
Mobilizing Resources but Still *Mining* for Opportunities?: Indigenous Peoples, their Land and the Philippine State

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ABSTRACT

The Kalipunan ng mga Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas (KAMP) or the National Alliance of Indigenous Peoples' Organization in the Philippines is almost in their 30 years of existence and yet, like in most cases of indigenous peoples' issues, there is still no significant number of studies about their role in campaigning for the betterment of the Indigenous Cultural Communities. Anchored on political opportunity structures theory as a guide, the basic motivation of the paper is to illustrate how the KAMP fights and survives through re-source mobilization and how the government – represented by National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) accommodate their interests. Using archival research, secondary data analysis, elite interview and participant observation, the paper asserts that KAMP's use of their organizational structure, advocacy campaigns and political assaults as their basic resources to fight for the Nueva Vizcaya Mining issue are relatively insufficient to a centralist and relatively closed government, despite the presence of democratic institutions. The ability of the Philippine government to strike the balance between development and indigenous peoples' rights protection shall remain to be a defining feature if not a challenge to the quality of democracy and governance in our land.

Keywords: indigenous movements, indigenous peoples, political opportunity, resource mobilizations, state-society relations

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INTRODUCTION

The defense and assertion of indigenous peoples' rights

is an endless struggle and is a significant feature of politics in several parts of the world. According to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples' issues, indigenous peoples in the world over are susceptible to a wide range of threats that affect their human rights, including but not limited to lack of access to education and security of abode, inadequate or no sanitation and poor access to health services. It is thus essential to shelter the rights of these people particularly their identity, history, customs, traditions, language, education, participation, land and self-governance (Bruner, 2006; Anno, 2010; Cernic, 2013; Meyer, 2012). This problem creates impact and opportunities to the indigenous population and sympathizers who build advocacies through social movements. According to Brysk (2000), while the global indigenous rights movements defy any simple definition, it broadly refers to drives for principled change in indigenous peoples' status and condition as a distinct cultural group. Mobilizations to protest development projects of the state, such as hydroelectric and geothermal energy generation, mining and logging have increased and intensified, as these state projects encroached on the most sacred possession of indigenous peoples - the land (Casambre, 2006).

In the Philippines, after the authoritarian regime of Marcos, President Corazon Aquino opened up all social forces that had been repressed by the state, notably left-leaning groups (Casambre, 2006). The advocacy of indigenous peoples' rights in politics has intensified in the last decade, and is counted among the so-called New Social Movements phenomenon in contemporary politics. Pizzorno (1978) contended that social movements are crucial in the formation of collective identity and production of solidarity. Moreover, Singharoy (2012) posited that they are constrained by identities framed not only by subjectivity, morality, emotion, value and cognition but also of common interest, rational calculations and contentious politics. These indigenous movements are challenged in putting their best efforts to protect their culture and land in relation to the reconciliation and development agenda

of the state (Singharoy, 2012). Although in the case of the Philippines, while there are an increasing number of social movements that are still asserting indigenous rights, still, in the words of de Vera (2007), indigenous peoples are the poorest and most disadvantaged social group in the country as they remain as the most marginalized sector of the society. Furthermore, there are still divisions among the indigenous peoples movement in the Philippines. Regardless of this and other challenges though, there are very clear manifestations of the growth and progress among indigenous people's organizations (IPOs) in the Philippines.

Anchored on political opportunity structures, the paper looked at the strength of the *Kalipunan ng mga Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas* (KAMP) or the National Alliance of Indigenous Peoples' Organization in the Philippines as a social movement in relation to the Philippine state. Specifically, we identified the resources mobilized by the movement on the issue of Nueva Viscaya mining and determined how open the state (as represented by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples and Department of Environment and Natural Resources) is in accommodating the movement's interests.

As a whole this paper is designed to be culturally and symbolically significant to the issues of indigenous movements and government agencies for the betterment of indigenous cultural communities. The paper intends to create an impact to the policy-making processes affecting the natives' ancestral domain, specifically those that deal with the protection of their right to land.

The discussion is as follows. We first provide a brief review of the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of the paper, followed by the methodological considerations. The next section presents the results. The last section then concludes that the KAMP's resources (organizational structure, campaign advocacy and political assault) are significant but relatively insufficient compared to the state's centralist tendencies making the movement and the claims of the indigenous peoples in the mining issue in Nueva Vizcaya peripheral.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This study is anchored on political opportunity structures. These opportunities are exogenous factors, which border or empower combined actors, in this case, the social movements (Meyer, 2004). Political opportunity structures explain how the political context affects the social movements' development and influence in a number of respects. They refer to the nature of resources and constraints outside of the challenging group (see Tilly 1978; McAdams 1982; Kitschelt 1986; Tarrow 1998). These factors either enhance or inhibit visions for mobilization, advancement of claims and exercise of strategies to influence and affect politics and policy (Gamson, 1996; Meyer, 1996). According to Kitschelt (1986) political opportunity structures function as "filters" between how the movement mobilizes and how it chooses strategies to effect change in the sociopolitical environment. The structure of political opportunity has two underlying premises: (1) Resource mobilization and (2) political state opportunities. Resources are assets considered to be the key ingredient of a successful movement and they are at the core of the birth, development and success of social movements. Resources may take a variety of forms including but not limited to knowledge, money, media, labor, solidarity, legitimacy, and internal support from powerful elite. On the other hand, resource mobilization stresses that social movements are formed when people who share grievances are able to mobilize these resources and take action from there. Some vital components for movement formation are: organizational strength, similar to the main argument of the resource mobilization theory, emphasizing that the social movement must have strong and efficient leadership and sufficient resources (Kurzman, 1996). Political state opportunities on the other hand question how the state accommodates this particular movement. It asks questions like "Does the state open on the forces of social movements? Or does the state accommodate the interests of the movements? It thus refers to the vulnerability of governmental institutions in the locus of the social movements.

In relation to this, Tarrow (1994) identified contingent circum-stances in which political opportunities may arise: (1) the opening up of access to the polity to new challengers; (2) elite realign-ments; (3) elite divisions; and (4) changes in the capacity and propensity to use repression against challengers. Moreover, Tarrow and Tilly (2009) provided six properties of political regimes that shape this political opportunity structure: (1) multiplicity of in-dependent centers of power within the regime; (2) relative clo-sure or openness to new actors; (3) instability or stability of cur-rent political alignments; (4) availability of influential allies or supporters; (5) extent to which the regime represses and facili-tates collective claim making; and (6) decisive changes in these properties.

This paper uses these structures of political opportunity. First, it basically identifies the resources mobilized by the National Alliance of Indigenous People Movement on their anti-mining campaign in Nueva Vizcaya (a province in Northern Philippines) and determines how the movement mobilized these. Second, it presents the political state opportunities specifically on how open the state is on the claims and agenda of the said movement. Given these, the paper explores on the relationship between the state and the movement in the context of mining. We assume then that the strength of the National Alliance of Indigenous people's organization of the Philippines is a function of (a) internal factor-the resource mobilization of the movement, using the pro-tests and rallies, network of indigenous peoples' movements, and strength of organizational structure as their resources for their goal on Nueva Vizcaya anti-mining campaign, and (b) external factor- the openness of the state in accommodating the interests of the movements. As such, whether they are successful in mobi-lizing their claims is contingent on the dynamic interaction of the mobilizing structures that the social movements have at their disposal and the political opportunity structure in which they are embedded.

METHODS

This study made use of qualitative descriptive design- aimed to describe the political opportunity structures used by the actors in the society to reach the movements' goals and objectives. The researchers used archival research and secondary data analysis of the particular movement's history, cases, documents of memberships, press releases and social media public postings to analyze past activities pertaining to reaching their end goals and how these activities were implemented. Face to face interviews with 16 (sixteen) *Kalipunan ng mga Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas* leaders and founding members purposively selected were utilized to gather insights with regard to their resources in achieving their aimed success pertaining to their anti-mining campaign in Nueva Viscaya (a province in Northern Philippines) Region II, and their perceptions and experiences on how the state accommodated their campaigns and complaints. The head and select officials of National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) and Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) were also interviewed to know the stand of the state's openness to the force of the indigenous movement. Participant observation was also used specifically during the "Indigenous Peoples' Week" 2014 celebration spearheaded by the United Nations and the *Kalipunan ng mga Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas*. The researchers witnessed, observed, noted and analyzed the week-long celebration and activities of the particular movements such as organizational meeting, United Nation's consultations, Committee Hearing at the House of Representatives, awarding ceremonies, photo exhibits, Congress lobbying, and their protests and rallies.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

ON THE RESOURCES OF THE KAMP

The KAMP is a nationwide confederacy that was established in the 1980s. It is now self-possessed of 15 indigenous peoples' organizations maintaining local networks in the regional, pro-

vincial, municipal and barrio levels. The various ethnolinguistic groups make up the General Assembly (GA), the Federation's highest policy-making body that creates the organization's guide-lines consistent with indigenous and democratic practices of representation and consultation.

The National Alliance of Indigenous Peoples' Organization in the Philippines' main field of actions are such that facilitate the unity of different indigenous peoples' organizations all over the Philippines, equipping the indigenous peoples with necessary skills and expertise to enable them to articulate their struggles and aspirations; facilitating linkages and solidarity with other existing organizations and individuals within and outside the country along mutually agreed principles; advancing the issues and demands, aspirations and struggles of indigenous peoples of the Philippines and; serving as the center for mobilizing and gathering support- technical, financial and moral - from various support groups and individuals (Katutubong Mamamayan, 2013).

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

One of the movement's strengths is its organizational structure. The *Kalipunan Ng Mga Katutubong Mamamayan Ng Pilipinas (KAMP)* was created as a national federation of regional, provincial, and island-based indigenous people's organizations representing various indigenous communities in the whole Philippines. KAMP was formed in 1985 after a cycle of national advice-giving assemblies of tribal leaders that culminated in a "Sandugo" (blood pact) in 1987. The formation of a national indigenous peoples' organization was the minorities' response to the escalating violation of their individual and collective rights and the impending threat of massive dislocation posed by large-scale industrial development programs of the government. From then on, KAMP strives to work for the attainment of genuine ancestral land rights and self-determination for the indigenous peoples.

As a KAMP national leader and coordinator claimed:

"KAMP was formally formed in 1987 but forming the so called

national unity started in 1985 during the era of unresolved issues about land disputes. This was the time of President Marcos. That time when developmental projects however encroached on the indigenous peoples' most sacred possession—the land.”

The very idea of a national alliance was to stitch different issues from various indigenous cultural communities. The main objective was the creation of a common direction because they found out that their issues (land disputes) are the same. KAMP thus exists to represent the merciful situation of different tribes representing them politically and economically.

Their leaders respectively said that:

“The primary objective of KAMP is to have a focus and shout for one goal even though we're far from each other. With that, we're still connected and intact.”

The data of membership of KAMP provides that it is now the biggest alliance of indigenous peoples' organizations in the Philippines. It is a countrywide coalition of island-wide organizations (Palawan, Mindoro, Mindanao, Panay), regional organizations (Regions of Cagayan Valley, Cordillera, Central Luzon, South-ern Tagalog, Central Visayas, Caraga, Northern Mindanao, West-ern Mindanao, Southern Mindanao and SOCSKSARGEN) and provincial organizations (Provinces of Rizal, Aurora and Quezon). They are also affiliated with a sectoral network of indigenous women's organizations (Bai-Aurora). These facts make the whole of a countrywide alliance of different tribes and indigenous groups all over the far mountains and islands that comprise the coun-try.

KAMP's campaigns and protests come from their local struggles which are emphasized as issues that merit a national attention, as in the case of the Nueva Vizcaya mining. Mining is an issue affecting indigenous peoples' lands all over the Philip-pines, and as the lead movement, KAMP organizes these issues at a national scale, as was witnessed in its lead role in the *Scrap*

the Mining Act of 1995 signature campaign.

The KAMP also facilitated capacity building by giving trainings and other workshops among Nueva Vizcayanos, thus consolidating the campaign advocacy of the members and its organization against the mining corporations and the state. In 1994, the Philippine government gave Climax-Arimco Mining Corporation (CAMC) a Financial and Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA) to mine 37,000 hectares of mineral lands in Nueva Vizcaya. FTAA's are a type of mineral concession, that allows 100% for-foreign ownership and capital investment of mining projects and incentives and auxiliary rights, such as the right to timber and water in their concession areas even before the enactment of the Mining Act of 1995 (RA 7942.) The protestation of locals through the support of their national organization, KAMP, delayed the operations of CAMC for more than a decade. Later on, after a merger, the FTAA was transferred to Australian mining company Oceana Gold (OGC) in 2006. Locals together with KAMP and the church people established barricades to protect their lands in 2006. Undaunted by the violence and determined to save their lands from plunder and destruction, locals in Didipio village resisted the demolition of houses once again in March 2008. However, despite the people's long resistance, OGC has succeeded in commencing full commercial productions in early 2013.

Moreover, when an FTAA was given to FCF Minerals Corporation to mine spanning 3,093.51 hectares of land in Quezon municipality of Nueva Vizcaya, the people responded with a barricade set up in Runruno village in Quezon, which was violently dispersed in March 29, 2009. FCF also filed legal cases against residents who refused to sell their lots to the mining company. Yet the barricades persisted despite the harassments, threats, and rights violations committed against locals. By December 16, 2012, barricade dispersion again occurred, and this was followed by legal cases filed against members of the movement. By June 2013 FCF personnel and the Philippine National Police demolished ball mills, houses, and small-scale mines.

The case of The Oxiana Philippines Incorporated, which was granted an Exploration Permit in 2000, is also an interesting example. The permit spanned through Kasibu and Dupax del Norte municipalities. Like FCF, CAMC, and later on Oceana Gold, Oxiana was rejected by the locals, preferring traditional livelihoods of small-scale mining, farming, and citrus production over the unsustainable and destructive large-scale mining operations. The mining permit was then sold to another Australian mining corporation, Royalco Phils Inc., in 2005. The barricades against Royalco commenced in 2006, starting in Kakidugen village in Kasibu. Another barricade was set up in the same year in Belance, Dupax del Norte. Shortly thereafter, another roadblock was set up in the Pacquet village, also in Kasibu. These barricades persist today, and few more have been set up since to prevent Royalco from entering their territories.

The attacks being made to these barricades are now central in the struggle of Nueva Vizcayanos against mining plunder in the province. In response to the reported violations to the rights of indigenous peoples and other residents in several upland villages in Nueva Vizcaya and the imminent threat of displacement and destruction of livelihood to communities due to the operation and exploration of several mining companies in the province, local organizations and KAMP organized a fact-finding and solidarity mission. The National Fact-Finding and Solidarity Mission (NFSM), composed of 126 participants from 27 organizations, was sponsored by *Alyansa ng Nagkakaisang Novo Vizcayano para sa Kalikasan* (ANNVIK) and the *Kalipunan ng mga Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas* (KAMP). This was, according to their national coordinator, “to show support and solidarity to the indigenous peoples and other peasant communities in Nueva Vizcaya affected by mining operations of three big Australian mining corporations namely, Royalco Phils. Inc., Oceana Gold Philippines, and FCF-MTL mining company.” Not only are networks from other sectors used to spread insurgent consciousness of land disputes. According to Kakay Tolentino, one of KAMP’s founding members, since

the time of forming this alliance up until now, the help of the different sectors was very consistent. While it all started when religious groups organized literacy programs that educated indigen-ous cultural communities, volunteers helped the tribes to fight for their land rights. This convergence among actors broadened the scope of the campaigns of the native Filipinos. As a KAMP national public relations officer noted: *“the convergence makes the fight for struggle stronger”*.

CAMPAIGN ADVOCACY

Campaign rallies against large-scale mining and other land disputes have been one of the strategies used by the KAMP to drumbeat the issues of the minorities. They aim to affect the public opinion. It is in their perspective that in pushing for the recognition of indigenous rights, they need to double their effort to amplify this to the greater civil society and masses. If their concerns can make a public clamor, it is the only time that it can create pressure to the government to hear and to eventually accommodate their concerns.

As per interviews during the rally at the Chino Roces Avenue, Manila, the members reiterated:

“Our target is to make the public be aware of the land disputes and for them to care for us.”

“This is to tell them our story of land struggle. That this struggle is not only of local concern but of national as well.”

“This mobilization is to protest for our land rights and human rights. It is done to tell them our situation and to share the idea that we need their support.”

“This serves as an eye opener for all the commuters seeing us protest-ing here.”

The protests during the commemoration of the International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples reaffirm these objectives. According to KAMP national leader, Pya Maclling Malayao, *“we find no reason to celebrate, given the continually worsening conditions*

of the Indigenous Peoples in the country. While the objective is to voice out the enduring struggle of indigenous peoples to defend their rights to ancestral domains and to self-determination, this protest represents the various problems that beset in the indigenous peoples in the Philippines.”

The statement and the situation implied the strength of KAMP as a lead movement of all the Indigenous Peoples. They voiced out the entire problem from different areas of the country especially the large-scale mining in Nueva Vizcaya that led to human rights violation in the latter. This adds to their call of expressing their concerns to wider mass through media coverage about their struggle. This strategy contributed to the fight for local struggles of the Bugkalots in Region II. As the Bugkalots stated: “*They (KAMP) helped us and we are more than willing to cooperate with them. The national level does not understand our local struggle that’s why it is very important to widen our campaign to seek support.*”

POLITICAL ASSAULT

Surprisingly, apart from campaign advocacy, political assaults from different unnamed stakeholders of big mining corporations were also considered as resources, as great motivations in the KAMP’s call for the recognition of the indigenous people’s rights. As provided by the members:

“It makes us more angry rather than frightened.”

“In my 30 years in KAMP, nothing can stop me from fighting.” “It’s a fuel to keep on striving.”

According to them, 163 leaders of KAMP from different tribes were all under death threats because of strong opposing principles of the government’s development projects such as geothermal energy project, dam constructions, subdivisions, logging corporations and of course large-scale mining industries particularly in the three mining corporations from Nueva Vizcaya as they noted. Their emotional expressions in words can speak for it that this tactic can make them more determined. In some cases, they feel insecure and this hinders them to more engaged in

rural areas. As they noted:

“We take care because we know it’s (death threats) real.” “We feel insecure. It’s just that we are used to it, it’s our life.”

“It’s really happening, it’s possible – but it means that there really is something wrong.”

“Even those who fight for justice are being persecuted, why is that the case?”

For KAMP and for the Bugkalots of Nueva Vizcaya, they are in the right principle and as such death threats and trumped-up charges made them feel that injustices in the current system need to be addressed. In the regime of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) press released “knowing thy enemies” or enemies of the state, and surprisingly for KAMP, their leaders’ names were included. For them, this meant recognition but definitely a repressive one. Similarly, leaders of KAMP are normally and historically accused of being members of the New People’s Army (the armed section of the Communist Party of the Philippines). For them, this is an assault, if not, a question to their organization’s composition, claiming that they are IP activists and are legitimate Indigenous Peoples. They also contended:

“The threats really exist. If this idea will make us weaker, we will all die.”

“Death threats? They’re inspiring.”

“It’s a call for us to unite to become stronger.”

“If we are going to be afraid, then who will fight for the rights of these indigenous peoples?”

The idea of threatening them (by different mining corporations) is notably not applicable in the principles of Indigenous Peoples Movement, as they equate their land to their life. It adds up to their inspiration to change the system for the next generation of their tribes. For them, to continue to live meant to continue the struggle. The recognition of the existence of forms of

political assault continuously empowers them and it becomes a force to move and not to stop defending their land rights.

ON THE POLITICAL STATE OPPORTUNITIES

The state is significant to the resources mobilized and outcomes of communal action of a social movement. According to Rootes (1999), the crucial dimensions of these political opportunity structures are the openness or closedness of states to inputs from non-established actors. These measure the strength or weakness of capacities to deliver the effective implementation of policies once they are decided. In this paper, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples and the agency focusing on mining issues, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Mines and Geosciences Bureau, represent the state. How the state accommodated these resources and actions of the KAMP against large-scale mining industry in Nueva Vizcaya is discussed in this section. It was found that the concerns of the indigenous peoples existed against the backdrop of a centralist Philippine state pushing the movement at the periphery.

THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CONCERNS IN A CENTRALIST STATE

It is evident that the DENR and NCIP work hand in hand for the mining cases faced by the tribal minorities given their joint provisions and programs. However, in the pursuit of the interests of the indigenous communities, these agencies have conflicting perspectives of the nature of the problem and the laws created to solve them. This is also exacerbated by the lack of organizational support to address the concerns of the indigenous communities.

As an official noted:

“The IPRA was promulgated in late 1997. The Mining Act of 1995 was there in 1995. These two laws have opposing principles.” “We, the NCIP, are only composed of 1058 staff all over the country.”

“The problem is this. When we approved and assured mining corporations to operate – that have complied through process, here comes the protests. This implies that our process is not effective, and then we fail.”

Notably, in the four years stay of President Benigno S. Aquino III, he did not tackle any single matter about the indigenous peoples in his State of the Nation Address- an unimpressive record. The president however announced the operation of some big mining projects that surprised the indigenous population. During the time of Ferdinand Marcos, the Commission on National Integration (CNI) followed by Presidential Assistance on National Minority (PANAMIN) was created to attend to the concerns of indigenous communities. Corazon Aquino for her part created the offices of Northern Cultural Communities, Southern Cultural Communities and Moro Cultural Communities. Given that these were insufficient, and their implementation ineffective, the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) was created through the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997. Under the law, it is “mandated to protect and promote the interest and well-being of the indigenous peoples with due regard to their beliefs, customs, traditions and institutions. As such, it shall serve as the primary government agency responsible for the formulation and implementation of pertinent and appropriate policies and programs to carry out the policies set forth in the new law.”

According to Kakay Tolentino, founding member of KAMP:

“The government agencies for Indigenous Peoples are based on the perspective of the President and not from the Indigenous people themselves.”

Statements coming from the IPs also corroborate this. Regardless of the provisions of the laws to address the state of the IPs and the institutions created to implement them, the Indigenous Peoples are yet to be included in mainstream Philippine

problems.

As the indigenous peoples expressly stated:

“Right after the promulgation of IPRA, we criticized it for it is not pro-IP, and it is obviously not visible nowadays.”

“The government laws and customary laws are different. Instead of these agencies guiding us, they serve as the dealer (broker) of our ancestral domains for mining projects.”

“We see them as a tool of the government to support its state’s economic priority (mining industry) which falls against the rights of the Indigenous Peoples.”

“We are even blamed for the destruction of mountains. How can we do that if we do not even have tools to do so (as compared to the mining corporations)?

THE KAMP AS A PERIPHERAL SOCIAL MOVEMENT

The KAMP has emerged and flourished in the recent decade as a societal response to worsening aggression against the environment and the rights of the indigenous peoples. The functions and contributions of tribal and indigenous communities in Philippine governance and politics are inevitable as seen on the government’s recognition of their issues through consultations with the KAMP. Despite of the opportunity to participate in policy-making processes through state consultations and dialogues, it is evident through the implementation process that the state does not fully recognize the force from outside political actors, making KAMP as one of those in the periphery.

As the members of the KAMP opined:

“Yes they recognize us now. As an enemy.”

“We don’t engage with them nowadays. They just present the agenda. We participate as an audience but in forming national plans, not anymore.”

“The NCIP and DENR invites us, but that is because of past experiences. Like for example in mining, we do not engage with them anymore. They are facilitating Free Prior Informed Consent for Indigenous Peoples but they always favor the Mining Corporations.”

These statements support those of the NCIP and the DENR. These institutions indeed support the very idea that KAMP is a part of their considerations but not essential because of contradicting principles.

As they respectively stated:

“They need to be with the stakeholders’ team of the mining corporations, with that their problems can be solved.”

“They should engage to the congressman of their district to have a pressure and count on congress.”

“How come that we are opposing them? They are the one who’s deciding on mining operations through Free Prior Informed Consent.”

The opportunity structure of state and movement partnership for solving mining cases remains uncertain, conditional and precarious. The pattern of approaching societal reforms for mining problems has evolved into a more restrained and untrustworthy actions of this social movement to the government.

DISCUSSION

Despite concerted efforts exerted by the government, in partnership with various movements like the KAMP, still our indigenous peoples remain a marginalized sector of our society. According to Molintas (2004), basic services remain wanting in most of these geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas. Furthermore, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples reported that serious human rights violations, displacement from ancestral domain and destruction of natural environment and cultural values are still among their long-standing serious concerns. It is for these reasons as well that the KAMP continues to fight for policies and programs that would give our IPs the recognition and opportunities due them.

The paper thus reflects the findings that indigenous social movements play an important role in the process of contesting foremost concerns including the right to land and ancestral domains (Wilde, 2010), the protection of the environment and the

fight for survival of their communities and ways of life (Clark, 2002) and the creation of policies that pursue indigenous and peasant rights (Miller, 2006). This paper has shown that indigenous social movements not only contribute to the activation of the focused and concentrated campaigns of the sector particularly against large-scale mining of corporations, similar to the case of indigenous environmental movements in the United States (Clark, 2002) and the indigenous peoples at the Yanacocha mine in Peru (Laudardale, 2009), but also to highlight the struggle to maintain traditional practices that have served these groups and the rest of nature and their sacred places, as was the case of the indigenous struggles by the Mapuche in Argentina due to oil contamination, those in Brazil due to the plight of their rubber workers, those in India due to the uranium poisoning in the Jharkand Belt and those in Marinduque, Philippines due to copper-mining spills, among many others (Laudardale, 2009).

Nonetheless, guided by their opportunity structures, the KAMP's organizational structure, campaign advocacy and political assaults were significant but insufficient resources given the strength and power of the state through the DENR and NCIP that forced them to the periphery. The concerns of the indigenous peoples, as represented by the KAMP, are still yet to enter the mainstream and thus await consideration as a national political concern. The KAMP may have been a solid, consistent and legitimate social movement for those they represent, but the enormous hand of the state and its say in the operation of foreign mining corporations amidst protests manifest the lack of concern on issues that pertain to the rights of the IPs. Specifically, the KAMP's transformation into a mere audience instead as a participant in the formulation of policies that pertain to both mining and protection of the IPs' rights reflects the state's centralist tendency. This is perhaps where the formal institutional or legal structure of a political system and the more informal structure of power relations, both emphasized in the conceptualization of political opportunity structures in the ex-

tant literature, meet. While it is true that there is a greater chance for social movements in general to gain access to the political system in the Philippines in periods after the return to democracy in 1986, the elites' strategy of repression (exclusion), which is an aspect of the informal structure of power relations, become all the more important in the consideration of the indigenous peoples' concerns through the KAMP.

The consideration of the state of several stakeholders in the policy formulation process will definitely structure the future of the indigenous peoples in the Philippines. The extent to which they are consulted and involved in framing policies that concern them and their land, their culture and their environment, shall shape the future of these communities. After all, the question of whether the state's power is eroded when these groups are considered does not matter so much when participative governance and development are at the core of the government's principles. The ability of the Philippine government to strike the balance between development and indigenous peoples' rights protection shall remain to be a defining feature if not a challenge to the quality of democracy and governance in our land.

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