

It is regrettable, however, that there is no parallel open access version of this book available – in contrast to current trends in science publication (<<https://www.bmbf.de/de/open-access-das-urheberrecht-muss-der-wissenschaft-dienen-846.html>>). In light of the price (\$ 120.00), even specialized libraries probably will think twice before ordering this book. Therefore, one has to be afraid that this important book might not get the dissemination and attention that it deserves.

Erich Kasten

Bulloch, Hannah C. M.: In Pursuit of Progress. Narratives of Development on a Philippine Island. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017. 228 pp. ISBN 978-0-8248-5886-5. Price: \$ 62.00

"In Pursuit of Progress. Narratives of Development on a Philippine Island" by Hannah C. M. Bulloch casts a garish but welcome light over some areas of enquiry that received less attention in the anthropology of development and development anthropology. Bulloch elicits the personal and moral dimensions of development from the impoverished island of Siquijor in the Bisaya-speaking region of the Central Philippines.

By pursuing the discursive formation of development ethnographically, Bulloch illuminates how this fairly entrenched but contested trope of knowing human achievements and potentiality can be further unpacked without wading into the sharp divide separating the exponents of development and post-development advocates yearning to slay the concept altogether. In making development and poverty a personal and moral question, Bulloch rises above contentions that vilify development defenders for brushing aside the deplorable impact of inequality or paint postdevelopment proponents as essentialists provocateurs who valorise subaltern resistance clueless of the messy micro-politics of power relations.

Liberated from these longstanding debates, the ethnography deftly tracked the ways development was promoted, lamented, bemoaned, and inserted into everyday conversations by the destitute communities implicated by it. Bulloch teased out these disjointed sentiments from the narratives of landless farmers, fisher folks, *sari-sari* (small neighbourhood store) clerks, and roadside vendors who became her intimate friends and informants in the course of a long-term, albeit, on and off fieldwork in a Siquijor *barangay* (village) from 2004 to 2015. Bulloch navigated her way into this sphere of engagements heeding Arturo Escobar's emphatic call for ethnographers to follow the subtleties of the discourses, practices, operations, and transformative implications of development. Bulloch pursued this trajectory in consonance with an exhortation from Stacy Leigh Pigg to situate the study of development in the context of localized appropriation of modernity as a discursive site for understanding how subjective agents "adopt, deploy, modify, and question." By taking the tools of ethnography into these discursive realms, Bulloch illuminates the disjunctive viewpoints and, at times, moralizing lenses of subjective agents implicated by the interlinked phenomena of development and modernity.

The Siquijodnon notion of development, as noted by Bulloch, is encapsulated in the concept of *kalamboan*, a complex Bisaya everyday terminology and philosophy that invariably refers to progress, enrichment, advancement, and sense of fulfilment in ways that is not simply equitable to neoliberal articulations of development. As Bulloch showed, *kalamboan* and specifically its variant term, *asenso*, also refer to the transformation of individual condition from extreme poverty to a *simple life* where one's basic necessities are met and sense dignity is lived. Such line of thought, however, cuts in many ways by which Bulloch reveals the prejudicial and moralistic conception of *kalamboan* by the impoverished who interprets and adheres to it. Bulloch lays bare the sense of difference and even discriminatory tendencies of the Siquijodnon poor towards their poorer fellow from isolated highlands for supposedly not being sophisticated enough to imbibe the terms of *kalamboan* in the form of Westernized education, modern outlook, consumer goods, and so on.

Discordantly, however, the strident judgment of the Siquijor poor is not only directed towards the poorest but reserved even more harshly onto themselves as Bulloch narrates. The poor blame themselves for their own destitution. They see impoverishment as their "*swerte*" (fate and fortune) and shortcomings in liberating themselves from the bondage of their poorly cultivated land. They hold themselves responsible for their apparent failure to adapt and draw the resources of *kalamboan*, filtering out the powerful global market forces and structural policies of import-export substitution that stack the cards against them to begin with. Conflating *kalamboan* to the notion of *swerte* effectively obscures the drivers of inequalities that consequently made the Siquijodnon poor a prey of impoverishment.

Through the introspection of her Siquijodnon friends and informants, Bulloch shows how the hard effects of poverty and the idealization of development clouds the analytical proficiency of the poor in thinking about the roots of their affliction. Bulloch questions how power and market relations in Siquijor and the broader Philippine body politic implicate the contemplation of the poor to further unravel the underpinnings of these sentiments. In doing so, however, Bulloch veered away from Pigg's fundamental point of dissecting local modes of modernity by tracking how the people it entangles appropriate, mobilize, recast, and question the discursive terms of development.

Rather than yield insights from her ethnographic context, Bulloch relied heavily on yet another trope of analyzing power relations and inequalities in the Philippines. This trope views Philippine politics as almost exclusively shaped by patron-client relationship dominated by the landowning class who mastered the art of exploiting the Filipino sense of reciprocity since the age of Spanish and American colonialism. This line of analysis privileges Weberian ideation of power while shoving aside other means by which political performance, symbols, and mobilization of power are grasped, absorbed, utilized, negotiated, dealt with, and even challenged within the context of the peoples indigenous roots, political economic history, and sociocultural transformations.

The political economy of Siquijor, as Bulloch herself pointed, do not exactly reflect the wide gulf of economic disparities between the landed political elite and the landless farmers in other Philippine provincial contexts by which the patron-clientele assessments were drawn from. Siquijor's landowning class could not hold expansive landholdings due to the island's circumscribed size compared to the sprawling haciendas of Central Luzon that served as the power base of the dominant political families in the Philippines, suggesting the need for other frames of analysis.

An alternative analytical trajectory need not brush aside the client-patron appraisal of the configuration of power in Philippine localities but, rather, avoid reducing them to these generalizable descriptions. In other Philippine contexts, the poor see goodness in politicians not exactly because of received favour but over a belief that the powerful have meaningfully touched their lives. I saw this veneration first hand while witnessing a murdered politician's funeral in the Southern Philippines. In that funeral, I managed to converse with an elderly woman marching behind the politician's hearse under a blazing noontime sun. She came because she could never forget the single bottle of flu medicine that the politician gave her at the time of great need. She did not come to ask for more nor the politician sought for her after that encounter. The lady, nonetheless, repeatedly casted her vote for him because she saw a sincere leader standing in solidarity with a poor like her as manifested by his ability to somehow express care and respond to her circumstance. This is not a simple case of patron-client relationship but one that is imbued by transcendent reverence, and even love, with all their complexities and contradictions. It is, nonetheless, a brutal sense of deference wherein those who love are bound to be frustrated by a leadership that exploits and fails to deliver.

The idea of a leader standing up, providing, and caring for his or her political subjects, indeed, has indigenous origins as reflected by an array of studies of Philippine leaderships, spanning from politicians to rebel commanders who are sometimes referred in Southeast Asia as "men of prowess." These indigenous roots of leadership do not completely define contemporary political arrangements but assessing the subtleties, operations, transformations, and implications of these relations alongside colonial and postcolonial reconfigurations of power would have enriched the question of how development and politics intertwined as they were deployed, adopted, mobilized, and challenged.

Siquijor's political class are powerful and enduring with the top echelons of governmental authority controlled by the same family for over two decades. The ways they drew legitimacy and sustained their stranglehold to power deserve ethnographic examination. Bulloch was in the position to probe this issue in relation to the discursive formation of development but unfortunately backed away from it.

The political question I raised above is further embroiled by Bulloch's understanding of cosmopolitan sensibility in her dissection of *kalamboan*. Bulloch re-

peatedly brings up the cosmopolitan desires of her key informants but dismissed it as indicator of how some of the poor see the foreign as the exclusive source of development. Bulloch, however, barely scratches the analytical surface of these expression of cosmopolitanism primarily due to her inability to subject the concept to theories that recognize, among others, the demotic, vernacular, down-to-earth, and indigenous sensibilities of cosmopolitan morality. Had she followed these thoughts, it is possible to also think of her impoverished informants as rooted cosmopolitans fully aware and attuned to global sociocultural and economic flows that can transform their lives in a level playing field.

Notwithstanding what was missed, Bulloch's contribution to the study of development are not at all diminished. This work alone expanded the realms by which development and modernity can be probed and analyzed in ways that will productively guide future ethnographers of the subject. Bulloch faced the question of poverty squarely as she took the readers right down to the domain of introspection where the ambivalence of subjective agents of development are raised as a lens to scrutinize the hardness and persistence of poverty notwithstanding development's repeated promise of salvation. If at all, the book opens another dimension of understanding what Nancy Scheper-Hughes points as the "destructive signature of poverty and oppression on individual and social bodies" as well as the "creative and often contradictory means" by which the impoverished "thrive with their wit and their wits intact."

Jose Jowel Canuday

Button, Gregory V., and Mark Schuller (eds.): *Contextualizing Disaster*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2016. 208 pp. ISBN 978-1-78533-280-7. (Catastrophes in Context, 1) Price: \$ 120.00

Every year, on October 13, the International Day for Disaster Reduction is celebrated worldwide. On the 2017's event, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) launched new "Guidelines for National Disaster Risk Assessment" (NDRA). The aim is to support the countries' implementation of national disaster risk assessments, which should enable them to take better preventive action in order to reduce the number of affected people. But even after decades of research, capacity development, programs for information, and awareness raising on disaster risk reduction – accompanied by a huge body of academic literature and policy briefs on vulnerability, resilience, and climate change adaptation – the question might be raised why people are still so vulnerable to (natural) hazards. Apparently, some crucial aspects have been undervalued or missing in disaster and risk studies. It is still not clearly understood why some people are more affected by hazards than others, which processes give rise to disasters, and how disaster related preparedness and response is shaped.

At this point, the book "Contextualizing Disaster," edited by Gregory V. Button and Mark Schuller, makes a significant contribution to a better understanding of the social construction of disasters by contextualizing them in