexts, Issues, Initiatives* (Quezon City, Manila: Upland NGO Assistance Committee, 1998), 37. CADT "refers to a title formally recognizing the rights of possession and ownership of ICCs/IPs over their ancestral domains identified and delineated in accordance with this law", while CALT "refers to a title formally recognizing the rights of ICCs/IPs over their ancestral lands." Republic of the Philippines, Congress of the Philippines, Metro Manila, "The Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997," Republic Act No. 8371, 28 July 1997, Chapter II, "Definition of Terms," Section 3c) and 3d), 3.

[88]"Indigenous Peoples Rights Act," Chapter VIII, "Delineation and Recognition of Ancestral Domains," Sections 57 and 58, 24.

with existing property rights (including TLA and mining agreements) are exempt from the IPRA,[89] thus doing nothing to resolve already existing cases of development aggression. Nonetheless, the IP have supported the bill, because another opportunity to begin to legislate the protection of their welfare might not emerge for many years.[90] Yet, while in some ways the IPRA has served to decrease the marginalization of the indigenous peoples, and increase the legitimacy of the government, the conflict brought about by development aggression continues to colour IP-government relations.

The drive for modernization and development may actually be worsening the amount of development aggression faced by indigenous communities. "The renewed emphasis on mining, forestry contracts and infrastructure projects increasingly endanger indigenous land and resources. In the last decade, for example, open-pit mining has stripped bare large areas of the Cordillera mountains, wreaking havoc on the ecosystems on which the Igorot peoples of Northern Luzon have long depended."[91] While, during the Marcos period, the major development projects menacing IP were timber and hydroelectricity related, mining has become the newest threat to environment and inheritance — "[m]ining is one of the most pressing environmental issues in the country today."[92]

This changed situation has principally come about due to the Mining Act of 1995 — part of Ramos' development strategy. Under the new Act, in direct opposition to the Constitution, companies that are 100 percent or majority foreign owned are allowed to exploit

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[89]Agoncillo, *Pursuing Development*, 33.

[90]Senior government employee, confidential interview by author, tape recording, Manila, 29 April 1999.

[91]Coronel, "The Endangered," 194-95.

[92]*Philippines 2000: A Myth Shattered*, Report on the Human Rights Situation, 1996-1997 (Quezon City, Manila: Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, 1998), 15.

Philippine natural resources.[93] The new Act does improve upon the old laws in some ways. The companies are required to hold consultations with affected communities, rather than simply obtaining their consent, before any activities are commenced. However, these meetings are generally advertisements for the new project, rather than genuine objective information sessions.[94]

More importantly, the Mining Act comes into direct conflict with the IPRA — the laws overlap.[95] While the IP have the right to the land, the multinational mining firms have the right to the natural resources in it. In mid-1999, the IPRA was challenged in the Supreme Court of the Philippines. The basis of the case is that the IPRA "violates the constitutionally guaranteed right of the state to 'control and supervise the exploration, development, utilization and conservation of the country's natural resources'."[96] The result of this renewed attack on IP rights will determine the status of indigenous people and the upland environment in the future.

Democracy and Conflict II

The above policies have advanced the process of democratic deepening by empowering marginalized communities, decentralizing power to local governments, and strengthening civil society. In so doing, they have also begun to address the root causes of

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[93]Philippine Human Rights Resource Centre, *Growth 2000*, 53.

[94]Agoncillo, *Pursuing Development*, 29.

[95]"Field Validation Visits," DENR-led Validation Visits to Five Case Areas with OPAPP (Office of the Presidential Advisor on the Peace Process) and the OPAPP Peace Partners, March 10 - April 2, 1998, vol. 3, 31.

[96]Alecks P. Pabico, "Landmark Law on Indigenous Peoples Hits a Dead End," *Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism*, October 1998, http://www.pcij.org.ph/stories/1998/ipra.html.

conflict, as outlined by NUC. This has led to a diminishment in grievances, and a change in opportunity structure.

The LGC and CBFM promote rural democratization, people empowerment and environmental reforms. They improve the economic prospects of rural people, diminish structural inequities in the political system, and improve the efficacy of local governments and justice systems. As noted in Chapter One, allowing "meaningful participation in the making of political decisions" is essential for the political legitimacy of regimes, without which relative deprivation could increase.[97] The IPRA specifically responds to the marginalization of IP and recognizes the importance of ancestral domain. The three policies thus target all five root causes of the insurgency, decreasing grievances.[98]

As was explored above, formal democracy can serve to make violence a less acceptable option. Yet, this does not completely bring conflict to a halt. If the democracy stagnates at the level of minimal, formal democracy, it is often ill-equipped to respond effectively to its citizens' peaceful demands. Many new democracies retain some of the repressive elements of the old regime. In the Philippines, this was most clear during the turbulent years of Aquino's 'total war' policy, when levels of conflict rose along with human rights violations.

With the help of a vibrant civil society, democratic deepening was slowly initiated during Aquino's administration and more consistently during Ramos' term in office. This laid

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[97]Juha Auvinen, "Political Conflict in Less Developed Countries," *Journal of Peace Research* 34, no. 2 (May 1997): 180.

[98]Clearly there will be some differences in levels of grievances between those areas where implementation has been successful, and those where it has not. Yet, at their basis, all three policies do target the root causes of the conflict.

the groundwork for a long term reduction in levels in conflict by responding to the root causes of conflict and opening avenues of peaceful action. However, democratic deepening can be initially destabilizing. Especially when it involves fundamental grassroots change, democratic deepening can cause powerful members of society to attempt to block proposed changes to the *status quo*. This is another explanation for the heightened conflict seen during the early years of the Aquino regime, when any progressive policies, appointments, or peace overtures tended to provoke a backlash of opposition and coup attempts.

Democratization can be problematic for the opposite reason, as well — if government reforms are not being pursued at an acceptable pace for the heightened expectations of the concerned populations, increased conflict can result. Finally, the insurgents also sometimes react negatively to democratic reforms. At first glance, one would suppose that they would support any endeavour to improve the lives of the peasants for whom they purport to fight, even if it comes from the government. However, the reality is that positive government programs are a threat to their existence. They realize that if people's lives are improved by the government then they have little reason to continue supporting a violent overthrow of that regime. This has resulted in threats to derail progressive natural resource management and land reform programs.[99]

From the above analysis, it is clear that the linkages between democratization and conflict in the Philippines are far more nuanced than described by the inverted U-curve hypothesis. In order to explain the conflict that extended into the late 1980s, that theory

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[99]Assistant Vice-President of NGO, confidential interviews by author, Manila, 12 April 1999.

would have to call Aquino's regime a semi-democracy,[100] and Marcos' a semi-autocracy. This does not differentiate clearly between the two regimes, and fails to acknowledge the distinct impact that the advent of formal democracy has on conflict. At the same time, it obscures the important fluidity of the democratic deepening process, once democracy is in place. Many of the policies which significantly affected the environment and the insurgency were initiated during Aquino's administration, and carried through into Ramos' term.

The inverted U-curve is unhelpful because of its assumption that all democracies are non-repressive and conflict free. This simply does not fit the case of the Philippines, nor would it likely apply to many other third wave democracies. Democracies can be semi-repressive. This, as suggested by the S-curve, is one of the factors that can make them conflict prone, despite their democratic institutions.

If formal democracy changes the opportunity structure by making it less conducive to violence, then it is democratization that produces an opportunity structure conducive to peaceful protest. While initially destabilizing, policies of decentralization and grassroots empowerment allow local people to obtain some democratic power. This provides them with an outlet to express grievances, make demands on the government, stand up to the powerful vested interests and retain control over their lives and the environment. The greater that outlet, the less of a need they will have to turn to the insurgency to bring about positive change (see Figure 4.1).

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[100]As mentioned in Chapter Two, Polity III actually terms Aquino's regime a coherent democracy. This is equally problematic for an analysis based on the inverted U-curve as coherent democracies are not supposed to have significant levels of conflict.

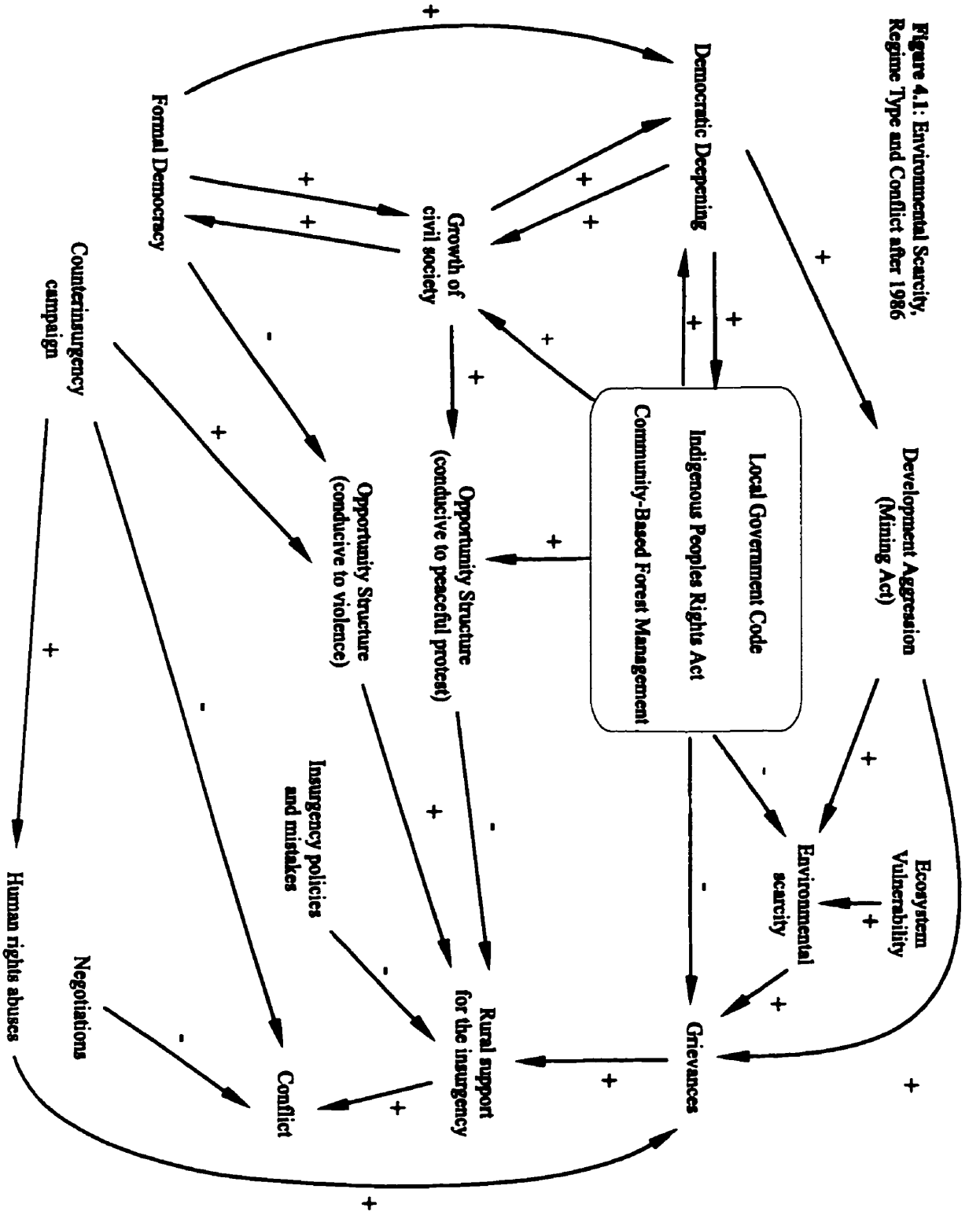

Figure 4.1: Environmental Scarcity, Regime Type and Conflict after 1986

'Now that the revolution has returned to us and the movement is strong again, let us ask ourselves, 'Will we join or not?' We may say no out of fear and misgiving. But the tide to time, the worsening crises we are facing, gives us no choice. Our lands are being grabbed, the mines will come, our rivers will die; we have no choice but to join our revolution. Our efforts alone to defend ourselves will not be enough. We need the armed struggle. In the revolution lies our future and our children's future'.[1]

CONCLUSION

In outlining the background to the case of the Philippines, an initial glimpse emerged of historical splits between the landowning elite and the peasantry and indigenous peoples; a split that only widened after independence and the disenfranchisement of the Huk guerrillas who had fought in World War II. This split, in conjunction with the vulnerability of upland ecosystems, set the stage for extensive environmental scarcity in the Philippines, involving unequal access to land and insecure land tenure, extensive logging, agriculture on steep upland slopes, deforestation, and soil erosion. These matters are closely linked to — in fact, practically inseparable from — those of development aggression and the marginalization of indigenous peoples.

An initial investigation of the impact of the Marcos regime on the relationship between environmental scarcity and conflict served to illustrate the fundamental interconnection between the three key variables, and the difficulty of disaggregating the terms. Insurgents brought about cognitive liberation. This served as a catalyst to transform underlying grievances based on environmental scarcity and development aggression into violent conflict.

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[1]Jaime Espina, "Reconciliation with former comrades, supporters marks Negros reb's recovery of territory," *Panay News*, 21 March 1998, http://www.geocities.com/~cpp-ndf/natsi151.htm.

Violence was a valid option because of the remoteness of the mountain terrain and the lack of access to peaceful political action. This close relationship between the principal variables explains why a number of interconnected issues must be addressed in order to diminish the level of conflict in the long term. These include the situation of environmental degradation in which uplanders are forced to subsist, their perception of marginalization and their need to have control over their natural resources.

The advent of formal democracy, in conjunction with negotiations, a strong counter-insurgency campaign, internal splits within the movement, and economic factors, weakened the insurgency in the short term. Democratic deepening initiated under Aquino and Ramos addressed the closely linked roots of the conflict, increasing the potential for a long term end to the insurgency.

Prospects for the Future in the Philippines

Despite thirteen years of democratic deepening, negotiations, counter-insurgency campaigns, and policies attempting to target the root causes of the conflict, the NPA insurgency has not died down completely. In fact, some would argue that it is on the rise.[2] President Joseph Estrada assumed power in June 1998 through the second democratic election since Marcos' ouster. A former B-movie actor, he was derided by many analysts but hugely supported by the majority poor who saw in him someone who understood them, and

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[2]Member of research institute, confidential interview by author, Manila, 12 April 1999. No definitive statement regarding the current state of the insurgency can be made at this point, however. Others equally confidently argue that there is no evidence of a recent upsurge. Paulynn Sicam, Director, Peace and Human Rights Desk, Benigno Aquino Foundation, interview by author, Manila, 13 April 1999.

would be responsive to their needs.[3] The president's popular support has remained high throughout the initial months of his regime,[4] yet all does not bode well for the still democratizing country.

Estrada's recent appointment of Cerilles to the position of Secretary of DENR was vigourously protested by most environmentalists. Unlike many of his predecessors, Cerilles is not seen as someone who will take environmental protection and NGO participation seriously. He has already created rifts with many of the NGOs. The Haribon Foundation, a leading environmental organization in the Philippines, wrote an article soon after his appointment entitled: "Save the Environment! Reject Cerilles!" To illustrate their problem with the new appointee, they state that "his statements demonstrate the absence of clear grounding on policy. For instance, in a forum with NGOs he stated that common sense dictates that the best way to protect a forest is to build roads around it. On the contrary, road construction is the fastest way to open the forests to exploitation and denudation."[5] Many people from Cerilles' own department resigned when he was appointed.[6]

Estrada's negotiating technique has also been very different from his predecessors; he has taken a much more hardline approach. Estrada did sign on to the human rights accord negotiated toward the end of Ramos' term. Nonetheless, the headline of the *Philippine Star* on April 18, 1999 read: "Peace this year or else - Estrada." In it, the President is said to have

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[3]Gabriella Montinola, "Parties and Accountability in the Philippines," *Journal of Democracy* 10, no. 1 (January 1999): 127.

[4]There has even been some movement on land reform. Joel Rocamora, "Estrada — The Movie: Take One," *Political Brief: A Monthly Digest of the Institute for Popular Democracy* 7, no. 1 (January 1999): 6.

[5]The Haribon Foundation, "Save the Environment! Reject Cerilles!" 10 February 1999, www.haribon.org.ph/cerilles.htm.

[6]President of NGO, confidential interview by author, Manila, 12 April 1999.

stated that: "'Within this year, we must end this (peace process with the communist rebels) and I have given our peace panel a deadline up to December this year to finalize it'."[7] This uncompromising stance will make negotiations more acrimonious than they were during Ramos' administration.

Yet Estrada has not split from the previous governments completely — his "remains, as with past administrations, an elite dominated, rent-seeking, corrupt regime."[8] He has even been accused of borrowing from the Marcos school of government — "some of Estrada's early appointments smack of nepotism and cronyism."[9]

All of these factors demonstrate the tenuousness of both the decline in levels of insurgency in the Philippines and its return to democracy. With negotiations faltering and DENR no longer quite as committed to community-level empowerment and control over natural resources, the prospects are somewhat grim.

> For those who have been coming in, in large numbers, what we are afraid of is that, given the new situation of unpeace...caused by the implementation of development projects, that the numbers that have been coming in quietly may diminish sometime, and the recruitment may in fact increase. We do have a projection that that may happen, or is beginning to happen...Anything to endanger the ever shrinking ancestral domain is a good recruiter for the rebel movement.[10]

Of course, this is not to say that the entire country will soon crumble into conflict and authoritarianism. The democratization that the Philippines has undergone since 1986 has created a strong civil society; strengthened democratic institutions; decentralized power to

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[7]Marichu Villanueva, "Peace this year or else - Estrada," *The Philippine Star*, 18 April 1999, 1.
[8]Rocamora, "Estrada — The Movie," 1.
[9]Montinola, "Parties and Accountability," 128.
[10]Senior government employee, confidential interview by author, tape recording, Manila, 29 April 1999.

local levels; decreased levels of deforestation; granted increased security to indigenous peoples; decreased norms of violence; and opened peaceful avenues of change. All of these factors will make it much more difficult to return to a state of large scale insurgency, even if objective grievances increase.

Two Research Agendas

At the outset, this thesis posed the question: what is the relationship among environmental scarcity, regime type and conflict? In order to begin building a theory that would address this puzzle, two principal research agendas were analyzed and integrated.

The environmental conflict literature is the 'second wave' of the environmental security discourse. It focuses on the specific issue of identifying causal pathways between environmental scarcity and conflict, rather than the more general question of integrating the environment into the security agenda. It generally concerns itself with the degradation of renewable resources. While some analyses of the environment-conflict nexus concentrate on 'resource wars', many others research the manner in which environmental scarcity can be an *indirect* cause of conflict. This avenue of research is far less obvious than that regarding direct conflict over resources. This, however, does not make it any less important. As demonstrated by Homer-Dixon's research, supply-induced, demand-induced, and structural scarcity can be the basis of a cycle of events culminating in low-intensity conflict in developing countries.

The second research agenda focuses on regime type and conflict. This is a somewhat contested area of research. Those who support the inverted U-curve hypothesis argue that democracies and autocracies are pacific, while semi-democracies are more conflict prone.

This argument is founded primarily on an assessment of the opportunity structure confronting insurgents in each of these three regimes. It also tends to assume that level of democracy is directly related to level of repression, thus assuming that all democracies are non-repressive. This, despite conflicting findings on the correlation between level of democracy and conflict and repression and conflict.

Qualitative democracy theory is also somewhat indeterminate. Huntington argues that democracies are peaceful, while authoritarian regimes are conflict prone. However, the process of democratic deepening that many new democracies undergo can itself bring about increased conflict. These divergent theories necessitated an in-depth case study analysis, in order to understand how they might be brought together. Nonetheless, it was possible to conclude in a preliminary fashion that democracies should diminish conflict.

Based on an assessment of the civil conflict literature, which illustrated some of the key manners in which environmental scarcity and regime type might affect grievances and opportunity structure, a preliminary hypothesis that would bring together the two research agendas was advanced. A moderating relationship was proposed, as it best captured the nature of environmental scarcity as an underlying cause of conflict and the much more proximate role of regime type in the incidence of conflict.

Does Democracy Matter?

Referring specifically to the work of the Toronto Group, Nils Petter Gleditsch argued that environmental conflict research tends to imply that democratic procedures are important

rather than clearly stating "that democracy matters, or in what way."[11] While it is too early to reach any definitive conclusions about democracies mattering, some observations can be made based on the case of the Philippines.

Democracy, defined in the most minimalist fashion, matters in that it initially decreases grievances, raises expectations, and makes conflict a less acceptable option. This is not enough to bring about a complete cessation of hostilities, however. This might be due, in part, to the fact that many new democracies still have some repressive elements to them. There is therefore a tension between the pacifying nature of the democracy and the more conflictual repercussions of semi-repressive regimes.

Democracy, defined as formal democracy undergoing further democratic deepening, matters because it addresses the root causes of the conflict, further decreases grievances, and promotes peaceful alternatives. Both of these processes are fluid and marked by fluctuations. Both also have the potential to increase conflict as those fearful of disenfranchisement — inside and outside the government — struggle for control in an environment not devoid of all repression.

In decreasing the root causes of conflict, democracy matters for environmental conflict research both for what it can do directly and indirectly for the environment. In the Philippines, the democratic governments have shown themselves to be better able to initiate programs that directly improved the environment. Just as important, however, are initiatives such as the IPRA. While not an environmental program *per se*, by granting secure tenure to ancestral

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[11]Nils Petter Gleditsch, "Armed Conflict and the Environment: A Critique of the Literature," *Journal of Peace Research* 35, no. 3 (1998): 389.

domain land, it returns control over natural resources to indigenous communities, empowers them, and lessens their sentiments of marginalization. It also aids them in preventing future environmental degradation through large-scale mining and timber concessions. These factors are all equally important for the resolution of environmentally-induced conflict, but demonstrate the difficulties inherent in environmental conflict analysis.

As observed in Chapter One, there is a danger of overemphasizing the role of regime type in affecting conflict. Other factors must also be explored in order to fully round out this analysis, including questions of regime strength, regime repressiveness and the particular nature of transitional regimes. These are all important avenues of further research. At the same time, regime type must not obscure the role of environmental scarcity in generating conflict, despite its greater proximity to conflict.

The discussion in Chapter Three outlined how environmental scarcity can be an important root cause of conflict, a cause that can be further exacerbated by authoritarian regimes, but exists independently of those regimes. The analysis in Chapter Four focused primarily on the resolution of environmentally-induced conflict. It is easy to lose sight of the importance of the environment as a source of conflict at this juncture. The level of democracy seems to play such an overwhelming role in the resolution of conflict. What must not be overlooked, however, is the *manner* in which democratization affects levels of conflict. For long term change, it addresses those issues fundamentally connected to environmental scarcity. While this might translate itself into decentralization programs or people empowerment, at their heart, these programs treat the causes and repercussions of environmental scarcity.

The environmental conflict literature serves to highlight the processes that connect environmental scarcity to conflict. Democracy and conflict literature provides an understanding of the impact of regime type on conflict. The latter is important for the former because it provides an overlooked dimension to the analysis. The former is important for the latter because it highlights the issues that must be addressed for the long term resolution of conflict. Regime type moderates levels of conflict, which are themselves intimately connected to underlying environmental scarcity.

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