Insurgents

Constructing the Moro Gender Order in Mindanao Conflict and Migration

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Statement of Originality

This dissertation is an original presentation of my own research and writing. The assistance and sources I accessed in preparing the dissertation have been acknowledged and indicated.

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Abstract

Literature on the southern Philippines region of Mindanao has a longstanding gender gap, with relatively little attention paid to the role of women either in history or in the contemporary era, despite international and national concern about gender in the recent peace process involving the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Philippine Government. To understand both gender and conflict in Southern Philippines, I ask, *how does a Moro gender order shape conflict and migration in Mindanao?* Building on the work of gender scholars, I see a gender order as encompassing both social structure and a discourse of gender inequality. Through six family stories, ethnography in Davao City (July 2016–April 2017), and discourse analysis, I examine how conflict in Mindanao is built on gendered relationships. I find that gender inequality shapes the Mindanao conflict driver landlessness and the related urban migration, recruitment into armed groups, and state and insurgent group discourses about war-making and peacebuilding. I thus argue that the Moro gender order is constitutive of violent conflicts in Mindanao. To visualise the Moro gender order as a structure and discourse, I construct an inventory of gender articulations from family stories and other narratives by and about Moros – the indigenous Muslim inhabitants of Mindanao. In highlighting what I call insurgent femininity, I draw attention to Moro women's agency across Mindanao conflicts. In examining the Mindanao conflict as a site of gender practice, I advocate for an insurgent research approach that puts people at the centre and dares integrate previously opposing analytical traditions to help transform knowledge and improve peacebuilding strategies in Mindanao.

Keywords: *insurgent femininity, Mindanao, family stories, gender, conflict, urban migration*

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Figures, Tables and Photos

Acronyms and Abbreviations

AFP	Armed Forces of the Philippines
AKP	Ansarul Khilafa Philippines
ARMM	Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (1996-2019)
ARB	Agrarian Reform Beneficiary
ASG	Abu Sayyaf Group
BARMM	Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (2019)
BDP	Bangsamoro Development Plan
BIFF	Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters
BIWAB	Bangsamoro Islamic Women Auxiliary Brigade
BMA	Bangsa Moro Army
BMWF	Bangsamoro Women's Foundation
BTA	Bangsamoro Transition Authority
CAFGU	Citizen Armed Force Geographical Units
CATW-AP	Coalition Against Trafficking in Women Asia-Pacific
CCTV	Closed-circuit television used for surveillance
CHDF	Civilian Home Defense Force (CAFGU predecessor)
CMPL	Code of Muslim Personal Laws (1977)
DDS	Davao Death Squad
FPA	Final Peace Agreement (1996)
GPH	Government of the Philippines, Republic of the Philippines
GRO	Guest relations officer, sometimes a euphemism for sex worker
HMB	Hukbong Mapagpalayang Bayan (also Huk, for short)
HSA	Human Security Act of the Philippines (2007 and 2019)
IPRA	Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (1997)
IS/ISIS	Islamic State, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria

KIA	Kachin Independence Army
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front
MIM	Muslim (also Mindanao) Independence Movement
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front
MOA-AD	Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain
MOYO	Moro Youth Organization (based in Angklahan, Davao City)
NAP	National Action Plan
NCMF	National Commission on Muslim Filipinos
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPA	New People's Army
PC	Philippine Constabulary (Police during Marcos' administration 1967–1986)
PNP	Philippine National Police
QRT	Quick Reaction Team (recording human rights violations)
SPCPD	Southern Philippine Council for Peace and Development
TJRC	Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
US, USA	United States of America
WAR	Women Against Rape
WE ACT 1325	Women Engaged in Action on 1325
WPS	Women, Peace and Security Agenda (also UN SCR 1325)

Glossary

adat	customary law
amik, apam	Tausug traditional rice cakes and snacks
amir	Arabic for leader, commander; also emir
bagong buhay	to have a new life, change ways
bai, bae, baylan	female community leader; also babaylan, katalonan
bakwit	internally displaced, evacuee
Balik-Islam	A person who converted to Islam
bangsa	nation; also descent
bantut	Tausug for effeminate, also homosexual
barangay	smallest administrative unit in the Philippines
barkada	group of friends
barrio	village, also barangay
bayot	Cebuano for effeminate, homosexual
bolo	farmer's long blade
bugoy	silly kid
bulalo	beef stew
buy-bust	police entrapment operation using marked money or drugs
cathexis	gender substructure defining sexual and emotional relations
cota, kota	fort, barracks
Dabawenyo	Davao resident
dapat	right, entitlement, due
Darangen	Maranao epic poem
dakwah, da'awa	Islamic social reform projects, missionary work
datu	chieftain, traditional leader; plural datus
dayang-dayang	Tausug princess

Dayunday	Maguindanao pre-wedding concert
dori	dowry, bride price; also mahr
diskarte	strategy; business acumen
duaya	second wife, other wives of one's husband
dumot	grudge
five-six	loan shark lending scheme with 20 per cent interest
gaba	Cebuano for cosmic punishment, karma
halal	permissible based on the Qur'an, moral, sanctioned, encouraged
haram	forbidden
hulidap	looting or a hold-up disguised as a police operation
hyperfemininity	exaggerated adherence to a stereotypical feminine role
hypermasculinity	exaggerated masculinity in reaction to a threat
imam	head of Muslim religious affairs, worship leader
indio	Spanish coloniser term for natives, Christianised Filipinos
isug	Tausug for bravery
jihad	Arabic for to struggle; also used to defend or uphold Islam
juramentado	person who has taken an oath, describing ritualised suicide
kalayaan	freedom
kama o kulong	sex/rape or prison; a scheme police offer women
kapit sa patalim	to take a dangerous, self-damaging risk
karapatan	rights, human rights; also what is due
kasal dayon	a very short courtship, if at all, before marriage
kasama	comrade
kasambahay	domestic worker living with employer/s
katarungan	justice
khutbah	sermon or oration during congregational prayers and festivals

kris	traditional asymmetrical dagger or sword with wavy blade
kutyapi	Maguindanao two-string boat lute
lakas ng loob	daring
lansa	fishing vessel
loko-loko	mad, mentally ill
Lumad	non-Muslim indigenous people in Mindanao
Madrasah	Islamic educational institution, plural madaris
mahr	dowry, bride price; also dori
makibaka	to struggle
Malacañang	Office of the President of the Philippines
malong	traditional tube wrap or skirt
malas	bad omen, bad luck
maratabat	rank, status-honour
Moro	Muslims from Mindanao, in this dissertation limited to non-elites
moro-moro	plays with Moro antagonists popularised during Spanish colonisation
mujahideen	Arabic for martyrs, takes on jihad; singular mujahid
nanlaban	police claim that suspect resisted arrest and fought back
Normalisation	post-conflict process integrating former combatants into society
Pakiring	Tausug dance emphasising hip and hand movement
palit-ulo	police scheme granting freedom in exchange for information
panday	smith, traditional technological leader
Pangalay	Tausug dance with elaborate postures and hand movement
parang sabil	Tausug holy war, martyrdom
pariah	socially castigated femininity as part of male domination
pasensya	patience
piso-net	neighbourhood internet shop charging a peso per minute

prahu	specialised trading vessels
propagandista	Filipino elite intellectuals during the late Spanish occupation
purdah	segregation of the sexes, seclusion of women
purok	settlement or neighbourhood within the barangay
pusaka	customary laws governing land inheritance
qiwamah	concept of male authority
reklamador	one who always complains but does not act
resbak	retaliation
rido	clan or family dispute; plural ridos
sakop	followers of a datu, commoners
saksi	witness
sana	ideal, aspiration, hope
shabu	popular drug methamphetamine (hydrochloride); crystal meth
taguimba	Tausug inland dwellers
tarsila	genealogy record; also salsila
tauhigad	Tausug coastal dwellers
tokhang	police soliciting support for War on Drugs; to knock and plead
Salah	Muslim ritual prayers performed at least five times a day
sari-sari store	convenience store selling retail goods
sipug	Tausug for shame
swerte	good omen, luck
tungkulin	duty
ulama	male Muslim religious scholars, preachers
ustad	teacher; plural ustadz
vinta	native boat with colourful sail
watchlist	drug suspect list compiled by *barangay* officials and/or the police

Part I.

Introduction: Transforming the Mindanao conflict

Amina Abdul was born in Basilan, an island in the Sulu archipelago, in the mid-1950s. But she was raised in Davao City, as she put it, 'to escape war'. When she was 14 and visiting relatives in Sulu, she narrowly escaped being kidnapped. Three years later, a young man named Jamir abducted her in Davao City. Their families settled that the abducted should marry her abductor, whom she loved. Amina and Jamir were both teenage members of the Black Shirts, a precursor armed militia to the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), before Martial Law was declared in 1972. Amina became a first wife at 17. Jamir challenged Amina and his second wife to produce a son. Amina birthed daughters. Using her connections in Davao, Amina got Jamir a job as a police officer during Martial Law (1972–1986). Years later, Amina once singlehandedly disarmed her police husband after catching him naked with another woman. She laughed when she told me how she took Jamir's firearm by the door that day, aligning her pointed index fingers like a long gun and simulating the sound: 'bratatatatat'!

From this excerpt from Amina's story, I introduce both the insurgents we encounter in this dissertation and my 'insurgent approach' to research. The insurgents in the title of my dissertation are not only or even primarily active participants in the Mindanao conflict like Amina; the term refers to women who challenge conventional gender norms, and also alludes to my own research method. My approach puts people at the centre and dares integrate previously opposing analytical traditions in gender and conflict research to help transform knowledge and improve peacebuilding strategies in Mindanao. In adopting this approach, I focus on the way gender is constitutive of (contributes to, or forms a part of) the conflicts in Mindanao, and analyse gender as both a social structure and a discursive order. The

extract from Amina's story already points to several characteristics of conflict in Mindanao, the southern region of the Philippines:

1. Active participants in the conflict include women like Amina and her husband Jamir, who engage with both insurgent groups and the state's armed organisations such as the police.
2. The Mindanao conflict goes beyond the Muslim-majority areas in the Philippines like the (Bangsamoro) Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, and also includes cities like Davao. Moros all over Mindanao have found ways to engage with armed groups.
3. There are occluded conflicts which are usually missed when scholars and other observers discuss conflict in Mindanao; such occluded conflicts include abductions, forced marriage, polygyny, adultery, and domestic violence.

In this dissertation, I show that paying meaningful attention to gender and using family stories allows scholars and analysts to access fresh insights into the conflict and related migration in Mindanao. I argue that unequal gender relations have contributed to landlessness among the Moros – the indigenous Muslim peoples of Mindanao – recruitment into armed groups, and discourses about the Mindanao conflict. Thus, I conclude, challenging gender inequality and pursuing gender justice should be crucial to the current peacebuilding efforts.

Gender is a buzzword in Mindanao peacebuilding. Since the 1970s, successive conflicts in Mindanao have pitted the state against insurgent groups, notably the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF, launched 1972) and Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF, founded 1984). These conflicts have displaced millions of people and killed more than 120,000 (Schiavo-Campo and Judd 2005). Peace negotiations have also occurred intermittently since the 1970s. When negotiations between the MILF and the Government of the Philippines (GPH) resumed in 2010, the latter had just adopted a National Action Plan (NAP) to implement the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda embodied in the United

Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions.[1] The WPS aims to address gender-based violence, especially rape and other forms of violent conflict, and highlights women's roles in peacebuilding. From this time, parties to, and analysts of, the Mindanao peace process have paid more attention to gender.

However, the Mindanao case illustrates the challenges of operationalising the WPS agenda. In its spirit and scope, the WPS is a milestone (Willett 2010) and a watershed (Anderlini 2007) in promoting attention to the role of women in armed conflict and in conflict resolution, but some critics also say it has been very slow to have an impact (Tryggestad 2009) and that its implementation has been disappointing (Swaine 2009). In 2010, a decade after the UNSC endorsed the WPS, the Philippines was the first country in Asia to formalise an action plan jointly developed by the government and local civil society organisations in response to the WPS.[2] Yet in 2013, a civil society monitoring report indicated that there was still a lack of gender-aware services and programs distinctively for women in armed conflict-affected areas (Natividad et al. 2013). As I write in 2021, a decade after the MILF-GPH peace process resumed, we have yet to see it having a clear impact on gender-based violence in Mindanao.

Scholars of conflict recognise gender as a key variable in peacebuilding, but there is a general confusion on how to deal with it (Kuehnast, Jonge Oudraat, and Hernes 2011). How should peacebuilders address gender inequality when it cuts across other issues? Given that women are societally disadvantaged in most parts of the world, does support for men in post-conflict education and employment only reproduce inequality? And given that each conflict is different, how can addressing gender-based violence be context-specific? These concerns point to knowledge gaps that hinder the implementation

[1] A long history of women's struggles is behind the WPS agenda, which is composed of the UNSC Resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent Resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2008), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015), 2467 (2019), and 2493 (2019). The agenda has four pillars: participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery.

[2] Women from peace, human rights, and women's organisations were part of the Preparatory Committee that developed NAP. Their 34 organisations, mostly Mindanao-based, further formed the network Women Engaged in Action on 1325 (WE ACT 1325) to help the government to implement the plan and support the peace process.

of the WPS agenda across different settings (Anderlini 2010). The lack of clarity on how to deal with gender in peacebuilding locally makes parties in peace negotiations, pressured by international and national advocates, cursorily use gender terminology, without seriously addressing gender inequality and gender-based violence.

Gender is too important to be a mere buzzword. Across various fields of research, abundant materials on gender and conflict show us why. Individuals and structures practice and embody gender (Connell 1987, 2002, 2005). Women are vulnerable in conflict and play crucial roles in peace (Stiglmayer 1994; Eisenstein 1996; Powley 2003; Garap 2004). Sometimes, women are armed, and men are vulnerable in conflict (Žarkov 2007; Petchesky 2005; D'Costa 2014). Feminist writers (like Afshar and Eade 2004; Butalia 2000; Steedly 2013) have shown us how gender has shaped particular conflicts in Africa, South Asia, and Indonesia. In paying only lip service to gender in the peace processes, we miss how gender can be a critical tool in understanding the causes and consequences of complex political emergencies (Mazurana, Raven-Roberts, and Parpart 2005). Yet such studies also show us how gender dynamics can play out very differently in different conflict settings. The challenge then is to tap the breadth of knowledge about gender generated by both case-study and comparative research, and to draw upon deep understanding about a particular conflict to meaningfully deal with gender in local peacebuilding.

Thus far, the most prominent works on the Moro conflict and Mindanao history, such as those of Cesar Majul (1999), Samuel K. Tan (2008, 2010), and Salah Jubair (1999), reinforce a national discourse that may be classified as what Cynthia Enloe (1990:93) calls masculinised memory, humiliation, and hope. In contrast, there is a thin but provocative scholarship on gender and conflict in Mindanao. A leading local scholar on gender and conflict in Mindanao, Rufa Cagoco-Guiam (with Leslie Dwyer 2012:5) stresses that 'addressing the issue of gender in conflict is not simply additive – bringing in one more stakeholder group to work for peace – but can be transformative. Attending closely to gender can – and should – change the way we look at conflict, and give us innovative ideas for addressing it'. Despite

this urgent call, we still lack a comprehensive study of gender as a social structure and how gender inequality is made to appear natural through discourse.

In this dissertation, my goals are to foreground a gender analysis in understanding the Mindanao conflict and show what it means to place 'gender' at the centre of the peacebuilding agenda. Both goals entail highlighting and broadening the scope of gender-based violence. The central question I ask in this dissertation is: *how does a Moro gender order shape conflict and migration in Mindanao?* A gender order, as defined by Jill Matthews (1984), is a *historical* construction of *power relations* between men and women, encompassing definitions of masculinity and femininity. In describing a gender order and analysing its relation to conflict, I hope to concretely contribute to understanding Mindanao's multiple conflicts and building peace there.

Using gender as the primary analytical lens supplements and transforms the way we know the Mindanao conflict. My project privileges the intersectional analysis of gender as an *order* that *structures* Moro social life and a *discourse* of inequality. Let me briefly define these terms here (more in Chapter 1). An intersectional analysis examines how gender, class, and ethnicity constitute each other, offering insights from both structural and poststructural theories. At the foundation, my analysis focuses on gender as a structure, in the integrative tradition sense, incorporating sets of ideologies and practices, and potential for change (Connell 1987; Lorber 1994; Risman 1998, 2004). Raewyn Connell's (1987) work on gender inspires my structural analysis. I follow her assumption that structures go beyond patterns and actually constrain social life. Intersectional analysis adds poststructuralist insights on how discourses create categories through language, and produces specific subjects (Misra 2018). In Mindanao, I thus analyse how gender structures social and political life in households, communities, and the street, and study how state and insurgent groups adopt and reproduce gender inequality in their discursive production of Moro men as 'disposable' and Moro women as 'resilient'.

The term Moro is contested. The local media uses the label to refer to Muslim-led insurgent armed groups and ordinary Filipino Muslims. For the MNLF, Moro connotes revolutionary, as the Moro struggle is anti-colonial, anti-elite, Islamic, and committed to social justice (Majul 1985; Gutierrez 2000). When I use the term Moro, I refer to the marginalised majority of Muslim indigenous peoples in Mindanao, even though this majority is heterogeneous. Thus, in this dissertation the term Moro does not extend to the Muslim elites, who may themselves identify as Moro in everyday life.[3] I adopt this approach to focus my ethnography and analysis on the gender-distinct experiences of the Moro underclasses, who have been marginalised in academic literature on Mindanao. Thus, I can pose a contrast to the more common leader and elite-focused studies on Mindanao and, as historian Reynaldo Ileto (2017:286) suggests, show how political power circulates throughout the social body and enables the 'big men' to rule.

My main argument is that the Moro gender order is constitutive of violent conflicts in Mindanao. The historically dynamic Moro gender order reveals gender, class and ethnic inequalities within the Philippines. Rather than seeking to explore all aspects of conflict, I zero in on a conflict-driver, recruitment, and resolution. Accordingly, the three components of my main argument are:

1. A historically specific Moro gender order contributed to landlessness, a major resource-based conflict-driver, which made conflicts possible in their current forms and drove migration to urban areas.
2. Conflict actors exploit and sustain the Moro gender order in war recruitment that in turn fuels vertical conflict (between the state and insurgent groups) and undermines community rehabilitation.
3. States and insurgent groups adopt and reproduce the inequalities characteristic of the Moro gender order in their military and business strategies to address and resolve the vertical

[3] Elites are the economically powerful whose political stance and actions exploit others to benefit their interest.

conflict in Mindanao. The strategies do not address horizontal conflicts (between ethnic groups and clans, classes, and genders).

Rather than representing a separate and static element, a gender order infuses all aspects of a particular conflict – its causes, dynamics, and continuing effects. This dissertation explains that far from playing a bit role in conflict, the gender order is one of its engineers.

The key foundation for these arguments is recognition that conflict is built on gendered relationships. Viewing the relationships among women and men illuminates gender at work in different aspects of social life and at different levels.[4] Through structural and discourse analyses, I demonstrate how gender relations are economic and political, as much as they are emotional and sexual. Doing this allows me to identify aspects of the gender order that go far beyond the previous academic attention paid to gender in conflict – which tends to see women primarily as victims of sexual violence in conflict situations or as peacemakers (see Eisenstein 1996; Stiglmayer 1994; Cockburn 2001; Garap 2004).

But how do we grasp the way a gender order operates through the lives of ordinary people? My main research method is the family story, shared with me in ethnographic fieldwork. I did fieldwork in Davao City from June 2016 to April 2017, supplemented by short field visits in March 2015, November 2017, and December 2019. The communities I engaged in, coded Angklahan, Black Beach, and Kawayan, are dense urban poor communities on both sides of the Davao River, on the fringes of the city. By weaving family stories, I learned about Moro residents' experiences and interpretations of the conflict both in their places of origin and through their stories of their subsequent migration to Davao City.

In this dissertation, I offer a broad description and analysis of how the Moro gender order works through the Mindanao conflict. Using a gender lens, I encompass economic, political, and emotional

[4] I use the term 'women and men' based on how the Moros I engaged with during fieldwork identified themselves, and not to exclude Moros who identify their gender as non-binary.

dimensions and forms of conflict, and various sites of violence, including domestic violence, the 'war on drugs' (hereafter, War on Drugs), and the 'war on terror' (hereafter, War on Terror). I explore the gender dimensions of the landlessness that is still unexamined in gender, conflict, and Mindanao studies to show how gender is integral to this conflict driver. In highlighting what I call insurgent femininity, which is embodied by Moro women taking up roles reserved for Moro men and thus challenging the Moro gender order, I privilege previously dismissed women's contributions to Mindanao's unfolding history. And in examining the internal conflict in Mindanao as a site of gender practice, I stress the significance of a gender research that potentially contributes towards social justice and peace in contested spaces and challenging times.

The dissertation is organised in three parts. Part I provides a background, reviews related literature, and consists of this short introduction and Chapters 1 and 2. In Chapter 1, I present a background on my fieldwork site, assess the academic writing around my arguments, and expound on my research methods. In Chapter 2, I introduce the Moros and the Mindanao conflict, focusing on the power of constructs and narratives that have portrayed them to the outside world. Through a survey of folklore and online media relating to gender and conflict in Mindanao, I demonstrate how folk and contemporary portrayals of Moros produce Moros as subjects.

Part II draws from the family stories and analyses gender as a social structure. It consists of Chapters 3, 4 and 5. The family stories my research participants shared with me were animated by complex economic, political, emotional, and sexual relationships that were, as in life, intertwined and messy. In representing the family life stories in the dissertation, I tell them through the gender substructures or dimensions of labour, power, and cathexis. I use these terms as Connell (1987) defines them. *Labour* pertains to the gendered division of labour, the nature of work as part of production, consumption and distribution, and capital accumulation, or in my case, land accumulation. *Power* is about gendered decisions and the use of force, including organised violence. *Cathexis* defines regulations about sexual

relations and practice (for example, heterosexuality, monogamy, etc) and emotional relationships. I study the three gender substructures in all three chapters of Part II.

The family stories detail how Moro women and men experience and interpret the conflict in Mindanao and in Davao City. In Chapter 3, I introduce six Moro families and their members' experiences of conflict in their hometowns in different parts of Mindanao in the late 1960s to the early 1980s. The chapter's novel contributions are its elucidation of gender dimensions of the conflict driver landlessness in Mindanao, the gender dimensions of participation in wars, and the occluded domestic violence that accompanied the spectacle of insurgent wars.

Through the same family stories, I describe the nature of migration to Davao City in Chapter 4. I examine the same dimensions of labour, power and cathexis, but this time, at three levels: the household, the community, and the street. Thus, I am able to look at migration's economic impact on households, the police and local government powers in the community, and the exploitative transactions in the Davao City streets. I find that landlessness and chronic conflict push Moros away from their hometowns, while urban and rural inequalities pull Moros to cities. First-generation Moro migrants to Davao City are mostly male conflict migrants. The migrations often occur immediately after a conflict event, but they may also take place months or years later. Moro women mostly move to Davao City pulled by informal economic opportunities. Ultimately, it is the perceived economic opportunities that keep Moro families in Davao City.

From discussing the conflict in Mindanao at large in Chapter 3 and migration to Davao City in Chapter 4, I zero in on the women in the conflicts in Davao City in Chapter 5. Through family stories, I show how labour, power, and cathexis operate in each form of conflict in the city: the War on Drugs and the War on Terror. Moro women and men negotiate these conflicts through calibrated collaboration and contestation with their neighbours, local leaders, the local government, the police and paramilitaries.

As with rural conflicts, class and gender inequalities define the perpetrators and targets of violence, the beneficiaries, and the sufferers of wars. Yet I also show how Moro women actively use opportunities even in wartime and within the new space of Davao City to build their communities.

In Part III, I synthesise the preceding empirical chapters, detail my discourse analysis, and summarise the dissertation's implications. In Chapter 6, I build on Connell's (2002) position that gender as a structure has a fourth dimension, discourse or symbolic gender relationships, and further argue that a gender order is produced and expressed discursively. I do this in three steps. First, through an inventory of gender constructs, I trace the evolution of the labour, power, and cathexis substructures of gender relations as the Moro families moved from rural to urban communities, and from one conflict to another. I analyse how these gender constructs are built to negotiate precarity due to Moro landlessness. Next, I study how Moro gender constructs cohere into Moro masculinity and insurgent femininity to explain Moro participation in wars. Third and lastly, I examine how both the state and insurgent groups adopt and reproduce a discourse of Moro gender inequality in their war-making and peacebuilding strategies. I argue that the Moro gender order is key to understanding conflict and urban migration in Mindanao.

In Chapter 7, the final chapter, I summarise my findings and their implications for gender, conflict, and Mindanao studies. I reflect upon my insurgent approach to research and how family stories help illuminate the seeming paradox of Moro individuals' engagement with both insurgent armed groups and the state forces, with some changing their armed group affiliation through time. Further, I reflect on my contributions to theory building in Mindanao in describing the components of the Moro gender order, especially insurgent femininity. I therefore highlight how gender is integral to all aspects of Moro life, the power of women in their communities, and the real-world effects of gender discourses. On the practical side, I suggest concrete ways to meaningfully include gender justice as an agenda for community work, as well as in policies of the new Bangsamoro Autonomous Region for Muslim

Mindanao. I show that the substantive content of 'gender' in the current peacebuilding processes ultimately defines its impact against gender-based violence. I argue that beyond disarmament and development projects, gender justice can help abate conflict and improve the quality of peace in the Philippines and beyond.

1 Gender, conflict and migration in Mindanao

I was born in Davao City in the early 1980s but raised in Manila for what my family told me were 'safety reasons'. Late in the period of martial rule under President Ferdinand Marcos, military men came after my activist parents in Mindanao. They caught and killed my father in Davao City when I was five months old. I would only come back to Davao to visit relatives there from my early teens. As I learned more about my family story, my curiosity about my birthplace and Mindanao grew. For example, as a student of anthropology at the University of the Philippines, fellow activists told me that my father had written a social investigation of Mindanao and its three people: the Moros, indigenous Lumads, and settler migrants. For 15 years, I was obsessed about getting a copy of this underground document, which I finally found while on fieldwork in Davao City. Now, I have written my own social investigation of Mindanao. Through this dissertation, I want to make sense of conflict and displacement in Mindanao and how the personal is entangled with collective stories. My inquiry brought me back to my birthplace, raising questions about what conflict means and what moves people to fight or flee.

In this chapter, I describe the conflicts in Mindanao, expound on my core arguments, and explain the methods I use in the dissertation. In the first section, I give a brief background of the Mindanao conflict, focusing on landlessness, armed groups, and discourses around conflict to set up my arguments about the material conditions that underpin the conflict, the agency of actors who participate in it, and the potency of its framing. Next, I define how a gender lens helps make sense of the conflict and migration among Moros in Mindanao. In doing so, I locate my inquiry into gender, conflict and migration in Mindanao in literature across political anthropology, peace and conflict studies, feminist scholarship on gender inequality, and Mindanao studies. The last section details my research methods, which encompass ethnography, family stories, and discourse analysis.

The conflicts in Mindanao

Mindanao is a group of islands in the Southern Philippines, sprawling across the Celebes, Sulu and Philippine Seas.[5] Various academic works (Jubair 1999; Majul 1999; Tan 1987) depict Mindanao – home to at least 18 Lumad (non-Muslim indigenous peoples) ethnolinguistic groups, 13 Islamic ethnolinguistic groups, and today, about a quarter of the Philippine population – as a place of conflict. In popular use, the conflict in Mindanao is that violent vertical conflict which has been occurring between the state and various Moro armed movements from the late 1960s to the present. In general terms, conflict is a hostile social interaction between parties (Levine 2007), that may take a vertical form (between a group of social actors and the state), or horizontal (between individuals or groups). Hostility can be violent if it harms immediately or latently. Like anthropologists Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois (2004), I refer to violence as a continuum of harms with socio-cultural dimensions, to make the study of structural and symbolic violence possible. I follow peace studies founder Johan Galtung (1969, 1996) that any system of social inequality that leads to unnecessary death is violent, and the World Health Organization (Krug et al. 2002) in recognising that neglect and omission are also forms of violence. In many forms, violence indicates the presence of conflict.

Reflecting on a broader meaning of conflict in this dissertation, I see conflict as a challenge to an order. Thus the conflicts in Mindanao are both vertical *and* horizontal in character. Beyond the clash between the state and armed groups – the focus of the vast bulk of scholarly attention – in Mindanao conflicts also involve clashes of interests among Muslim elites, and between Muslim elites and the Moro

[5] A third of Mindanao land is used for agriculture, generating 40 per cent of the Philippines' food and contributing 30 per cent to national food trade (FAO 2019). Gold mined in Mindanao accounts for nearly half of the national reserves (Institute of Island Studies UPEI 2007). Mindanao holds almost half (six of 14) of the Philippine administrative regions.

majority. They also involve challenges to a particular gender order. Conflict is a symptom of a contradiction that conflicting parties need to address, and a process that contributes to social change. For consistency: when I refer to the 'conflict in Mindanao' I am talking about the vertical violent conflict that has been ongoing between the state and armed groups from 1968, as used in the media and academic texts. When I refer to the plural 'conflicts in Mindanao', I mean a broader array of conflicts beyond the spectacular events that pitch armed Moros against the Philippine state.

In studying the conflict in Mindanao, one can begin from the 1970s, a decade that witnessed mass killings, displacement, and destruction. Or start over four centuries earlier, with the colonisation of the Philippine islands and the subsequent marginalisation of Muslims in Mindanao. Taking a longer view of history provides crucial context to the later emergence of armed movements in the Southern Philippines. Read on its own or as a part of Philippine history, the Mindanao literature offers insights into the economic, political, and social aspects of the overlapping conflicts in the region. Economic marginalisation in the contemporary Philippines takes the forms of land, job, and food insecurity. This dissertation takes a deep dive into the landlessness that is an important source of conflict and which contributes to both job and food insecurity in Mindanao. In the following, I provide a background on the Mindanao conflict, focusing on three aspects related to my arguments: the conflict driver of landlessness, the armed actors in the conflict, and the discourses around the Mindanao conflict.

Landlessness

Land is a basic resource that nourishes people through its produce and provides the literal space to live and thrive. Many indigenous peoples around the world equate land to life itself (Dew et al. 2020; Molintas 2004; Wickeri 2011). For Moros, land is an important aspect of the struggle for a Bangsamoro entity (TJRC 2017). Mindanao scholar Judy Gulane (2013:145) observes that 'colonial and postcolonial institutional foundations for determining access, use, and ownership of land provided the fertile ground for the decades-old Moro rebellion.' That is, land exploitation has set up Mindanao for conflict.

Figure 1. The Philippines in Southeast Asia

The Philippines (pink) was a site of pre-colonial sultanates whose inhabitants bartered with Southeast Asian and Chinese traders (CartoGIS Service, College of Asia and the Pacific, The Australian National University).

Seafaring indigenous peoples in Mindanao were once dominant in the archipelago that would be known as the Philippines. In the 11th century CE, the Sulu and Celebes Seas were bustling with trade. The indigenous communities controlling these waters had trading and occasional warring relations with each other on the basis of their contestation over material goods and resources even prior to the 14th century CE when Islamisation began (Kiefer 1972b; Tiu 2005). The adoption of Islam from the 14th century onward and establishment of sultanates – Sulu in the Sulu archipelago and Maguindanao in the Mindanao mainland – transformed political, economic and social institutions. For instance, the sultanates adopted mercantilism as an economic strategy and became powerful and prosperous,

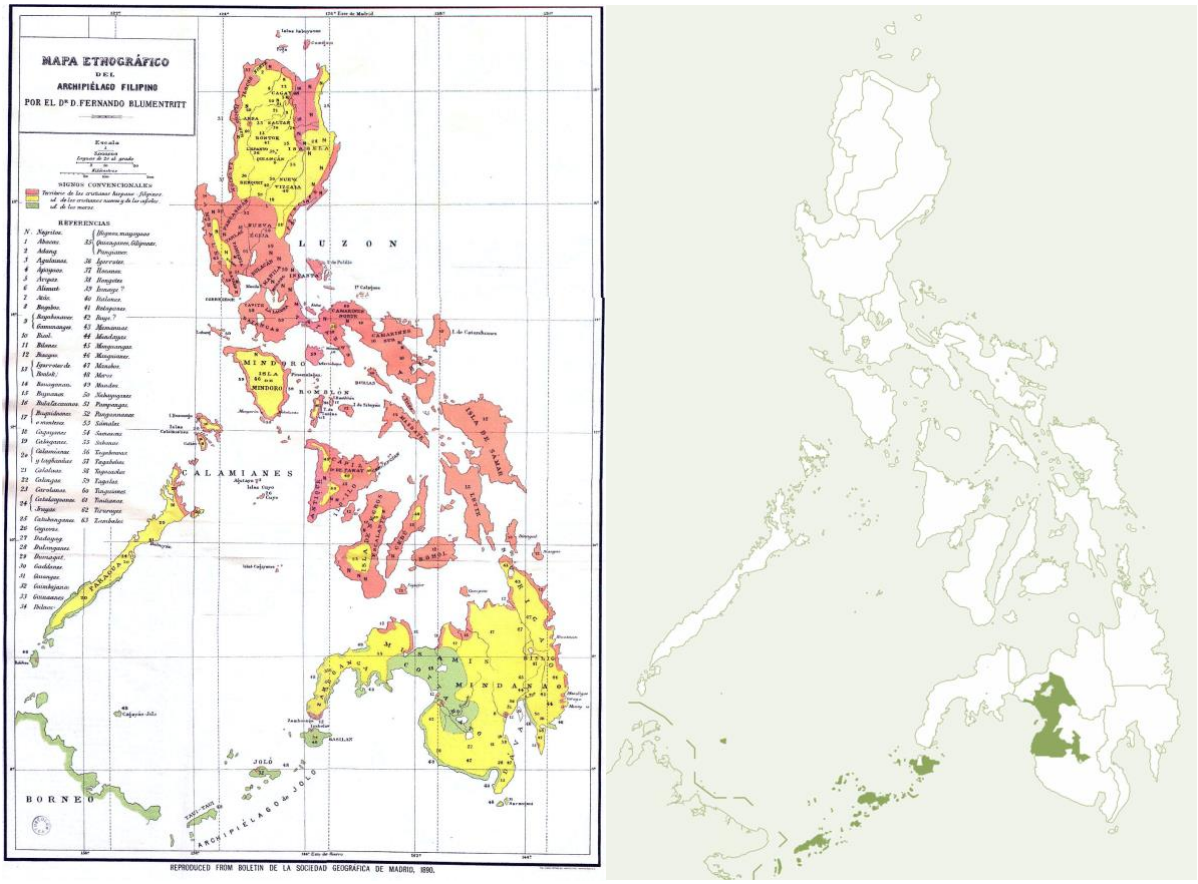
expanding the lands under their influence. The growth of Islam further supported the ascendency of Tausug, Maguindanao, and Maranao elite families and their access to land. The sultanates were the most complex political organisations in the islands before the era of Spanish colonisation (1521–1898).

Early in the Spanish occupation, envoys named the archipelago the Philippines after the Spanish King Philip II, and proclaimed the Regalian doctrine – a legal fiction under which Spain claimed all lands in the Philippines (Molintas 2004). In Mindanao, Spanish colonisation began in the mid-16th century and involved building unfortified military port cities along the northern coast to maintain Spanish sea power (Chias and Abad 2012). By the mid-17th century, ports in Zamboanga and Iligan had been established, and by the early 19th century, in Cotabato and Jolo (Phelan 2011). The ports did not mean that the Spanish effectively colonised these areas, however, as they met fierce resistance from the communities around them whenever they attempted to tax or restrict the Muslims' use of land. The Spanish converted most Filipinos into Catholic subjects, but not the Muslims and the majority of indigenous peoples who retreated to the highlands. Yet, both Muslims and indigenous groups collaborated to some extent with some of the Spanish rulers (military personnel or friars) against their own rivals. For example, Mindanao scholar Patricio Abinales (2000) writes about Muslim elite factions using the Spanish officials for legitimacy, and anthropologist Oona Paredes (2013) shows how some Lumad allied with the Spanish Recollect friars to counteract the Moros they found oppressive.

Despite the resistance and sometime utilitarian collaboration of Moros during Spanish colonisation, a process of economic and political disempowerment of the Moros began. According to anthropologist June Prill-Brett (1988) and legal historian Jose Mencio Molintas (2004), the Regalian doctrine started undermining indigenous concepts of land use and rights. Successive Spanish laws, decrees and memoranda called for land titling. The last of these, the 1894 Maura Law, declared that all untitled lands belonged to Spain (Lynch 1982). Perhaps during the Spanish colonisation, Moros did not feel threatened by land laws, as they did not see themselves as part of the Spanish-controlled Philippines

(coloured red in Figure 2). Yet at the end of the Spanish-American war, marked by the Treaty of Paris in 1898, Spain sold the entire Philippine archipelago for $20 million to the United States of America (Punzalan 2007:384; Tompkins 1970) (in fact, the Spanish had by this time lost to Filipino revolutionaries in northern Philippines and were unable to control most of Mindanao).

Figure 2. Ethnographic map of the Philippines (1890), BARMM (2019)



Left: Based on Spanish documents, ethnographer Ferdinand Blumentritt (1890) mapped the areas of 'Moros' (green), 'infidels' or non-Christians including Lumads (yellow), and 'indios' or Christian Filipinos (red) (Wikimedia Commons). Right: The BARMM (2019) (Roel Balingit, CC BY-SA 3.0, Wikimedia Commons).

While the Americans saw themselves as developing Mindanao and disciplining the Moros and Lumads (Abinales 2000), the United States colonial regime heavily militarised and exploited Mindanao (San Juan 2006, 2011; Tan 1987).[6] The Americans concretised the state land ownership that Spain had

[6] For Molintas (Molintas 2004:284), the Mining Law of 1905 gave the Americans the right to acquire public land for mining and revealed the Americans' goal of extracting resources from indigenous territories.

established through a series of land laws starting with the Land Registration Act of 1902, a Torrens Title System of land registration and transfer. Again, this declared that all unregistered land belonged to the state. Muslims in Mindanao felt the clash in perspectives on land slowly, as initially their leaders tried to negotiate with the new colonisers. In 1903, however, Act 718 invalidated land grants that Moro sultanates and datus (chieftains or traditional leaders) distributed, past and future. Lanao-based writer Francisco L. Gonzales (2000:111) writes, 'The new system disregarded not only traditional laws and procedures, it ignored the right of the chief to approve all transfers'. State laws superseded customary laws, including that of land inheritance (*pusaka*), sale and donations.

A land system based on titles clashed with communal land use practices among Moros and indigenous peoples in Mindanao.[7] Instead of challenging the registration process, however, Muslim datus mediated informal land markets and the educated among them took the opportunity to register vast lands under their own names (Gonzales 2000; Matuan 2007:79; TJRC 2017). In contrast, the majority of the Moros did not register their lands (Lara 2014:131-32). As registrations were written, signed and sworn in the English language, the Americans denied most Moros access to the process (Lynch 1982). Moreover, some did not claim titles because they refused to pay the taxes that came along with titles (Beckett 1982:403). Thus, Moros who contested the individual land titling and/or who were not able to access the bureaucratic procedure to gain individual title lost legal claims to their lands.

The Americans also encouraged migration into Mindanao, through a homestead program established under the Public Land Act of 1903 that awarded land to individuals (up to 40 acres) and corporations (up to 2,530 acres) (Pelzer 1945; Wernstedt and Simkins 1965). From 1913, the Americans established agricultural colonies, six in Cotabato and one in Lanao, and included free transportation, financial

[7] Precolonial Moro *sakop* (followers) followed customary land laws facilitated by the royal families and their chieftains, thus titles and the titling process were sources of confusion. For example, ordinary Tausugs registered the lands they tilled under the Sultan Jamal-ul-Kiram's name, unaware that titular ownership and rights of usufruct among the Tausugs were the same as in Western land law (Kiefer 1972a).

assistance, town sites, and surveyed properties as incentives to migrants to these areas (Wernstedt and Simkins 1965:87–88). Despite the dismal performance of the agencies promoting migration (Interisland Migration Division of the Bureau of Labour from 1918 and the National Land Settlement Administration from 1939), steady voluntary migration increased the settler population during the American occupation:

> Traditionally the Moslems have viewed most of the land in their areas of settlement as belonging to them. Only a part of these lands was actually occupied or cultivated. It has been upon these Moslem claimed-but-unoccupied lands that much of the Christian settlement has occurred. Commonly, the better educated Christian has been able to present a stronger case to the courts, and decisions have often been in his favour, while the Moslem litigants have been viewed as obstructionists and anachronists (Wernstedt and Simkins 1965:101).

The friction that Wernstedt and Simkins observed were largely because of colonial land titling and prejudiced land distribution. For example, Public Land Act 2894 of 1919 allowed non-Muslim Filipinos to apply for ownership of 24 hectares but limited the ownership of Muslims to only 10 hectares (Caballero-Anthony 2007:147). There were cases where settlers were allotted 16 hectares each, while local Maguindanaoans got only half of this at eight hectares (Vellema, Borras Jr, and Lara Jr 2011:305). Over time, land titling generally favoured literate Christian settlers who were more familiar with American legal processes, as well as others who could afford the costs (Tan 1995). Some settlers and corporations exploited the Muslim and Lumad people's ignorance of the law in collaborating with government officials to manufacture land titles, which passed control over customary lands to outsiders. Because titles signified land rights, settlers and corporations could pressure Moros and Lumads out of their occupied lands (Gutierrez and Borras 2004:5). Thus, in the only land survey of Cotabato Province by the Department of Finance in 1953 (Abinales 2016:53), only three Maguindanao elites owned above 900 hectares of land, comprising 17 per cent of big landlords, while 278

Maguindanao with 50–99 hectares of land each comprised the majority of the low-tier landholdings at 63 per cent. By the time the United States left the Philippines, they had created a 1935 Constitution that integrated Mindanao with the Philippines.[8]

Post-war social unrest led the Philippine government to create the Land to the Landless Program in 1954, which invited dissidents and landless settler movement to Mindanao.[9] The weak state apparatus was, however, unable to regulate and organise the registration of lands, making room for fraud and duplications (Abinales 2010; TJRC 2017). Thus, throughout the 20th century, Mindanao absorbed the land-dispossessed from other parts of the Philippines (Abinales 2000; Feldman 1973), dramatically shifting the population.[10] Indigenous and Muslim people had been 63 per cent of the population of Mindanao in 1903; by 1970 they were a minority at only 24 per cent (Dwyer and Cagoco-Guiam 2012), in 2000 they were 27 per cent (NSO 2009). Through the corruption and inefficiencies in land registration (Abinales 2010; Gutierrez and Borras 2004), the state actively facilitated the marginalisation of Moros and Lumads and fortified a resilient secondary land market that mediated the transfer, sale, and rent of lands in Mindanao (Gulane 2013:147). Thus, land records are especially problematic in the southern Philippines as vast areas formally remain 'public lands', despite the fact that these are productive, agricultural, densely populated lands under the effective control of private landed elites (Borras 2006). Land conflict, due to lack of land titles, conflicting land titles, fraudulent sales including double sales, among others, leads the causes of horizontal or clan conflicts in the region.

[8] The United States and the Philippines have a Mutual Defense Treaty (1951) that still stands today. Through the Visiting Forces Agreement in 1999, US troops trained and assisted counter-insurgency and 'anti-terror' operations in Mindanao.

[9] The Magsaysay government created the National Rehabilitation and Resettlement Administration to resettle share tenants mostly from Central Luzon, the hotbed of the *Hukbong Mapagpalayang Bayan* peasant movement, to Mindanao and Palawan. For James Putzel (1992: 88–91), this land reform was an anti-communist strategy.

[10] From the 1950s to the 1970s, the government conducted 42 resettlement projects where Mindanao received four times more settlers than the Visayas and twice those of Luzon, and the size of land involved was about five times larger than that of Luzon and Visayas (Tigno 2006:28).

During Martial Law (1972–1986), the government of Ferdinand Marcos promoted logging, mining and plantations in Mindanao, industries that typically favoured employing Christian settler-workers.[11] Local political rivalries between Muslim elites and a new class of settler (Christian) elites heightened ethnic rivalries over land tenure, making the conflict look like a Muslim-Christian war. Christian politicians backed the vigilante group Ilaga, 'formed to drive Moro communities off their lands, which were subsequently taken over by settlers' (TJRC 2017a:26).

After the end of Martial Law, several new laws were introduced that affect land use. These include the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law of 1988, the Mining Act of 1995 and the Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (IPRA) of 1997. According to Vellema, Borras and Lara Jr. (2011:309), the land reform law had the potential to deliver social justice to one group of landless like the Christian workers on plantations while depriving others like Moros who were forced to abandon their land claims. This was because land distribution under the government program prioritised tenants occupying the land which, in Mindanao, meant settlers. The program did not consider the prior land claims of Moros and Lumads (Borras 2002). Meanwhile, the Mining Act gave foreign corporations full access to land, water, and other resources for mining explorations in an approved area up to 81,000 hectares onshore and 324,000 hectares offshore. Companies were allowed to repatriate all profits and get tax holidays, while the Philippine government would ensure removal of 'obstacles to mining, including settlements and farms'. The corruption of the 'free prior and informed consent' requirement prior to mining stipulated in the IPRA allowed mining companies to legally operate on Moro and indigenous lands.[12] Drawing on such facts, Vellema, Borras and Lara Jr. (2011) argue that Moro marginalisation results from economic

[11] TJRC (2017a:26) reported that the Marcos administration granted Timber License Agreements covering vast forest lands 'to senior military and government officials and allied entrepreneurs to gain, reward, and consolidate support for the dictatorship. This led to the systematic and widespread clearance of virgin forests in Mindanao with particularly devastating effects for indigenous peoples'.

[12] For example, since the mid-1990s, Australian Sagittarius Mines Incorporated operates in the Lumad B'laan lands in Southern Mindanao (Chaloping-March 2014) and Canadian Toronto Ventures Incorporated in Subanen domain in the Zamboanga Peninsula (Wurfel 2006). In the 1970s, the Ilaga drove the B'laan into the mountains where they now negotiate with the mining company (TJRC 2017:50).

and social transformation that have occurred since colonial intrusions and continue up to the ongoing global agrarian modernisation.

Thus far, I have shown how colonisation and the Philippine state laws and programs changed both material access and social practices in Mindanao. Amidst the occupations of the Spanish, Americans, and the rule of the modern Philippine state, the political influence of the precolonial sultanates that dominated Mindanao weakened. Unfortunately, as Abinales (2016:53) observes, 'we really have no idea who owns how much (land) and where today'.[13] With the limited data available on land dispossession because of the dispersed informal land market and problematic official records, we can deduce that state laws and programs forced Moros and Lumads, who have historical ancestral land domain claims covering Mindanao, to accept the presence of settlers from elsewhere in the Philippines and honour the titles that the state granted these settlers. Thus, Mindanao has the highest levels of horizonal or between-group (Muslims, Lumads, and Christians) inequality in the Philippines (McDoom et al. 2019:925). But as Muslim sultans and elites were able to register and bargain over lands, it is the ordinary Moros who have lost legal claims to most of their lands:

> The minoritization of Muslims occurred side by side with the marginalization of the Muslim poor's access to productive resources, especially land. The combined problems of the state's failure to deliver on its promise of land settlements favouring the poor, as well as the local elite's manipulation of legal institutions to grab lands, have denied many incoming settlers of the promised land while at the same time promoting the encroachment of elite families and corporations into Lumad and Muslim lands (Gutierrez and Borras 2004:18).

[13] The TJRC (2016:78) recommends the Bangsamoro entity to create a database on land ownership and dispossession in the Bangsamoro to support legal proceedings and restitution/reparation.

Land grabbing and associated abuses helped the insurgent armed groups recruit, as I show through life stories in Chapter 3, when Moro people's dispossession literally pushed them out of their lands to join guerrillas (Jubair 1999). To be sure, land conflict was not the only source of conflict – scholars explored other economic and political reasons (for example, Howe 2013; Lara 2014; Lara and Schoofs 2013) – but land had a particularly stark self-perpetuating dynamic, with the civil war prompted by the Moro movement's growing strength caused further displacements and migrations which, as I examine in later chapters, threw further fuel on the conflict fire.

Armed actors

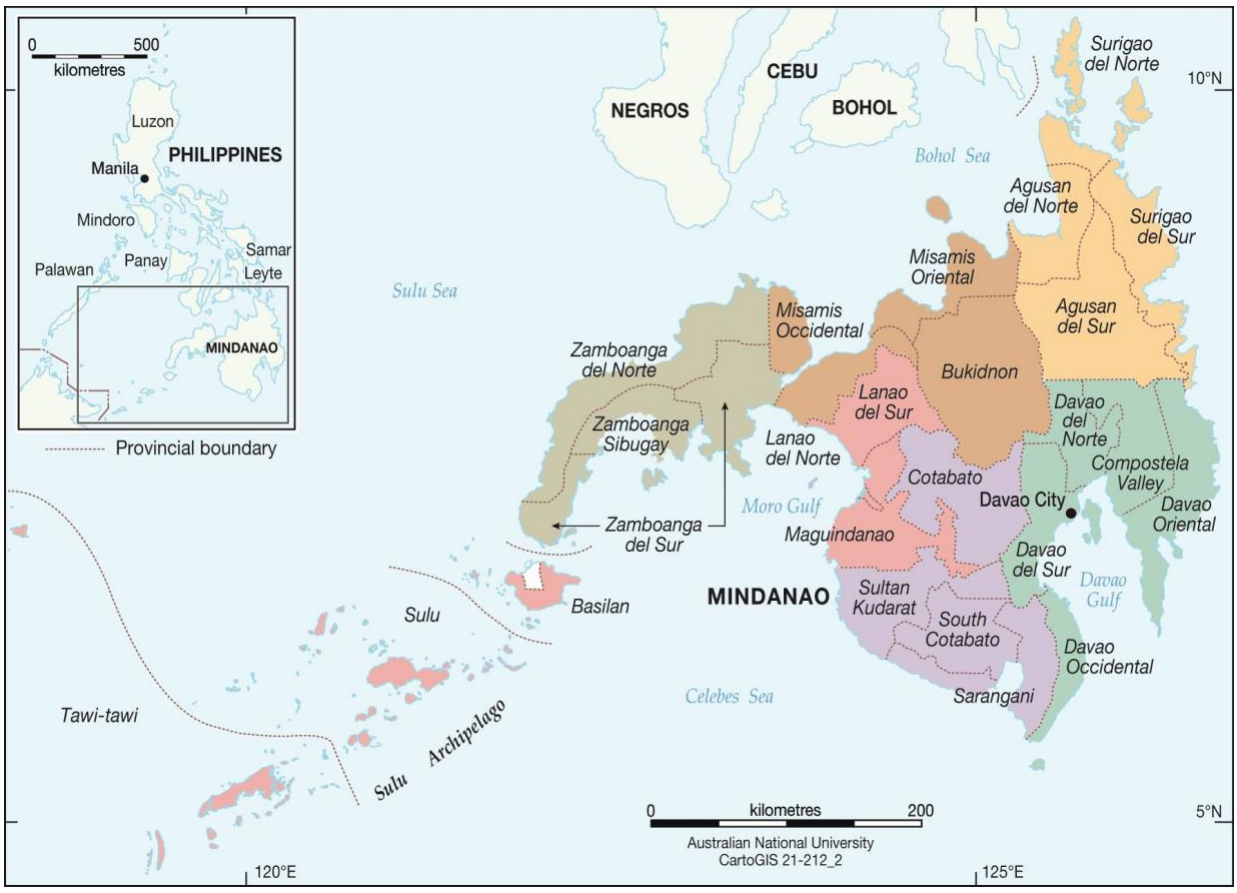
A multitude of armed groups thrive in the Southern Philippines. The proliferation of arms in the region (Gutierrez 2000), a vibrant shadow economy, and a history of armed struggle make it easy for armed groups to operate. There are frequent *rido* or local clan feuds (Torres 2007), which are entangled with conflicts involving other armed groups. The Communist Party of the Philippines, too, gained ground in Mindanao during Marcos' martial rule and has maintained large camps in the region. In this section, I only have space to introduce the most important armed groups identifying as Moro (see Table 1) to show that their strategies, membership, and public image espouse a militarised Moro masculinity, contending against the largely Christian hypermasculine state.

The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) was launched in 1972 as a secular armed social movement, which aimed to liberate the Muslim people of Mindanao or the Bangsamoro (Muslim nation).[14] MNLF Founders Nur Misuari and Hashim Salamat initially envisioned secession from the Philippines. They convinced many Muslim clans, including elites, to join their cause. For the MNLF, the homeland is Mindanao, the Sulu archipelago, Palawan Islands to the north of Mindanao, and for some leaders, Sabah. At the height of MNLF popularity in 1975, it had about 30,000 soldiers (Molloy 1985; Wright-

[14] Prior to the MNLF, former Cotabato governor Datu Udtog Matalam founded the Mindanao Independence Movement (MIM) in 1968. MNLF founders Nur Misuari and Hashim Salamat were youth members of MIM (McKenna 1998:148–149).

Neville 2010). With the potential oil embargo that the mediator Organization of Islamic Cooperation has on its sleeve, the Philippine government signed the 1976 Tripoli Agreement with the MNLF, watering down secessionism to autonomy of the Moro region within the Philippines. While the Tripoli Agreement specifies 14 provinces including Palawan and Davao del Sur as part of the autonomous region, then President Ferdinand Marcos narrowed the scope of autonomy by instituting two separate regions (IX and XII, see Figure 3), instead of a single entity within Muslim Mindanao (Molloy 1985).

Figure 3. Mindanao regions



Clockwise from top left are the colour-coded regions Zamboanga (IX), Northern Mindanao (X), CARAGA (XIII), Davao (XI), Soccsksargen (XII), and BARMM (CartoGIS Service, The Australian National University 2021).

The MNLF formally accepted the government formula for 'autonomy' in 1987, that led to the establishment of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in 1990 and the Final Peace Agreement in 1996. Determined through plebiscites, the ARMM is an even smaller territory carved out

from Regions IX and XII. Under this autonomy, the ARMM had administrative and operational control that can potentially develop the region. Then President Fidel Ramos further created the Southern Philippines Council for Peace and Development (SPCPD), the equivalent of the Provisional Government stipulated in the Tripoli Agreement. This autonomy is artificial, however, because the region did not have control over bureaucratic agencies operating in it, and the SPCPD was never allocated funds to carry out its developmental functions (Flores 2019:214; Maruhom and Allian 2005:142). Misuari was ARMM governor and Chair of the SPCPD in 1996. The MNLF's Executive Council (15EC) comprised mostly of elites ousted Misuari in April 2001 and formed cliques (Caballero-Anthony 2007). In November 2001, Misuari's men attacked government forces in Sulu and Zamboanga City, killing 50 people, for which he was charged with rebellion, arrested in Sabah, and imprisoned in Manila until released on bail in 2008. A court ruled in 2009 that Misuari was not guilty of rebellion staged in 2001. The MNLF loyal to Misuari continued the demand for the full implementation of the Final Peace Agreement, exemplified in the 2013 Zamboanga Siege, a 19-day urban encounter between the MNLF and the state's Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) that killed over 200 and displaced 119,000 (Rood 2013, 2014; Salazar, Law, and Winkler 2018).

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) is the second major armed group in the region. Disappointed at the MNLF's abandonment of secession, Ustad Hashim Salamat left the MNLF in 1977 to establish a 'New MNLF' which launched as MILF in 1984. The MILF furthered not just a nationalist cause but also an Islamic agenda. Through the decades, its military arm Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Force (BIAF) has grown to about 30,000 to 40,000 regular members, with the government estimating it has about 10,000 troops (Arguillas 2019). Recognising the MILF's growing physical camps in Mindanao, from 1997 the Philippine government has offered MILF ceasefire agreements and peace negotiations. For 11 years, the MILF and the Philippine government laboured to come up with a Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domains (MOA-AD), which recognises Moro land claims in Mindanao and expands the ARMM territory.

Figure 4. The BARMM

The BARMM is composed of the provinces Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Basilan, Sulu, and Tawi-tawi; the cities Marawi, Lamitan, and Cotabato City, the centre of BARMM administration; and 63 barangays in neighbouring Cotabato (CartoGIS Service, The Australian National University 2021).

Following the Supreme Court declaration of the MOA-AD as unconstitutional in 2008,[15] MILF commander Ameril Umbra Kato, disillusioned about the peace process, broke away and founded the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) in 2010. By then, MILF leaders under Murad Ebrahim were ready to accept the government offer of an expanded Moro autonomy in Mindanao. The peace process proceeded through a landmark Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro (2012), a Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (2014), and the Bangsamoro Organic Law (2018). On February 25, 2019, the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM, Figure 4) replaced the 30-year-old ARMM, with Murad as its Chief Minister. As part of the decommissioning

[15] The Supreme Court (2008) ruled 8 to 7 that the MOA-AD failed to consult local governments of constituents and exceeded their authority in guaranteeing amendments to the Constitution. The first point reflects a strong lobby against the MOA-AD from settler politicians that feared the backlash of Moros claiming lands that they now occupy, but also the stance of some Lumad groups. The second point is premised on the wording in the MOA-AD that the Bangsamoro has 'associative' relation with central government as a sub-state. The Court interpreted that such arrangement guarantees a constitutional amendment, a power vested only in Congress. Some MILF commanders launched attacks before and after the ruling as protest.

process, 12,000 of 40,000 combatants have exchanged arms for ₱100,000 cash assistance each (Manila Standard 2020). For the 1st Bangsamoro Development Plan (2020) and peacebuilding projects, the MILF has enfranchised MNLF factions in recognition of their similar aspirations for the Bangsamoro.

Table 1. Chronology of armed groups, conflict, and peace process milestones in Mindanao

Year	Administration	Mindanao Armed Groups Launched	Selected Events	Peace Process Milestones
1968	Marcos	Muslim Independence Movement (MIM)	Jabidah/Corregidor Massacre	
1969		Ilaga, Black Shirts, Barracuda vigilantes		
1972		Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF)	Martial Law	
1976				Tripoli Agreement
1984		Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF)		
1987	Aquino			Jeddah Accord
1990			Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)	
1991		Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)		
1996	Ramos		Misuari sits as ARMM Governor	Final Peace Agreement (FPA)
2000	Estrada		all-out-war	
2001	Arroyo		MNLF Splinters, all-out-war	
2007			Tripartite Review FPA implementation	
2008			MOA-AD unconstitutional	
2010	Aquino III	Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF)		
2012				Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro
2013			MNLF Zamboanga Siege	
2014				Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro
2015			Mamasapano Encounter	
2017	Duterte	IS-Groups	Marawi Siege	
2018			Bangsamoro Organic Law	
2019			Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM)	

In contrast to the MNLF and the MILF, the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG), established in 1991 by former MNLF member Abdurajak Janjalani, called for jihad (struggle in defence of Islam) to pursue an Islamic State and had resorted to kidnap for ransom, bombing and similar activities (Maruhom and Allian 2005).[16] Security scholar Anja Jetschke (2010) recorded evidence that the AFP was involved in setting up the ASG to split the MILF and that the AFP profited from ASG abductions. Since the War on Terror operations, the AFP allegedly reduced the ASG from a few hundred to a handful of combatants. Yet, having accumulated ransom money from a series of kidnappings, the ASG has managed to continue recruiting from local communities (Turner 2003).

A fourth important group in the Mindanao conflict are allegiants of the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). When BIFF's Umbra Kato died in 2015, the group fractioned, with some commanders declaring allegiance to ISIS.[17] In 2016, ISIS officials recognised ASG leader Isnilon Hapilon as the ISIS's *amir* (leader) in Southeast Asia (Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict 2016). The international popularity of ISIS in the last decade unified several armed groups in Mindanao, including the ASG (IS-Basilan), the Ansarul Khilafa Philippines (AKP) and the Maute Group (IS-Ranao).[18] These groups cooperated in a bombing in Davao City September 2016 and besieged Marawi City from May to October 2017 to claim the city under the ISIS flag (Gunaratna 2017). There is no guarantee that the alliances will hold. More than ideology, these organisations' leaders likely follow resources and opportunities that ISIS provided.

[16] Since 1997, the US list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations (2019) has included the ASG. The MILF eluded the terror tag with help from the Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who requested the US not to list the MILF as terrorists while peace talks were ongoing.

[17] On 25 January 2015, the Philippine National Police's elite Special Action Force (SAF) pursued a high-value target allegedly protected by the BIFF in Mamasapano, leading to a clash with the MILF that killed at least 64 people: 44 SAF, 17 MILF, 3 civilians, and unknown number of BIFF. The crisis triggered a 'socio-political tsunami' that roiled relations among civil society, political parties, and government and derailed the peace process for some time (de Jesus and de Jesus 2016:159–60).

[18] ASG has been linked to Jemaah Islamiyah, a group branded as Islamist or extremist in Southeast Asia. While the United States continued its war in Afghanistan and Syria, many jihadists headed to Southeast Asia and the Philippines (Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict 2016, 2017), reinforcing the status of armed groups proclaiming allegiance to ISIS in the area.

The constellation of evolving armed groups in the region contributes to making the conflict in Mindanao complex (Rood 2016). What is clear is that these heterogenous armed groups must be understood as active agents that are historically and materially produced in the heavy militarisation of Mindanao and the marginalisation of Moros since colonisation. Rather than innate warrior characteristics of Moros, the militarised Moro masculinity practiced in Moro armed groups is a product of the co-constitution of gender, class, and ethnic inequalities prevalent in Mindanao. Missing or underplayed in the armed conflict in Mindanao are the women, even more marginalised materially and discursively in the conflict, as members of the MNLF's Bangsamoro Women's Foundation (BMWF, founded by Eleonora 'Rohayda' Tan Misuari), and the non-combatant MILF's Bangsamoro Islamic Women Auxiliary Brigade (BIWAB). Yet, as I show in this dissertation, Moro women comprise an unorganised army that makes it possible for men to make war and that deals with the wars' aftermaths.

Representing Moros and conflict

Historical and other academic accounts of Moro society define the elite and government understanding of the conflict in Mindanao. The standard accounts are mostly written in English, published by university presses and are the usual references in academic work on the conflict. I review some of these academic accounts here to give a brief background of how both Moros and the Mindanao conflict were forged in a specific historical process. Both Moros and state actors draw on these accounts for important ideational resources, using them to pursue and justify often varying ideological goals. Thus, I compare various perspectives that inform government policies on Mindanao and the content of the peace processes.

Moro nationalists consider historian Cesar Adib Majul's *Muslims in the Philippines* (Majul 1999) a definitive text on Islam in the Philippines. Majul's hefty volume chronicled the Moro wars, the wars between the Moros and the Spanish (1565–1889). In contrast to the Spaniards' piracy narrative, Majul

distinguishes six stages of the Moro wars to illustrate variations in the motivations of the combatants, political results of the clashes, and the function of changing historical forces. In it, Majul concludes:

> Muslim resistance against Spain in the Philippines was not an isolated phenomenon but an essential part of the general resistance of all Muslim peoples in Malaysia [Southeast Asia] against Western Imperialism, colonialism, and Christianity. In an important sense, the sultanates were articulations of a wider social entity, the Islamic society in the Malaysian world (Majul 1999:410).

According to Majul, the Spanish response to Moro resistance included fierce military operations, co-optation of some members of the elite in classic divide and rule fashion, and occasional peace treaties. Ultimately, the wars resulted in heavy losses of Moro lives and had ripple effects on agricultural production in their communities and their trade with Europeans and Asian neighbours. At the end of the 19th century, Spain succeeded in ending the Sulu sultanate's control of external trade, destroying all their *prahu* (specialised trading vessels) (Warren 1985:235).

A political result of the Moro wars was the othering of Moros in the Philippines, evident still today in their exclusion and marginalisation. History professor Jamail Kamlian, author of *Bangsamoro Society and Culture* (1999) and articles on Mindanao peace and development, asserts that the Spanish popularised derogatory connotations of Moro men as 'pirates', 'traitors', 'enslavers', 'cruel', and 'uncivilized'. One way they accomplished this was through popular plays called *moro-moro,* which local actors performed in community celebrations honouring a patron saint. The scripts predominantly described the male Moros as evil and ill mannered, and in a rare account, effeminate (Pacana 2007). The plays themselves dramatised the wars between the Christians and Moros, with the final triumph of the Christians making them comedies in theatrical parlance.

In Majul's account, the Moro wars ended in the sultanate's decline and in Spain bowing out by selling the Philippines to the victorious United States in the 1898 Treaty of Paris. Kamlian (2012) notes that nationalist historians consider the three-century Spanish-Moro war as one of the longest anticolonial wars in the world. Weakened but not subdued – one might consider that the Moros won the Moro wars because they remained in their homeland Mindanao. Yet, when Spain transferred their claim over the contested territories to the United States, Moros surfaced from one war only to dive into another, this time with the Americans and their superior firepower. While domestic debates in the United States resulted in some ambivalence in attitudes towards their colonies (Abinales 2010:1–3), this did not affect their state policy or practice in Mindanao, which was militarisation and war (Tan 2010).

Picking up from where Majul left off, Patricio Abinales chronicled the American occupation of Mindanao in *Orthodoxy and History in the Muslim-Mindanao Narrative* (2010) and came up with a conflicting analysis. He points out that leaders of revolts against the Americans, such as Datu Tahil of the battle at Bud Bagsak and Datu Santiago of the Parang Cotabato revolt, later supported the Americans. 'One cannot simply adduce that the revolts were Muslim versions of the great anti-colonial resistance…. None indicated any forward-looking anti-colonial or nationalist perspective' (Abinales 2010:39). Abinales dismisses the 'invented tradition' (Hobsbawm 1983) of the orthodox view of conflict in Mindanao that places Mindanao's story under a national resistance model against a colonial and postcolonial Philippine state. To him, this view obscures the connections between Muslims and Filipinos that 'go back as early as the American period' (Abinales 2010:x).

In order to survive, and to further their own particular goals, Muslim leaders certainly did support colonisers at various times, especially during multipolar contests among elites, and Majul observed the same in records of some Muslim leaders' collaboration with the Spanish. Yet Majul still describes the Moro struggle as being anticolonial in nature. Why the conflict in interpretation? Majul was a Moro nationalist, who took a primordialist position that places primacy on people's ties to birthplace, kin,

language, and religion as basis for solidarity and asserting the existence of a deeply historical Moro identity. In contrast, Abinales' position is that the Moro rejection of the Philippine frame was a given in the early formation of the Philippine state,[19] but that the imaginary of the Bangsamoro is a relatively new phenomenon. Abinales' instrumentalist and modernist take echoes political scientist Paul Brass (1979:41), who argues that ethnicity is 'infinitely malleable and manipulated by elites'.

The narrative of an *unceasing* resistance of a *unified* Muslim minority against the colonial and postcolonial states was indeed invented to support the Bangsamoro claims for land and rights in Mindanao. However, the fact that resistance was intermittent and Moro groups were disorganised does not mean that Moro's claims to land are illegitimate or that Moros had no imagination or awareness of a collective self.[20] Philippine Studies scholar Megan Thomas had asked the question:

> Is thought that conceives of a people sharing a language, culture, or history necessarily 'nationalist', and, conversely, must nationalist thought be articulated in the word 'nation,' or can nationalist thought be expressed in terms of 'people,' 'culture,' or 'race'? (Thomas 2012:8).

Despite the lack of a common language and culture among indigenous groups identifying as Moro, MILF chief negotiator and author Salah Jubair (1999) identifies racial origin, religion, a shared history, government, territory, and an ongoing Moro nation-building process as the main elements of Moro unity. Jubair concurred with Majul when he wrote, 'if the Moros fought for anything related to their perceived racial distinctness it was no doubt a peripheral issue; the main point always was religion' (1999:15). Jubair asserts that the nationalism of the Moros was ordained in the Qur'an: 'We have created you male and female, and have made you nations and tribes that ye may know one another'

[19] Based on distinct histories of having sultanates before the colonial state formation, Mindanao behaved much like Aceh, which long rejected the Indonesian state.
[20] Southeast Asian Studies intellectual Benedict Anderson (1983:15–16) defined nations as imagined political communities that compel people identifying as members to sacrifice their lives for such entity.

(Chapter 49, Verse 13). From this point, he argues that, 'if [the] Filipino was the child of colonialism, [the] Moro was the offspring of anti-colonialism' (1999:14).

In the pioneering *Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philippines*, anthropologist Thomas McKenna (1998) challenged the then-dominant primordialist assumptions in Bangsamoro nationalist historiography. McKenna's fieldwork in Campo Muslim, an urban poor community in Cotabato City, showed discrepancies between the official discourse of the rebellion and that of ordinary adherents and supporters. For example, while ideologues claimed that nationalism or religion motivated people to join the resistance movements, McKenna documented that foot soldiers did not usually invoke these concepts and argued that fighting for a Bangsamoro or Islamic nation were not potent factors for recruitment. Instead, he suggests, people joined the movement to, among others, defend themselves and their local communities, or as a result of social pressure, armed coercion, and personal ambition.

My own position straddles the primordialist and instrumentalist views of Moro history as I take a justice perspective and distinguish between the Moro majority and Muslim elites. On the one hand, Moros have material claims to land and resources in Mindanao rooted in conceptions of social justice owed to Moros that precede a pan-ethnic Bangsamoro identity. Moro identities were undoubtedly forged in the colonial and postcolonial occupations, and a Moro struggle developed historically, and is still ongoing. On the other hand, I agree that Moro elites have instrumentally used Moro identity to achieve their own ends. While the production of a Moro identity can have a progressive, mobilising value, it also 'flattens' identity into a homogenous category, and hides class and gender differences. To a large extent, Muslim elites downplay the diversity of people in Mindanao, especially Lumads sharing their land claims. I agree with Abinales' analysis that:

> In invoking cultural, ethnic or religious distinctiveness, many Mindanao intellectuals gloss over more fundamental differences like class, warlordism and political clans and their access to resources to and control over the resources of these extremely rich areas (Abinales 2010:x).

The Moro nation-building project generated a form of identity politics that was clear-cut with the goal of being persuasive – i.e., of convincing people that it was their identity as Moros that trumped all others. Yet the reality was that people identifying as Moros in Mindanao have various identities and mobilities. For example, there are many Muslims living outside of, and there are non-Muslim indigenous peoples sharing, what is claimed to be Moro territory (Silva 1979). Furthermore, elite Muslim men and women identifying as Moros typically speak as if they are representing all Moros, even when acting to pursue their individual interests. In fact, as Mindanao scholar Francisco Lara Jr (2016:250) argues that local strongmen and clans undermine or utilise state structures and organisations to benefit themselves. Many of the Muslim elites who took part in the anticolonial resistance later became agents of the state and hence part of the oppression and exploitation that they had previously opposed (Lara 2014). In this process, some elites excluded themselves from their own communities, resorting to violence to assert control over them.[21] While recognising the heterogeneity of elites and non-elites as groups, my position aims to recognise Moro people's ancestral land claims, history, and aspirations for social justice apart from that of the Muslim elite.

Historical writings serve as important ideational resources for both Moros and state actors. Predictably, most Mindanao historians have focused on Muslim elites. However, the colonial and state archives they use as sources could contain biases that limit the breadth and scope of such scholarly accounts. These accounts help shape our understanding of Moro history and focus it on male, elite figures who held power, as if they were the only relevant actors in their time. Reynaldo Ileto's

[21] To illustrate, the Muslim elites' participation in regional and national politics during Martial Rule in the 1970s such as that of Mohamad Ali Dimaporo (Bentley 1994), only legitimised state control of Mindanao.

(1997:104) critique of nationalists in the Philippines applies to some Mindanao scholars: the masses are not allowed to speak.

Regardless of the writers' intentions, other actors reproduce their narratives about conflict in order to achieve certain goals. For instance, academics' adoption of the long or short view of conflict history, their analysis of actors, and their identification of issues arising from the conflict inform or legitimise government and insurgent group policies and strategies in Mindanao. The positions these academics have and the privilege given to their voices in multiple mediums allow them to shape opinions of the educated elite and middle classes in the Philippines.

Cesar Majul was already a prominent historian before becoming Dean of the University College (1961–1966) and then the College of Arts and Sciences (1969–1971) at the University of the Philippines. While working on the book *Muslims in the Philippines*, Majul employed Nur Misuari as a research assistant. Misuari looked up to Majul as mentor and corresponded with him regularly (Stern 2012). Majul's 'primordialist' position may have grown with his engagement with Misuari just as Misuari's vision for the MNLF may have developed with Majul's guidance. Majul was instrumental in securing Misuari's support from Malaysia in 1971:

> Malaysia and Libya, convinced of the need to administer punishment to Manila for injustices against Muslims, had begun to search for a Muslim leader they would support. High officials from Malaysia had spent several days with Cesar Majul, asking, '*Who is Misuari? Is he the right one?*' (Stern 2012:41).

In *Muslims in the Philippines*, Majul's emphasis on the kinship relations of Moros in the Philippines and Muslims in Southeast Asia, especially the Sulu Sultanate's rights to Sabah, was especially useful in legitimising the Philippine's claims to this part of Malaysian territory. At the launching of his book in

1973, months after Martial Law was declared in the country, Executive Secretary Alejandro Melchor referred to the book as 'a landmark in the rewriting of Philippine history' because it asserted the existence of sultanates as nation-states and linked Filipino identity with Southeast Asia. But for the Philippine government then, the book legitimised government policy:

> The successor states to earlier societies now exist all around us; the New Society itself *is* emerging as an authentic successor state alongside others. In a sense, we are resuming an interrupted process of political development in our region (Melchor in Majul 1999:x).

This statement was predicated on the government's Operation Merdeka to take back Sabah and the subsequent cover-up of a massacre of Muslim recruits in Corregidor in 1968.[22] Majul may not have intended for his work to be used in this manner, but it was appropriated in this direction.

Sulu-born Christian Samuel K. Tan has authoritatively written about the place of Moros in Philippine history since 1974 from his positions as Chairperson of the Department of History, University of the Philippines, Research Fellow of the Tadhana Special Research Projects of the Malacañang Palace (Presidential office and residence), and Chairman-Executive Director of the National Historical Institute, among other roles. Tan's work (1987) employs colonial categories of *indios*, *infidels*, and *Moros* that translate to today's Christians, Lumads and other non-Muslim indigenous peoples, and the Muslims, respectively, and reflect the historical process that created these cultural communities:

[22] Also called 'Jabidah Massacre', state military massacred (at least 23) Muslims training in Corregidor Island, 1968, when the trainees refused to follow the order to invade and occupy Sabah (Rivera 2008:40; Vitug and Gloria 2000). News of the massacre outraged Muslims, leading to the founding of MNLF precursor, the Mindanao Independence Movement. Only in 2013, on its 45th anniversary, would a Philippine President officially recognise that the massacre happened at all.

> War is a result of historical and cultural inertia of indigenous peoples' reaction against both perceived and actual social injustices as well as the pressures of contemporary social, economic, political and cultural processes that accompany modern changes (Tan 2010:38).

Tan deems war normal and necessary for the government because the Moro secession hurt national sovereignty when it established over 40 military camps and autonomous communities in Mindanao. In fact, for Tan (2010), the government needs to prevail. Rebuilding Mindanao according to government plans means to take over Moro military camps and refortify the territory following the lead of the Spanish and Americans during colonisation. The government should transform Mindanao's lands, he argues, into modern economic zones drawing on the capital provided by national and multinational interests. Tan's stature in academic and political circles contributed to the popularity of his views. Importantly, Tan's views reflect the government's combative stance against resistance movements and its appetite for economic benefits from the resource-rich region.

Salah Jubair, author of *Bangsamoro: A Nation Under Endless Tyranny* (1999), is an eyewitness historian, a former MNLF member, and subsequently a member of the MILF Central Committee. To critics of the idea of a Moro nation, Jubair asserts that the precolonial sultanates were actual states in form and function. He argues that downplaying this history was a political stance that favoured the Philippine government's myth of a unitary state:

> The Philippine government continues to ignore the national character of the Moros in the Philippines. It persists to perceive the struggle of the Moros to be no less than a reflection of interlocking socio-political, ecological, economic problems, similarly confronted by the hungry and malnourished, the rural landless, the urban squatters, and the slum dwellers (Jubair 1999:34).

Jubair's book was dedicated to the 'gallant and patriotic Bangsamoro *mujahideen* [martyrs] of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front', and indeed the Moro resistance movement use it to support their claims against the Philippine state. Since the signing of a framework agreement in 1998, the book has guided the contents of the MILF position in the peace process. This book implied the primacy of Islam as the unifying element of the Bangsamoro and suggested that upholding Islamic institutions was a critical component of the peace process in Mindanao. It is now known that Salah Jubair is one of the pseudonyms of MILF Chief Negotiator Mohagher Iqbal (Arguillas 2007).

Accounts such as those of Majul, Tan and Jubair are integral to constructing national memories of the past; they generate narratives that reconstruct and reinforce national discourses. They are fragments that forge nationalism that 'typically [has] sprung from masculinized memory, masculinized humiliation, and masculinized hope' (Enloe 1990:93). That is, a nationalism that considers and serves men's interests. For instance, these historians' focus on war – on military forms of conflict – wittingly or otherwise, reinforces calls for a rational, masculine government domination over the emotional in their anger, emasculated Moros. It is therefore critical to identify whose voices are heard, and on what authority they claim to speak.

The canonical writings on Moro history also tend to define conflict narrowly, focusing on armed violence pitting Moros against the state, and viewing ceasefires and power sharing between elites as the loftiest goals in resolving conflict. Broadening the definition of conflict beyond war, instead seeing it as a challenge to an order as I do in this dissertation, can help focus our attention on everyday struggles for social justice. This refocusing provides more space for Moro women's narratives, and the narratives of the impoverished, to meet and permeate Moro stories.

As with the conflict in Mindanao, the most critical conflicts in the world today are not between states but within and across them. Internal conflicts from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe devastate, displace, and

cause great suffering among the poorest people in the world.[23] Of course, each conflict is historically and context specific. Peace negotiations across the world have rightly looked at the grievances that drive conflicts. But grievances are not enough to explain mounting conflict the world over (Tilly 1978). Political scientist Edward Aspinall (2009) explains how a collective frame was necessary for the Acehnese nationalists to mount resistance against a dominant state discourse in post-independence Indonesia. This is certainly why Moro nationalists in the Philippines mobilise a collective Moro identity. In the next section, I explain why a historically specific gender order in Mindanao is another frame that enables and shapes one of the longest internal conflicts in Southeast Asia. Without taking gender into account, we come up with an incomplete and distorted picture of the Mindanao conflict.

Privileging gender

The gender inequality that exists throughout the Philippines is starkest in the Mindanao conflict areas. The Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao registered the highest Gender Development Index disparity among the regions in the Philippines in its 30-year run.[24] Viewed in terms of their access to health, education, income, and political representation, women and girls in the region are more discriminated against than in other places in Mindanao and the Philippines (Human Development Network 2005). This inequality has adverse implications for Moro women's capabilities, development and freedom, raising the question of how Moro women and men experience and negotiate such inequality in times and places of conflict. In this dissertation, I show that gender inequality is not coincidental but constitutive of the Mindanao conflict.

[23] Internal conflicts have been described as 'protracted' (Azar, Jureidini, and McLaurin 1978), 'deep-rooted' (Burton 1987), and 'intractable' (Kriesberg, Northrup, and Thorson 1989). Mary Kaldor (1999) distinguished internal conflicts as 'new wars' to contrast the 'old' interstate wars. Conflicts within borders persist after decades of interventions, even while the number of interstate wars fell in the last 50 years (Mack 2008).
[24] While the Gender Development Index is not a perfect measure, I find it a useful indicator within country.

My inquiry into the relationship of gender and conflict is premised on the historical, structural, and discursive nature of gender. For my analytical purpose, I require an autonomous theory of gender that is not biologically determined, goes beyond social reproduction, stereotypical sex roles, and the pitting of all women against all men. The latter means that the category 'women' is not a coherent group with identical interests (Mohanty 1984), just as 'men' is as heterogenous. Gender in this dissertation is a historically and culturally specific social construct, practiced and embodied by individuals, structures, and relations of domination (Connell 1987, 2005, 2002). In this section, I show how I use gender as the main tool for my analysis of conflict. I begin by providing a short overview of writings on gender and conflict in Mindanao. Next, I explain how I analyse gender as an order that structures and reinforces a discourse of 'natural gender inequality', is dynamic, intersectional, and multilevel. Then, I go through my arguments, explaining how gender is constitutive of conflicts in Mindanao by making conflicts possible in their current forms, sustaining conflict through recruitment, and shaping how conflicts are discussed and addressed.

Mindanao gender and conflict

Existing scholarship on gender and conflict in Southern Philippines is thin but provocative. One strand of work on gender in Mindanao discusses masculinities and transgender Moros. The association of men and war motivated this early interest in Moro gender studies, and in the seeming contradiction of men discarding their masculinity. Thomas Kiefer (1972b) has written ethnographies of the Tausug, including Tausug masculinity in the context of violence and war, and concluded that revenge is a form of reciprocity (blood-debt). Explaining Tausug revenge behaviour through Tausug proverbs, Armando Tan (1981) offers that *sipug* (shame) and *isug* (bravery) are motivational factors that rule social relations in Tausug conflict situations. More recently, Mark Johnson (1995, 1997) wrote about transgender identities and homosexuality among Tausug and Sama men as cultural transformations shaped by colonisation and militarisation in Mindanao. With some exceptions like Johnson's, most studies on gender in Mindanao have largely focused on men and women as categories.

Another strand of work documents Moro women's agency in conflict. Southeast and East Asian studies scholar Jacqueline Siapno (1994) argues that while women participate in national liberation movements in intelligence, supply, medic, and combat roles, they typically return to everyday patriarchal life after rebellion. In contrast, religion and conflict scholar Vivienne Angeles (1998:228) argues that women's participation in the MNLF politicised them and gave them opportunities to rediscover and believe in themselves. Women and conflict researcher Anne-Marie Hilsdon (2003) commends the activism of Maranao women and non-government organisations, in interpreting the Qur'an to promote women's rights to sexual freedom, work, education, and political participation. On the eve of the Philippines' adoption of the Women Peace and Security Agenda, Hilsdon (2009) also warned of the way Maranao women's labour is elided in peacemaking. She argues that while Maranao women are successful peace negotiators in *rido* (clan and community conflicts), they are seen as only 'assisting men' and their accomplishments are undervalued as they occur at the community and not at the national level. Further highlighting women's agency in public life, anthropologist Birte Brecht-Drouart (2013) details the work of elite Maranao women leaders as peace and development advocates. Like Angeles, she concludes that while there is still no consensus among conservatives, moderates and progressive Muslims whether women should take over public leadership positions, Maranao women are so far able to compete for these roles only when backed by their elite families.

The final strand of Mindanao gender research looks at gender at work in conflict settings. Here, Brecht-Drouart (2011) contributed a dissertation on the national question and its impact on gender in elite Maranao society. She convincingly argues:

> The confrontation between re-Islamization and re-traditionalization involves social struggle, the poor against elites, a national struggle, since government supports traditionalists, and a gender struggle. Women have more chance of occupying and expressing official power in the

> traditional framework but for those who are excluded from a dominant position in clans and who have political ambitions, the main possibility of expressing their opinion is through Islam (Brecht-Drouart 2011:371).

Leslie Dwyer and Rufa Cagoco-Guiam's Asia Foundation report (2012) also falls in this category, as they explored the gendered impact of conflict on the mobility and peacebuilding roles of women and men, and on the psychological impacts of conflict on them. In my assessment, the different strands of research on gender and conflict in Mindanao should go beyond the ethnographic moment of documenting particularities of gender practices in Mindanao as insights can also meaningfully contribute to the peacebuilding in the region. To this end, Sara Davies, Jacqui True and Maria Tanyag (2016) zeroed in on the low reporting and resulting neglect of sexual and gender-based violence in the peace process between the MILF and Philippine government (GPH). They argue that the oversight is symptomatic of the failure to recognise conflict dynamics and range of actors in Mindanao, and a serious hindrance to building sustainable peace.

Despite the United Nations' recognition of the importance of incorporating gender into conflict mitigation and resolution programming, Dwyer and Cagoco-Guiam (2012) assessed that in the Philippines, efforts in this direction were limited to the Women in Development approach, which adds women to the equation of gender-neutral programs. I found that the 2015 Bangsamoro Development Plan drafted as a key document in the peace negotiations between the Philippine state and the MILF manifests this limited approach (Jopson 2017). I maintain that the gap comes from the standing mystification of how gender works in the Mindanao conflict. Thus, in this dissertation I build on earlier works on gender in Mindanao in my study of Moro masculinity, insurgent femininity (which I define below), and the gender structure and discourses in which they are forged. To complement research focusing on elites like Brecht-Drouart's, I turn my attention to the Moro underclasses and the gendered aspects of landlessness. While most research has recorded the particularities of gender practices

within Islamised ethnic groups like Tausugs and Maranaos, my study aims to draw out their similarities by examining a pan-ethnic Moro gender order and its implications for conflict and peacebuilding. This broad view could be particularly useful in engaging with multi-ethnic populations within the BARMM.

Gender as an order

Along with many other scholars, Joan Wallach Scott (1986) argues that gender is a useful tool for historical and social analysis. But how is gender a tool? Gender can help us understand social parameters, subject positions, and possibilities for change. I found that sociologist, gender theorist and activist Raewyn Connell's *Gender and Power* (1987) provides a practical framework for studying gender as a social structure. For Connell (1987:92), 'the concept of *social* structure expresses the constraints that lie in a given form of social organisation… through a more complex interplay of powers and through an array of social institutions.' Connell developed a theory of gender as social structure in three steps. First, incorporating developments in the theory of practice, Connell argues that structure is dynamic in that *situational* gender practice and gender structure transform each other, allowing for both reproduction and transformation through time. This integrative tradition that incorporates agency in social structure has since been adopted widely in gender research (Lorber 1994, Messerschmidt 1997, 1999, Risman 2004, Martin 2004). Second, she breaks down the concept of a single structure of gender relations into dimensions of labour (economic and production relations), power (organisational and power relations), and cathexis (emotional and sexual relations). To these, Connell (2002) later adds discourse (to examine 'institutionalised meanings'). Third, she distinguishes 'between the kind of structural analysis that produces concepts like the "sexual division of labour" (structural *models*) and the kind that produces concepts like the "gender order" (structural *inventories*)' (Connell 1987:91, emphases mine).

Rather than being voluntary, random and ahistorical, gender practices build an order. Following Jill Matthews (1984), a 'gender order' is a *historical* construction of *power relations* between men and

women encompassing definitions of masculinity and femininity. Connell expanded Matthews' understanding of gender order, to portray the *empirical unity* of gender relations in a society at a particular historical moment. 'Where structural models push towards comparisons across situations at a given logical level, structural inventories push towards a more complete exploration of a given situation, addressing all its levels and dimensions' (Connell 1987:98). Connell's concept of a gender order is thus an inventory or a compilation that describes a complex picture of overall gender arrangements (Connell and Pearse 2015), rather than a model by which to measure gender relations. An inventory suits my purpose of describing gender in operation in Mindanao, conscious of the historically specific social and cultural practices in this region rife with conflict. Further, I am making my inquiry into gender inequality's relationship with conflict in Mindanao at a particular point in history when the neoliberal turn in gender studies (Risman, Myers, and Sin 2018) is restoring an earlier emphasis that sees gender as being about individuals and choices. I find in the work of Connell and likeminded thinkers a welcome emphasis on collectives and structures, without losing sight of agency.

Building on Connell (1987, 2002) and Misra (2018), my own take on the gender order demonstrates how a gender structure is produced and expressed discursively, and that gendered discourses produce gendered subjects. In this dissertation I describe a dynamic Moro gender order in my inventory of gender relationships that comprise households, communities, and the city streets. As a social structure shapes interaction among people and institutions, so can structure be accessed through a study of the patterns of gender relationships in a particular society. Following Connell (1987), my structural analysis of gender attends to dimensions of labour, power, and cathexis. Collating insights from the study of each, I draw a picture of a Moro gender order particular to practices at a given time and to gender as a social structure at work in Mindanao. This very structure is in turn expressed discursively in my inventory of gender relationships that draw on narratives produced by ordinary Moros, insurgent groups, and state characterisations.

In identifying a Moro gender order, we can also identify the femininities and masculinities – i.e., the contextually symbolic and culturally specific sets of meanings of what women and men are and should be (Schippers 2007:92) – that operate within it. Rather than studying the multitude of gender identities in Mindanao, I focus on the ideologies and practices of the most widely shared versions of Moro masculinity and the less common insurgent femininity. I could argue, drawing from Ashis Nandy (1983), that Moro masculinity is a hypermasculinity, an exaggerated masculinity in reaction to the threat of colonial and Filipino rule. But for clarity, I reserve the term hypermasculinity to the hardliner posture of the Philippine state to Moro insurgency and secessionist campaigns, a posture that also shapes the Moro masculinity. By 'insurgent femininity' I refer to the way some women take up soldiering and leadership roles normally reserved for men in the Bangsamoro, and thus this 'insurgent femininity' has potential for transforming the Moro gender order.

Intersectional approach to gender

While the dissertation's focus is on gender, I value gender's meaningful intersection with class and ethnicity. Since the 1980s, collectives and scholars like Kimberle Crenshaw (1989) and Patricia Hill Collins (1991) have productively explored how gender mutually constructs social hierarchies of race and class to highlight the intertwined oppression of impoverished black women. From being embodied experiences, an approach, and an analysis, intersectional thought is now its own field. Intersectionality scholar Ange-Marie Hancock (2016) characterises intersectionality as a project with two goals: to visibilise the marginalised to get their policy needs met, and to reshape ontological relationships as a framework (usually) for social justice.

The intersectional approach suits my structural analysis very well as it recognises gender, class, and race as social structures. Joya Misra (2018:113), however, argues that structural theory has to understand why, despite change, gendered inequalities remain troubling and durable in media representations, wages, violence, and political power, to name a few. To the structural analysis, the

intersectional approach additionally offers poststructuralist insights on how discourses form categories through language and produce specific subjects. Thus, intersectional theory provides the greatest insight into structural changes and durability by bridging structural theory's emphasis on analysing power and inequality through examining difference by or across categories (such as gender) and poststructural theory's emphasis on disrupting categories (Misra 2018:113). In my intersectional approach, I combine structural and discourse analyses in describing a Moro gender order. For critical discourse analysts, discourse is a 'way of talking about and acting upon the world which both constructs and is constructed by a set of social practices' (Candlin and Maley 1997:202). While ideologies and discourse can blend into each other, I will use ideologies consistently when referring to masculinities and femininities, and take discourse as a broader category that can mean a combination of ideologies. In fact, in my analysis of gender as a social structure, I construct a Moro gender order from particular framings Moro women and men shared with me using everyday language; as a result my inventory of a Moro gender order is discursive in form.

The symbolic relations between and among men and women come from patterns of gender practices among individuals and institutions at the local, regional, and global levels that affect each other. The specificity of localities is embedded in historical and geographic contexts that makes it impossible to discuss Moros without relating their experiences to Islamic movements and other racialised conflicts in the Global South. Moro masculinity compares with other subaltern masculinities in South Asia, Latin America and Africa subjugated by the supremacy of white, rich, heterosexual European men. In South India, Martyn Rogers (2008) documents how Scheduled Caste youths deployed sexual harassment to contest their subordination within higher education and the 'white collar' employment market. In Colombia and South Africa, economist Mara Viveros-Vigoya (2016:233) and anthropologist Mamphela Ramphele (2000) respectively describe how structural violence translates into interpersonal violence within communities when men with subaltern masculinities assert their authority over women. Through such studies, scholars show how sexism produces sexual and domestic violence. As I will show

in this dissertation, the symbols of gender inequality are produced and reproduced locally in Mindanao and relate to wider violent structural inequalities in the Philippines and globally. While the conflict in Mindanao is racialised through its colonial roots, within the Philippines, conflict actors invoke ethnicity as a more salient category than race. Thus, in this dissertation, I refer to the intersection of gender, class, and ethnicity.

Thinking of gender inequality as an everyday form of violence speaks to a stirring body of work in political anthropology that attends to the actors and forms of violence invisible in mainstream conflict studies. In this direction, anthropologists Veena Das (2007), Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1993), Philippe Bourgois (2001), and Stephen Lubkemann (2008) among others, theorise on violence both in war and peace. They show how normalised and constant forms of physical, psychological and emotional violence not only have productive and destructive but also reproductive effects, so that 'we can rightly speak of chains, spirals, and mirrors of violence' (Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois 2004:1). To this body of work about how violence descends to the mundane, I contribute that the gender order is an accomplice to making violence at once invisible yet also spectacular in the form of wars. Gender inequality, including landlessness, gambling lives in wars, and peace only for elites are forms of structural violence in Mindanao. Akin to the tradition of the oppressed, Moros are in a constant 'state of emergency' (Benjamin 2003:392) in insurgent and other wars. I refer to this chronic situation due to landlessness as precarity, following Judith Butler (2010:3), who distinguishes precarity as a political condition of unjustified insecurity, from the existential condition of precariousness. Precarity is an everyday form of violence that spirals into, and is a mirror of, military and community forms of violence. Brooke Ackerly (2018:12) further calls the disproportionate impact and experience of injury and death as 'harms that reveal injustice itself because of the role of power inequalities and normalization in bringing them about'. An intersectional approach that examines the structural and discursive normalisation of Moro precarity offers constructive ways towards justice.

Feminist intellectual Delia Aguilar (2012) laments how current intersectionality scholars have largely moved to the realm of discourse and banished a critique of capitalism from their analysis. I take this concern seriously. Studying historically specific Moro masculinities and insurgent femininities is my way of pursuing an intersectional approach that attends to Moro people's material dispossession and disempowerment. I recognise that identity positions are relationships of power, and in many instances, class defines many of these relationships. Thus, to prevent the common lumping of Muslim elites and non-elites, I distinguish between them and use the term Moro only for the latter. The theoretical and empirical grounds I draw from are the gendered practices among Moro communities in Mindanao, Southern Philippines, in full recognition of the disruption, persistence and durability of coloniality.

Gender order as constitutive of conflict

In this dissertation, I demonstrate that the Moro gender order is constitutive of violent conflicts in Mindanao. I study the Moro gender order as an inventory of constructs that manifest themselves in the experiences of Moro women and men and in the ideologies and discourses of inequality that shape their lives. In taking this approach, I also build on a body of literature on social inequality, a subfield cutting across peace and conflict and social movement studies (Galtung 1969, 1996; Tilly 1978, 1999, 2000, 2003) that can benefit from critical feminist perspectives (Confortini 2006). Some inequality theorists have zeroed in on grievance or discrimination based on ethnicity and religion as a predictor of interstate conflicts (such as Gurr 1994) and especially in modern states, intrastate conflicts (Gurr 1970, 1994, 2012). Others focus on rational actors taking opportunities and mobilising resources; this is the camp that I find more compelling. I am particularly drawn to Charles Tilly's (1999) framework of 'categorical inequality' that allows me to study horizontal inequality between women and men. I associate with scholars that look at gender inequality, a specific aspect of social inequality, as illuminating of conflicts.

So far, we know from literature in the fields of international relations and comparative politics that gender inequality and conflict are correlated. In a quantitative study of conflicts around the world from 1960–2001, political scientist Mary Caprioli (2005) confirms a direct relationship between gender inequality and intrastate violent conflict. She also finds that gender equality has a pacifying effect on state behaviour internationally (Caprioli 2000, 2003). In a complementary qualitative study, feminist and peace researcher Cynthia Cockburn (2010) makes a strong case for patriarchal gender relations intersecting with economic and ethno-national power relations in perpetuating a tendency towards armed conflict. Cockburn (2010:152) argues that masculinity serves, seeks, and needs militarisation and war for its fulfillment. In this qualitative research on the Mindanao case, I confirm the direct relationship between gender inequality and conflict by studying three elements: the conflict driver landlessness, recruitment into armed groups, and the discourses around conflict. Let me expound on each component in turn.

Gender inequality shapes landlessness

The contest for land and resources is a conflict driver in Mindanao. Yet, in an independent desk study on gender as a causal factor in conflict, Jenny Birchall (2019) underscored that the gender aspect of conflict drivers like land rights is a gap in the literature.[25] To anchor my inquiry on material conditions, I took up the challenge of examining how gender inequality in Mindanao shapes the conflict driver landlessness. Frustratingly, the informal land markets described above are manifested only in handwritten documents (like that which Gulane 2013 examined) scattered all over Mindanao, and the data about land ownership in Mindanao is problematic (Borras 2002). Even the body created by the MILF-GPH peace negotiations, the Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC), with the best possible access to official and unofficial data on land in Mindanao, had no concrete land distribution figures in their Land Report (2017a). However, the limited data are still valuable in

[25] An exception is a small number of studies that recognise the gender dimensions of land as a conflict driver in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Combaz 2013).

describing gender aspects of landlessness that I complement with attention to how Moro women and men retained or lost lands in Mindanao in their life stories. I find that a combination of the state laws on land registration and inheritance and Moros' partiality to paternal lineage contributed to Moro women's landlessness.

Relative to their population prior to colonisation, Moros had an abundance of available land and water resources in Mindanao. Mindanao scholar Peter Gowing (1979:12–13) infers that migration into Mindanao around three or four millennia B.C.E. involved groups that followed rivers inland to become farmers, as well as settlers on the coast who lived as agriculturalists, fishers, traders or adventurers. Thus, for instance, among the Tausugs in Jolo Island, there are inland *taguimba* and more maritime *tauhigad* communities that both use land for subsistence and trade. Small-scale farming, fishing and related tasks are seen as extensions of household responsibilities of both women and men (Gowing 1979). In fact, land was not as valuable as human resources that make the land productive (Kiefer 1972b; Warren 1985). It is likely that with permission from the community *datu* or chieftain, Moros, including women, enjoyed access to unoccupied lands they could clear. Due to the abundance of land they deemed under their territory, many of these lands remained forested in pre-colonial Mindanao.

Colonial land titling disadvantaged all Moros, but due to gender-biased practices and land consolidation, affected Moro women particularly adversely. Foremostly, Moro men expected women to primarily care for the family and manage the household, limiting women's employment in farms. Related to this, individual land titling and population growth diminished the communal lands that Moro women depended on to gather food and medicinal supplies. This added a burden on women who needed to look for alternative sources to fulfill the duties assigned to them. Secondly, for most of the 20th century, Moro girls had less access to education than Moro boys, as their parents were less likely to allow them to attend a school run by foreigners and because they married earlier than boys

(see Chapter 3). The low level of education compromised Moro women's ability to access land and have land registered under their names.

Thirdly, decades of land reform policies in Mindanao that facilitated setter migration and restricted Moro access to land, generated what I call a Moro land squeeze, which meant that the growing Moro population cultivated, on average, less and less land. In turn, land scarcity promoted a consolidation of control over land that reinforced patrilineal descent. Among the Tausugs, Kiefer (1972b:142) observed that the *adat* or customary law on land inheritance is ambiguous, although it was theoretically bilateral. In practice, by the time Kiefer was doing his study in the 1960s, it was usually males who had land rights. Land consolidation among the poorer farmers is not particular to Mindanao.[26] In a study of five rice-growing villages in northern and central Philippines, economist Agnes Quisumbing (1994:170, 183) found that poorer families tended to allocate transfers unequally among their children. Instead of breaking up small parcels of land, the poor pass it on to the ones that they deem able to make the land more productive. Poorer families also tend to diversify their family's occupational portfolio as insurance against fluctuations in family income, investing education on members who have higher probability of making remittances from urban incomes (Quisumbing 1994:173). In this arrangement and responding to the global care chain demands, the 'physically strong' sons are assigned to work on the land, and the daughters are encouraged to find employment elsewhere. In short, dwindling land resources and poverty transformed practices on land that were previously more egalitarian into a system that funnelled Moro lands into men's hands.

Fourthly, the Code of Muslim Personal Laws (CMPL, 1977), a Presidential Decree issued under Martial Law further limits women's access to land. Among the elite Maranaos, Brecht-Drouart (2011:292, 2013:214) compared how women have the right to inherit equally with their male siblings, possess

[26] Moro land consolidation practices vary. Kiefer notes that, traditionally, Tausugs preferred cross-cousin marriages to avoid land alienation (1972b:142).

land and keep the income from their labour in the *adat*, while they are entitled to only a third of the inheritance shares in the CMPL. I assume that the preference given to males in terms of land inheritance is a combination of gendered assumptions that males should provide for their families, and to the priority given to the male lineage. Among elite Maranaos, the latter is manifested in the importance of male lineage in claiming royal titles (Brecht-Drouart 2011:190). The favour given boys and men is common nationwide. Quisumbing's study (1994:179) shows that sons received almost twice the area bestowed to daughters, the higher value of the land, and a higher value of non-land assets. Even more restricted than other women in the Philippines, women observing the CMPL are obliged to dutifully manage the affairs of the household, and acquire property or exercise a profession only with the husband's consent (1977: Article 36).

Lastly, the bureaucratic hindrances in establishing land ownership through titles also applies when transferring titles. The idea of titling lands under men's names assumes that the man heads the household and makes decisions that benefit the family. This is a dangerous assumption, especially in the context of informal land markets where sales and transfers can be done without the consent of other family members (Gulane 2013). In critical times of conflict, men may join rebel groups and leave women as household heads without legal or autonomous claims to land (TJRC 2017a:29). When the title holder dies in conflict or due to other causes, women and other family members find it difficult for lands to be transferred to their names (see Chapter 3).

The TJRC report on land (2017a:28) summarises the gender dimension of land dispossession in Mindanao in terms of inequality between women and men with respect to property rights, with men being the primary owners and administrators of land and property. This is true both in the individual land titling and in the communal land ownership by clan or ethnic group recognised through the Indigenous People's Rights Act of 1997. Theoretically, women should have regained equal ownership to land as part of a clan or group, yet the TJRC report explains that women typically do not equally

participate in the decision-making processes that their clan or community undertakes as landowners, in practice making men the de facto 'owners' of these communal lands.

Gendered landlessness highlights that conflict has far-reaching effects beyond either one-off or recurring experiences of displacement. The dominant writing on displacement in Mindanao laments how evacuees are exposed to abuse, disease, and death in evacuation camps that have poor health and sanitation facilities (Kok 2015). Displaced women and girls from minority groups are most vulnerable to conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence (Davies et al. 2016; Sifris and Tanyag 2019), including human trafficking (Cagoco-Guiam 2013). In contrast, anthropologist Jose Jowel Canuday (2009) wrote an ethnography about the agency and power of the displaced in evacuation camps, in spite of the challenges of constant dislocation. Complementing Canuday and like Lubkemann (2008), I shine the spotlight on a displacement blind spot: the migration that often occurs some time after a conflict event. In focusing on landlessness and urban migration, I draw attention to the decisions Moro women make to move from a rural place of conflict to an urban or peri-urban area where they hope to find greater security. I thus show that gendered landlessness was successful in driving Moros out of their lands. Following anthropologist Tamara Jacka (2006:14), I can further trace how rural to urban migration reinforced the state-enabled wealth accumulation of domestic and international capitalists, and the multiplication of migrants' subject positions.

I show in this dissertation that Moro women's loss of land is an aspect of, but also contributes to, Moro people's further landlessness. While not all Moros and not all Moro women are landless, the Moro land squeeze concentrated lands in the hands of men, especially elites and those involved in land grabbing and informal land markets. Without lands registered to Moro women, families and clans can lose lands when men sell or mortgage their lands for arms or other goods, or die in *rido* or other wars. The growing landlessness of Moros has pushed Moros to join armed groups or move to urban areas

for the potential economic benefits they believe they will get there. Thus, the gender inequality that shaped Moro landlessness drives conflict in Mindanao and Moro urban migration.

Gender inequality shapes recruitment to armed groups

The majority of work on gender and conflict underscores women's vulnerability in conflict situations (see for example Eisenstein 1996; Stiglmayer 1994) and their leading roles in conflict resolution and shaping peace (Cockburn 2001; Garap 2004; Powley 2003). Documentation of women's experiences in conflict along these lines is extensive, and passionate activism on it underpinned the United Nations' Women, Peace and Security Agenda launched in 2000. Yet this is not the whole story. Moro women are indeed active in local conflict resolution, but they also demonstrate active resistance through participation in conflict. Rather than seeing women only as victims or resolvers of conflict, I contend that detailed descriptions of Moro participation in conflict can explore when and how gender inequality shapes conflict through soldier recruitment.

Gender inequality shapes the circumstances of Moro recruitment (or non-recruitment) into armed conflict and determines the roles of individual Moros in the armed groups (see Chapter 3). Similar dynamics are found in other armed conflicts. Drawing from interviews of Kachin activists in Myanmar and Thailand, Jenny Hedström (2016:3, 2018) argues that 'the [Kachin Independence Organization/Army]'s system of governance and use of political violence is underpinned and justified by the regulation of gender relations'. She found that the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) assigned active women members in reproductive jobs as paramedics or other support staff, and expected women to retire when they married. The Kachin women critically generated consent for the KIA among Kachin communities and helped to sustain the civil war, even while the movement's leaders deliberately dismissed or downplayed women's labour in the movement. In Mindanao, women members of the MNLF and MILF legitimise and sustain the armed movements, but field commanders prevent them from joining combat and elide their work as auxiliary.

Mindanao scholars have taken Moro men's participation in armed insurgent groups for granted, but none have taken interest in Moro masculinities after Kiefer (1970s). Though crouched in the language of 'men's roles', Dwyer and Cagoco-Guiam (2012), in their analysis of gender and conflict in Mindanao, demonstrate that masculinities are critical in understanding soldier recruitment:

> [Moro m]en feel their mobility and agency to be radically constricted and their social and economic lives to be insecure, often coalesce emotion and action around powerful themes of honour and pride. For some men, joining in violence seems to offer a chance to regain social prestige and dignity. Others felt that their sense of themselves as an oppressed Moro Muslim minority had been heightened within a constant cycle of conflict and impoverishment (Dwyer and Cagoco-Guiam 2012:19).

Dwyer and Cagoco-Guiam thus suggest that Moro men's feelings of oppression as a Muslim minority are exacerbated by their experiences in the cycle of conflict and impoverishment in Mindanao. Such experiences are counterposed with men's ideals of honour and pride, prestige and dignity; all notions attached to social definitions of Moro men. In turn, the contradiction between the experience and the ideal moves Moro men into action. Dwyer and Cagoco-Guiam add that for some Moro men, this action involves taking up arms. Their observations parallel that of subordinate black men's masculinities in South Africa, that for psychologist Kopano Ratele (2013:254), perform fearlessness in contexts where they themselves are represented as objects of fear. In the context of conflict, performing fearlessness occurs on the front lines of armed confrontations.

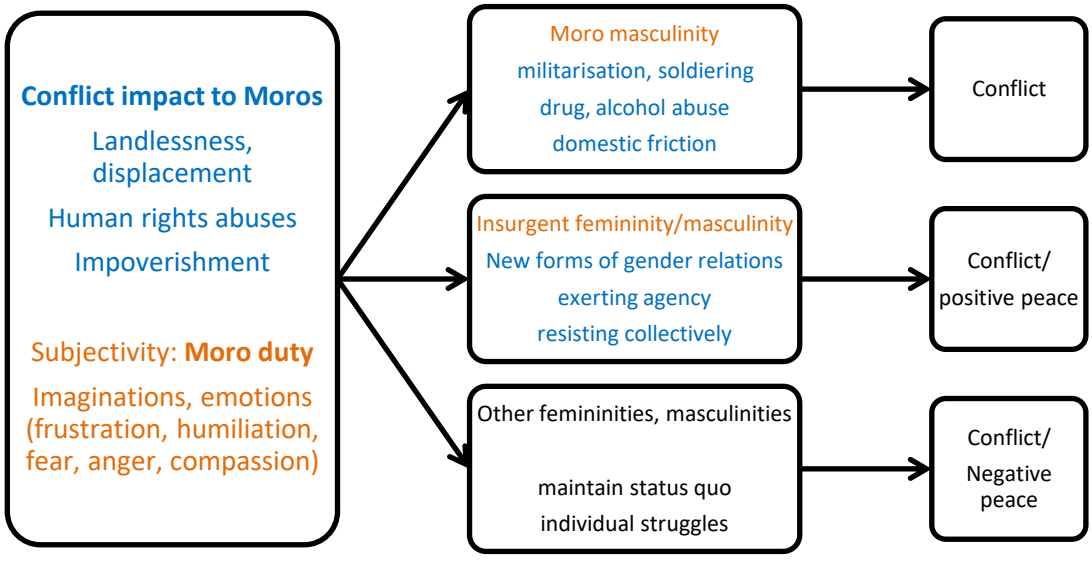
To me, scholars best analyse masculinities when they appear in relation to femininities, and in the context of broader social structures. In today's neoliberal world order, sociologist Raka Ray (2018) argues that men's recruitment into armed organisations and urban migration must be understood in

the context of the broader political economy, including the decline of male manufacturing jobs and similar opportunities for urban employment for men and increases of precarious female service sector jobs in urban areas. Given this combination, masculinities often experience a 'crisis' when labour migration occurs, as observed, for example, in Vietnamese transnational families (Hoang and Yeoh 2011) and among Guatemalan migrant men (Montes 2013). In Mindanao, the large informal sector in urban poor communities provide service jobs in the form of cleaning, cooking, and washing, tasks that women are keen to be paid for, but that men avoid. Urbanisation is thus often accompanied by a crisis in traditional male roles. In contrast, the militarisation of Mindanao opened opportunities for men to be compensated for soldiering.

Studies about Moro women in Mindanao have highlighted women's agency and multiple roles, but have not thoroughly examined femininities, the symbolic and cultural meanings of what women are and should be (Schippers 2007). To address this gap, I study an insurgent Moro femininity based on the experiences of non-elite Moro women who supported armed groups and took up leadership roles in negotiating the War on Drugs and the War on Terror. Investigating insurgent femininity thus adds to and reorients the literature on women's participation in armed movements (Afshar 2003; Specht 2013), and men's vulnerability in conflict situations (Petchesky 2005; Spencer 2000; Žarkov 2007) that pose counterpoints to the broader gender and conflict literature. We now have ample evidence that women, as well as men, take up arms, join armed groups, and contribute to violence. For example, women and men pressure men in Uganda to carry out vicious cattle raiding, to be able to pay for dowries (Specht 2013). Women, like men, often vocally support conflict, praising those who take up arms, and ridiculing those who do not (Barth 2002). I found that Moro experiences reflect such complexity, which we can begin to understand by combining family stories with structural analysis: the former to provide insights into women's agency, the latter to provide insights into the constraints they are shaping through their actions.

The link between Moro experiences and a structural analysis lies in subjectivity, an anthropological inquiry into emotions and imaginations. Anthropologist Rosa Castillo (2017:35) shows that subjectivity is the intersection of imagination, memory, emotions, and action; it can be understood by attending to the wider historical, social, political, and economic processes in which the subject is intertwined. Conversely, to understand these wider processes, one must interrogate the ways in which they play out in people's subjectivities. In her work on Moro subjectivity in Mindanao, Castillo (2017:46–48) argued that Islam and the Bangsamoro are imaginaries that were powerful in motivating people to join the liberation struggle. Castillo's ethnography complements my approach, where subjectivity refers to Moro men and women's emotions, imaginations, and recreations of what it means to be a Moro man and woman in the context of conflict. In Mindanao, I study the way recruitment and support for Moro armed groups is a way for Moro men and women to affirm their gender (and Moro) identities.

Figure 5. Moro masculinity, insurgent femininity and conflict in Mindanao



Drawing from an Agency for Co-operation and Research in Development project across Africa in 2000–2001, Judy El-Bushra (2003) also highlighted subjectivity in arguing that men's and women's inability to meet gendered expectations in conflict propel a cycle of conflict. In a diagram, El-Bushra (2003:262) illustrated that men's and women's frustration and humiliation links the inability to meet gendered

expectations to secondary impacts of conflict, militarisation, violent crime, drug and alcohol abuse, and domestic friction. She suggests that one way out of the loop is when the inability to meet gendered expectations creates positive impacts in new forms of gender relations, coping, resisting, and exerting agency. I incorporate these sections of her diagram to my own illustration (Figure 5) of how Moro masculinity and insurgent femininity are relevant in understanding the durable conflict in Mindanao.

In my illustration, conflict-induced landlessness, displacement, human rights abuses and impoverishments shape Moro subjectivity or their imaginations and emotions around their 'Moro duty'. Their beliefs and practices about Moro duty cohere into masculinities and femininities that in turn generates secondary conflict impacts, including soldiering, that can maintain the conflict status quo or open a potential path towards what Galtung (1985, 2011) calls positive peace related to social justice, rather than negative peace as an absence of war. I critique and compensate Galtung's gender-blindness by attending to the collective constructions and practices of masculinities and femininities that produce and reproduce violence.

The force and character of recruitment to armed groups is but one aspect of gender inequality at work in Mindanao. Edited feminist collections on women and war like that of Haleh Afshar and Deborah Eade (2004) on Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe, and location-based monographs like Urvashi Butalia (2000) on India's partition and Mary Margaret Steedly (2013) on Indonesian independence demonstrate that gender often has a powerful impact in shaping conflict on the ground. These writings also examine how conflict in turn shapes the lives of women and men. This is the kind of literature still missing in Mindanao studies, and one that I initiate through my description of Moro men and women's experience of conflicts beyond the insurgent war in times and places of relative peace. Thus, in this study I use the term 'armed groups' broadly to include not only insurgent groups but also armed state actors in the War on Drugs and the War on Terror in Mindanao. The gender

inequality and the many faces of conflict across times (war, 'peace') and spaces (rural, urban) demand a closer look at durable discourses about gender and conflict prevalent in Mindanao.

Gender inequality shapes discourses about conflict

Literature on the intersection of gender and conflict underscores that before, during, and after periods of conflict, gender identities are accentuated and politicised. For example, gender identities can be drivers of conflict with various actors framing men as protectors and fighters, and women as vulnerable and needing protection (El-Bushra and Sahl 2005). I examine this politicisation of gender in the recruitment to armed groups, and take it further to look at how gender inequality has shaped the discourses about conflict, impacting the way conflict is addressed. Foremostly, gender inequality has affected how the conflict is understood in Mindanao as an armed insurgent war waged by Muslims, and the discourse surrounding the government's military response. Secondly, it affects the way Moro men and Moro women are substantively represented in the peace processes.

Recent explorations of gender in Southeast Asian and Asian Studies betray a special interest in Islam. Books such as *Muslim Women and the Challenge of Islamic Extremism* (Othman 2005), *Gender and Islam in Southeast Asia* (Schröter 2013) and *Contesting Feminisms: Gender and Islam in Asia* (Ahmed-Ghosh 2015) explore gender and Islam as discourses with varying focus. These edited collections attend to women's agency in conflict, and the appropriation of gender and feminism towards political ends. Othman (2005) recognised the strategies women in Southeast Asia employ to surmount the challenges confronting Muslim women in the face of religious extremism and the rise of political Islam since the 1960s. Meanwhile, Schröter (2013) brought together writings on normative gender orders and their religious and state policy legitimisations in Southeast Asia. The last volume edited by Ahmed-Ghosh (2015) challenges mainstream Western and national feminisms that homogenise Muslim women's experiences, with drastic consequences. Together, they show how gender, Islam, and even feminisms, are discourses that have real-world effects, shaping lives, institutions, and policies.

As a coherent way to interpret stories, discourses (ways of talking about and acting upon the world) feature elements that put into focus specific ways of seeing or imagining. Even if scholars like Abinales (2010) and Lara (2014) point out that peaceful relations between Muslims and Christians in Mindanao go back far longer than the 1970 watershed decade, religion has been the main marker in the Mindanao conflict. For the Philippine government and some Moros themselves, the conflict in Mindanao is one between minority Muslims and the Philippine-majority Christians. Moro men and women who shared their stories with me expressed commonly held sentiments of fear and anger at attacks against followers of Islam in Mindanao. Indeed, religion has been a basis for Moro groups in consolidating the Bangsamoro (Moro nation/community). Adding the label Islamic to the MILF's name back in 1984 proclaimed the movement's religious aspiration, set it apart from its predecessors, and attracted support from the grassroots and internationally (Maruhom and Allian 2005:138). As Zainah Anwar and Norani Othman (2005:201) emphasise, in countries where Muslims are minorities like in the Philippines, a deepening sense of Islamic identity vis-à-vis the 'infidel other' has led to advocacy for conservative 'Islamic' values as a way to highlight difference from the majority population.

In *Gender, Islam, Nationalism and the State in Aceh*, Jacqueline Siapno (2002) questions the over-emphasis on Islam in analysing Muslim societies when Islam is just one of the many political-economic and socio-cultural factors that make subjects. She argues that an over-emphasis on an aspect like Islam risks downplaying other factors like gender that tend to be sidelined in discussions about conflict in Aceh (and, by extension, other Muslim parts of Southeast Asia). Siapno also shows how particular gender practices are forged in the context of the Aceh conflict, by processes that are similar to the way Mindanao insurgent groups appropriate gender practices as 'traditional values' in their struggle:

> If there were no armed rebellion against the Indonesian state, Acehnese Islam would less likely construct Islamic identity into militant, patriarchal lines which restrict women's roles and

> mobility, but rather for centuries has allowed the co-existence of long-standing matrifocal beliefs and practices with Islamic values (Siapno 2002:2).

As I show in this dissertation, omitting women from academic accounts supports the state depiction of conflict actors as violent Moro men (Chapter 2), just as the occlusion of domestic violence in discussions about conflict in Mindanao narrows the empowering potential of the peace process (Chapter 3, 6). At the same time, Islam took on such a central role in the Mindanao conflict precisely because of the assertions by Moro nationalists of a Bangsamoro national entity that should be separate from the Philippine state. One way expressing this difference has been to spell it out through masculine militancy on the part of Moros, which has in turn been led to responses in the form of hypermasculine militarisation on the part of the state.

My analysis also builds on the arguments laid out by scholars on gender and nationalism. As well as Siapno's volume, Nira Yuval-Davis' *Gender and Nation* (1997) and Bina D'Costa's *Nationbuilding, Gender and War Crimes in South Asia* (2011) are excellent examinations of gender relations, nationalist projects and nationalist conflicts. Yuval-Davis' (1997) work on women's biological, cultural and symbolic reproduction of the nation and the masculine construction of military service have influenced writers in this field. Through vivid examples from South Asia and Afghanistan, D'Costa (2011, 2015) emphasises the way women's bodies are sites of contestation in nation-building:

> Through the nation building agenda, the traditional and religious elites maintain and reinforce control over women and their sexuality, whereas the state building agenda of the international community relies on a democratic and secular notion of women's freedom and choices. Sandwiched between these two, women become the battleground for ideological warfare (D'Costa 2015:72).

While women's bodies become battlegrounds, states, insurgent groups and international actors sideline women in peace processes and shelve goals of gender justice in efforts to buy peace. This was seen in the peace process addressing the conflict in Aceh, Indonesia, even while there was a woman negotiator on the panel (Jopson 2017). Negotiators in the peace process between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front were willing to forgo discussions on gender inequality for the sake of achieving negative peace, the agreement on economic and political power sharing between the Moro and national elites. Thus, gender inequality in the absence of women's substantive representation has shaped understandings and imagination of conflict in Mindanao, as well as the means by which it is addressed through war or peace.

Had Moro women from urban poor communities actively participated in the formal peace process, their demands might have been crouched in the language of justice. Moro women expressed their vision of peace to me in terms of rights (*dapat, karapatan*) and justice (*katarungan*) that encompass economic security, dignified political participation, and redress for injustices ranging from the misrepresentation of Moros in historical texts to violence against women in wars and peacetime. Their views point toward an ideal of positive peace, which addresses structural and discursive inequalities. Realising their vision of sustainable peace would entail reconstructing exploitative relationships in Mindanao and the Philippines towards a goal of gender justice. Their vision implies, in other words, an agenda of close to that of transformative justice – i.e. a justice agenda that avoids restoring a prior system that led to conflict (Lemaitre and Sandvik 2014) – as well as a feminist transitional justice project that secures material gains for marginalised women (Bell and O'Rouke 2007).

Despite my goal of studying gender as structure and discourse in Mindanao, my examination is limited in many ways. While I study masculinities and femininities in Mindanao, I reserve deeper discussion of non-heteronormative Moro masculinities and femininities for a later project. In tracing Moro marginalisation and conflict, I limited my study to landlessness, though there are other factors such as

a robust shadow economy, unequal political representation and legitimacy, poor governance and conflict management, incoherent peace policy and missing peace-building leadership that have been examined in other studies (Ferrer 2013; Lara 2014; Lara and Schoofs 2013; Torres 2007).

In sum, my own contribution to the literature on Mindanao focuses on the Moro gender order that shapes Moro history. I investigate how gender is both constituted and constitutive of the history of conflict in Mindanao. I examine gender aspects of landlessness and migration, individual and institutional participation in armed conflict, and the discourses around gender and conflict in Mindanao. In doing so, I provide the Mindanao case as an example of how occluded conflicts link to spectacular wars, and how both contribute to people's movement. Finally, I explore a broader definition of conflict to encompass conflicts in times of, and places at, 'peace'. The point of all this is to describe the current Moro gender order as both a structural and discursive inequality that produces violence and injustice, and how it can be radically democratised towards justice and sustainable peace. My methods for achieving these goals are outlined in the following section.

Methods for engaging Davao Moros

I study gender and conflict in Mindanao broadly, yet my research is limited to my capacity as an ethnographer and shaped by my decisions in the field, including my choices regarding field sites and life-story interview participants. Based on my preliminary understanding of conflict and migration in Mindanao, my assessment of gaps in existing literature, and safety considerations for all participants in the research, I decided to look at conflict in Mindanao through the lens of migration to the Mindanao commercial capital, Davao City. In this section, I introduce my field sites in Davao City and discuss my insurgent approach to research and my methods: ethnography, family stories, and discourse analysis.

Davao City

Located at the Southeast point of Mindanao, the Davao Region with a 18,809 km^2 land area (see Figure 3) has the largest population in Mindanao at 4.89 million in 2015 (Philippine Statistics Authority 2021). Its capital Davao City is the largest city in the Philippines in terms of land area (2,444 km^2) and the most populated city outside Luzon with 1.63 million residents (Philippine Statistics Authority 2015). The city is the main commercial hub in Mindanao, earning ₱19.784 billion in 2019 (Palicte 2021) and landing in the top 10 richest cities in the Philippines. Among its neighbours in Mindanao, Davao has the lowest poverty incidence among families at 13.7 per cent while ARMM had the highest at 53.6 per cent in 2018 (Philippine Statistics Authority 2020). Today, the Davao Region is home to at least six Moro groups, nine Lumad groups, and settlers from other parts of the Philippines. About 80 per cent of the Davao population are Cebuano speakers from Central Visayas (Tiu 2005).

For the Spanish and American colonisers, Davao Region was administratively part of Moro land (Abinales 2000). Yet its vast forests and non-Muslim indigenous peoples made it an especially remote place.[27] Was Davao part of the Moros' imagined Bangsamoro? In the Maranao epic *Darangen*, Davao (Butuan Bay) is part of the pre-Islamic Maranao people's kingdom (Abreu 2017). Historically, the Maguindanaoan Buayan Sultanate ruled Davao when the Spanish reached the region in 1540, although the control of Davao was contested by their rival Maguindanao Sultanate (Tiu 2005:12). By the 1630s, the latter's Sultan Kudarat had boasted to the Dutch that except for Dapitan [in Northern Mindanao] and another place, he was lord of all Mindanao, and in 1703, Sultan Anwar had declared that he ruled over Dabao and Maguindanao (Tiu 2005:12, 18). The Kalagan were indigenous Lumads (Mandayas and Tagakaolos) who embraced Islam from the 1700s and controlled key rivers in Davao (Gowing 1979:2; Majul 1999; Tiu 2005:61–63). Davao intellectual Macario Tiu (2005:18) concluded that by the late 1700s, 'the Davao polity under [Kalagan] Datu Bago, although from Buayan lineage was practically an

[27] The name Davao itself originated from various indigenous names for the Davao River – *Davah* for the Obo Manobos, *Dawaw* for the Klata or Guiangans, and *Dabo* for the Tagabawas.

independent kingdom lording it over Davao Gulf'.[28] Basque Jose Oyanguren's forces defeated Datu Bago in 1848 but found the Moros and Lumads of Davao ungovernable (Tiu 2005:24–25).[29]

Land claims and migration colour Davao's history. When the Americans took over the Spanish in 1899, they placed Davao as part of the Moro province, consisting of Davao, Cotabato, Lanao, Sulu, and Zamboanga. The Americans claimed land for their hemp plantations along the Davao coastline, displacing local Kalagans and Lumads. To quell the unrest, Americans launched a scorched earth operation involving massacres for a year, and germ warfare in the form of cholera in relation to the land problem (Tiu 2002:235–66, 2005:30–31). Since local labour was unstable, Americans imported labour for their plantations from other parts of the Philippines and Japan, mostly single males.[30] By 1918, the Japanese surpassed Americans as abaca plantation owners (Tiu 2005:32), successfully making the abaca into one of the Philippines' top trade commodities and earning Davao the highest revenues in Mindanao by the 1930s (Dacudao 2018:77).[31] In the post-war settler migration into Mindanao in the 1950s, land was the main problem in Davao as many claims overlapped (Tiu 2005:35). Simultaneously, Davao needed migrants to underpin the logging boom during Ferdinand Marcos' Martial Law (1972–1986), and to provide the skilled labour needed to power the Mindanao economic capital. Davao has thus attracted migrants from all over the Philippines (including my family).[32]

[28] Spanish priest Fr. More estimated that 4,000 Kalagans make a powerful minority in the Davao region in 1885 (Arcilla 1998:108).
[29] Through trade and intermarriages, Moros were at home in Davao by the turn of the century (Cole 1913).
[30] To solve the shortage of women, Davao planters placed an ad for 1,000 women to go to Davao in a local newspaper, and the American colonial government police chief rounded up 181 sex workers from a Manila red-light district and deported them to Davao in 1918 (Tiu 2005:31).
[31] By 1936, Davao's population shifted in favour of settlers, about 50 per cent of the total 161,092 population, while indigenous inhabitants and mostly Japanese foreigners comprised 42 per cent and 8 per cent, respectively (Hayase 1984:230–40). The Japanese presence in Davao created tension during World War II.
[32] My mother's (Ilokano-Tagalog) sister moved to Davao in the 1970s to provide catering in a logging company canteen. She would be my primary guardian in my first five years. My father's (Ilonggo) uncle moved to Davao about the same time and built a family dental practice. My own parents could be considered conflict migrants. My father Edgar Jopson was a leader of the First Quarter Storm student movement in 1970. Government soldiers tortured him in prison in 1979. He escaped captivity and took refuge in Davao in 1980 with my mother, Joy Jopson. Both spoke Cebuano fluently, and fought the dictatorship with Christians, Lumads and Moro comrades.

Unlike the active state programs catering to Christian migrants from outside Mindanao, Moro migration into Davao post-war has been more organic, but also pulled by economic opportunities and pushed by landlessness in their hometowns. From the 1970s, as the conflict between the AFP and MNLF intensified, Davao City attracted Moro migrants from conflict areas in Mindanao because of its relative proximity, and the social services and economic opportunities it offered. Davao had, and still has, schools and health facilities that are better equipped than counterparts in Muslim-majority areas of Mindanao. Moreover, Davao City does not have restrictions in terms of residential qualifications and appears welcoming to Moros, who comprise 5–10 per cent of total Davao City residents. For example, the city officially recognises six Moro groups – the Kalagan, Iranun, Maguindanao, Maranao, Sama, and Tausug. Each group is assigned a Deputy Mayor, salaried by the local government. Today, the Davao Region sits apart from the BARMM that the MILF was midwife to. Even so, Davao City figures in Moro people's imagination as an advanced city worth emulating, as a retreat, and, as I show in this dissertation, as a new conflict ground.

I chose Davao City as field site and vantage point to study conflict and internal migration in Mindanao. Through family stories, I was able to trace Moro women's and men's experiences of conflict in their home towns elsewhere in Mindanao and their journeys to Davao City. I imagined that they would find refuge in Davao City, whether they came as migrants pulled by economic opportunities or as exiles pushed by conflict. Many of them did tell this story. But there were also as many, like me, who did not expect to find new conflicts in the form of urban poverty, the War on Drugs and the War on Terror.

Insurgent approach, ethnography, family stories, & discourse analysis

My insurgent approach develops feminist and decolonial analyses and research practice that can challenge discursive and material orders on the ground. The approach continues the tradition of activist anthropology in the Philippines in engaging research participants to guide the research process,

findings, and analysis. I aim to deepen collaboration with research participants to create knowledge and community action that resist official and state narratives and strive towards their own goals.

My own subjectivity shaped my conduct and thus it is relevant that I disclose my standpoint that grapples with conflict in Mindanao as a non-Moro Filipino woman of colour born in Davao City to settler parents. Aware of my epistemological position as a feminist educated in the Philippine capital Manila and abroad, I am critical about my own assumptions about gender and conflict.[33] I recognise the ethnic difference, and the gender and class inequalities between myself and my knowledge co-producers, and understand how my own life story and family story have been marked by conflict and migration entangled in the story of Mindanao. I strove to practice reflexivity and collaboration in the field, to be accountable and reciprocal as far as possible (more discussion in Jopson and Sakaran 2020).

I conducted my main fieldwork in Davao City Moro communities from June 2016 to April 2017, with shorter field trips in November 2017 and December 2019. I had visited Moro communities in Davao City before I started my PhD in April 2015, and I knew that, with my limited resources, I could not immerse myself in all of them. I found that writing to and visiting the offices of the Davao City Mayor, the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF)-Davao, Philippine Statistics Authority-Davao, and *Barangay* (smallest administrative unit in the Philippines) Captains to introduce myself and my research was helpful, not least to validate my selection of field sites.

A 2010 city census found that the Tausug, Kalagan, Maranaos and Maguindanaos were the largest Moro ethnic groups in the city.[34] Based on my understanding of Moro settlements in Davao and migration patterns that had generated them, I could not justify looking at just one setting, and decided

[33] I am subjective and political. Anne Norton (2004) suggests that recognising this truth allows for research that can help solve, rather than reproduce, problems like inequalities and injustices.
[34] Among Moro groups, the Tausug had the largest population (14,223), followed by Kalagans (13,285), Maranao (12,692), and Maguindanao (4,886) (NSO 2009). Since Kalagans are considered indigenous to Davao, I excluded them in this research that looks at migration.

to immerse in three *puroks* (settlements or sub-neighbourhoods), each with a Tausug, Maranao or Maguindanao majority, from three *barangays* on either side of the Davao River. All three *barangays* have a mixed population of Muslim, Lumad and largely Christian settlers. I coded the Moro settlements I immersed myself in as Angklahan, Black Beach, and Kawayan.

A multi-sited ethnography makes possible comparison of experiences among different ethnic groups identifying as Moro. I am able to examine how ethnicity as a category challenges or reifies my assumptions about gender and class, but also enables me to understand the category Moro as a pan-ethnic identity. The drawback is foregoing deeper immersion in just one settlement. I mitigated this problem by choosing settlements that are within five kilometres of each other, so I could visit all in one day if necessary. I devoted about two days of the week to each one, building and sustaining relationships throughout my fieldwork.

Photo 1. Davao City Poblacion

The first of Davao City's three legislative districts is the most populated and comprises the districts surrounding the Davao River mouth, Poblacion and Talomo (Author's photo).

In April 2016, I had completed a full ethics review and considered everything from typhoons to terrorism, and prepared for encounters with post-traumatic stress. Yet I was not able to anticipate that I might stare at the War on Drugs in the face when I commenced fieldwork in June 2016. In July 2016, Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte became President of the Philippines and immediately launched a nation-wide War on Drugs campaign. Around two months into the fieldwork, community members themselves disclosed that their neighbourhoods had been hotbeds of the *shabu* (methamphetamine) trade. As a new face in the community, I could have been suspected of being involved in the drug trade or, worse, of being a police spy. Either way, the police or dealers in the communities may have thought I was a threat. Even though I formally wrote to *barangay* officials and personally introduced myself to them before exploring the communities on my own, walking mostly alone at day or night in my first weeks ran the risk of making me an easy target. By the time I realised this, people in the community were already familiar with me, and that familiarity became a strength and source of security.

I spent the first five months immersing myself in the communities, introducing myself and getting to know the people living there, and studying Davao maps and the city streets. Living in a rented room in between the three communities, I created conditions in which I might be able to visibilise politics of the everyday in mundane and take part in exceptional events. I attended festivals and forums. I was invited to witness and photograph baptisms, weddings and Qur'an readings in the community. Young Moros hung out with me at corner stores and showed me around their neighbourhoods. Some took me to Arabic lessons, where I struggled to keep up with lots of gestures and signs. Moro mothers invited me to stay overnight at their homes, especially when conversations or community events ran into the night. I accepted these invitations and was grateful to be offered a sleeping spot next to their daughters. Later in the fieldwork, I was trusted to observe MNLF activities in Davao. Last but not least, I also volunteered in a community-based children's organisation that doubled as a drug prevention mechanism. My involvements became crucial in my understanding of community concerns, and defined the scope of this research.

When doing ethnography, Thomas Eriksen (2010) warns that having limited knowledge of the local language is a real handicap. While I speak Filipino, the national language spoken widely in the country, and learned basic Cebuano, a lingua franca used widely in Davao, I do not speak the native tongue of my informants who are ethnic Maguindanao, Maranao and Tausug. Since they all speak Filipino and some Cebuano, we settled on these languages. For interviews in Cebuano, a field assistant had helped me conduct, translate and transcribe the conversations. I am aware that aspects of their stories may have been lost in their own narrations, given the shifts in languages they use. I also lose some cultural context and interpretation of tropes and double meanings in interviews and in my ethnography. My attempt at feeble knowledge of their vernacular was crucial when hanging out in the community. This generated valuable insights (Venkatesh 2008) and was a source of amusement in the community.

Ethnography was essential to my method because it created conditions in which participants in the research could 'safely tell their stories to someone who is listening and who [could] be trusted to bring their voices into conversations about human experience' (Gilligan 2015:75). Based on my fieldnotes and informal interviews, I sought participants who might share their life stories with me. I did this only later in my fieldwork to prevent the selections bias Barbara Geddes (1990) warns about. Most of the life story interviews I did were therefore collected in the last few months of fieldwork, from January to April 2017. I sought to balance my reliance on the words and stories of my research participants with attention to the silences and omissions, the unspeakable and unspoken, that can be brought to the surface by being there, listening deeply to people sharing their experiences, and understanding the contexts in which they were told.

I chose family stories as a main method because they help illuminate gender as a structure of daily life and of conflict, and the masculinities and femininities that pervade both. I would learn after fieldwork that social scientists are exploring family stories as co-constructed stories. One strand I came across

was an examination of stories told by family members to informant/s across time to study family identity or identities (Amason 2020; McGeough 2012). The other strand is the study of specific phenomena from different perspectives of family members (Gregorio 2019; Phoenix and Brannen 2014). My own take is closer to the second strand, in my study of gender and conflict through the practice of Moro families. I blended together individual life stories, and conversations with two or more family members to piece together partial family stories about the Mindanao conflicts over time, and over periods of conflict and relative peace.

Individual life stories or oral, autobiographical narratives is already a well-established method in the social sciences, especially in psychology (Brown and Gilligan 1991; Etherington 2009; McAdams 1985, 1993, 1996). Before me, political anthropologist Ma. Lourdes Veneracion-Rallonza (2015) has productively used life stories in understanding women and conflict in the Philippines. Following the lead of Maynes, Pierce and Laslett (2008), I solicited life stories extending over a considerable period to bring out experiences, meanings, and struggles of individuals engendered from childhood. Life stories entailed a series of two to six recorded interviews of 30 minutes to two hours duration, with each participant requested to provide at least five hours of engagement. As in case study research, the sample size is small but generates descriptive richness that is contextual, captures the participants' journey through time, and allows for within-case and cross-case comparisons (Gerring 2007). Choosing life histories is also political, because they centre voices that have been marginalised (D'Costa 2006), humanise the speaker, and transform the listener (Saikia 2011). Most importantly, as Veneracion-Rallonza (2015:40) argues, the storytelling process itself 'allows storytellers to become co-creators of knowledge, providing space for them to make sense of their lived lives.'

I had the privilege of hearing 30 (27 of which generated over 50 hours recording) life stories, to make possible an analysis of eight family stories that allow me to consider relationships between genders, within and across generations. Six of the eight stories feature in this dissertation. Each family story

consists of life stories from at least two people of different genders. For instance, the Abdul family story combines the life stories of two generations of Tausug women, the younger of whom married a Maguindanao migrant and former combatant. This way, the family stories show varying perspectives on single events as well as relationships among genders, ethnicities, and generations. In (family) stories, the intimate emotional relations come into sharper view (Beatty 2014), which is missed when gender researchers focus only on the economic and political relationships. In all cases, I coded the names of people and places, and kept all materials confidential and safely stored. The transcribers I hired signed a confidentiality agreement and were required to destroy the recording and transcripts in their files after I received the transcriptions. In my writing, I changed some personal details to maintain the participants' anonymity. Secondary interviews were solicited from academics and peace workers knowledgeable about Moro history and the peace process. Whereas I use pseudonyms for persons who appear in the family stories, the public figures interviewed appear as themselves.

In my study of the Moro gender order, I analyse family stories, folklore, media (including online), academic classics, and state and insurgent group policies as narratives that reflect gender relationships. Let me specify what I consider as narrative in the dissertation. A narrative is a representational device that reflects a broader discourse (or way of apprehending, talking and acting upon the world). In this sense, the real world can be accessed through narratives, even if in a refracted way. I do not assess the truthfulness of the narratives. Instead, I use narratives as an approach and an object of investigation. As an approach, narratives afford a qualitative (rather than a hypothesis-testing quantitative) study, provide an opportunity for people's stories to be heard, and offer analytical procedures from narratology (that focus on characters, events, sequence). I particularly focus on the characterisation of Moro women and men as subjects. Following Myra Marx Ferree and David Merrill (2000), I treat the characterisation as a specific gendered frame that connects to a broader gender ideology and discourse. As an object of investigation, I am interested in narratives of conflict, migration, and peace, co-constructed by participants in this research. In piecing the narratives

together, I primarily draw from the life stories my research participants provided but also supplement these with secondary data. I refer to these narratives as a teller and listener's co-construction of a story in the way the postclassical school defines them, instead of embarking on a structural analysis of narratives as a sequence of events with syntax (like Labov 1972) and syntagmatic properties (like Greimas 1983, 1990) as in classical narratology.[35]

Beyond the subject construction, I give attention to the absences and silences or what discourse analyst Alexandra Georgakopoulou (2006:130) refers to as 'the allusions to tellings, deferrals of tellings, and refusals to tell'. These are crucial, especially when dealing with stories of and about people who experienced trauma, censorship, or political exclusion. I understand that silence gains meaning in contexts, and can be a sign of power and resistance (Gal 1991). Sociologist Nicole Curato (2019:17) further finds that 'suffering defies language for there is no vocabulary that can render a "painfully obscure" experience legible to others' and argues for attention to action as form of communication. My focus is therefore on the construction and context of the narrative to access discourses about the production of Moro women and men as subjects, rather than the narrative as a product.

For the dissertation, my analytical procedure inventories and investigates the gendered constructs about Moros and the conflict events across Moro, insurgent groups, and state narratives. I compiled paired Moro gender constructs that can be found throughout Chapters 2–5 and analyse the contexts in which they were forged and the relationships that animate them. Thus, in contrast to analyses and comparison of various discourses through deconstruction, my work analyses gender constructs and ideologies to reconstruct and visibilise a Moro gender order as discourse. I recognise that the family stories and discourse analyses are my interpretations and, in the end, my translation and narration of my research participants' narratives. I am aware that in taking up discourse analysis, I have an explicit socio-political stance (van Dijk 1993), and that my analyses are limited by my own subjectivity.

[35] For a great map of the narratives field, see Robert and Shenhav (2014).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I introduced the Mindanao conflict, discussed my argument that gender is constitutive of conflict in Mindanao, and described the methods I use in this dissertation. I wove together relevant literature on gender, conflict and migration, and research methods. My inquiry and methods are feminist in the way I aim to construct knowledge from experience, dialogue, and reflexivity in a process that is open, vulnerable, and uncertain (Page 2017). I was – and remain – anxious about my reliance on words and stories in my inquiry, and my own political and cultural biases in interpreting them. I am further mindful about how much I should share of myself, and about how open, vulnerable and uncertain I was in doing research in urban poor communities in Davao City. This awareness allowed me to address potential gaps and constantly adjust while in the field and beyond. In the next chapter, I begin the task of showing how gender shapes conflict in Mindanao by examining depictions of Moro across different narratives.

2 Moro mythology

'The history books are wrong', Datu Ibrahim Kudarat told me, when I asked him what his thoughts were on Moros in Philippine history, 'they do not even bother to record massacres against us. We are always the bad guys'. Datu Ibrahim is from a prominent Maguindanao clan. As the eldest child, Ibrahim took care of his siblings while his father Datu Karim was busy as a Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) commander in the 1970s. His mother Samira accompanied Datu Karim, perhaps because the latter had a penchant for womanising, Ibrahim explained. Ibrahim joined the MNLF himself until he married and moved to Davao City at the end of Martial Law, in 1986. The title Datu was passed on to him. He is now a traditional leader in their Maguindanao community in Kawayan, and has two wives. I prodded him, does a particular book come to mind? Datu Ibrahim shrugged, 'they are all the same, I was told.' For Moros like Datu Ibrahim, access to academic and history texts is usually second hand; they are heard or seen in local sermons or popular media. He assessed the information based on personal observations and experiences, however. He concluded that the recording of Philippine history is unfair to Moros.

Moro mythology involves the popularisation of Moro images in the public imagination. The publics I refer to are the Moros themselves, the Filipino population who seek to understand Filipino collectives, and a wider public invested in building peace. This chapter reviews how gendered Moros are depicted as subjects across folklore, the media, and academic classics: three distinct layers of Moro mythology. I selected these sources to show how the portrayals of Moros and conflict narratives contribute to insurgent group and state discourses about, and strategies addressing, the Mindanao conflict. I therefore describe the power of narratives and the violence in misrepresentation.

I argue in this chapter that attention to gender illuminates a new way to view Mindanao history and conflict. I review depictions of conflict and identify gaps where gender could be explored across a range of popular writings. My aim is to illuminate gender aspects missed in the Mindanao literature; omissions that have constricted the way conflict is understood in Mindanao, the Philippines, and other former colonies. An additional goal is for the chapter to provide more background on the Moro conflict to readers unfamiliar with the Philippines and Mindanao.

Gender and conflict in Moro mythology

Myths are narratives in creation stories, epics, and folktales that embody community values. The stories belong to the genre of folklore that social anthropologists study to understand peoples' ways of life before written accounts and colonisation.[36] My interest in Moro folklore is in affirming Moro people's connection to lands in Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago and in regard to its role as Moro cultural heritage. In many ways, myths weave in indigenous and religious beliefs and form a tapestry of collective ideals and taboos. As oral traditions, these stories evolve as versions unfold across time and space, and are powerful as long as they are passed on and told in Moro households. Their power comes from the ability to shape the listeners' perceptions about who they are, and what to aspire for in their cultural community.

In this section, I draw from creation stories, epics and folktales among the Maguindanao, Maranao and Tausug peoples, the three most dominant ethnic groups that identify as Moro. I tap into the genre of folklore to examine the values common to the ethnic groups to illuminate their various and collective pasts. Conscious of variations in these oral traditions, I chose published versions of stories collected in

[36] Folklore as a field that emerged in the 19th century aimed to study peoples and the past through comparisons. In this genre, ordinary people (*volk*) were sources of wisdom, their stories the data used to study the remains of the past in the present (Thomas 2012:102).

Mindanao available in bookstores or online. I tapped into all the publications I was able to access, which are Ralph Porter's (1902) and Edgar Maranan and E. Arsenio Manuel's (1994) interpretations of the adventures of the hero Bantugan in the epic *Darangen*, and collections that Damiana Eugenio (2001a, 2001b) and Arthur Casanova, Rolando Esteban and Ivie Esteban (2011) edited.

Moro women and men have inherited and passed on folk stories to their children, and shared them with scholars referred to in this section. From Maguindanao, Maranao or Tausug languages, the above authors compiled and translated the stories into the English language. Porter's, Maranan and Manuel's, and Eugenio's stories have hard copy forms but also appear as articles in an electronic journal, on the National Commission for Culture and the Arts website, and as an electronic book, respectively. Casanova, Esteban and Esteban's has both Filipino and English versions, intended for use as a reading supplement for high school students and available as paperback in a chain bookstore in the Philippines. The brief summaries I present below relate to aspects of gender and conflict embedded in the stories.

Heroes and princesses

The folk stories in the selected publications depict heroes, princesses, and monsters as protagonists and antagonists. Conflicts in these stories arise from nature, creatures, foreigners or other people that challenge one's honour and dignity. When men and women respond with strength of mind, spirit and the body – intelligence, courage, and grace – they succeed at seemingly impossible tasks and emerge victorious. In short, conflicts make heroes. Across different ethnic groups, conflicts are opportunities to test their mettle and create a better order in their community.

According to legend, conflict created the Tausug peoples. A Tausug origin story begins with the abduction of a Chinese trader's daughter, who was hidden in a bamboo stalk. A man born in Sulu from a bird finds the abducted woman, and marries her to produce Paramisuli, the legendary mother of all

the chiefs of Sulu (Eugenio 2001b:307).[37] The story is premised on conflict – an abduction that dishonoured a foreigner and daughter. The honourable and clever rescuer is rewarded through marriage and fertility, but it is Paramisuli – of foreign blood and mythic origin – who is named and honoured as the mother of the reigning families of Sulu. In this story, we know nothing else of Paramisuli but her ability to produce the rulers of the Sulu archipelago. This is strikingly similar to ancestral genealogies in Aceh, Indonesia, that are traced to a female ancestor, a mother goddess with extraordinary powers (Siapno 2002:76). Origin stories such as this suggest common ancestry of the warring Sulu clans today.

The pre-Islamic oral epic *Darangen*, told among the Maranao and Maguindanao, featured stories about the hero Bantogen who is depicted as a strong warrior who forayed into foreign lands and won many women. The King of Berbaran thought his brother Bantogen was courting Babali Anonan and in jealousy decreed that no one should speak to Bantogen again. Despondent, Bantogen left Berbaran and died. The King of All the Land Between Two Seas found Bantogen's body and sent it back to Berbaran. Loyal allies of Bantogen, Mabaning and Madali, brought Bantogen back to life when they retrieved his soul from the sky world. Thinking that Bantogen was dead, enemies invaded Berbaran, but were defeated as Bantogen regained his strength. After the war, the hero sailed to distant lands and married several princesses and 40 other lovely ladies (Maranan & Manuel 1994). In another narration, Bantugan (also Bantogen) and his friend Baningan rivalled Spanish generals in their quest for wives. Bantugan outwitted a Spaniard in marrying the Sultan's daughter, but died in a later battle against the Spanish. The wife of Bantugan gathered the remaining warriors and set forth to avenge him (Porter 1902).

[37] A bird may be a metaphor for migrants. Tausug people are seafaring people that settled in the Sulu archipelago no earlier than the 11th century (Warren 1985:xxi).

In epics of both the Maguindanao and Maranao peoples before or in the early years of Islam (in or before the 12th century CE), the heroic brothers Indarapatra and Sulayman are most prominent. The magical brothers lived in another realm, but came to Mindanao to fight monsters which were terrorising local kingdoms and communities. In the Maguindanao epic, they fought against giants which lived in different mountains of their territory when the plains were submerged in water. Sulayman fought each bravely. Unfortunately, a flying giant's severed wing fell on Sulayman.[38] Indarapatra saw that a plant he sowed when Sulayman left their kingdom was dying, and understood that his brother was in trouble. Indarapatra followed Sulayman's footsteps and found him under a giant wing. Nearby was a jar of water that he thought to pour on Sulayman, who slowly came back to life. Indarapatra married a beautiful woman in a local village, but later left his family to be reunited with his brother in their kingdom (Casanova et al. 2011).

In the Maranao version, it was the monster Omakan which terrorised the kingdom and enslaved women, against whom Sulayman fought bravely but failed. The demise of a sapling which Indarapatra planted when Sulayman left for battle prompted Indarapatra to follow his brother. En route, Indarapatra found out from a tree creature that Omakan only multiplied himself when cut, and this was why Sulayman was overwhelmed. Armed with such knowledge, Indarapatra planned his attacks well and defeated Omakan (Casanova et al. 2011).

In both the Maguindanao and Maranao stories of the epic brothers, the conflict can be interpreted as challenges presented by the natural and social environment, and the foreign brothers were able to address these challenges to bring peace to their communities. The epics positively portray the people's freedom of movement to engage in wars, and the migration and acceptance of foreigners when they marry into the local community. Blood bonds between brothers are stronger than ritual bond, as

[38] Islamic and Philippine studies scholar Isaac Donoso (2013:150–51) recognises this gigantic bird from the sealore *Sindbad the Sailor* and that of Mait Island, killed in a story of Mindanao's birth: the clearance of the creatures and withdrawal of the sea to expose the lowland.

abandonment of women seems to be acceptable when men go to war or back to their homeland. In both stories, women are saved from monsters and serve as trophies for the heroes' bravery, suggesting women's incapacity to fight and their value as men's property.

Conflicts were between brothers in the Maranan and Manuel narration, and against the colonisers in Porter's version. Both accounts were contests for a royal woman's hand in marriage. The heroes aspired to win elite women, as doing so reinforced their prestige in the locality. Beyond the women's royal status, almost nothing was said about their personal qualities. Women were therefore cause of conflict, and in both variants, women were also the trophies – as exemplified in the Indarapatra and Sulayman epics and the Tausug creation story. In both stories about Bantugan, the hero was a fierce warrior who commanded the loyalty of allies and admiration from women. Bantugan was not expected to be loyal to his spouse, but his wife demonstrated loyalty when she fought the Spaniards to avenge him. It was unclear if it was expected of a wife to join her husband in death, or her way of avoiding marriage to the Spaniard protagonist.

A Tausug story about *Dayang-dayang* (princess) Fatima was told when Islam was already practiced in the Sulu archipelago (by the 12th century CE).[39] This folktale is about a female protagonist, Fatima, who was left in the care of the slave, Towan Putli, when her sultan father went to battle. Towan Putli first maltreated and disguised Fatima by throwing squid ink onto her face, and then married a prince who was supposed to wed the real princess. When Fatima told the truth to the prince's sister, the prince killed Towan Putli and asked for Fatima's forgiveness. Fatima gave him a seemingly impossible condition for marriage: to create in front of their own island, two more islands fertile with coconuts and plants, and houses. The prince asked for Allah's help. One morning, Fatima looked out her window and saw the islands she had asked for, and they lived happily ever after (Casanova et al. 2011). The

[39] This story is a *kissa*, a form of Sulu narrative that features royals such as datus, sultans, and princes, and pertains to a myth or legend with a strong moral lesson (Tan 2010).

story itself is premised on the circumstances that rulers leave their kingdom to engage in battles and arrange marriages between royal heirs who have never met. It is also taken for granted that in order for the prince to marry the real princess, he must be religious enough to earn grace from Allah.

The conflict in *Dayang-dayang* Fatima's story has a class element: it depicts a situation where power is in the hands of the divinity-favoured royalty and not in those of the poor. Class intersects with gender as men lead the legitimate and rational authority, and a woman is the emotional imposter ruler. The royal king entrusted the kingdom to the slave woman,[40] who abused this power, suggesting that power in the hands of the poor is dangerous. Not only did the slave abuse her entrusted power, she used it to betray an elite woman, the royal heiress Fatima. The imposter went on to successfully trick the prince into marrying her, putting another one over the royals and dishonouring them all. Noteworthy were details that marked the slave's subordinate status: Towan Putli had a tail; in envy, she threw squid ink on the face of the real princess to make her look like a dark-skinned slave; and she was brazenly sexual in reminding the prince, before he killed her, that he had enjoyed his night with her. The last detail seems to suggest that talking about sexual pleasure was unbecoming of dignified women like princesses. For all her subversions of extant social structures, the slave paid with her life.

Blending myths and reality: land claims and physical bodies

Moro folklore is rife with evidence of Moro people's connection to land, the seas and other resources like forests and swamplands in Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago. For example, mountains and rivers in the stories about Indarapatra and Sulayman and the epic Darangen correspond to landmarks in different parts of the Mindanao mainland. That Moro ancestors thrived in Mindanao prior to Islamisation and colonisation suggest that like other indigenous peoples around the world, they have ancestral domain claims. As historian Meghan Thomas (2012:98) suggests, folklore legitimises an idea

[40] James Francis Warren (1985:215) argues that slavery in the Sulu Sultanate was 'not as rigidly defined an institution as in the West where it was historically synonymous with property' but 'a means of incorporating people in the Tausug social system'.

of a nation through peasants' common practices and beliefs, 'supposedly untainted by modern capitalism with its urban-metropolitan cores and provincial-colonial tentacles.' Collectively, folklore serves a nation-building project.

Islamic and Philippine Studies scholar Isaac Donoso (2013) argues that myths and reality intertwine in Mindanao – real and fictitious characters, geographical and cosmological spaces are closely connected in people's daily lives. The stories carry claims, and are valuable in describing relationships of the foreign and local. For example, the mobility, reunification, and desertion themes integral to Indarapatra and Sulayman relate to the imagination of Mindanao and other lands. Raja Indarapatra was said to be the king of Mantapuli, a city far in the land of the sunset (Eugenio 2001b). Another Maguindanao folklore hero attributed as being the Sultan of Mantapuli was Sultan Skander, slayer of a man-eating and woman-enslaving creature called Tarabusao (Casanova et al. 2011). Iskandar Dhu-l-Qarnayn is a name attributed to Alexander the Great, and Mantapuli is likely Malacca, in the Malay peninsula, west of the Philippines. The reference to a historical character campaigning for Islam in Southeast Asia connects Mindanao to Islamic cosmology.

The Maguindanao, Maranao, and Tausug epics mirror the entry and intermarriage with foreigners reflected in stories and *tarsilas* or local genealogies of the Tausug and Maguindanao. Arabs Tuan Mashaika and Makhdum Karim were credited to have founded and expanded Muslim communities in Sulu, respectively, by 1380 CE. Another Arab from South Arabia, Syed Abubakar, said to be a descendant of Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him), allegedly married a local Rajah's daughter Paramisuli, to be the first crowned sultan of Sulu. The account blends easily with the Tausug creation story, which attributed a Paramisuli, of foreign and mythic descent, as the head of the Tausug genealogy. In mainland Mindanao, foreigners likewise figure prominently in local *tarsilas*. From Jahore (Johor in present-day Malaysia), Sharif Awliya and Sharif Muhammad Kabungsuan were credited to

have spread Islam in the mainland by 1460 CE. From Kabungsuan's marital union with locals, the Maguindanao and Buayan sultanates emerged (Jubair 1999).

While unnamed and silent in many of these stories, women were important actors in indigenising the foreigners through marriage and mothering their children, and legitimising their claims to local land. Women's adoption of Islam was crucial for the validation of *tarsilas* and raising families of a particular religious practice acceptable to the local community. Without the collaboration, we might speculate the stories would contain depictions of Islamic foreigners who were antagonistic and illegitimate in local communities. The Islamic sultans became real and legitimised only through women's bodies.

Articulating gender ideals, shaping conflict reality

Thus far, I have illustrated that folklore commonalities provide ammunition for those seeking deep historical roots for an imagined Bangsamoro (Moro nation). Here I focus on the difference gender makes. While honour, loyalty, piety, and cooperation are common themes in the folk stories discussed, they varied in their meaning for and application to Moro men and women. For instance, *maratabat* (status honour) is an important value in these stories for Tausug, Maguindanao and Maranao Moros of all genders. Yet, honour for men in the Tausug creation story, the epic brothers Indarapatra and Sulayman, and that of Bantugan, entailed the ability to risk one's life, outwit one's opponent, defend the community, and extend one's household. Honour for *Dayang-dayang* Fatima was in her ability to remain calm despite facing hardships; her modesty and dignity in asking for a difficult bride price. The folk stories prized bravery and deemed diplomacy undesirable among men, while encouraging endurance among women.

Moro genders are constituted with class. In contrast to Fatima's honour is the lack of honour of Towan Putli, the slave who was instead envious, abusive, deceptive, and sexual. The stories depicted ability to outwit enemies as positive when practiced by men, and negative when done by women – especially

by women of lower social status, against men. Sociologist Mimi Schippers (2007) calls the femininity that appropriates powers reserved for men as *pariah femininity*, noting it is socially castigated as part of male domination. The stories contain details to restrict ordinary women's movement, such as an epilogue to Bantugan's story preventing women from sailing through the Rio Grande de Mindanao (Porter 1902). Yet folk stories accept mobility for royals, including women.

As long as folk stories are passed on, they inform everyday understanding of Moro gender ideals and taboos. Porter (1902:143) claims in his translation that, 'every child is taught the story of Bantugan until he almost knows it by heart'. Heroes like Indarapatra, Sulayman, and Bantugan, who demonstrated their masculinity in battle and 'won' the objectified women, encourage admiration for dominant masculinity from listeners. In these stories, men were reserved the roles of rulers, monster-slaying heroes and warriors, loyal brothers and friends. Women's roles were predominantly mothers, rescued damsels, royal princesses, loyal wives, and imposters. The folk narratives reflect and reproduce gender stereotypes that shape people's views of acceptable participation in wars.

What is at stake when conflict is portrayed as an opportunity for a man to be a hero and for woman to be a martyr? The narratives legitimise masculine power in times of war and in relative peace, in homes and in wider communities. Seemingly natural depictions of women as mothers in the Tausug creation story and as rescued damsels, royal princesses, loyal wives and mothers-to-be, valued for their fertility and sacrifice, are the opposite of neutral. International Relations scholar Bina D'Costa (2011) argues that in discourse and practice, representation of women as mothers of the nation legitimises state control and regulation over women's bodies and sexuality, and perpetuates a masculine state's domination over women. When motherhood is placed as the central contribution of women to building community, their martyrdom entails offering their family members to wars.

In these folk stories, imposters, non-fertile and non-sacrificing women are out of their place and are cast as antagonists and societal outcasts. Thus, women in armed social movements and men who refused to join armed groups in Mindanao are portrayed as anomalies. When prescribed roles and reality do not match, feminist scholar Judy El-Bushra argues that conflict generates a crisis of masculinity or the confusion for both sexes about which values should be retained, and in turn creates a wider social crisis (El-Bushra 2003). It is therefore relevant to examine portrayals of heroes, martyrs, and antagonists in stories being passed on as cultural heritage.

The older members of migrant Moro families I shared stories with in Davao City are familiar with the folk story characters like Bantogan and *Dayang-dayang* Fatima. Most of the Davao City-born younger generations cannot name folk story characters, and have grown up watching telenovelas and browsing the web through neighbourhood internet shop, *piso-net*, and later, on mobile phones. When I spoke to younger Moros about folk stories, though, most showed interest and asked about what I had read about them. On one occasion, older children and adolescents in Black Beach passed among themselves my copy of the book *Folktales of Southern Philippines* (2011).

In this section, I drew from creation stories, epics and folktales to examine gendered actors and conflict narratives in Moro stories. It is possible that these stories – with details such as Bantugan's marriage to several princesses and 40 other lovely ladies – were fantasies that Moro men created, as well as metaphors for the promises that heaven prepared for male believers. Reflecting on the dynamism of oral traditions, I wonder how these stories would unfold if they were told as Moro women's fantasies, and what would happen if these versions were shared instead. I suspect that the stories would have more humour and humanity, and end differently. In the next section, I survey Moro portrayals online as another layer of Moro mythology.

Moro portraits online

The blending and challenging in Moro history continue today. As above, myths and reality intertwine in stories that relate to gender and conflict in Moro depictions in mass media and cyberspace. Because of its wide reach (Subido 2017) and accessibility, narratives in mainstream media and online are another version of popular culture, carrying values and claims that describe the relationship of Moros with other Moros, other Filipinos, and the world. In this section, I provide a background of how the conflict in Mindanao has evolved in the last 50 years by describing two portrayals and one narrative involving Moros in contemporary times. I argue that these portrayals and narrative are gendered, historically situated, and crucial in the way conflict is discussed and addressed in Mindanao. Identifying the dominantly opposing portrayals and complementing narrative is part of a preliminary gender relations inventory that I will build on in the next chapters and discuss more thoroughly in Chapter 6.

'Violent fanatics'

The Spanish and American colonial frames in Mindanao historiography live online today. Search online for 'Tausug people', 'Maguindanao people', and 'Maranao people' and you will generate ethnic profiles that exoticize these groups as 'the last tribes of Mindanao', 'at present caught, in the middle of nowhere' (de Jong 2010a, 2010b, 2010c). The religious missions like the Joshua Project and Christian Aid produce profiles of Moro ethnic groups online that reinforce racist images of them as 'uncivilized' and needing saving through prayers, missionary work or development projects. The portrayal of Moros as uncivilized is characteristic of the European 'white-men's burden' and American 'manifest destiny' ideas used to justify colonisation of Mindanao (Tan 2010:84) and the Philippines, centuries before the internet.

Central in the colonial archives is the portrayal of the Moro as violent. The *juramentado*, originally referring to Muslim warriors who had undergone religious rites and prayers before rushing towards

Christian invaders to kill as many as possible without expectation of surviving (Majul 1999:419), has been used to refer to any Muslim who fought the colonisers during the time of war (Ewing 1955). When the Sulu sultanate was overwhelmed by the Spanish in 1876, individual Muslims and local communities took it upon themselves to defend their religion (Angeles 2010:34). Instead of depicting the attacks as directed against colonisation, the Spanish branding of Moros as *juramentados* casts them as violent and portrays them as an antagonist, in ways that were calculated to frighten the Christian population.

The Americans continued to depict Muslims in Mindanao as 'savages' and 'violent'. For example, an article 'Bloodthirsty Moros' in *Collier's Weekly* in May 3, 1902, depicts Moros as 'assassins, savages running amok and immoral polygamists' (Angeles 2010:38). Such depictions do not describe the context of Moro reaction to foreign intrusion and policies such as residence taxes, disarmament, and survey of ancestral lands. Instead, they convey the image of the swordbearing Moro who seems violent, indiscriminate, and even mentally ill. For instance, in the article 'The Taming of the Moros of the Philippines', Thomas F. Millard (1908) calls the *juramentado* 'a religious fanatic who occasionally gets into his crazy head to draw up his barong and run amuck'. 'Running amok' and the term *juramentado* is even more loosely used through the decades to refer to any Muslims who have killed in the heat of passion or courted death by attacking law enforcement agents (Majul 1999:419). In her study of Moro representations in the media, Vivienne Angeles (2010:29) concludes that both Spanish and American colonisers viewed Filipinos in terms of their religious identification, and through the propaganda they created in their campaign against the Moros, influenced the thinking and attitudes of Christian Filipinos towards Muslim Filipinos. Thus, more than bad reporting, the misrepresentation of Moros across media is a racist exercise that reverberates in the Moro mythology today.

Many voices comprise the Philippine colonial archives. Historiographer Najeeb M. Saleeby (1905, 1908), an Arab Lebanese Christian who served the Americans, qualifies the standard account by

explaining that Moros used violence to preserve their admirable Islamic culture. In the American historiography of Mindanao, not only were Moros prone to 'savagery and violence', they could be trained in the ways of the West. American historians writing on the Moros such as David P. Barrow (1905), Dean C. Worcester (1914), and Victor Hurley (1936) all reinforce this framework. The accompanying United States policy of educating Moro leaders yielded widely varying results. Maguindanao rulers during the American occupation, Datu Piang and Datu Sinsuat Balabaran, subscribed to a 'Muslim Filipino' identity and accepted the legitimacy of the annexation of Moro territories into the American colony (McKenna 1998:93–96, 98-101). Meanwhile, the Sulu Sultan's sister Tarhata Kiram filed her teeth upon return to Sulu from studies in the United States, and led a minor uprising against the Americans in 1927 (Horn 1941:155). Thus, the American education among Moros both reproduced colonial subject identities *and* allowed the expression of subversive identities.

Moro women are invisible in the portrayal of Moros as 'religious fanatics' in colonial archives then and online today. This invisibility is crucial in making the portrayal legible to general audiences. Women's association with peace and the celebration of our nurturing roles run counter to the propaganda of bloodthirsty Moros. Instead, acceptable portrayal of Moro women includes that of Princesa Tarhata Kiram in Western clothes as proof of the United States' civilising mission in Mindanao. Images of the princess with filed teeth or as leader of an uprising against the Americans are left out of the archives.

Revolutionaries

My simple search engine query on 'Moro people' in 2019 came up with Wikipedia entries for 'Moro people', followed by 'Moro conflict', 'Moro rebellion', and 'Moro Islamic Liberation Front', suggesting that Moros are semantically associated with conflict and rebellion. The MNLF is the first movement to use the formerly pejorative term 'Moro' to claim a distinct pan-ethnic identity that resisted colonial and postcolonial rules in the Philippines. The term Moro itself was recast to 'evoke shared historical memories of successful and fearless resistance to colonial rule' (Gutierrez 2000:312). The MNLF

blogsite claims that the organisation has an egalitarian ideology and was organised after the 1968 Jabidah massacre – the Marcos administration's botched operation to take Sabah using Filipino Muslim soldiers (Petalcorin 2011). This origin story that responds to a massacre of young Tausug soldiers reinforces the depiction of the MNLF as an organisation fighting in defence of their people and homeland. The MNLF created the image of the Moro as a revolutionary warrior. Meanwhile, in splitting with the MNLF, the MILF critiqued the MNLF's peace talks with the Philippine government and branded itself as the genuine revolutionaries. Beyond the MNLF social justice frame, the MILF professed to also aim to create an Islamic community in Mindanao.

Both the MNLF and MILF rely heavily on male voices and images in their own representations of their respective movements. On the one hand, the men are depicted as masters of their fate, determining their own version of the Bangsamoro and protecting Moro women and children. On the other hand, MILF leaders publicly refer to conservative interpretations of Islamic practice that women should primarily care for their families (MILF peace panel secretariat head Jun Mantawil in Maulana 2009) and lead only when men are not capable of doing so (MILF peace panel member Lanang Ali in Brecht-Drouart 2011:150). So while the MNLF and the MILF cast themselves as revolutionaries, in practice they mean that Moro men are revolutionaries. Both groups remain quite conservative in their views on women.

Islam against the West

Over the last century, the rise of political Islam has influenced how Moros view themselves and how people in the rest of the Philippines view Moros. Political Islam (or Islamism), which aims to establish Islamic rule in the Muslim world, links the Moro experience to the Islamic world in Southeast Asia and beyond. Many Moros find political Islam attractive in its recognition of Muslim communities' historical marginalisation globally. It does not help that the Philippine government, working from what Moros call 'imperial Manila', has styled itself as the modern representation of Western liberal values and

accommodated foreign interests in the country. The Moro insurgent groups have begun to depict their struggle for control over land as a continuation of earlier anticolonial struggles, this time against the continued economic exploitation of Mindanao under the Philippine state.

Political Islamic movements typically promote a narrative that pits Islam against the Western world. But plenty of discourse produced in the West reproduces this binary. Political scientist Samuel Huntington' influentially wrote about a 'Clash of the Civilizations?' (1993), arguing that religion would become the main denominator of post-Cold War conflicts. In his formulation, Muslim communities are static and homogenous, and the West too, has its own fixed set of values. As a result, a clash is inevitable. In fact, Islamist movements consist of an array of groupings, from those who engage in political violence (also called 'militant' or 'jihadist'), to those with politicised social reform projects (also called *dakwah* or *da'awa*) and social change or revolutionary aims ('radical' Islam) (Othman 2005:1). But to those subscribing to the 'clash of civilizations' narrative, they are homogenous.

Framing Islamic movements in Mindanao in terms of the Islam against the West narrative proved to be lethal. When the Joseph Estrada administration engaged the MILF in 2000, it turned into an all-out-war in Mindanao. Estrada, a former action star before he became president adopted a 'tough' stance was decisively macho, with the goal of winning approval from macho constituents. Military actions under his presidency killed 693 combatants and displaced 800,000 civilians at the height of the campaign (Corrales 2015). The indiscriminate war angered and politicised Mindanaoans, pushing them to further support groups like the MILF and the ASG.

After al-Qaeda attacked US targets on September 11, 2001 (9/11), the Islam against the West narrative morphed into one where the United States (US) government branded themselves as heroes. The narrative the superpower sold the world was that they were avengers as they launched a War on Terror across borders to save innocent women and children everywhere. The media in particular

propagated the message that Muslim women especially needed to be saved, doing so in a way that justified interference, including military invasions, in the Muslim world (Abu-Lughod 2013). Indeed, the US-led War on Terror was premised on violating state sovereignty to save democratic constituencies and democracy itself.

Women are important in the 'Islam versus West' narrative. Both states and Islamist groups share a common interest in defining the roles women take in their communities and policing women's bodies (D'Costa 2014; Abu-Lughod 2013). For example, the US' and the Taliban's symbolic use of the Afghan women in the War on Terror are amply documented (Berry 2003; German 2008; Steans 2008). Yet 'forms of violence against women, such as honour killings, and security for [Afghan] women in many provinces is worse than in 2001' and women's 'access to clean water, healthcare, education and jobs remain problematic' (German 2008:88). Human Rights Watch (2003:24) found that even after the foreign military drove Talibans out of southeast Afghanistan, sexual violence and rape is 'both frequent and almost never reported'.

In the name of 'tradition', 'culture' or even 'democracy', insurgent groups and the state imagine women to be the beneficiaries of both 'Islam' and 'Western' camps. However, whenever and wherever convenient, the Philippine state overlooks the presence of civilian women in favour of indiscriminate modern warfare using aerial bombardment in their communities, with this tactic characteristic of the state-led wars in Mindanao from 2001-2009. For example, in 2003, the state military, allegedly in pursuit of members of the Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom gang (GMA News Research 2009; MindaNews 2017), engaged in violence that resulted in 284 killed, 227 injured, and at least 40,000 residents in Pikit, Cotabato displaced. A military official later admitted that the offensives were directed at the MILF (Pazzibugan 2003).

President Bush's narrative frame of a War on Terror coloured global views of Muslim communities worldwide, as it was interpreted, reinterpreted, reproduced, and normalised in various media (Reese and Lewis 2009). Beyond transmitting the 'war on terror' as shorthand for United States administration policy, journalists reified the policy as uncontested, and further naturalised it as being taken-for-granted (Reese and Lewis 2009:792). In a quantitative study of media reporting on terrorism, Jörg Matthes et al. (2020) conclude that non-Muslim media sources and journalists in Germany, Austria and Switzerland were more likely to make undifferentiated statements that failed to distinguish between Muslims and terrorists. Academia had its share of slippage, too, mostly in the form of Western academics using the term 'Islamic terrorism' in ways that reflected the prevailing Western counter-terrorism discourse produced by political leaders (Jackson 2007). In this context, US-led wars continued and hate crimes against Muslims, intensified (Levin 2016), affecting millions of Muslims all over the world (Green 2018).

The War on Terror narrative is a real threat to Muslims everywhere, including in the Philippines. The GPH Chief Negotiator in talks with the MILF, Miriam Coronel Ferrer (2013:69), calls the War on Terror a complicating factor in the peace process as 'the United States is only creating conditions for more extreme retaliatory actions'. Surely, the narrative contributes to Moro people's further economic deprivation and marginalisation. In January 2015, the misencounter in Mamasapano (see Chapter 1, footnote 16) concretely shows how operations that are framed as being part of a War on Terror can lose a firm grasp of dynamics on the ground (Dunham-Scott 2012); in this case, they derailed peace negotiations (Espina-Varona 2015; de Jesus and de Jesus 2016). The Filipino politicians investigating the botched operation exhibited their prejudice against Muslims on television, fanning the already wide distrust against Muslims in the wider Philippine population (Pulse Asia 2005).

In stories about Moros in mass media and online, Moros are alternately 'violent fanatics', revolutionaries, 'terrorists' and victims in relation to the colonial and neo-colonial state and other

ethnic groups. The state and insurgent groups endorse gendered constructs and narratives that contribute to the subject formation of Moros through their articulation and repetition in policies through time, but which is also reproduced in popular forms like folk stories and the media. Moros identifying with the image of a fanatic or a revolutionary and 'the clash' narrative recognise their subject position. But rather than forceful acceptance, Moros negotiate the subject position. To this end, Norman Fairclough (1989:140) argues that subjects have 'paradoxical properties of being socially determined, and yet capable of individual creativity; obliged to act discoursally in pre-constituted subject positions, yet capable of creatively transforming discourse conventions'. Beyond folktales' depiction of heroes, princesses, and imposters; and beyond mass media and online portrayal of Moro as fanatics and revolutionaries, Moros define themselves through their offline and online interactions. The access and reach of their networks may be diminutive but not insignificant. As long as these stories are shared, they can shape perceptions about Moros in the Philippines.

Absences and silences

I surveyed in the preceding sections the portrayals of gender and conflict in Mindanao across folklore and media, and in Chapter 1, in academic literature. I demonstrated that gendered actors and gendered narratives point to the pervasive power of gender in Mindanao history and society, even if such gendering is usually taken for granted. Beyond these observations, figuring gender's piece in the Mindanao conflict puzzle requires looking at what is absent and listening to silences in the narratives. When we begin to question the absences and silences across popular and academic mediums, we will see that gender is not a separate piece but one that shapes other pieces of the puzzle that is the Mindanao conflict.

In this section, I argue that Moro women's absence and silence across media and literature is crucial to the masculinised memorial and portrayal of conflict in Mindanao. To complement the analysis that I have put forward in the first two sections, here I focus on Moro women's erasure and dismissal in Philippine historical and academic accounts. Subalternisation is a historical and material process that creates the subaltern, or the most exploited, oppressed class within the modern state.[41] In Mindanao, subalternisation has taken place through the long history of economic and political disenfranchisement of Moros, and their alienation from access to land and justice mechanisms. It is also expressed through the neglect and censorship of Moros in history books. On the one hand, Moro women's absence and silence are ideational manifestations of Moro women's material subalternisation. On the other hand, the absence of the Moro majority and especially Moro women in official narratives about conflict make it difficult for parties in the peace process to assert why they need to be enfranchised as partners in altering the course of that conflict. In fact, silences are integral to the narratives about conflict in Mindanao; they inhibit discussions about certain topics, such as gender and social justice, in the context of war and peacebuilding. Thus, analysing what is left out in the Moro historiography can also illuminate the Moro mythology in Mindanao and the Philippines.

Women in the story of men

Using the conceptual framework 'the story of man in the Philippines', former Chairperson of the Historical Institute of the Philippines Samuel K. Tan (1987:14, 110) recognises that Moros are linked with other Filipinos in their struggle to protect or recover their 'ancient liberties' that were lost in the process of colonisation, modernisation and subsequent marginalisation.[42] I find this analysis appealing,

[41] Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci (1992) coined the term subaltern in his work on cultural hegemony, where he describes the exclusion of particular groups to deny their agency. The subaltern differ from the standard Marxist focus on the proletariat because they comprise 'the bottom layer of society, not necessarily put together by capitalist logic alone' (Spivak 2000:324). Subalternisation operates on the logic and methods of colonial and racism, capitalist and classism, and patriarchy and sexism. These logics can constantly reproduce their own condition of existence (see E. San Juan Jr 1996:1).

[42] 'The story of man in the Philippines' is Tan's own description of his conceptual framework in a study of the ecological environment and the historical experience of people in the Philippines.

because the goal of recovering 'ancient liberties' resonates with aspirations for self-determination and is vague enough to encompass various liberation movements. Yet the ideal of 'ancient liberties' need to be reconfigured in a world that colonialism and neo-colonialism transformed. It is not possible to go back to communalism as it were prior to the arrival of these forces. And, I argue, nor is it desirable to recover only men's ancient liberties. In what follows, I consciously engage the 'story of man' framework to illustrate women's marginalisation in Philippine historical accounts – the erasure, the downplaying, and the dismissal of women's voices.

Challenging Tan's concept of ancient liberties to include those of women, I proffer that indigenous women practiced many freedoms in the Philippine archipelago before the arrival of Islam and Catholicism. Referencing the 13th century Zakariya Al-Qazwini's fantastic *'Ajā'ib al-makhlūqāt wa-gharā'ib al-mawjūdāt* (Marvels of Things Created and Miraculous Aspects of Things Existing), Donoso makes a case for myths having grains of truth. The book describes eastern Southeast Asia as:

> A conglomerate of islands (as many as 1,700) politically dominated by matriarchy. This fits in with the anthropological evidence of historical maritime Southeast Asia and perhaps of the Philippine Archipelago (Donoso 2013:123).

While hard evidence of matriarchy in precolonial Philippines is not forthcoming (also globally, see Eller 2001), largely egalitarian communal living was likely the norm. Anthropological studies of indigenous Agtas in Luzon, Philippines, for example, have shown that women were skilled and important hunters in their community (Estioko and Griffin 1975; Estioko-Griffin and Griffin 1981; Goodman et al. 1985) debunking the myth of the male hunter and female gatherer that was prevalent in previous anthropological literature. Such studies suggest that indigenous women engaged in tasks that gave them economic power.

Some Filipino historians have underscored women's leadership in precolonial communities in the Philippines, mostly as spiritual leaders and keepers of community traditions. According to Zeus Salazar's (1996) study, precolonial women and transgendered persons called *katalonan* or *babaylan* played roles as spiritual leaders in the Luzon and Visayas group of islands; similar roles are identifiable as the *baylan* and *bai* in both Lumad and Moro communities in Mindanao. In Salazar's account, a typical precolonial community in the Philippines had *datu*, *babaylan*, and *panday*, or the political-military, cultural-spiritual, and technological leaders, respectively. It was unclear, however, why women only performed the role of spiritual leadership. Notwithstanding Salazar's functionalist understanding women's place in the community, women were important public leaders and community members before and during Spanish colonisation. For example, historical figures like Gabriela Silang in Luzon (Friesen 1989), Teresa Magbanua in the Visayas (Locsin-Nava 1996), and the *baylan* Salud in Mindanao (Baños 2021; Estarte 1998) led military resistance against aggressors in their communities. Thus, we can infer that indigenous women at least sometimes held political power as community leaders.

And what of body integrity and sexual freedom? Sociologist Elizabeth Eviota (1992:23) argues that sexuality was relatively freely expressed in the precolonial Philippines, where men and women's chastity was largely irrelevant. Historian Raquel Reyes (2008:257) further notes the 'historical and contemporary evidence of the Filipina's sexual freedom and sexual licentiousness' and the 'unconstrained sexual nature of the pre-conquest native woman'. Together with economic and political power, I interpret women's ancient liberties as women's freedoms of development and movement, the capacity to be themselves and to change themselves if they want to.

I do not mean that patriarchy did not exist prior to foreign contact, as privileged men in ranked society practiced polygyny and concubinage (Eviota 1992), but emphasise that patriarchy has changed in shape in history through encounters with other peoples. Foremostly, the foreigners indigenous peoples interacted with were usually male, and if they had women on board, they did not command

the vessels or their crew. The Islamic traders and missionaries were commonly male, as were the colonisers who sought to fight or deal with elite men in the localities they entered. Both groups of foreigners brought religious elements that tied sexuality to morality, and chastity became a crucial ordering principle for women's lives (Eviota 1992:23). But it is important to emphasize that these encounters were not only with different views of gender, but also intersected with new notions of race and class. For example, Reyes (2008:257) points out how a class of Filipino male elites, the *propagandistas* in the late 19th century, created an image of a docile Filipina 'equal to their European sisters'. As cultural studies scholar Nerissa Balce (2017) argues, the nature of engagement with these foreign entities shaped the way women in the archipelago were viewed as less capable and less authoritative public leaders, and more sexualised beings belonging to the private domain. The racial and gendered interaction with foreigners and colonisers influenced the status of women in communities in the archipelago as these interlopers reconfigured precolonial gender orders.

The unwritten in Philippine history

> History books in the Philippines tend to lay emphasis on events in other islands that glorify national heroes from such areas, as if the history of the Philippines is only that of people who had been conquered while the history of the unconquered ones does not merit a share in the history of the Philippines (Majul 1999:410).

Mujul's appeal for the inclusion of the unconquered Moros in the imagination of a Philippine nation is a start, but would be transformative if it included the history of women. Filipino historians themselves (Peczon-Fernandez et al. 1996) have risen to the challenge of looking for ways to fill women's absence in Filipino history. Historian Mina Roces (2012, 2010, 2004) has provided great service in detailing women's activism in the Philippines from 1986-2008. But where are the Moro women in Philippine history, especially before the twentieth century? One account, by Tausug literary writer Ibrahim Jubaira about his aunt Princess Asda Shariful Hashim, is based on an oral story passed on to him. He

narrated that his royal aunt trained and organised singers to keep up the troops' morale, rolled down logs and boulders onto approaching American enemies, and fought hand to hand and died alongside the men in the Battle of Mt. Langkuasan in 1912 (in Canoy 1987:66).

In fact, it is easier to find women figures in oral rather than written traditions because elite men have long guarded the domain of writing official records. For example, the name of a female Sultan of Sulu in the 16th century, Sultana Nur ul-'Azam, appears in the *khutbah*, the sermon during congregational prayers and festivals. Majul tapped into this alternative source to triangulate written genealogies of the Sulu royalty that had tried to erase her from their roster. Comparing the written genealogy with oral *khutbah*, Majul finds that the four-to-five-year reign of Sultana Nur ul-'Azam, who was also given the titles Pangyan Ampay (Sulu royal princess) and Sitti Kabil (Arabic, grand mistress), had been glossed over in the written sources. These oral sources do not point to anything irregular about her succession to the post, so the Sultana must have been the most qualified among the heirs to the throne:

> When royal qualifications were more or less the same, the candidate with the greatest power in terms of wealth and followers would win the contest. A *Rajah Muda* (heir apparent) who got himself proclaimed Sultan must have possessed some personal qualifications or enjoyed the support of strong *datus* [traditional village leaders]. No one could long remain as sultan if he was a weakling (Majul 1999:399).

While the Sultana sustained her rule longer than some Sultans in the royal roster, we know nothing about the quality of her rule. The *khutbah* narrated that, 'Some Sulus did not look with favour upon her regime, it being under a woman' (Majul 1999:17). As noted above, some written accounts struck her out of the roster of rulers, while others altered her name to make it sound more gender neutral. It is unclear whether the disdain for a woman's rule in Sulu and the revision of the past were products

of precolonial patriarchy, a strategy of political opposition against a particular leader, or of an adoption of a *fatwa* from Mecca, forbidding the rule of a woman (Mernissi 1993).

Such erasure of a women leaders from royal genealogies is not unique to Sulu or Mindanao. In fact, it is highly reminiscent of traditional depictions of four women leaders of the Acehnese Sultanate as powerless. The Acehnese rulers Tajul Alam Safiatuddin, Nur Al-Alam Nakiyyat al-Din Shah, 'Inayat Shah Zakiyyat al-Din, and Kamalat Shah bore titles similar to that of Sultana Nur ul-'Azam of Sulu, and ruled in succession from 1641 to 1699. Siapno (2002) rightly criticises writers who dismissed 58 years of women's rule in Aceh as a period when heads of state were mere puppets of male politicians in their time. Feminist sociologist Fatima Mernissi (1993) offers the analysis that women had more access to political power in 'Island Islamic Societies' than societies in the Middle East in the 17th century. The contrast warns us against the interpretation of history based on contemporary realities, and prods us to pay attention to historical processes that lead to political and social change.

In the end, the exclusion of Sultana Nur ul-'Azam from the Sulu genealogy was incomplete, and what was erased on paper still lived on in oral traditions. Yet the effects were far-reaching. None of the Moros I have asked in the communities I immersed in knew about the Sultana. Like Datu Ibrahim Kudarat, they believe, instead, that Moro women leaders are products of modernity. If stories of an elite woman leader like the Sultana can be revised or neglected, all the more are voices of non-elite Moro women silenced and forgotten.

Missing voices

Records of Moro resistance to colonialism are substantial in Majul (1999), Canoy (1987) and Jubair (1999), among other sources, but the framing of the stories leaves much to be desired in reconstructing non-elite histories and especially the participation of Moro women. Here I discuss only two examples

of academic accounts that fail to engage with Moro women's subject position, and thus provide an unclear picture of the historical events they describe.

The first account is that of Majul (1999:325), who noted in passing in his account of the Samals' resistance to Spanish steamships in 1848 that 'the cota [fort] fell, but only after the defenders had killed many of their women and children to save them from becoming prisoners of the Spaniards. About 400 Samals were killed'. In this passage, women and children are not framed as actors but as belonging to the men, and as recipients of action, in this case, their killing. Nothing is said about how women and children took part in the resistance, the violence of killing family members, or its possible significance. The women are not allowed to speak.

Majul's account of the 'saving' of women and children by killing them is strikingly similar to men's killing of their female family members and women's mass martyrdoms during the Partition of India one hundred years later. Majul, however, missed recognising these as 'honour killings', as feminist writer and publisher Urvashi Butalia (2000) does: she suggests that such killings are only coherent when honour pertains to community or collective honour, and where men are duty-bound to protect the women's honour (sexuality), the violation of which is worse than death. Furthermore, in becoming martyrs, the women are not depicted as being part of the violence but remain non-violent entities. It is, however, difficult to believe that women did nothing during the resistance in Mindanao. Majul (1999) himself argues that in extending the frontiers of Islam, women are not enjoined to fight, but that it is incumbent upon all believers to participate in the defence of the Islamic community.

The second account is by Southeast Asian studies scholar, James Francis Warren (1985), who writes a history from below which taps testimonies of Tausug slaves captured from all over the Philippine archipelago and Southeast Asia in the late 18th to 19th centuries. Most of the testimonies Warren studied were collected by foreigners – Spanish and Dutch vessel officers who documented the people

they took on board. Warren's method was to assemble a collective biography of slaves to give voice to the underclass of Tausug society under the Sulu sultanate and during the Spanish colonisation. He argues that slaves played a role in the economy as units of production and as a medium of exchange for the Tausugs. Young people, especially women, were premium commodities:

> The highest prices were for young women, who could be offered as wives and concubines to recruit fighting men to a *datu's* retinue, and youths, who were considered tractable and therefore more readily incorporated into Taosug society than men (Warren 1985:201).

Despite their prominence and high demand in the slave trade, women were underrepresented in Warren's sources. Out of 180 testimonies of slaves who escaped captivity, only four were of women. Their small number may be because women slaves had fewer chances to escape, especially when they were traded as wives or concubines of wealthy Tausug men. A testimony from a woman who escaped showed that slave masters also arranged marriages for some slaves. One of the four narrated her ordeal but her voice is lost in a foreign vessel officer's translation to a third person voice:

> Her master compelled her to marry the slave Lantana… that she wanted to be transported to her village where she had been married and had two sons, the elder one already had two children when she was seized (Warren 1985:247).

Perhaps because he thought it was very obvious, Warren does not acknowledge the sexual violence in selling women to be wives or concubines, or compelling them to marry other slaves. It is difficult to know more about the women's lives as slaves through Warren's collective biography. Since the testimonies Warren studied were collected by foreigners who were vessel officers, the information they were interested in was mostly limited to the Tausug social organisation of raiding and ethnic relations. Stories that show foreigners as perpetrators of the slave trade may further be concealed. As

contribution to a history from below, Warren's collective biography is valuable but it presents a limited view of underclass women's experiences. It is only a partial biography of slaves, just as the history of Moros is partial, without including the history of Moro women.

In this section, I have argued that Moros are subalternised in the colonial and postcolonial history, and the most exploited and oppressed among them – especially the women – remain marginal in written narratives. I drew attention to the silences in historical narratives. The absence of women's voices creates serious gaps in collective memory, and dislocates women's experiences from the historical contexts that produce contemporary gendered violence (Saikia 2011). Thus, absences and silences, too, can be repeatedly articulated to take a hegemonic form in the guise of being natural.

By challenging existing analyses, scouring narratives for unwritten heroes, and studying silences to find missing voices in elite and male-dominated historiography, it should be possible to reimagine the Moro and Mindanao history of conflict. Such an exercise challenges us to rethink what is known about the Mindanao conflict, to include the very violence of silencing women's voices. Reimagination further invites us to think of existing narratives as if they sculptural moulds with vacuums left out or photographs with negative spaces. Filling these spaces matters, to provide a more coherent picture of narratives in time and space.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I drew from folktales, media and academic literature to examine actors and plot conflicts in narratives about Moros. Together, these stories create a Moro mythology – who the Moros are in public perception that influences how Moros sees themselves in relation to other Moro women and men, other Filipinos, and other peoples of the world. Academics and the media thus practice what

van Dijk (1993:257) calls discourse control, which entails control over minds and the management of social representations. I then analysed how a gendered history of Mindanao can change the way conflict is understood not just as war but as challenges to orders, including the subalternisation of Moros, especially Moro women, in history. I illustrated this by studying silences in historical accounts to try to bring to the surface the erasure, downplaying, or dismissal of women's contribution to their communities. I argued that gender inequality shapes how the conflict in Mindanao is understood and discussed. I demonstrated that masculinised narratives reinforce militarised strategies for addressing conflict, and reproduce class and gender inequalities. In the next chapter, I illustrate how gendered narratives and government policies shape Moro women and men's life stories.

Part II.

3 The many wars in Mindanao

Taya Kudarat was seven when armed men rained bullets into her family's home in Midsayap, Cotabato province and a piece of shrapnel pierced her scalp. She bled so much that her mother thought she was dying. From then on, it was a childhood of constantly fleeing wars. Her father was killed, their house burnt, and their land abandoned, so that she was not able to go to school. Taya's mother urged her to marry so that she could be 'protected' in a male-headed household, and her *dori* (dowry) could help them survive. At age 13, Taya married Esmael, seven years older than her, and would deliver eight children in ten years. During Martial Law, she cooked for Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) soldiers when she could. After Martial Law, she followed Esmael to Davao City with all of her three living children. As an adult in Davao, she recovered the shrapnel out of her scalp. It was as big as her smallest fingernail, she told me. Its scar marks the distance she had travelled from Midsayap to Davao.

This chapter demonstrates that a gender analysis offers a new perspective for understanding aspects of Moro landlessness, labour, and relationships in conflict that have not been explored in previous studies of Mindanao. Drawing from family stories, I study what Raewyn Connell (1987) refers to as a gender regime operating at the level of institutions. In this case, I focus on the family and the Moro armed group MNLF. The family is considered the most basic political institution in the Philippines, as its structure is fairly simple. Yet, in terms of the relationships within it, the family is complex. No other institution has relationships 'so extended in time, so extensive in contact, so dense in their interweaving of economics, emotion, power and resistance' (Connell 1987:121). Gender and inter-generational dynamics, ethnic and class practices, and differences within the nuclear and extended family can complicate interactions within the family. Family dynamics among Moros are further intensified in times and places of conflict. Clan wars by nature involve blood relations. Affinity and

recruitment to armed groups occur regularly through kinship ties (McKenna 1998). People leave orphaned or abandoned children in the care of relatives. In trying times, families sell their human and other resources such as land, weapons, and sentimental heirlooms to survive. In many cases, insurgent (vertical) conflict and clan and gang (horizontal) conflicts relate to each other because politicians and conflict entrepreneurs use clans to gain footholds in Mindanao. I concur with feminist economist Heidi Hartmann (1981) who argues that rather than being a homogenous unit with unified interests, the family is a locus of *struggle* for production, distribution, and affect.

Following Connell's structural analysis of gender relations, I study the gender dimensions of labour, power, and cathexis through the economic, power, and emotional relations in Moro family stories. Studying relations within the family demonstrates the family as a site of all these relationships and of the co-constitution of class, gender, and ethnicity.

My analytical strategy in studying gender relations in conflict involves three steps. The first step is to study labour as a dimension of gender through economic relations. In the first section, I introduce six Moro families and through their stories, map the conflict over land, and the labour spent in the Mindanao conflict as part of armed groups. The second step teases out the power dimension of gender through the power relations in the Mindanao conflict, especially among differently positioned Moro men, and between Moro women and men. In the second section, I therefore look at the intersections of class, gender and ethnicity in recollections of their experiences in what most Moros considered as a time of conflict – the Martial Law period of 1972 to 1986. During my research, Moro women and men referred to times and places of conflict in ways that were entangled in their own life courses, and subjectively deemed some details more valuable than others. I follow their lead in studying the emotional and psychological violence in memories of conflict. The third step thus examines cathexis as dimension of gender through the emotional and sexual relations in the conflict, including domestic

violence. As a result, the family stories reflect a broader definition of violence than has been written about in Mindanao.

Through these three steps, I argue that Moro gendered landlessness, gendered recruitment into armed groups, and domestic violence broaden our understanding of conflict in Mindanao. 'The many wars' in the chapter title alludes to simultaneous spectacular and occluded conflicts people navigate in Mindanao. With spectacular wars between the government and insurgents from Martial Law in 1972 to Martial Law in 2017 in the background, this chapter foregrounds the experiences of ordinary Moro women and men. Supplementing the writing about conflict that makes it to history books and media reports, this is a story of the many wars in Mindanao from the perspectives of people who have fought in and fled from conflict.

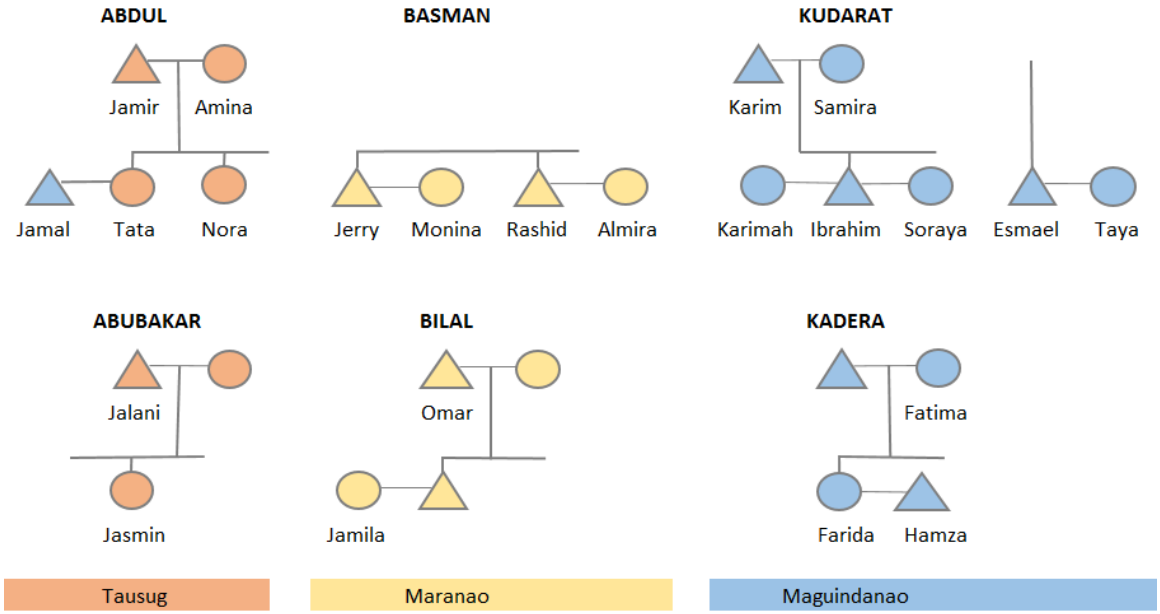
Gendered landscapes, gendered actors

The dispossession of Moros from their land and their participation in the insurgency have crucial gender aspects. Firstly, while land laws and state operations dispossessed most Moros of land, they had especially severe effects on Moro women. Secondly, a gendered division of labour defined recruitment into and operation of armed groups. I substantiate these claims by retelling the experiences of five Moro families from different parts of Mindanao: the Tausug Abdul and Abubakar families, the Maranao Basman and Bilal families, and the Maguindanao Kudarat and Kadera families (Figure 6). Let me briefly introduce the people who shared their life stories with me before relating how they experienced conflicts.

Jamir Abdul comes from a family of fisherfolk from Talipao in the Sulu archipelago. He married Amina, who was born in Basilan but raised in Davao. They have three children; the eldest is Tata (Tarhata) and

the youngest is Nora (Noraima). Tata married her Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) comrade Jamal, a Maguindanao from Palembang, Sultan Kudarat. The Abubakars were farmers in Tapul Island. Jalani moved to Zamboanga in his teens, and then to Davao City as an adult looking for work. He had a few wives in succession. Jasmin is one of his eight children born in Davao City. The Abduls and Abubakars were once neighbours in the predominantly Tausug *purok* Angklahan.

Figure 6. Research participants' partial family trees



The Basman brothers Jerry and Rashid are from Lanao del Sur. Sons of an MILF soldier, they did not grow up together as a maternal aunt raised Jerry in Wao while paternal grandparents cared for Rashid in Marantao. Their other siblings were also raised in different households. They would only get to know each other later in life. Jerry met fellow Maranao vendor Monina in Manila, while Rashid met Davao resident Almira in Lanao del Sur. After Rashid moved to Almira's neighbourhood in Davao City, his brothers joined him with their growing families. Also from Lanao del Sur, in Malabang, Omar Bilal is a jack of all trades and takes pride in learning skills quickly. This proved useful as he worked as a soldier, in logging, and later in construction. In Davao City, his son would marry Jamila, a Maranao migrant

from the outskirts of Marawi City. The Basmans and Bilals are neighbours in the Maranao-majority *purok* Black Beach.

The Kudarats are descendants of a 16th century Maguindanao sultan. Datu Karim Kudarat was a ranking MNLF leader. The Kudarats moved from Kabacan to Davao City after 1986. Just before they moved to Davao, Karim's firstborn Ibrahim had married Karimah, and years later, Ibrahim also married Soraya from Cotabato. Esmael is Datu Karim's cousin who joined the move to Davao. Esmael's wife Taya and their children later joined him in Davao. The Kaderas from Pagalugan, Maguindanao are distant relatives of the Kudarats. The Kadera men usually earn an income by driving tricycles while the women work abroad or care for children. The Kudarats and Kaderas live in a largely Maguindanao community in *purok* Kawayan.

All six Moro families suffered from clan and gang wars, and from state military and vigilante group atrocities. I illustrate land concentration and conflict in four of these Moro family stories. Five of the six families were involved in Moro resistance movements, and all had members who were once part of an armed group.[43] Through their experiences, I will thus show how Moro girls and boys, women and men, were actors and witnesses in the Mindanao conflict.

Moro women's dispossession from their land

Building on the discussion in Chapters 1 and 2 of how Moros experienced subalternisation through constrictions on their access to land, I turn the focus here to evidence from my own fieldwork. The concentration of land ownership among Moro men, at the expense of Moro women, is reflected in the family story of the Kudarats. Datu Karim and his first wife Samira both have individual claims to Maguindanao royal lineage and are recognised as traditional leaders in their migrant community in

[43] In fact, it was difficult for me to find families without any form of involvement in insurgent groups. Even families whom I thought were non-partisan revealed some involvement in or support of the MNLF or MILF when sharing their life stories.

Davao. While the Kudarats live simply, they seem wealthier than their neighbours. Their concrete house is larger than most of their neighbours' houses, which are made of wood and makeshift materials. A painted portrait of the couple in regal clothes adorns a wall in their living room. A few generations before them, men and women in their families had large tracts of lands at their disposal as their clans regulated land use such as clearing of forests and cultivation of the fertile plains. Over the decades, the use of formal land titles combined with patriarchal practices resulted in women having access to less land. While Datu Karim is still able to access his parents' lands, Samira does not have a formal share in her family's properties. If she wanted to access her family's lands, she needs to ask permission from her male relatives. Having married Datu Karim, she is expected to use the lands of his family.

The land titling system in the Philippines is especially difficult to navigate, especially the transfer of land to the wife or descendant of a deceased man. Even Datu Karim still does not have formal title to his father's 476 hectares of land. As an only child, Karim was bound to inherit lands registered in his father's name. Using a certificate of his father's death from an *imam* (Muslim religious leader) in Zamboanga, Datu Karim asked the courts to transfer his father's lands to his name in the early 1980s. But the process was long, complicated and costly:

> The courts approved the lands to be transferred to my name, but it is still being processed… as there are other claimants to the land. I heard Digong [former Davao Mayor and current Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte] on TV saying that they will return all the lands that the Spanish and Americans stole from the Moros. I wrote to Digong right away to say that I hope your pronouncement comes true…. Because I am contending with rich people, I spent ₱53 million to fight the case in court. I became poorer because of that. You know the lawyers. In Manila, they ask for ₱100,000 per day. Here [in Mindanao] it is just ₱15,000 per appearance.

> The other claimants, because they are rich, they tried to prolong the case in court. But by God's grace, I trumped them all. Because my claim is real (K. Kudarat 2017).

It would be rational to assume that if a relatively well-connected and credentialed sole heir such as Karim Kudarat has difficulty transferring the land title from his deceased father, then the family members of male Moros who die in the wars in Mindanao will have all the more difficulty doing so. Even if the courts ruled in Datu Karim's favour before 1986, he still does not have the land title in his name as his claim was 'against a cousin of Marcos' (K. Kudarat 2017). Datu Karim hopes to secure the land title soon and pass it on to his firstborn son with Samira, Ibrahim.

In the Kudarat family story, the women acquire land only when men share land with them. In the context of dwindling Moro resources, such sharing was practiced less through the generations. Datu Karim told me that he used to have 16 wives; now he has only six wives but he has over 20 children. Marriages between Moros usually occur through customary and Islamic rights, without the issue of government licenses. Datu Karim gave some smaller, untitled parcels of lands at his disposal to his other wives as child support. Perhaps this is in recognition that by law, his wives other than Samira do not have a legal basis to assume his properties. Datu Karim did not explain where his untitled lands came from; they may be his father's shares of the Kudarats' traditional lands.

Datu Ibrahim Kudarat explained that their traditional land is passed on from fathers to their first-born sons to prevent land fragmentation. It is up to a first-born son like him to share work on the land and its produce with his siblings. Because he does not have many properties and assets, Datu Ibrahim plans to pass any land in his name to his first-born son, who will in turn be entrusted to share the land and its produce with his brothers and sisters. Datu Ibrahim has two wives, Karimah and Soraya, and about 18 children. However, since Datu Karim does not have the land title yet, Datu Ibrahim's claim to the land is even more uncertain.

The Kudarat family story illustrates how Moros – even ones with elite family backgrounds – have precarious access to their own lands, and in the Moro land squeeze, how Moro women are the first to be disenfranchised. In the context of the contest for land in Mindanao, two factors can be highlighted to explain why Moro women are prevented from accessing their family lands. First, Moro men promote patriarchal practices of passing their land onto their sons. Underlying this practice is Moro men's belief that it is men's duty to provide, and women's to care for their families. Second, the adoption of formal land titling, alongside informal land markets, has made it difficult for women to access land held in men's names. The cumbersome procedures, outright fraud and violent conflict surrounding land claims in Mindanao prevent women from asserting a right they might have on properties. Lands in the name or stewardship of soldiers who died in conflict are usually lost, since the families cannot usually produce wills or other legal claims. In these cases, powerful clans or other actors can lay claim to the lands using money or violence. In combination, these factors create the situation where Moros, especially Moro women, are land dispossessed.

Clans fighting for land through women's bodies

Through the decades after colonisation, land access and use have been leading causes of conflict between and within Moro families (Gulane 2013:148). Land disputes usually arise due to lack of land titles, conflicting land titles, fraudulent and double sale of properties, and disputes about inheritance (Durante et al. 2007:106–8). The disputes can turn into *rido*, armed clashes between families in defence of their honour – a form of conflict that occurs where the central government is weak and where justice and security are wanting (Torres 2007).[44] A Social Weather Station (2005) survey found that Moros deem *ridos* as more immediate and prevalent threats in Mindanao than insurgency-related

[44] With historical roots that precede colonisation in Mindanao, clan wars are still prevalent during elections, lean seasons, and the holy month of Ramadan. Clans continue to contest the power of local governments in terms of keeping peace, providing order, and serving justice in their localities.

wars.[45] The value of land to families manifests in the lengths they can go to fight for and defend them. Yet lands are also fought through women's sacrificial bodies when they become hostages in the clan wars and brides in arranged marriages, as in the Abubakar and Abdul family stories below.

The Abubakar family is an ethnic Tausug family from the Sulu archipelago. Born in 1961, Jalani Abubakar is the ninth of ten siblings who grew up amidst clan conflict about land. When sharing his life story with me, he began with his involvement in a local *rido*:

> In Tapul, the wars there were within families. I have cousins from the other side – they were against us. It became worse when heads rolled during wars. One time, cousins from our side were inside a *cota* [barracks], our rivals went in and my cousins and other relatives were gunned down. It was like people did not matter to them. Many died, almost all were women. After that, retaliations ensued. Even if you just went to the farm to collect food, they would be waiting for you there. We would also go there ourselves [to look for them]. One time they took as a hostage a girl cousin who was gathering sweet potatoes and bananas, I was already 14 years old then. We fought back. We all had a gun each. We had to exchange a gun for the person (Abubakar 2017).

Taking justice into their own hands, clans contest the power of traditional leaders who mediate between clans in land and other disputes, and usurp the authority to use force from them and the state. In Jalani's hometown, the absence of a leader who could unite the clan allowed male family members to violently compete for land. Parties would guard and hold people hostage in the farms, with the death toll in clashes then prompting further retaliations. It was taken for granted that there were many firearms around, as Jalani explained above one was even assigned to him when he was a

[45] Previously, in 2002, an Asia Foundation survey found that while Muslim-Christian conflict in Mindanao dominates media attention, clan conflicts are more pertinent to the lives of Moro people (Torres 2007).

boy of 14 years. A gun was valuable in Jolo and many parts of Mindanao during the Martial Law period, and in Jalani's story, worth the same as a girl cousin's life in 1975.

The Abdul family is also ethnic Tausug. Jamir's father travelled to Davao in the 1950s, met Jamir's Lumad mother there, and decided to stay. Jamir Abdul grew up on the Davao City coast and married Amina, another second-generation Tausug migrant. To escape a *rido* in Basilan, Amina's paternal grandparents, who were of Spanish and Chinese descent, migrated to Malaysia, where her father was born. Amina's mother was a 'pure Tausug'. Amina's maternal family claimed to have Tausug royal lineage but have little resources, having abandoned all their lands in Basilan during clan wars. Amina was raised in Davao from the mid-1950s as her parents deemed it safer from *rido*. Yet, Amina bitterly recalled how they lost land in Davao too, as a result of a conflict with a land grabber:

> There was trouble because we had about five hectares of land here [in Davao]. My father almost died because there was someone who claimed the land from us [and our neighbours]. My father sensed that we should go, so we left for Digos [in Davao del Sur]. Our neighbour who was left behind was killed (A. Abdul 2017).

The Abubakar and Abdul stories are typical of the many Moro families who have lost lands in *ridos* in the Sulu archipelago and Mindanao. An aspect of this form of land dispossession and consequent migration is the care work that falls on women during the transitions caused by land loss and subsequent rebuilding. Conflict migrants escape *ridos* by uprooting themselves from their homelands and venturing into uncertain territories. The labour involved in setting up in a new location and keeping the family together falls on Moro women, who are expected to make homes wherever they are.

The story of the Abdul family presents a particularly extreme case of expecting women to go to great lengths to keep the family together, but also an unfortunately common example of using marriage to

secure land. .Jamir's family owned a lot in Sarangani, the southernmost point in the Mindanao mainland. Amina recalled that they she and Jamir were newly wed through Islamic rites when Jamir needed to attend to this land:

> [Jamir] told me there was a need for him to go to Sarangani because he had to settle an issue over a lot owned by their family, which is situated there. I had no idea that it was because of a woman. The woman's family threatened that if he did not come, the land bought by my husband's family would be forfeited. It was like blackmail (A. Abdul 2017).

Amina followed Jamir to Sarangani and found that, in her absence, he had married another woman to keep the land. Jamir avoided a land dispute by entering a second marriage. From Amina's point of view, the other woman blackmailed Jamir. However, the context presents a complicated picture. Jamir's claim to the land in Sarangani arose from his father's marriage into a Lumad community. To prevent fragmentation of the land, Lumad elders had arranged a marriage for Jamir with a local woman (a story we return to below). In this case, Jamir's second wife might have been equally unhappy with the marriage. Women work on the land, but usually do not make decisions about it (Fianza 2004). Men often make decisions about women's marriages and migrations without attaining their consent.

Vigilantes clearing lands, violating bodies

Especially during the Martial Law of 1972–1986, Moros abandoned lands in Mindanao in response to state-backed vigilante group operations. A group called Ilaga (Hiligaynon for rat) commanded by an Ilonggo settler, Feliciano Luces (also known as 'Commander Toothpick') was one of the dreaded vigilante groups that targeted Moros from 1969 up to the early 1970s. There were speculations that the Ilaga was initially composed of Lumad Tedurays that resented paying tribute to Muslim datus and, or that Luces' hatred for Muslims derived from his patron and godfather Manuel Tronco. Tronco was a retired constabulary captain and chief adversary of the Muslim politician Michael Sinsuat ('Datu Puti')

in the competition for the mayorship of Upi Town. He was also obsessed with the idea of the political supremacy of Christians, especially the settler Ilonggos in North Cotabato (Canoy 1987:103). Seven Christian politicians in North Cotabato, also known as the Magic Seven, were said to have organized and sustained the Ilaga to influence the outcome of the 1971 elections in their favour (Kaufman 2015:81; Larousse 2001:135; Rodil 1993:16).

Taya was a child visiting Kibayo village in Carmen municipality, Cotabato province, when she first heard about the Ilaga. Her family moved many times in her childhood, but kept coming back to Midsayap where they had farmlands. In the early 1970s, Taya was 10 years old when the Ilaga caught up with them in Midsayap:

> When they came to our place, the people said Torpik [Toothpick] was there. Why was he named Torpik when he kills everyone he meets, men and women? We hid, and our house was burnt down. We fled back to Midsayap, but there was war even in Kabuntalan, that's our place in Midsayap. The Muslims didn't fight back. How could the men fight when they did not have guns, and our *bolos* [farmer's long-bladed knife], were just for clearing our fields? We had nothing in our hands, so we just ran and ran, wherever we could go. We left our *barrios* [village], that was what Muslims did.
>
> The Ilaga killed all Muslims, my papa was killed by the Ilaga too. He didn't do anything – he was just a farmer. When he got to our house, he was headless. It was just his body that fell on the ground. The Ilaga took his head (T. Kudarat 2017).

Taya narrated that she and her family was able to flee aboard a bus, taking her father's body with them to give him a proper burial. Her father's death prevented them from claiming their land in their hometown. Taya and her family fled a few more times before they settled in Kabacan, where she would

meet and eventually marry Esmael Kudarat and have children. Esmael himself heard about Ilaga operations elsewhere in Cotabato as a young man living in Kabacan:

> My aunt in Carmen was one of the people called by their barangay captain to a meeting in the mosque. [The Ilaga] threw a grenade inside the mosque, strafed them, and hacked to death those they found alive. My aunt survived because she was under piles of bloody dead bodies. The Ilagas thought she was dead too (E. Kudarat 2017).

Blood flooded the mosque, and it was strewn with body parts on that day, 19 June 1971. The massacre in Carmen that Esmael recounted is also known as the Manili Massacre. It is one of the 22 massacres the Ilagas committed between 1970 and 1972, wherein they mutilated bodies, and burned and looted properties (Majul 1985:50).

'When Ilaga came across Muslims, they would kill them and cut off their ears,' Esmael said. One of their neighbour's nephews survived an encounter with the Ilaga, but they cut both his ears off. 'He is still alive today, but until now he has long hair to cover his missing ears.' Lesser known than the cutting of men's ears, the Ilagas also cut off their women captives' nipples (Mawallil 2016). Violating women's bodies, including breasts and genitals, as well as causing pain, fear and humiliation interferes with the victims' ability to bear and nurse children. These details show that the vigilantes defile Moros in a deliberate attempt to cause offense to their ethnic community. The mutilation of Moro bodies – cutting off heads and body parts – is meant to terrorise survivors and drive them away from their lands.

For Taya and Esmael, the Ilagas represented Christians who were pursuing Muslims, not necessarily their lands. But as a result of the vigilante atrocities, Taya's family had to leave their lands in Midsayap and, with the murder of her father, they also lost their primary income earner. Depicting the wars in Mindanao merely as primordial conflict among Moro families, and between Christians and Muslims

misses how these conflicts impact on important economic relationships within and beyond the Moro family. For example, when public outrage in Manila led to Toothpick's arrest in the early 1970s, he was pampered in jail and then President Marcos granted him amnesty (Canoy 1987:104). This treatment demonstrated the state's favour for the vigilante group and the value of their operations in Mindanao for the authoritarian regime.

Land is a key issue in *ridos* because of the dispossession of Moros in Mindanao history. As I explained in Chapter 1, prior and during the Martial Law period (1972–1986), government-backed vigilantes and the military cleared Moro villages to make way for Christian resettlement and provide access to logging areas (TJRC 2017a:26). The Kudarats' subscription to the state framing of the Mindanao conflict as between Muslims and Christians in its 1972 Martial Law declaration (Yusingco 2013:39, also see Gowing 1977, McAmis 1974) trades off analysis about how landlessness intertwines with violence (Tuminez 2008:212) and aided politicians to gerrymander provincial boundaries in Mindanao (Vellema, Borras and Lara 2011:312, Lara 2014:228). The plasticity of the provincial borders led to the creation of settler-dominant districts and ethnic segregation in the region (Lara 2014:252). Instead of interpreting the conflict in Mindanao as primarily ethnic, evidence shows that land conflict between elites and poorer Moros *and* Christians (Canoy 1987:94–95) generated the ethnic tensions.

I have so far shown how women have lost access to lands in the story of the Kudarats and how *ridos* on lands have been fought through women's bodies in the Abubakar and Abdul family stories. I further demonstrated how vigilante atrocities during Martial Law forced Moros like the Kudarats to abandon their lands. Through these stories, I have illustrated the state's persistent dispossession of Moros of lands, and the gendered logic of the process which produced the concentration of the dwindling remaining lands in the hands of Moro men.

Moro recruitment to armed groups

The Mindanao conflict was made possible through people rendering labour to armed groups including the military, gangs, and insurgents. In this section, I introduce two more Moro families: the Bilals and Basmans, both from the Maranao ethnic group, and show how they and members of the Tausug Abdul and Abubakar families, and the Maguindanao Kudarat family have been involved in the insurgency. In my discussion, I focus on the gendered labour young men and women contributed to armed groups.

Omar Bilal, who grew up in Lanao del Sur province, remembers the Ilaga well. He said that members of the Ilaga were his family's neighbours in his hometown of Malabang, but they were of Visayan descent. 'Where we differed was, they joined the Ilaga under the army while we joined Maranaos in the Civilian Home Defense Force (CHDF)' (O. Bilal 2017). Omar started training for the CHDF, an auxiliary paramilitary force organised by local government when he was 19. He was vouched for by a powerful local politician (and Marcos crony) in Lanao, Ali Dimaporo, who also happened to be Omar's distant relative. Omar was one of 24 young men trained by a local CHDF unit for a week. They were issued a gun each, and given a salary of ₱80 monthly – a decent amount back then. In describing these details, Omar suggested that he took up arms for the money. The CHDF targeted for recruitment young single men who had not finished high school, like Omar.

As an auxiliary unit, Omar's unit was supposedly on call each time the military needed them, but Dimaporo's uncle wanted them to guard his own plantation instead. 'It became [a] personal [armed group]. You know, Dimaporo before was called the Little President' (O. Bilal 2017). One time, Omar's unit came across some of the Ilaga that he deemed 'a lost command' of the military. Their sergeant decided that they should block the Ilaga so they would not be able to go back to their town. They killed one of them in an ambush. From these stories, I gathered Omar was uncomfortable about his unit's functioning as Dimaporo's private army and about the tension between his 'Maranao' unit and the Ilaga 'lost command', and that this discomfort stemmed from his struggle to be an upright Muslim.

Muslim elites armed and organised Moros in response to the operations of the state-backed vigilante groups in 1960s and the 1968 Jabidah or Corregidor Massacre, when the Philippine military massacred an all-Muslim platoon intended to 'take back Sabah' (Rivera 2008:40; Vitug and Gloria 2000). The armed Moro groups called Black Shirts and Barracudas were linked with Muslim politicians Matalam and Dimaporo, respectively (Noble 1976:410). Immediately after the Jabidah massacre, former Cotabato Governor Datu Udtog Matalam established the Muslim Independence Movement, which changed its name to the Mindanao Independence Movement (MIM) also in 1968. The MIM postured as a secessionist organisation and inspired later groups that trained fighters (Hedman and Sidel 2000:170), including the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) that formally launched in 1972.

Human rights violations committed by the vigilantes, and atrocities perpetrated by the military prompted many Moros to join rebel groups. In North Cotabato, Maguindanao Esmael Kudarat, who it will be recalled had already had frightening encounters with the Ilaga vigilante group, joined the Black Shirts in the late 1960s, and then in the 1970s, the MNLF. He joined the MNLF because he heard that Marcos wanted to eliminate all Moros. Even though his own father was already a member of the MNLF when he himself joined, he was recruited by another person who went from house to house, speaking about the movement. Esmael rationalised his participation as, 'You join so that if Christians die, we can get even' (E. Kudarat 2017). From Esmael's stories about the Ilagas' atrocities and his recruitment into the MNLF, I gathered that he joined the MNLF without any monetary compensation. What attracted him was the chance to defend his immediate community and Islam through war. As a new recruit, Esmael remembers attending trainings that were tougher than the Philippine Army's:

> The army does not train for airborne attacks, ours did. They did not have training that involves underground tunnels, ours did. We climbed trees then flew down, and then we would make

> the tunnel course where we would manoeuvre. After the morning sessions we had lectures, as part of our discipline, part of the war (E. Kudarat 2017).

Esmael's pride at the level of training he got hints at the performance of masculinity that, his view, was tougher in the MNLF than in the Philippine state's army. He also contrasted the men's training with that of the women recruits. He recalled that the women's training was 'limited to medical and cooking in large batches'. Together, women and men trainees swore an oath of loyalty at the end of the initial month-long training. After a decade fighting alongside the MNLF, Esmael decided to join the MILF in the 1980s 'because they were more religious'. In this rationalisation, Esmael declared that his affinity with MILF was based on ideology.

When the state military burned a large mosque in his hometown in Lanao in 1972, Omar left the civilian military and joined the resistance movement. 'We were called the BMA, Bangsamoro Army. When that dissolved, we became the MNLF. When Salamat split from Misuari, we became MILF.' Omar recalled, 'we were not thinking about salaries or that we wanted to be part of the government. We joined to defend Islam.' Omar called himself a rebel until 1975, after which he decided to go back to high school. He would later work in the logging industry, through which he met his wife.

Karim Kudarat, the Maguindanao Datu, also joined the MNLF in the 1970s, after military men torched his house and farms in Bulit. As an MNLF commander, he took his family to 'the mountains, so far from other people and with jungle monkeys for neighbours'. His eldest child Ibrahim, then 10 years old, took care of his siblings while Datu Karim and his first wife Samira went on MNLF missions. While both Datu Karim and Samira carried out work for the MNLF, Samira was not a recognised as an MNLF member as a trailing wife of a commander. At 20, Ibrahim later joined the MNLF on his own accord, but left in 1986 to focus on his own growing family in Davao.

As a young teen, Taya, the evacuee from Midsayap, cooked food and brought it to the rebels fighting for the Moro cause, knowing that she was helping 'in her own way'. Like Samira Kudarat, though, young girls like Taya were not considered members of the MNLF. This fits the global pattern of military elites perpetuating gendered processes that guarantee the military its manpower (Enloe 1983:212), including adopting a double standard that consider men who tend to the sick or feed combatants in war as soldiers, and women who perform the same jobs as auxiliary staff. Similar to civil war experiences in El Salvador and Myanmar, army leaders in Mindanao treat care work and cooking as domestic tasks that suited women while fighting on the battlefield is the higher form of rebellion fit for men (Viterna 2013:117, Hedström 2016:8, also see Enloe 1983:12–3).

Maranao siblings Rashid and Jerry Basman from Lanao got separated during Martial Law when their father joined the MILF. Jerry was born around 1968 (he is unsure himself of the exact year) in Lanao, which he described as the 'land of the Dimaporos', a local elite clan. He then moved to the border of Lanao del Sur and lived with the family of an MILF officer. Thus, through family ties but not through his own father, he joined the MILF in the 1980s. Jerry remembered attending an MILF training in Marawi when he was 'still small. A commander even said [to my officer], why did you bring a boy?' (J. Basman 2017). The MILF officer he lived with succeeded the commander of the MILF in their area. Jerry was loyal to this commander, and killed rogue rebels to protect himself and his comrades. When he wished to marry, his MILF commander raised the dowry he needed. Jerry surrendered to the administration of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo between 2001–2010 when his commander surrendered.

Alongside vigilantes like the Ilaga, armed gangs operated in many localities in Mindanao, protected by the military and police. Jalani Abubakar came to Zamboanga in 1977 when he was 16, leaving behind his family's lands in Jolo and an early life that, as explained above, had been dominated by clan conflict. He immediately married and found a new gang to hang out with. For Jalani, the gang was a means to provide for his family:

> I gained friends in Zamboanga who were bullies. In our territory, we were a group of 10 who would extort money from people. If they would not give us any, we would beat them up. Part of our group was a police lieutenant. Then we joined an even bigger fraternity called the Jeans Brothers; we were more than 50 people. We were bullies. We would ride jeepneys without paying and even collect people's payment; that was in 1978. We did that for a long time. We also had a notorious policeman in Zamboanga in our ranks, have you heard of Police Ali? He was well-known. We did a lot of trouble in Zamboanga, but Ali was famous, people were scared of him (Abubakar 2017).

Gangs like that of Jalani's recruited migrant young men who were willing to earn an income from illicit activities. Jalani was an asset to the gang, having handled guns in Jolo. His involvement in gangs kept him from identifying with rebel groups like the MNLF and the MILF.

Moros like Omar, Karim, Ibrahim, Esmael, Taya, and Jerry have committed themselves to supporting the independence and secessionist movements in Mindanao, which directly challenged the Philippine government's political and military authority in their Moro homeland. Monetary gain was an important factor in Omar's stint with the government's civilian auxiliary unit and in Jalani's participation in gangs. Yet other recruitment patterns can also be seen. Anger at human rights and property violations was a main motivation for Esmael, Taya, Omar, and Karim, who all participated in armed resistance following atrocities committed by vigilantes or the Philippine military. Both Esmael and Omar recognised the different ethnic group affiliations and religious commitments of the armed groups they engaged in. They changed allegiances based on their own understanding of the aims of the movements. Finally, it is non-recruitment that stands out in Samira and Taya's unrecognised participation in MNLF activities.

Actors in the conflict such as vigilantes, the military, rebels, and gangs, may appear as separate entities, but there are clear overlaps. The family as an institution and clans intersected with all other actors. During Marcos' Martial Law, for instance, the state gave favours and protection to the Dimaporo clan, who exercised local military control in Lanao. More recently, in return for votes in the 2004 elections, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo supported the Ampatuan clan including by turning a blind eye to their violence in Maguindanao province (Lara 2014:251–2). Some academics have suggested that local strongmen and the violent rule of local elites in ways that implicate the national government are a greater source of violent conflict than religious differences in Mindanao (Donnelly 2014).

Insurgent groups also recruit along clan and ethnic lines, as indicated by Jerry's life story. The overlaps with clans complicate some clashes. When Jerry got embroiled in a family dispute in the 1990s, involving Jerry's father-in-law preventing Jerry from sleeping with his daughter (Jerry's wife), Jerry went 'home' to calm down at an MILF camp. This however, made his adversaries think that he was seeking MILF backing in what became a full-blown *rido*. The friction resulted in Jerry killing his father-in-law amidst a struggle for a firearm, and his own in-laws staging an ambush in retaliation. Jerry approached armed men in the forest in the middle of the night, thinking they were MILF comrades. Only when he saw their faces did he understand that the men were his in-laws who were out to kill him. Jerry's affiliation with the MILF in this case overlapped with the *rido* he got involved in.

In this section, I examined the gender aspects of landlessness and of recruitment into armed groups in Mindanao. I discussed how in the fight for finite lands, Moro families consolidated lands in the hands of men at the expense of women. Land was further fought for through men's actions and women's bodies in *rido* and marriages. Vigilante and military operations cleared Moro settlements for Christian settlers and access to logging (TJRC 2017a:26). They kept Moros away by mutilating men's and women's bodies. Meanwhile, Moros participated in armed groups such as the government military, insurgent groups like the MNLF and MILF, and gangs. Young, unmarried men were primary targets for

recruitment. Young Moro men were motivated to join by monetary gains, kinship ties, and the defence of their ethnic group and Islam. Men expected their wives to support their participation in the armed groups. Participation was optional for women and girls, and men often downplayed their contribution. The conservative sexual division of labour in homes was, in short, remade inside armed groups.

The economic relations I described in the family stories constitute a pervasive labour dimension of gender relations. To characterise this dimension in agricultural Mindanao, I list its organising principles, modified from Connell's (1987:104–5) five principles of the gender division of labour for capitalist production. The first principle is women's exclusion from work on land and land accumulation. Second, is allocating child care to women. Third, is the irrational demarcation of men's and women's work. Fourth, is commanders' control of men's and women's labour in armed groups. And fifth, are practices promoting solidarity among men to maintain the demarcation between men and women. These principles, as practiced in Mindanao, all point to the gendered logic of Moro women's dispossession. The concentration of land ownership among Moro men and a division of labour according to gender define the nature and organisation of Mindanao conflict and the recruitment to Moro armed groups. Thus, gender as a structure is an integral aspect of the production of war in Mindanao, as fundamental as class divisions.

Conflicting memories

Many of the life stories I collected began during Martial Law in the 1970s, which Moros I met referred to as a time of conflict. The life-story interviews were conducted in Davao City, but sections of the stories took place in other parts of Mindanao and extended to Manila and the Middle East. Growing up in a time of conflict was different for Raul in Jolo, Taya in Cotabato, Jamal in Sultan Kudarat, and Rashid in Lanao. Their childhoods were not representative of their ethnic groups, but show a variety

of experiences that likely members of all ethnic groups had – children playing with friends amidst sounds of bombs and gunfire, running from the bombs and bullets, and training as young soldiers. Rashid's childhood was probably most unusual, as he was abducted to be a child labourer in Manila, as I explain below.

Varied experiences and memories of war during this period of Martial Law betray a power substructure of gender relations in Mindanao. In this section, I look at power relations in the conflict, especially as they operated between differently positioned Moro boys and men, and among Moro women and men, girls and boys. The stories illustrate how men's monopoly of force through organised violence in Mindanao were most powerful during Martial Law. Both the state and armed insurgents recruited from the ranks of physically tough peasants. In their insurgency, Moros were active agents and actors, even under the poorest circumstances. A family's economic capacity, social networks, and symbolic resources, however, increased their political power to negotiate conflict situations. I therefore look at how the intersection of class, gender and ethnicity creates power relationships within and between Moro families.

War as usual

Raul, a Tausug Muslim, was born in Zamboanga in 1974 and grew up in Jolo. Raul's maternal grandfather was a former MNLF member who moved to the centre of Jolo from his hometown Patikul to 'avoid trouble' and do business. His paternal grandfather was a colonel in the government's military and was the provincial commander in Jolo in the late 1970s. As a child, Raul remembers enjoying endless days playing by the beach with his friends, amidst the war that was ten going on:

> There was a war but we were used to it, like it was nothing to us. Jolo looked like a war zone, because you would not be able to identify the military from those who were not. But because most of the operations were outside Jolo the centre, we still played. We would hear explosions

> because we were near the boundary to Patikul. But even if we heard gunfire, we continued our games. We were so used to it. When I was already in Davao and called a friend in Jolo, my friend said, why are you surprised with the gunshots [in the background], like you did not grow up here [laughter]? We were used to it, every day there was gunfire. The MNLF that time had not begun to negotiate (Ahmad 2017).

In Raul's childhood, one grandfather was a businessman and another was a high-ranking officer in the military, lending his family power and protection from harm. Raul's Muslim parents both studied in Zamboanga City, and his father attended an elite Catholic university in Manila. Raul recounted that his childhood was spent playing on the beaches: It was 'all enjoyment, not like others who needed to make a living. I went home just to eat and then would go out and play again' (Ahmad 2017). Raul studied at Notre Dame High School, a Christian school for boys, where his classmates were sons of politicians.

When both grandfathers died, however, Raul commented that 'we reached a level close to being poor'. This emphasised how their connection to the military was crucial in their economic status during Martial Law. They still ate three times a day, an uncle kept him in private school, and his father, an overseas worker in Saudi Arabia, sent back money. But Raul was very much aware of their changed circumstances:

> My father could go anywhere as his parents were rich. My mother's side were also businessmen. But when I got older, all that was gone. I availed of a scholarship when I was in fourth year…. You would hardly find me at home, I was always with my *barkada* [group of friends], without focus on my studies. It was good I finished high school. Perhaps through *diskarte* [strategy], I would copy [during exams] from the one across me in class (Ahmad 2017).

When Raul finished high school, his mother also graduated from nursing school, an investment she made for the family's future. Raul's father stopped sending regular financial support when Raul and his mother graduated; as Raul explained, he had another woman by then. Raul's mother soon got a job as a nurse in Kuwait, and his mother's siblings became guardians to Raul.

In Raul's story, his grandparents' business and military network provided for the family's needs and sheltered them from harm in the conflict. When his grandparents died, his own parents worked in the Middle East and sent back remittances to support their extended family. In his story, Raul presented a masculinity that was unfazed by gunfire, hardly seen at home, and used *diskarte* (strategy).

Taya, whose story opened this chapter, described her childhood as one of fleeing conflicts in different parts of Cotabato. The family stayed with different sets of relatives when their house in Midsayap was burnt down and her father was killed. She was not able to go to school. 'How can one study when we were always *bakwit* [refugees]? When we get to one place there was war, we would go back and it was the same! Where would you go to school?' As a girl, Taya had the radio as a constant companion. Her favourite was to listen to radio dramas in the afternoons, but it also gave her news and commentary. Asked about why the group Ilaga was pursuing Muslims, she explained, 'We heard on the radio that Marcos ordered that only one Muslim woman and man should be left, just enough to propagate again, yes, but Allah did not want that.'

She explained: 'I came of age in the farms and was always fleeing conflict. That was how I became a young woman.' Taya was tall at 13, when she and her family lived with relatives in Kabacan, a town that had a mix of Muslims and Christians. She recalled that young men there began to notice her, including Esmael, many years her senior. She liked someone else and did not entertain Esmael at first:

> My mother and siblings told me, 'Papa is gone, no one is taking care of us. You can get married.' I told her, 'I didn't want to marry yet since I was still young, I hadn't even taken care of myself nor learned how to put powder on my face'. During flight from conflicts, it was enough to get a good shower, sometimes after a shower we went running again. We were always on the run (T. Kudarat 2017).

Esmael had liked Taya's cousin, whom Taya's family was living with in Kabacan. When Esmael's parents visited their house, Taya recalled that she was eating, while her cousin was shaving coconut from the shell. Esmael's parents took her eating as *swerte* or a good omen, and the cousin's work as, *malas* or a bad omen, and chose Taya over her cousin. Taya reported that her cousin died young, and had Esmael married her, he would have been a widower. Esmael's family gave everything Taya's mother asked for a dowry: 20 sacks of husked rice, ₱10,000 and beautiful mosquito nets. Then, Taya's family prevented her from going out of the house for a month before the wedding; they wanted her to be light skinned and beautiful when Esmael's relatives saw her next. She was almost 14 then, in 1977. Just a month into the marriage, Taya and Esmael again had to run when another war broke out:

> We evacuated towards the water where we could hide beneath the trees. We walked with the water up to our knees, we stopped where we found a dry place where a tree trunk had blocked the water – we sat there until morning. We didn't have children back then so what I had with me were chicken cages, our clothes, and I never left without a pot and plate. Even if we had rice but no pot and plate, we would not be able to eat. So that was what I brought, a cup, a container of water, a pot. It is only [when we moved to Davao] that I felt how it was to not be on the run (T. Kudarat 2017).

As with Raul, Taya's network of extended family gave her shelter as needed. But Taya's story about her childhood contrasted with Raul's in many ways. Taya's family were farmers, and they lost their

father and farm in the vigilante operations in Cotabato. While Raul's maternal grandfather may have forfeited land in Patikul, he lived to establish a business that sustained his family. Raul did not have to carry out household tasks, while Taya cooked for her family, regardless of whether at home or on the run. Finally, Raul enjoyed his childhood immensely, while Taya endured the trauma of constant flight, and was prodded into getting married early. In becoming a bride, the dowry that she gained helped her mother and siblings survive.

Growing up in conflict

Jamal's grandfather was one of the survivors of the 1974 'Malisbong Massacre' in Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat. He lived to tell Jamal how government forces killed over 1,500 people in their village mosque (TJRC 2017b:133–5). He recounted how the military took girls and women to their naval ships overnight, to rape them, and how some of the survivors lost their minds afterwards. Their local mosque walls still bear blood, something the local people never washed off to remind them of the state's pacification campaign in their hometown. Jamal's father, the eldest of the siblings, soon after became an MNLF regional commander.

Born in his mother's hometown in Surallah in the 1980s, Jamal was the eldest child and had to work hard in his father's absence. Jamal's family moved to his father's hometown in Sultan Kudarat when he was nine. By then, Jamal observed, 'even if it was relatively peaceful, there were still some skirmishes.' He remembered seeing government soldiers come into their area when he was playing with friends. Fighting ensued and they had to hide until it was over. Jamal attended school there from the age of 12, and grew comfortable around guns and in the training camps.

When Jamal was 17, he trained with his friends for six months with the MNLF. Martial Law was over by then and the MNLF had signed the Final Peace Agreement. 'The elder ones told us: train so that you can be absorbed into the military as part of the MNLF integration. I trained but I wasn't drafted.' He

did this without his parents' consent and almost for fun – 'those who went to *makibaka* [struggle] were deemed cool [among friends]! And it was never boring there, there was a market and a store.' When his father first saw him in the camp, he called him '*bugoy!*' – a silly kid, and told him to go home. When Jamal kept returning to the camp, his father advised him not to carry arms because he was not yet capable. But Jamal showed his father that he could.

Rashid was born in 1973 and grew up with grandparents in Lanao during Martial Law. He said that Martial Law broke up his family, because his father joined the rebellion as a member of the MNLF and then the MILF. In his father's absence, his mother had to make ends meet. His paternal grandmother took Rashid under her care. As a child, he witnessed how the military rounded up men including his own uncle in Marawi: 'I saw that all the men were made to lie face down on the ground, and then they were brought to the camp.' His grandmother was heartsick when she learned that her son was vomiting blood in a military facility. The family had to move a lot because of military operations, Rashid recounted. This prevented him from staying in school, as did the fact that one great-uncle did not want him to study but to earn a living for the family. When this great-uncle found out that he was attending second grade in secret, he beat him up, put him in a sack and then placed him in a drum behind their house. Rashid's grandmother found him 10 hours later.

When Rashid was 12, he went to his mother's place to get to know her, only to find that she had another family that treated him differently. A female distant relative of his mother lured him to go with her and her partner to ride a ship bound for Manila the following day. The couple deliberately kept their plan from Rashid's guardians: their plan was to use the boy's labour to sell goods in the Philippine capital Manila. In Manila, he worked for the woman and her husband, who developed a liking for girly bars. The husband first sold his wife's baby for money, and when she threatened to report him to the police, he killed her. 'I felt so sorry for her. He even asked me to hold the sack where he put parts of her body. He ordered us children to throw the sacks into the sea' (R. Basman 2017).

Then, Rashid overheard that the murderer was planning to sell him, too, since no one in his family knew where he was. In fear, Rashid ran away but did not know where to go in the unfamiliar city. He could not remember his family name, and so no one knew where to start looking for his relatives. People he stayed with took advantage of his labour, but grew anxious that he might steal from them and run away unaccounted for. For five years, he lived with random Maranaos, with a friend's family in Manila's garbage dump, and on rooftops in Cavite. He was 18 when he saw an uncle looking for him in one of the Cavite mosques. 'When I spotted him, it was like I saw Mindanao.' His heart leapt upon seeing someone familiar, from his distant childhood.

Rashid learned that his family had started looking for him when his father, then no longer in the MILF, threatened to kill all his mother's kin if they did not produce his son. When Rashid was found, it was already five years since the Marcos was overthrown in the 1986 People Power uprising. When he went back to Marawi, his father took Rashid in as an additional farm hand. When Rashid fell ill with tuberculosis, his father's family abandoned him in a Marawi hospital. He could barely move when his paternal grandmother found him seven days later.

Jamal's and Rashid's network of extended family supported the boys when their fathers enlisted as soldiers for the MNLF and MILF. Jamal's family were traditional village leaders, so his relatives were more materially comfortable than their neighbours. In contrast, Rashid's family were among the poorest in their locality. Their personal stories describe strong personal will, courage and a sense of adventure. Jamal joined the MNLF without his parents' consent. The way he shook with anger when telling me about the Malisbong Massacre is suggestive of a strength of emotion that might have contributed to his resolve to join. To the MNLF, he was a good foot soldier and a potential leader, like his father. In contrast, Rashid followed his curiosity around Manila and used his survival instincts in an unfriendly city far away from home. His uncles, aunts, and even his father, viewed Rashid as a source

of labour. Able-bodied and unschooled, family members took advantage of him. Both Jamal's and Rashid's stories illustrate power relationships within families in times of conflict.

War through different lenses

As children during Martial Law, Raul, Taya, Jamal and Rashid experienced the wars in Mindanao very differently. They all heard stories about vigilantes, atrocities, and the Moro resistance. Yet the power substructure of gender relations reflected in their family networks defined their respective experiences and perspectives. While all of them were active agents, they acted as agents with various class, gender and ethnic practices. Moro boys and men had various experiences of the conflict, which contrasted with those of Moro girls and women. I compare their levels of education, involvement with rebel groups, and their entry into marriage in Table 2.

Table 2. Martial Law (1972–1986) through different lenses: Raul, Jamal, Rashid, Taya

	Born	Family background	Education	Political group	Age married
Raul	1974 Jolo	GPH Military officer (PGFa) Entrepreneurs	College	None	35 (2009)
Jamal	1980 Surallah	MNLF commander (Fa) Traditional leaders	High school	MNLF	33 (2013)
Rashid	1973 Lanao	MILF soldier (Fa) Fisherfolk	Some elementary	None	23 (1996)
Taya	1963 Midsayap	Farmers (FaMo)	None	MNLF	13 (1976)

PGFa - Paternal grandfather, Fa – father, Mo – mother

As a young Tausug Muslim, Raul studied in a private Catholic School and completed a college education in Davao City. Jamal, who came from a leading traditional Maguindanao clan, finished high school in Sultan Kudarat. But Rashid, who came from a family of landless Maranao fisher folks, and Taya who was from a family of Maguindanao farmers, missed school as children. While Raul and Jamal said they did not take school seriously, perhaps in deliberate displays of masculinity, Rashid risked beatings to attend school behind his guardian's back. Taya did not have the chance to learn how to read and write

as a child, but sourced information through other means, such as listening to the radio. She deemed it acceptable for girls and women to listen to the radio while working on household chores, while men working outside the home rarely had this opportunity.

For Raul, the grandson of a military officer, his memory of Martial Law in Jolo was not sheltered from explosions and gunfire, though he heard them from a distance. Taya, daughter of a farmer killed by the vigilante Ilaga, spent her childhood in constant displacement. The explosions and the gunfire were always too close. For both, war and displacement were normalised. As the eldest son of an MNLF commander, Jamal took it upon himself to be a leader like his father. To him, this meant joining the MNLF without his parents' consent. A son of an MILF member, Rashid grew up in poverty with his grandparents. He earned a living as a young boy, and then was trafficked and exploited as a child labourer. In Manila, he was lost and became homeless. These different paths shaped the way each viewed and engaged with Moro movements such as the MNLF and MILF.

As minors, both Taya and Jamal helped the Moro resistance movement by cooking for the troops and carrying arms, respectively. Yet gendered practices shaped the manner and extent of their contributions. It was unthinkable for Taya to do more than cook or care for injured soldiers, just as it was unthinkable for Jamal to do less than take up arms. While Raul was also a young Muslim, his relations with a military officer removed him from the networks that might recruit him to the resistance movement. Unlike Jamal's friends who thought it was cool to be part of the struggle, Raul's own friends were not involved in the MNLF. In fact, if Raul had gotten involved in the conflict at all, it would have been on the side of the state, like his paternal grandfather.

Had Rashid grown up with his mother in Wao, he might have also joined the MILF like his father and older brother Jerry. But like Raul, Rashid would rather fight on the side of the government:

> I could have been a soldier or a police officer, being a rebel in the mountains is too difficult. If the government and the rebels do not have an agreement, they have to go back to being rebels and have difficulty again. It would be better to be neutral (R. Basman 2017).

For Rashid, involvement in insurgent groups or in the government's military forces was a job. The latter was more stable and comfortable than the former, but even better would to be in the retail business. Rashid's childhood experiences help contextualise his views about the conflict in Mindanao.

While Raul, Jamal, and Rashid did not have to marry early, Taya's family encouraged her to marry at 13. Arranged and early marriages are means of getting dowries for the bride's family, which can be especially important during times of conflict. In my verification fieldwork – a field visit where I requested my research participants to comment on my interpretation of their stories – Moro women participants also offered that early marriage in conflict times was a means to secure 'protection' for the girl. The belief was that a family without an adult male member would be vulnerable in conflict, so that securing a husband allegedly protects a girl from potential abduction, sexual assault, or hunger. Taya said that, luckily, her husband Esmael was patient with her in their early years of being married, when she 'still wanted to play and did not do much housework'. She withheld sex from her husband for a few years until she was ready, and was relieved that her older husband respected her decision.

At 17, the age at which Jamal was still being deemed a silly kid for playing with guns in an MNLF camp, Taya gave birth to her eldest child, and she delivered seven more children over the next ten years. Having eight babies meant that Taya was pregnant for about 72 months, or more than five years of her life. Nursing adds at least five years more. Five of her children died as babies or toddlers,[46] and

[46] I found infant and child mortality to be very high among Moro families I interviewed. Esmael's own mother lost seven of eight children to various diseases.

memories of them pained her deeply. Perhaps because of Taya's expected care work in the home, it was her husband Esmael who continued active involvement in the MNLF.

While girls like Taya could be married off for dowries, producing dowries is a cause of stress among young men and their networks. The need to raise a dowry is a constraint that prevents many poor young men marrying early. As a result, dowries enlarge the pool of poor single men available for recruitment into armed groups. Elsewhere researchers have found a causal relationship between bride price and ease of recruitment into insurgent groups (Hudson and Matfess 2017). Even when they became adults, Raul, Jamal and Rashid delayed marriage until they were able to raise the dowries that their partners' families expected. Raul's parents, who were working abroad, helped Raul raise funds for his marriage to a *Balik-Islam* (a person who converted to Islam). Rashid approached relatives to add to his savings from farming of ₱30,000, to marry a second cousin. Jamal's Maguindanaoan relatives, including those in the MNLF, pooled funds for the dowry they presented to the family of Tata, a Tausug MNLF officer. Jamal's marriage was delayed because the mediators representing the families were not able to settle on an acceptable value.

The power substructure of gender operating in Mindanao during Martial Law defined men's monopoly of force through organised violence. The government's military forces tried to exercise a monopoly of force during the Martial Law years, and operated with great impunity to destroy and reshape Moro lives including through their support for some vigilante groups. No matter which camp they allied and armed themselves with, the military men's monopoly of force was very potent during Martial Law in Mindanao, causing, for example, Taya's father's death and Taya's early marriage. Military officers like Raul's grandfather enjoyed association with the authoritarian state's networks. Thus, Raul's relative security during Martial Law was related to Taya's insecurity. Armed social movements contested the state's use of force through rebellion, recruiting from the ranks of physically tough farmers like Jamal, Jamal's father, and Rashid's father. The contest over the monopoly of force in Mindanao between the

state and armed groups thus also shaped Raul's, Taya's, Jamal's, and Rashid's life choices. These are vivid illustrations of how gender was a structural constraint in the Mindanao conflict, and shaped the agency and relationships of Moros caught up in its midst.

In sum, the power relations between differently located Moros in terms of economic means and access to social and political networks shaped multiple experiences of conflict in various geographical areas in Mindanao. While rebel groups tended to recruit from poor families, it does not follow that all poor Moros joined or supported rebel groups. When they did support rebel groups, Moro boys and girls made different contributions by carrying arms or feeding soldiers. Because of the exchange of dowries among Moros, girls tended to marry earlier and became vulnerable to sexual violence within marriage. A power substructure of gender relations was a formidable frame and the intersections of class, gender, and ethnicity in Moro families shaped their members' subjectivity and agency in what Moros considered to be a time of conflict: the Martial Law of 1972 to 1986. I look closely at emotional and sexual relationships within a Moro family from 1986 to today in the next section.

Occluded conflicts

Simultaneous to the spectacle of clan and insurgent wars were occluded conflicts in homes and within social movements in Mindanao. This section draws from the family story of the Abduls to look at the Mindanao conflict over the last 50 years. I give specific attention to the gender substructure cathexis that shapes embodied emotions, sexuality and interpersonal ties. Thus, I consider emotional and sexual relationships within a Moro household and an insurgent group, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). I show that forced marriage, polygyny, adultery, the pressure to marry and have children, keeping constant guard against gender-based violence, and domestic violence are prevalent practices that intertwine with the insurgent conflict in Mindanao.

Forced marriage

Amina was a baby when her family escaped *rido* and moved to Davao in 1955. Within Davao, they moved because of land conflict. In 1968, they visited relatives in Jolo and fled again, this time to prevent Amina's abduction, sexual violence, and forced marriage. Back in Davao, Amina joined the Moro militia called the Black Shirts. Jamir, another Tausug Black Shirts member in her neighbourhood, had cornered her outside the cinema and insisted that he would kiss her if she did not become his girlfriend. 'In my mind, when you get kissed you will become pregnant because that's what my mother told me. So I told him immediately that I agree to be his girlfriend.' Amina's comrade Jamir was her first love. 'I would not be attracted to an unarmed man. He should know that I am also like him, I would also fight,' Amina said. Being in Davao City did not prevent teenagers Amina and Jamir from supporting the Moros resisting the state-backed vigilantes and paramilitary groups that targeted Muslims.

The practices of arranged and early marriage are not as common as they used to be among Moros and have evolved to involve some form of consent from the girls or women getting married. Yet forced marriage also found Amina in Davao City. Not long after Jamir cornered her outside the cinema, Amina was cooking when a nephew called her out of the kitchen to see someone who was looking for her:

> I didn't want to come out because I was busy, but he insisted, so I did. When [Jamir] saw me, he grabbed me and brought me to their house. I wasn't even able to wear slippers. [Jamir's siblings] kept me in their house because they wanted me to become their brother's wife. It was scary because they chased me, but I managed to escape during the night. That time, I don't want to get married yet. I still had ambitions I wanted to achieve. I wanted to become a doctor (A. Abdul 2017).

Amina's family filed a kidnapping case against Jamir's family. After a month on trial, Jamir's family pleaded for a settlement. The guardians arranged for Amina and Jamir to get married on the condition that they would divorce afterwards. Jamir never fulfilled the promise of divorce. 'Every time we fight, I tell him that he shouldn't have the nerve to do that because he merely kidnapped me.'

Polygyny

Their marriage was also a struggle. Amina was 17 when she married Jamir according to Islamic rites. She recalled that she had to stay with relatives in Zamboanga afterwards. 'My parents had disowned me. They could not accept the fact that I had many rich suitors but I married the poorest among them.' Not long after, '[Jamir] told me there was a need for him to go to Sarangani because he had to settle an issue over a lot owned by their family which was situated there.' Amina received no word from Jamir for a year. Then, Amina received a telegram from Jamir asking her to meet him at the pier. Amina left Zamboanga with Jamir:

> When we arrived in Sarangani, my father-in-law approached me and asked whether I knew already that I have a *duaya* [the second wife of my husband]. I got furious. It's like heaven and earth sandwiched me in the middle. If I only knew, I would not have come with him. I would have given him to the other woman! There were still a lot of men anyway.
>
> So, I gave him conditions. First, he should not leave me alone in the house. Second, he should never go to the other woman's place. If he would not respect that, I would go kill myself. Fortunately, he respected my conditions. When I saw the second wife, I told her to back off. I despised her. Of all men, she chose my husband who was poor and had nothing to be chased for. I even slapped her. It's hard if your husband has two wives. I have experienced sharing a bed with the woman on the other side of my husband (A. Abdul 2017).

In the Philippine Code of Muslim Personal Laws (CMPL), no man can have more than one wife unless he can deal with them with equal companionship and just treatment as enjoined by Islamic law and only in exceptional cases (CMPL 1977:Article 27).[47] The historical context of sanctioning polygyny was that during the Prophet's time, wars left widows and orphans who, through marriage, could be added to the household as equal family members (Madale 1997). In contemporary Muslim communities, polygyny is a status symbol as rich men take more than one wife to show they can afford to lavish luxuries on them. The succeeding wives are generally younger women, not widows. Where marriage is used to extend family networks as in Mindanao, polygyny is also a sign of political power. The common understanding in Mindanao is that the first wife must consent to her husband's intention to have a second wife. In practice, men mostly do not ask for permission because they know they will not get support. Thus, as in Amina's story, most practices of polygyny in Mindanao do not occur with women's consent.

Amina endured a hard life in Sarangani for about a year, until she reached a breaking point:

> One time, I went to collect water while [Jamir] was fishing. When I arrived at the house with a pail full of water, he slapped me out of nowhere. Just because of a rumour told by his sister! When he slapped me, I swung the pail at him. I told them that I'm not scared even if I was alone and if they killed me, they would have to face my father (A. Abdul 2017).

Amina immediately packed up after the incident. She learned that a *lansa* (fishing vessel) was passing by. An elder person to whom she taught the alphabet solicited money from neighbours to cover her fare. Jamal and his family went aboard the boat to stop Amina from going home, but Amina's mind

[47] The confederation Nisa ul-Haqq fi Bangsamoro (Women for justice in the Bangsamoro) is lobbying for amendments to the CMPL including increasing the minimum marriage age from 12 (with guardian's consent) to 18 and discouraging if not forbidding polygamy. They argue that the caveat that the wives must be treated justly (Qur'anic verse An-Nisa 4:3), should be read with the contextual verse that it is impossible for a man to do perfect justice to several wives (An-Nisa 4:129).

was made up. After a few days, Jamir came looking for Amina in Davao. He carried a *bolo* Amina recalled, 'because he knew I wanted a separation. In case I would insist, he would go on a furiously violent rampage. Fortunately, we settled the matter in a peaceful way. No one was harmed.' What struck me about this settlement was that instead of asking for forgiveness, Jamir threatened Amina's family to get her back. It was Amina who had to change her mind about the separation. Amina was then 20 and pregnant with their first child:

> I learned when I gave birth that the other woman also gave birth. Depression seemed to cause the death of my first-born. I told [Jamir] I wanted to separate since there was no reason left for us to stay together. Our child was dead three months after birth. The doctor said it was [due to] meningitis. The other woman got pregnant again and I was also pregnant. [Jamir] said the one who will give birth to a boy will be the one he will live with for the rest of his life. When I learned that he was going to Sarangani again, I told him if he went, he would never be able to see me and his child again. I said he needed to make a choice between his wives without considering the sex of our children. He did not leave then. I gave birth to a daughter in January and the other woman gave birth to a son in March of the same year (A. Abdul 2017).

In Amina's story, Jamir preferred a son to a daughter and gave the impression that having a son was more important to him than any of his wives. However, Amina indicated that she could not put up with the emotional turmoil of her husband having a second wife. When I asked why she thought her husband chose to stay with her, Amina said that it might be because she was smart and could support her husband in rough times.

Adultery

Amina and Jamir had a civil wedding the following year, in 1977. 'He still had women left and right. It was the women who would go after him,' Amina said softly. Their friends in the MNLF and the

communist-led New People's Army (NPA) who were always welcome in their home would come 'when they sensed that I was troubled dealing with the other woman. They stood by to help. They even let me borrow a hand grenade,' Amina reminisced fondly. During Martial Law, Amina helped Jamir land a job as police officer in the Philippine Constabulary. One of Jamir's assignments brought him to Tagum, northeast of Davao City. Amina one day followed him and saw him and another woman, naked and in an embrace. She took his gun by the door, aimed, and fired around the bed. Amina laughed, 'Even if I was hurt, I did not show anger. But I reported him at his work and he was disarmed. Later, I arranged for him to work as a security guard.'

Amina defended her husband's actions, 'I understand him because he is a man…. As long as he does not bring the woman to our house – because then he will really see. I worked abroad for four years and told him that I could marry an Arab man instead of putting up with him.' In response, Jamir tore up Amina's passport so that she could not leave the country again. Amina tells her daughters to take care of themselves and to choose their partners wisely: 'Be brave and strong, because if you just cry, the man will abuse that.'

Amina and Jamir's eldest daughter, Tata, took care of her younger siblings while their parents were at work. She was 10 years old when Amina left for the Middle East. Amina described Tata as strong: 'she is like that because she does not have a brother. So she acts like one to discipline her younger siblings.' Tata felt that her parents were too strict with her:

> My father has said that when he wears the [police] uniform, panties peel off so easily, meaning he had other women. So [my parents] had problems. When [mother] got angry, I was the one they spanked. It was too much! They disciplined me too much (T. Abdul 2017).

Jamir's womanising thus had a profound effect on Tata. When Tata was graduating from university, she chose Amina over Jamir to come on stage with her. It was her mother who did all the hard work in the family, she reasoned, and her father 'only thought about other women'. Amina was amused that: 'My daughter told [Jamir] that he should now behave and stop his womanising because he has daughters. If he refuses, they will grow up to be pimps and prostitutes.' Tata knew about her siblings from her father's second wife. 'Our relationship is okay. Their mother has a different husband now.'

Actors in the Mindanao conflict such as clans fighting in *rido*, insurgent groups, and members of the police and military were all part of Amina's life story. With Martial Law and the spectacle of the military offenses against Moros in the background, Amina's story foregrounds the emotional and sexual relationships between herself, Jamir, and her *duaya*. It highlights the psychological, emotional and physical violence she experienced from her partner Jamir. This domestic violence is not usually part of the story of conflict in Mindanao. But it is connected to other aspects of conflict: I illustrated how the land interest that Jamir's family had in Sarangani was dealt with through an arranged marriage at the expense of Amina's and her *duaya's* well-being. The land conflict was thus fought through women's bodies.

Emotional relations shaped Amina's abduction, its settlement in marriage between Amina and her abductor Jamir, Jamir's second marriage, and Jamir's adultery. Amina challenged the patriarchal order when she fought – using the law to protest her kidnapping, and refusing to accept domestic violence – and when she fled – escaping her kidnappers, leaving her husband in Sarangani, and working abroad to be the primary provider for her family. Emotional relations defining gender inequality also shaped Amina's acceptance of Jamir's infidelity. As we can see, some seeming contradictions in Amina's words and actions can be better understood when attending to the gender substructure cathexis that defines emotional and interpersonal relationships.

Pressure to marry and have children

Tata and her youngest sister Nora grew up with members of the MNLF, NPA, police and military visiting her parents at home. Tata would be tasked to serve them coffee and sometimes could listen into the conversations. Tata was fascinated by the variety of guns her father took home as a policeman during Martial Law. At 15, she became a Cadet Officer of the Citizen Military Training (now Reserve Officers Training Corps, still led by the Philippine Army) in high school and was able to handle an armalite. 'My father was the reason why I wanted to be a soldier. He moulded me to be one. So they were also disappointed [when I did not make it to the military or police],' Tata said gently. For Tata, Amina's and Jamal's disappointment in her career intensified the pressure on her to marry. The pressure came from the gendered expectation that women would find fulfillment in having their own family, above all else. For families like the Abduls, the parents share with their children their aspiration to pass on support for the MNLF to the next generations. There was more. Tata's interest in soldiering made neighbours speculate that she was a lesbian. There was pressure for her to marry to shut them up.

Pressured to find a partner after college, her first boyfriend was a Christian man who aspired to be a government soldier. She told her parents that he was willing to convert to Islam. They were in a long-distance relationship for over five years during his training. Tata was attracted to his masculine soldier's uniform, she confessed. 'I didn't want to always do all the saving and securing others. I want someone who could also ensure my safety. Deep inside, I am a woman,' Tata laughed. But when her boyfriend came back as a military officer, he had changed. He was not serious about converting to Islam. She later found out that he had two children with another woman, who were born while he was in a relationship with her. Tata described the breakup as something that messed up her mind. She felt like a failure both in her career and personal relationships.

Tata knew that everyone had high expectations of her. She felt her parents' sacrifice for the family weighing on her. She imagined her authority over her siblings was eroding, and that other people

enjoyed seeing her suffer. Tata got irritated at well-meaning relatives and friends constantly asking about her love life. She was mad at neighbours who carried gossip on their lips. She held her head high whenever she walked past others, but she was having a silent meltdown. She boarded a ship to Manila to be away from it all.

At this low point in Tata's life, contacts in the MNLF invited to her go up the mountains as an MNLF officer based on her skills as a former Cadet Officer. She was then in her early 30s, an age when most Moro women are married with children. Tata knew that if she, too, had been married and had children then, she might not have accepted the offer. 'It was good that I could use my skills in the MNLF and help other Muslims,' Tata said. It was also an outlet for her to let go of her frustrations. In the camps, she recalled being strict, even brutal, to the recruits, such that the commanders took notice of the petite Tausug woman leading the training.

Tata caught the attention of an MNLF commander, who invited his son Jamal to their training camp to see Tata. Jamal watched Tata from a distance and one day, paid her a personal visit. Tata was amused at how shy and child-like Jamal was, and that he had brought with him bodyguards and an *ustad* (Islamic scholar) to translate between Maguindanao, Tausug, and Arabic languages. They settled on speaking in Tagalog. '*Sabi ng tatay ko, ikaw daw ang aasawahin ko*. [My father said that you will be the one I would marry],' Jamal told her after a long-winded conversation. Tata retorted, 'Is it your father who is going to marry me?' 'No, me,' stammered Jamal. Tata asked candidly, 'Do you like me?' To which Jamal responded that he liked her a lot. Tata learned to like Jamal a lot, too. He respected and never harassed her during their dates. She especially liked the fact that he was a Muslim. She also wanted to settle down soon.

Tata wanted to advise her own family about an acceptable dowry. She asked an officer buddy if she could investigate Jamal's family situation in Sultan Kudarat. Her friend came back with the report that

Jamal's family was just in the middle – not poor, not rich. When Jamal's uncle and MNLF commanders came to Davao to negotiate a dowry for Tata, they thought that Tata's relatives demanded too much. After five years, no wedding had happened. Tata had changed phones in the mountains and lost touch with Jamal. When they got back in touch, Jamal had a different girlfriend. She herself had other suitors who were in the police and military, as well as an engineer, and a Moro politician. Yet they got back together. This time, Jamal's parents talked to Jamir and Amina and arranged their children's marriage.

Keeping constant guard within the MNLF

Tata Abdul described the MNLF as a family. She called her older male comrades uncles and her female comrades, sisters. After years in the MNLF, she married Jamal, son of an MNLF commander. Here, I discuss some strategies Tata employed to take care of herself and other women within the MNLF. In doing so, I describe relationships between Moro women and men in the insurgent group.

What was it like to be a woman in the MNLF? 'Even if I were one of the boys, they took care of me. I looked like a queen next to them because I felt so secure when they were around me,' Tata told me. They were at her service, she felt, because they drew water for her and sometimes prepared her special food. She felt at home around them. These remarks seem contrary to Cynthia Enloe's (1983:6) observation that women in the military are vulnerable to being stereotyped as camp followers or whores, no matter how professional their formal position in the military. Listening to Tata's stories, however, helped me understand that she created the very condition in which she could feel safe around her comrades.

Tata was one of the few women officers in the Misuari group of the MNLF. Having finished a public safety course in college and an advanced Reserve Officers Training Corps course, Tata was a skilled MNLF military training officer. 'I shared my expertise on the drills and commands,' Tata described her work. She was still single when she started, and knew she had to protect herself from potential harm.

Her primary strategy was to be fierce and act ruthlessly to show her competence at work and to repel any gender-based violence:

> I was a woman, among many men. If they see you as an easy prey, they will look down upon you. But I knew how to relate with [the male recruits]. I acted like an officer when I was wearing my uniform…. I reminded them why they were here: to learn from me. I didn't care if they were sons of politicians or rich *datus* [traditional leaders]. I told them they should be ashamed that a woman had something to teach them about combat! (T. Abdul 2017).

Despite her clear non-verbal message, some MNLF men still tried to make moves towards her. Her secondary strategy was to deploy perceptiveness and vigilance. Tata takes pride in being strong and alert. 'I need to, because I am a woman.' When she was starting to see Jamal, she showed his picture to comrades as an explicit gesture that she was not interested in other men:

> I can sense [those who are sexually interested in me] from far away, so I find ways to put them back in their place, to let them know that I am not interested and they will get nothing from me. My actions would speak even if I do not (T. Abdul 2017).

A third strategy of hers was to refer to comrades with familial terms of address and treat them like a brother, or uncle if they were older. Tata thinks that because of this, her comrades also treated her like a sister or a niece who they could not take advantage of. Her manner prompted the men to mirror her actions and allowed for a familial kind of relationship between them. 'I showed them who I was as a person, I helped them understand me, not just as a soldier.' When she gets the chance to meet her comrades' family members, she makes it a point to get to know them too. This strategy has the additional benefit of making other comrades who might want to take advantage of her to watch her back instead.

Tata, however, lamented that despite the first three strategies, elderly comrades in positions of power would attempt to court younger women even if they already had wives. In these cases, Tata responded, 'I would tell them off and warn them – you're in trouble with your wives! I would tell them what you were up to!' I interpret this final strategy of hers as a balance of threatening her comrades and deploying humour in her manner to dissipate any tensions. Further, she was looking after herself, her female comrades, and the families of her male comrades.

Tata and her constant buddy in the MNLF camps, another woman officer who led first aid training, had each other's backs. MNLF leaders asked them to conduct training in different camps across the Bangsamoro, and they would spend about a week at each one. Other officers would pick up where they left off, and they would be invited again to the training graduation. Being together helped Tata and her friend feel secure in their accommodation and activities in the camps. For example, when she saw that her buddy was being challenged at one of her lectures, Tata stepped in and disciplined the recruits.

In Tata's stories, the women within the MNLF stood up for each other and helped enlighten their comrades about mutual respect. Women had to expend a lot of additional labour in order to protect themselves from potential gender-based violence. This experience mirrors Moro women's struggle within broader Moro communities. When Tata called out her own father's womanising, as well as that of her comrades, she was contributing to the shaping of norms in their homes and in the movement. Tata also made sure the women trainees were in camps out of their own free will, not just because their husbands told them to come. In significant ways, Tata was contributing to the MNLF more than just being a training officer.

As with her parents, Tata's living in Davao City did not prevent her from being involved in the Moro resistance. As an MNLF officer, she was able to go back to the places her parents left and actively participated in training combatants. Instead of fleeing from conflict, Tata went towards it, until she married in 2013. While there was great pressure on Moro women to get married, pressure was to have children afterwards was equally intense. Most people expect a woman to quit her job after marriage, in order to concentrate on building a family and making a home.

Domestic violence

Unlike her older sister Tata, Nora had many suitors as a teenager. Nora was proud of her curves, long hair, and light skin. When she was 19, she eloped with a boyfriend and bore a daughter. They separated soon after and she rarely spoke about him again. When her daughter was four years old, she married an MNLF fighter who the Abdul family hosted in one of Misuari's Davao visits.

After their wedding, Nora lived with her husband in his hometown. Neither had a job there. Nora expected that the respect her husband gave her during courtship would continue into their marriage, but his words and actions showed otherwise. While he and others expected her to have children right away, Nora did not feel ready. 'I have sinned much against him. We did not have sex for over a year even after we were married,' Nora disclosed. Nora hoped that Allah would forgive her for what she deemed a sin she would need to pay for in this life and the next:

> [My husband] put up with me through that, imagine! I was very annoyed at him at that time because of his words and actions. It was partly my *dumot* [grudge] and *resbak* [retaliation], I knew it was my obligation in the marriage, but I don't know why [sex] then didn't feel right. One time, he hurt me, because I did not give in to him. I was shaking so much in anger that the handle of the cup I was holding broke off (N. Abdul 2017).

In Nora's story, she considered it her obligation to have sexual relations with her husband. She also knew sex needed to be consensual. Nora called it part-grudge and part-retaliation when she used her power over her body to protest her husband's behaviour. My interpretation is that Nora held a grudge against her husband for not being able to provide for their new family. Nora retaliated against her husband's expectation that she would submit to him in the context of marriage. Perhaps her already having a daughter from a previous relationship complicated their expectations as sexual partners within the marriage. When her husband hit her, she became hysterical and cried herself to sleep, comforted by her mother-in-law. Nora went back to Davao right after. Just as Jamir followed Amina back to Davao, her husband joined Nora in Davao City to see if they could start over. They helped each other look for jobs and ways to earn money.

Like Nora, Tata and her husband had their share of struggles. Tata said that Jamal hit her once and regularly abused her verbally and emotionally when anger overcame him. The anger and helplessness that Jamal felt had everything to do with their difficulty in finding jobs and his yearning for his life as a rebel soldier in the countryside. He was frustrated that the cost of living in Davao was much more than in his hometown, where he could eat off the land without spending money. He also expected Tata to be a 'good wife', one who would have a meal ready when he got home. Instead, Tata spent a lot of time in unpaid work in their community, at a cost of piling up household laundry. Jamal had a sour face when he had to do his own laundry one weekend as he was running out of clean trousers.

During the period when Tata and Jamal were members of the MNLF, the most spectacular conflict-related events in Mindanao included the all-out-war in 2000, the post-9/11 wars in 2003, the MOA-AD related clashes in 2008, Zamboanga Siege in 2013, the Mamasapano encounter in 2015, and the Marawi Siege in 2017. Yet the only time Tata was hit was when Jamal physically struck her in their own home. Tata tirelessly explained to Jamal that mental abuse is also a form of abuse, and that Islam teaches that women should be valued. She often reminded him that women's rights are protected in

Davao through the local government's Women Development Code (1997, 2003). When infuriated, Tata herself hit Jamal to express her anger and frustration. Tata knew Jamal would not admit to being hit by his own wife in public. Thus, the domestic violence in their household came from both Jamal and Tata. Their relationship is an everyday struggle, Tata explained.

The substructure of cathexis regulated emotional and sexual relations in the Abdul family stories. Cathexis defined objects of desire and violence, and sexual practice in couple's relationships.[48] Rather than random occurrence, Amina's attraction to Jamir, Tata's attraction to Jamal, and Nora's attraction to her MNLF husband, all uniformed male comrades, make sense as they all moved in social circles connected to military life. Forced marriage entailing abduction, polygyny, and adultery were characteristic of unequal heterosexual relationships in Amina's stories, and affected her relationship with her daughter Tata. The structure of cathexis also defined Tata's admiration for her mother and her ambivalence towards her father and her partner Jamal.

The fighting and fleeing in the Abdul family stories foreground the domestic struggles and emotional violence that occupied Amina's, Tata's, and Nora's own worlds against a background of conflict in Mindanao. The social expectations that women will marry and bear a child, and that men will provide for the family and have many children, the constant guarding of themselves that women engage in to protect themselves from gender-based violence, all loom large in Amina's, Tata's, and Nora's emotional and sexual relationships. Within marriage, Amina accepted Jamir's womanising. Tata fears that Jamal might see other women too, especially since they have no children yet. Nora carries the

[48] While I focused on the family and MNLF, paying attention to cathexis can be useful for understanding local political dynamics such as *rido* and the rise and fall of Islamic parties in Mindanao. Take the political rivalry between the famous clans, the Ampatuans and the Mangudadatus of Maguindanao. Traditionally, women and observers were believed to be exempted from *rido*. Relying on the cathexis substructure to hold, Esmael Mangudadatu sent his wife, children, and relatives including a pregnant sister and a pregnant aunt, to file his gubernatorial candidacy in November 2009. Asserting their political and military control in the area, the Ampatuans massacred all 58 people in the convoy, including these women and 34 journalists. At least nine of the 28 suspects identified in 2014 were police officers. Police lab tests suggested that at least five of the 21 slain women were raped, and most were shot in the genitals. The message was clear. Far from being exempted from wars, women are as entangled in conflict situations as men, and are targets of sexual violence.

guilt of having sex outside of marriage and withholding sex within marriage. Many other Moro women in Davao share versions of Amina's, Tata's, and Nora's experiences and worries. From their point of view, the domestic conflicts loom larger than the wars that occur elsewhere in Mindanao.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I studied gender as a social structure operating in Moro families and armed movements through the substructures of gender relations – labour, power and cathexis – to unpack how gender defined the many wars in Mindanao. I found that gender inequality shaped the land dispossession of Moro women through a combination of state-imposed land titling and patriarchal inheritance practices, contributing to the general Moro land dispossession in Mindanao that drove conflict. While Moro men and women, girls and boys, all contributed their labour in armed groups, armed group leaders valued men and boys' contribution as soldiers the most. Girls' early marriage during times of conflict and men's expectation that women and girls primarily care for the family further prevented women and girls from active participation in armed groups. I further illustrated how multiple forms of domestic gender-based violence during the Mindanao conflict has physical, emotional and psychological impacts on Moro women and men. My description of the forms of gender-based domestic violence in Mindanao provides a Southeast Asian example to the literature on gender, conflict and domestic violence, already documented in Colombia and South Africa (Ramphele 2000; Viveros-Vigoya 2016), among other places. Thus, through family stories, I argued that the Mindanao conflict is gendered, with gender inequality shaping the conflict driver landlessness, labour in armed groups, and the occluded substratum of domestic violence that accompanies the Mindanao conflict. In the next chapter, I describe how gender as a structure is challenged by the migration of Moros into Davao City.

4 Moving to Davao City

The Kadera family were among the first settlers in Kawayan, a coastal settlement in Davao City, in the early 1990s. The first member of the family to come was then 12-year-old Farida. She was seeking refuge from a *rido* (clan war), and crucially, from a man in Kabacan who had attempted to rape her. Her siblings and mother Fatima followed shortly, while her father stayed back to tend their land. When Fatima's mother became sick, that land was pawned and lost. Farida's father looked for work elsewhere, and finally joined them in Davao City as a tricycle driver. Farida left for Saudi Arabia as a domestic worker at age 13, and from then on shuttled back and forth between the Philippines and the Middle East to work on various contracts. When more of Farida's siblings could work, they pooled their labour to contribute to the household. The boys drove tricycles. The girls helped at home or in other people's homes. Their mother Fatima kept the Davao household, made delicacies to sell locally, and cared for her youngest children and grandchildren. For the Kaderas, migration to Davao City offered livelihood for adults, better schools for the children, and safety from *rido* and from recruitment of the men into armed groups.

The story of recent Moro migration to Davao City signposts the conflict-related movement of people that government figures miss. Displacements in Mindanao tend to be long, protracted, and multiple. The conflicts displaced at least 2.85 million people in Mindanao between 1970 and 2014 (my combination of estimates from Schiavo-Campo and Judd 2005, Canuday 2008, and Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre 2015). Government data loses sight of displaced people when they do not return to their hometowns, when movement does not immediately follow armed clashes, or when clashes take the form of *rido* rather than vertical conflict between the state and insurgent groups. The state does not have written policies that restrict Moro movement, but in practice military

operations and checkpoints can be a barrier. Despite physical and social barriers, people move where opportunities are available. Moro movement to Davao City offers analysts insights into migration patterns in Mindanao, and the precarious situation Moro urban poor communities confront. This chapter describes the Moro migration to Davao City over the last 50 years, and how gender relations change in the new environment.

My analysis in this chapter parallels Chapter 3 in looking at the changes in the operation of labour, power and cathexis substructures of gender in Moro families and migrant communities in Davao City. The first section focuses on economic relations that shaped people's decisions to move away from their hometowns, and their economic situation in the city. Family stories tell of multiple and overlapping reasons for movement. Most compellingly, I found that, as a general pattern, conflict pushes Moro men toward cities, while economic opportunities pull Moro women in the same direction. Because conflict affects economic opportunities in rural areas, perceived economic opportunities become a major reason for moving to Davao. In Davao city, landlessness and the gendered division of labour shapes the integration of newcomers into the urban market.

The second section examines the power substructure of gender in Davao City Moro communities. Moros experience the city variously, depending on their class, ethnicity, gender, and generation. In the new environment, networks beyond the nuclear family are key. New Moro migrants in urban poor communities test the waters and stay in Davao City supported by kin and other networks. In this sense, networks become the most decisive factor in determining whether migrants stay in Davao for the long term. The importance of the wider networks challenges the authority of men within households. Ethnic and political diversity in the city creates space for new Moro migrants to encounter other ethnic and political groups, including those formed by women's and lesbians, gays, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights advocates in Davao City streets. The third section thus examines changes to the operation of the cathexis substructure of gender relations in the city street setting. I thus illustrate in this chapter

how gender as a social structure operate in Moro households, communities, and the Davao City street: locations where gendered practices privileging men at the expense of women persist.

Mobile Moros

Based on the population census of Davao City in 2010 and 2015, I estimate that over 75 per cent of Moros in Davao are first, second, or third-generation migrants. This was not a case of 'reverse migration', in which Moros have consciously occupied places that they want to reclaim as Moroland.[49] Instead, migration was spontaneous to Davao, a familiar place where Moros have family and friends. A third of the 30 Moros who shared their life stories with me came to Davao City as first-generation adult migrants. Another third came to Davao following their partners or siblings, many of whom were from Davao or had relatives in Davao. The last third were second or third-generation migrants born or raised in Davao (Figure 7). In this section, I focus on why and how Moros moved to Davao City and describe their current economic situation in Moro urban poor enclaves.

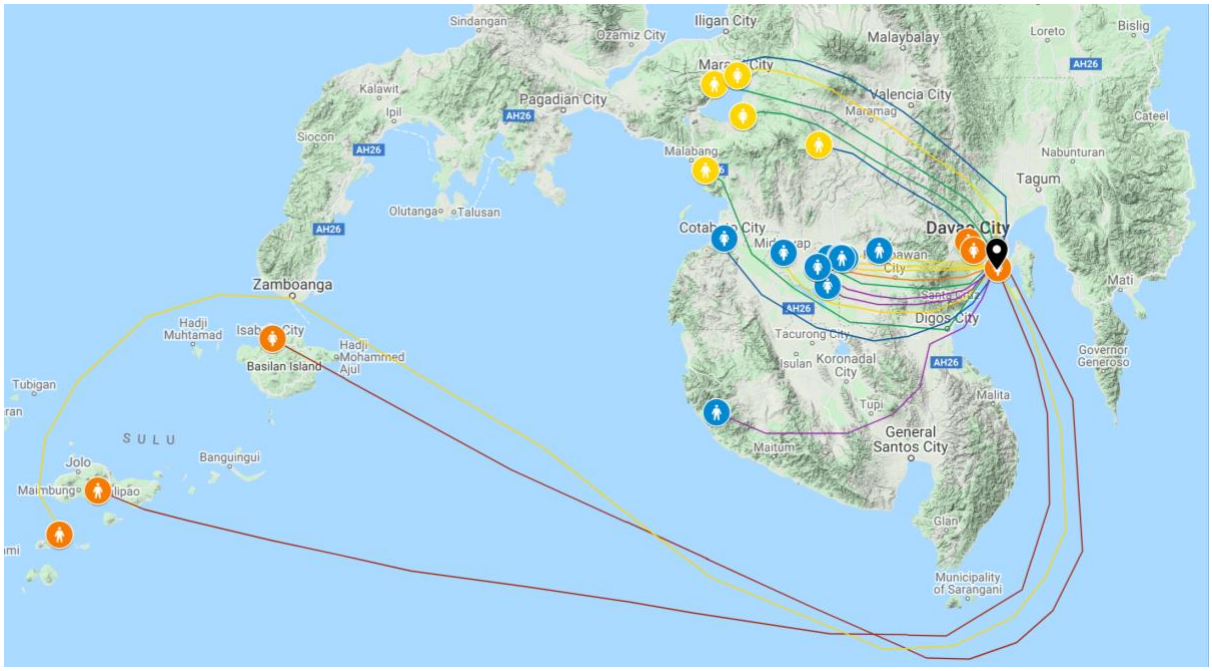
By boat or bus

Many Tausugs and Samas came to Davao in boats, the main mode of transport through the archipelago in precolonial times, but one that remains widely used in the 21st century. As a young man in the early 1950s, Jamir's father travelled to Davao in a traditional *vinta*, a wooden boat with a colourful sail. He knew the coast very well, through fishing expeditions, and he had relatives on Samal Island in the Davao Gulf. In these parts, he met Jamir's mother, a Davao Lumad, and stayed with her in the city. Thus, Jamir was born and raised in Davao, and Jamir's daughters with Amina, including Tata and Nora, are second-generation Tausugs born in Davao. Tausugs and Samas in Davao have scattered

[49] Davao del Sur, of which Davao City is the capital, is part of the autonomous (Bangsamoro) region defined in the Tripoli Agreement between the MNLF and the Marcos administration in 1976 (Canoy 1987:133–34).

settlements, but many of them live in Isla Angklahan or Angklahan for short, a settlement close to the mouth of the Davao River.

Figure 7. Moro families' origins and migration to Davao City



Tausugs (orange) Maranaos (yellow) and Maguindanaos (blue) moved to Davao City in the 1950s (brown line), 1970s (orange line), 1980s (yellow line), 1990s (green line), 2000s (blue line), and 2010s (purple line) (Cherry Mateo 2020).

Residents of Isla Angklahan are very proud that they are one of the oldest settlements in Davao City. Early in my fieldwork, I found it strange that a settlement along the coast would be named *Isla* Angklahan, as if it were an island. A health worker recounted how a typhoon (likely typhoon Titang in 1972) pulled their old home neighbourhood, which had previously been accessible only by boat, into the sea. Her family and their neighbours were able to rebuild their homes close to the new shoreline. The former island residents kept the name Isla Angklahan in public documents even when they moved inland, but the place is now commonly referred to as simply Angklahan. Since the 1990s, fisherfolk living in the neighbourhood have taken their boats through an opening in the seawall to catch fish. During a typhoon in February 2017, the ground floor of the health worker's two-storey house and surrounding alleys had knee-high water. That weekend, it seemed that Angklahan was again an island,

surrounded by water and apart from Davao City. Today, the residents' wooden and cement houses stand on landfill next to the seawall, with a fence of stones to keep the sea away from their doorsteps. Many parts of the village have soft spots – spongy front yards that are not yet compact and alleys that are watery underfoot.

On the same side of the Davao river as Angklahan is a predominantly Maranao settlement called Black Beach. Like other communities along the coast, the residents have survived shifts of the shoreline through typhoons and floods. Jamila's family was among the first to settle in Black Beach in the early 1980s, when it was only accessible by boat. Later in the 1990s, it could be accessed via a bamboo bridge. This village would host almost half of the Maranao population in Davao City by the year 2000. The settlement has grown from a few houses to a few hundred houses today. A cement road now connects the neighbourhood to one of Davao's main avenues. Jamila, herself a Maranao, married into the Bilal family, a Maranao family introduced in the previous chapter.

Many Moro migrants travelled over land to Davao in buses or hired vans. Kawayan, a predominantly Maguindanao settlement in Davao City, has been populated entirely by movement over land, even though it is located on the coast. A Maguindanao traditional leader, Datu Karim Kudarat, built the first house here in 1986, when he left the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) at the end of Ferdinand Marcos' Martial Law. Datu Karim's children, including Ibrahim, came with him to Davao. Initially, the settlement was populated by relatives and friends Datu Karim and his family invited to Davao. Kawayan's proximity to the city bus station and the easy road access to Southern Mindanao assisted the settlement's surge in population. By the year 2000, a third of Davao City's Maguindanao population lived in Kawayan village.

Comparing old and current maps shows that the settlements south of Davao's Quezon Boulevard have swelled in land size (Davao Poblacion 1910-1912 in Dabbay 1987; Alviar 1953). In the 1953 Poblacion,

Davao City map, one could be standing on the east end of the Boulevard and be close to the sea. Today, from the same point in the Boulevard, one needs to walk a few minutes to reach the shore. When I was first getting to know the Moro villages along the coastline, I was puzzled at the way the zones of Davao City coastal *barangays* are not contiguous. Studying Davao maps in my fieldwork, I deemed the spirited river and the changing shore as culprits for this peculiarity. Maps of Davao City depict a swerving river that flows south towards the Davao Gulf. In the 1950s, it snaked down the city and curved like a hook to meet the shore. In the most current Google GPS maps, the curling river rushes out to sea in a straight line (Jubilo et al. 2019). The local government guided the river to its current mouth in the 1990s, about the same time the seawall was built.

The movement of people around Mindanao is apparent in the family stories I collected across these three settlements in coastal villages on either side of the Davao River. There are multiple and overlapping reasons for migration. Early Moro settlers, like Jamir's father, were driven by a sense of adventure, Jamila's father by a sense of entrepreneurship, and for Datu Karim, a land claim. But Jamir's father also moved because of marriage. Datu Karim was also escaping conflict within the MNLF after 1986. More recently, there are those who moved to Davao for work or school. Recognising the multiple and overlapping reasons for migration, I found the push of conflict and pull of economic opportunities the most common reasons people gave when explaining why they headed to Davao City.

Conflict push, economic pull

The former Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), where many of the Moros living in these three settlements are originally from, has largely lagged behind other regions in the Philippines in terms of education, health, and income indicators. To illustrate the disparity, only 23 per cent of Grade 1 pupils make it to Grade 6 in the ARMM versus the 73.5 per cent national average (Coram International 2017). Only one of 10 students who started Grade 1 will graduate high school in the ARMM. The average score in the national standardised test for senior high school students in the

ARMM was around 10 points lower than the national average in 2012 and 2014. Disruptions in schooling because of conflict and displacement coincided with lower test scores in the same test (Coram International 2017). It is thus valid for people to be concerned about potential long-term declines in student learning outcomes resulting from chronic conflict and displacement in the ARMM. It is therefore common for families with school-aged children like Fatima Kadera's and their young Moro neighbour Mac to move out of the ARMM to increase their chances for education and, later, employment. Thus, the Kaderas and Mac now live in Kawayan.

In fact, education is not the only problem. Consider the disparity in access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities. Despite the abundance of natural water sources in the ARMM, only 62 per cent of households there have access to safe drinking water and 22 per cent have hygienic toilets, compared to 91 per cent and 75 per cent, respectively, at the national level (UNICEF and WHO 2017). Conflicts impede access to water in rural areas. The use of high-powered artillery in clashes between insurgent groups and the AFP displaces people and destroys the limited community infrastructure and facilities. *Ridos* impose more limited damage to infrastructure, but their frequency in most rural areas means they also have considerable impact on health over time. It is therefore unsurprising that many Moros, like Omar Bilal, move to Davao to get medical treatment. From Lanao, Omar travelled across land to Digos, the capital of Davao del Sur, to access health services two decades ago.

The ARMM has the highest poverty incidence among families in the country (55.3 per cent) in 2006, double the national average (26.9 per cent) (Asian Development Bank 2009). Especially in areas with subsistence production, incomes may not be the best indicator of economic inequalities. Mortality information, as economist Amartya Sen (1998) suggests, offers better insights. Life expectancy in provinces within the ARMM were at the bottom five among provinces in the Philippines in 2009. At the bottom is Tawi-tawi, with a life expectancy at birth of 46.8 years in 2009, dropping from 53.6 years in 1997. Life expectancy in Sulu was 49 years in 2009, dropping from 56.8 years in 1997. In

Maguindanao, life expectancy was at 52.4 years, down from 58.5 years in 1997. The declines point to the drastic mortality effect of the all-out wars the government waged in Mindanao from 1999–2007, including campaigns in the War on Terror. Tawi-tawi's figure of 46.8 years was almost 30 years shorter than the life expectancy in the top Philippine province Pampanga at 76.4 years in 2009 (Human Development Network 2013). Moving out of the ARMM increases a person's life expectancy.

Omar Bilal is a first-generation migrant to Davao City, but it was his son who convinced the family to move in pursuit of economic opportunities. A friend invited Omar's son to Davao City to become a hired hand selling plastic bags during the Christmas season. The child made a lot of money in this gig and convinced his entire family to move to Davao City, about an hour's drive away from Digos. Omar and his son initially sold plastic bags to make a living in Davao City. He later became an *imam* (Muslim worship leader) at the Black Beach mosque.

Those who moved to Davao without immediate relatives in the city, or first-generation migrants, were often the ones pushed by horizontal conflicts. For migrants leaving conflict areas, migration presents as an extreme choice, and is often the only way to survive. They may have visited the city a few times before or imagined the city to be a promising place for new beginnings. For instance, the Bilals' and Basmans' neighbour, Jun, was a police officer in Lanao del Sur when he got embroiled in a row that made him a target of the powerful Dimaporo clan. After he hid for a few days, relatives who feared for his life urged him to leave town. Jun found himself starting afresh in Black Beach.

Datu Ibrahim claimed that their growing Maguindanao settlement in Kawayan has welcomed those seeking a new lease in life or refuge from clan wars: 'We have everyone here, Ampatuan, Mangudadatu, Matalam, Mastura, the full roster [of feuding clans] is represented. That is why it is difficult to entrust our settlement to just anyone. If the leader is weak, there will be trouble.' Datu

Ibrahim permits newcomers to stay in the settlement on the condition that they leave their weapons and feuds in their hometowns.

Vertical conflicts further drove migration to Davao. Zaina, a Maranao from Lanao del Sur, had visited relatives in Black Beach for vacation and enjoyed her stay. During the all-out-war campaign in 2000, Zaina put her family in a bus from Lanao del Sur to Davao City. She has visited Lanao only a few times since then. Hundreds of the over 400,000 people displaced in the Marawi siege of May 2017 have found themselves seeking shelter with family and friends in Davao City. The staff of Barangay 86, of which *purok* Black Beach is part, had been busy registering new migrants when Martial Law was declared again in Mindanao on May 23, 2017.

For most, moving to Davao resulted from a combination of the push of conflict and the pull of economic opportunities. As I illustrated in the introduction to this chapter, the Kadera family was one of the first to arrive in Kawayan in the early 1990s. The family left their hometown following a *rido* and a sexual assault on young Farida. Most of the Kaderas returned to the province a decade later, and moved back to Davao City in 2013. Fatima disclosed that their house in Maguindanao looked far better than their Davao rental, which is made of light materials. But Fatima explained that Davao City offered more livelihood opportunities, better schools for the children, and relative safety from clan wars and from her husband's and sons' recruitment to armed groups:

> Life [in North Cotabato] is hard. It is difficult to make a living. There are more motorcycles there than people, not a lot of passengers. It would be good if you had land to till. But your uncle pawned ours when my mother got sick (Fatima Kadera 2017).

Almira Basman from Black Beach was born in Davao but visited Lanao for vacation before the all-out-war in 2000. In Lanao, she met Rashid Basman, a distant cousin. They married in Lanao and moved to

Davao by bus, and had a few hundred pesos as capital to build a new life. Rashid increased their money by buying and vending cigarettes. He now keeps a retail shop in a mall. Rashid's older brother, Jerry, recently joined him in Davao City with his young wife, Monina, and seven children. With their younger brother and his family, they formed a family cluster in Black Beach. Yet, when Rashid's younger brother killed a man in Davao, Rashid lost his house. He went to Manila with Almira and their son, to see if he could earn more money selling goods on the streets there. Unlucky, he went back to farming in Lanao where he saved enough to start over in Davao City. As can be seen in the Basman and Kadera family stories, Moros are very mobile, moving actively to seek opportunities for work.

From the stories I collected from fieldwork, a typical pattern is that first-generation male Moro migrants came to Davao to escape conflict, while Moro women were attracted to potential livelihoods in the city. These reasons are not mutually exclusive. Moro men and women who do not have lands in the ARMM found cities like Davao attractive because of the large informal sector there. Informal sector jobs like preparing food and providing cleaning, laundry, and care services are areas where Moro women actively participate in Davao City. For example, Fatima Kadera accepts sewing jobs to add to their household income. Ambulant vending of goods, transport, and casual manual labour is where Moro men are active in Davao City. Fatima's husband and son drive a tricycle to bring in the bulk of their household income. Jerry Basman sells hats and sunglasses to tourists along the Davao gulf beaches. Esmael Kudarat is a casual construction worker. These jobs in the informal economy make Davao City attractive to landless Moros.

In both rural and urban spaces, participation in the underground economy of drugs and arms smuggling and trade are available to the most desperate. The word on the street is that supply of these goods comes more from rural areas, but the demand is located more in urban locations. Those who profit from the underground economy can exploit the labour of unemployed Moros to distribute drugs to users in the city. For example, in an informal conversation with Harvey, a transgender Moro teen

from Angklahan, I learned that their mother was in jail for drug-running. Later in my fieldwork, I was surprised to see Harvey on the local TV news, arrested for running drugs in Davao City.

On the move

The movement of people through Davao borders was not one-way, as illustrated in the stories of Maguindanaos Datu Karim Kudarat and Fatima Kadera and Maranao Rashid Basman. As a traditional leader and former MNLF commander, Datu Karim was highly mobile, frequently moving around Mindanao, including Davao City, where he obtained a land claim. In some households like that of Fatima's, the going back and forth between Davao and a family hometown had to do with safety and livelihood, but also infidelity and sentiment. Fatima explained that she moved back to their hometown to keep a closer eye on her husband, who was having an affair with another woman.

Among those who are based in Davao but have their immediate families elsewhere were Mac from Kawayan, and Salima and Jamila from Black Beach. Mac traversed the Davao-Cotabato route often, to be with his immediate family in Cotabato City in times of crisis, and to support his girlfriend who was studying medicine in Davao. Salima owns a shop in Davao, but was still registered to vote in Lanao, where her children and parents live. Through the years, Jamila's father had gone back and forth to Marawi. He would find himself in Davao whenever he needed medical treatment, but preferred to enjoy his health in Marawi. Unfortunately, his health had suffered and his Marawi house was destroyed in the May 2017 Marawi siege, which brought him back to Davao City.

Like Mac and Salima, many Moro migrants to Davao visit their hometowns frequently to see parents, siblings, extended family, and friends. Mobility benefits those who have some capital. They are able to bring goods, such as fresh fish and vegetables, from rural areas to sell in Davao City. Then, there are those who are based in Davao but hope to move elsewhere later, such as Taya and Maylene from Kawayan. Taya has ties to Kabacan municipality's village captain, and gets a government subsidy in the

form of conditional cash transfer. This means that she has to visit Kabacan a few times a year to claim the benefit. Taya and Esmael plan to retire to Kabacan. Her neighbour, Maylene, on the other hand, frequents Shariff Aguak to help her sister-in-law manage a store while taking care of a toddler and a baby. Maylene has to be back in Davao often to process her application for work in the Middle East.

The constant Moro movement within Mindanao is one of the reasons it is difficult to monitor internal migration. For example, following the 2017 Marawi Siege, the UNHCR (2019:7) finds 'monitoring the number of [internally displaced people] in home-based settings continue to be a challenge', though it estimated them at 22,256 families of about 26,218. According to 2017 local radio reports I heard while on fieldwork, many of the Maranaos displaced by the siege sought refuge in Mindanao cities, including Cotabato City, General Santos City, and Davao City (also see City Information Office 2018). While many displaced Moros prefer shelter and rehabilitation with family and friends following conflict, it is beneficial for them to be in the roster of claimants for benefits from aid institutions. Indeed, they can take refuge elsewhere *and* go back to their hometowns if the situation changes. And what of movements like that of Jun's or Fatima's families that do not occur as a result of vertical conflict? They do not fall into the statistics of migration at all. In fact, like Taya and Salima, they are probably still listed as residents in the former ARMM.

The movement of Moros in Mindanao is pushed by conflict and pulled by economic and political opportunities, and can be tentative, transitory, longer term, or permanent. The conflicts in Mindanao are a cause of poverty in affected rural locations as conflict disrupts access to water, food, land, and livelihoods. This is a conflict trap, where wars interrupt and reverse economic development in a conflict feedback loop (Collier et al. 2003). Conflicts create a brain drain as they push teachers, doctors, and other professionals away. But even non-professional Moros leaving the ARMM bring their valuable labour power with them. The gap in social services and livelihood options that separates rural and urban areas leads people to move between these spaces in Mindanao. Inequality of rural and urban

work opportunities further shapes Moro resentment of the national capital, Metro Manila, and generates a romanticised view of cities abroad, particularly those in the Middle East.

However, it is not as simple as it may seem for Moros to simply opt out of the conflict trap. The Philippine Human Development Report (2013:xiii) notes that 'without foresight and adequate preparation, in-migration into a highly developed area can ultimately create problems in health, education and even incomes e.g., through congestion, pollution, and the emergence of slums'. Urban migration gives Moros economic opportunities that they can pursue beyond the purview of vertical and horizontal wars in their hometowns. Their knowledge, skills and labour, creativity and entrepreneurship have helped build Davao City into what it is today. Yet they endure precarious living conditions at the margins of the city.

Changing economic relations

Landlessness and the gendered division of labour again characterise the labour structure of gender relations in Davao City. What changes in the division of labour in the city is that, first, production is not based on land and is now dependent on a market economy. This means that the cost of living is higher even while demand for goods and services can be unpredictable. The density of people in urban poor communities and Davao City in general produces a broader market for goods. But that also means that a larger human labour pool makes competition for jobs or goods greater. Second, the vibrant informal sector allows more women to contribute to the household income. The higher cost of living makes families combine their labour power to cover expenses in the city. I illustrate these changes in the stories of the Abdul, Basman, and Kadera families below.

Reflecting on their family's dependence on cash, Jamal Abdul commented on how much further ₱200 can go in his hometown, Sultan Kudarat, than in Davao City. 'You didn't need money there. Here, ₱200 will not last long.' Jamal proudly claimed that he grew a lot of fruit trees and vegetables in Sultan

Kudarat. He has a natural feel for the soil and plants. He scooped a heap of sandy soil from an alley across their door in Angklahan and said sadly, 'nothing can grow here'. He lamented that their *purok* does not have common gardens where they can grow vegetables for subsistence. Gardening enabled women and men to produce healthy food in the ARMM. In Davao City informal settlements, the scarcity and absence of fertile soil generates an obligatory tie to the market economy.

In contrast to Jamal's family, Rashid Basman's family in Lanao did not have lands and laboured in other people's farms or fished in the lake. Rashid was happy to leave his farm tools and fishnets behind and go into a buy and sell business in Davao City:

> You know how it is in the farms… when you plant corn, you have to wait a long time. When you plant rice, the same. Where would you get the money? I had nets that I set every day, I got pails of small fish which I sold, that was how we lived. It was not enough because there were many mouths to feed, in-laws. You know, that is what I experienced when I was a child. Why was it the same when I became an adult? What could have been my sin to God? We ate rice only at six in the evening. It was so difficult when you don't have rice. So I asked my wife, 'Don't you have family in Davao? Why don't we go there?' (R. Basman 2017).

In this market economy, some capital is needed to start a business like that of Rashid's. Many people in urban poor communities have no access to banks and lending institutions. Small *sari-sari* (convenience) store owners like Omar Bilal's wife need to purchase in bulk and sell retail for a margin of profit. They resort to borrowing money from loan sharks under a *five-six* lending scheme.[50] For Rashid Basman, a Christian woman he met at a coffee stand jumpstarted his business in Davao:

[50] Five-six refers to the scheme of lending ₱5.00 for a ₱6.00 return or 20 per cent interest. For instance, a woman may borrow ₱500 as capital to sell grilled bananas for a month, which she will have to return with interest in daily instalments. A person making rounds on a motorcycle collects the payments. Failure to pay the daily instalment may result in the seizure of collateral.

> That time, I still couldn't speak Christian [Cebuano]…. I told her, my life in Davao is hard. She asked me where I lived and if I had a wife. I told her I had none. I think she had a crush on me. She told me, 'Tomorrow I will lend you ₱1,500.' I didn't understand what she meant. She couldn't understand Tagalog, she was Visayan. When she spoke Visayan, I spoke to her in Tagalog. I told her, *'bukas na lang*' [tomorrow then]. I told my wife [Almira] when I got home, because she might get angry: 'There's someone who wants to lend me money but I think she likes me'…. She told me to accept it, so I did. That's what made my cigarette vending grow (R. Basman 2017).

When Rashid's vending was generating a steady income, a relative of Almira saw Rashid in a mall with the Visayan woman. Almira was angry when she found out and made Rashid return the money to the woman. Rashid did and came clean that he was married. He explained that he didn't want her to get hurt, and according to Rashid, the woman thanked him: '"Thank you for the love", she told me. We got separated.' In Rashid's story, his need for capital complicated his relationship with a woman attracted to him, and with his wife.

The higher cost of living and the new urban opportunities in Davao prod Moro families to reconsider but also reinforce gender roles. 'In old times, women in our villages were kept hidden, now that has been lost, they are now in the malls', exclaimed Datu Ibrahim. Perhaps he recalled the way elite unmarried Muslim girls traditionally observed *purdah* or segregation and seclusion (Brecht-Drouart 2011:308). By referring to women's presence in malls, Datu Ibrahim might have meant the Moro women selling goods or, more poetically, been alluding to the way Davao Moros are tied to capitalist consumerism. 'The women only did housekeeping before, they could not make a living,' added Datu Ibrahim, 'but now they can study and do business.' Based on Datu Ibrahim's observations, in Kawayan women have more *diskarte* (business acumen) than men. Some women's and girls' entry into the

informal market in Davao City is based on necessity. When her father suffered paralysis for more than three years, Amina became the family breadwinner; from when she was eight years old she sold fish in the market before going to school. While it is more acceptable for women to earn money today, the preference is still for women to care for young children and do most if not all the housework. This is why many women have *sari-sari* stores or shelves full of catalogue products for sale at home. Still some women keep their *diskarte* to themselves. A woman in Black Beach disclosed that her husband was not aware of her selling ice candy and her other efforts to raise a 'diaper fund' for their toddler.

The highly militarised city also offers jobs in the security sector for men. Continuing the Abdul family story from the previous chapter, Jamir Abdul's second wife followed them to Davao City when Jamir was employed in the Philippine Constabulary (PC), the Martial Law era police. Amina Abdul consciously removed him from his post and got him a job as a security guard in the local government instead:

> I was the one who helped him get that job and I could also remove him from that. He really got removed…. I went there and showed my marriage contract and told them that he didn't support us. I made up lies to convince them. With that, he got dismissed from service. They must not mess with me because I am good at life…. [Jamir] stayed with me regardless after that. I had him removed from the PC so that [his second wife's family] would not have something to chase. I know they were only after his money….
>
> [Later] I was able to have my husband get a regular position in the local government. I have lots of friends and connections there. I gave it to him because he was the male. I already had experience working [in formal employment] and I know it's tough. Your salary would just be enough to buy lipstick. Also, I had children. What would happen to them if I worked [as an employee]? I earned more by selling fish than from expecting a salary (A. Abdul 2017).

While the division of labour in the household seemed to preserve Jamir's authority as he holds a job in Davao's formal economy, Amina determined his tenure in these jobs. Amina expressed a preference to be self-employed and alluded to the way women in formal employment get less salary than their male counterparts. With Amina's economic power and networks, she called the shots in her household. However, her decisions to assigned her husband a security-related job and the women in the household the entire responsibility for childcare suggest the formidable and durable constraints of a patriarchal gender structure at work.

When formal jobs are scarce, households increase their labour force by accepting that women can work outside the home. Hackenberg's (1976) survey of Muslim households in Davao City squatter settlements found that there were 2.02 total persons employed per household, of whom 1.44 were males. Most people worked in fishing and bazaar market activities. Most likely, Moro women negotiated with their husbands for permission to earn money. '[My husband] didn't want me to work,' Farida Kadera said, 'but he realised that we needed more income to put our children to school'. Moro men increasingly accepted women's participation in paid labour, but only if the jobs were deemed 'appropriate' for women. During my fieldwork, I observed that Moros considered jobs acceptable for women if they were tied to what I call 'display' work (as sales ladies and tellers in malls) and domestic work (laundry, cleaning, child care, and domestic work abroad).

Going abroad, especially to the Middle East, opened up for Moro girls and women from the 1980s, when the government encouraged the departure of overseas contract domestic workers. Davao is a recruitment hub for work abroad, drawing women and girls from other parts of Mindanao. Amina herself worked for four years abroad. Her second daughter, whom I have not met, is working in the Middle East today. Around the time when Amina was abroad in the early 1990s, Farida Kadera was 13 and also in the Middle East as a domestic worker. Recruiters doctored Farida's birth certificate to make it appear that she was 18:

> I saw how my parents found it difficult to raise us. I decided to go abroad. Unfortunately, when I went there, my situation did not improve. I was not able to finish my contract because my employers were cruel. My woman employer accused me of liking her husband. How could I when I went there to work, not to find a husband! She hit me with a metal pole. It was so painful… I ran away, got into a taxi without any money. I asked to be driven to the Philippine Embassy (Farida Kadera 2017).

When Farida got back to the Philippines between contracts, she met her partner Hamza in Manila, who went abroad when she was pregnant with their first child. When their daughter was born, she resumed work abroad, leaving her child with her parents in Davao City.

As in the Abdul and Kadera family stories, women's work abroad changed dynamics in the household. Women or girls in the immediate or extended family cared for any children the women left behind. When Amina left for abroad, her daughter Tata took on most of the housework. Today, Fatima and Amina take care of their grandchildren when their daughters are overseas. In return, they receive remittances to support the entire family. On the one hand, remittances are an added stream of income channelled through the women keeping the household budget. This means that women at home usually control the money made by the women who are abroad, challenging the authority of men in the household. On the other hand, women still provide for the family and take on the care and reproductive work at home, multiplying their burden rather than sharing it with the men.

In this section, I have shown that first-generation migrant Moro men are more likely to come to cities pushed by conflict. Moro women migrants are more likely drawn to the urban informal economy based on services and exchange of micro-capital goods in the cities. As conflict shaped landlessness and the livelihoods available in the former ARMM, economic opportunity was the most decisive factor in the

movement of Moros to cities like Davao. Dependent on their own labour and limited capital, migrant Moros found the informal economy an accessible means to survive. The gendered division of labour in the informal economy structured the participation of Moros in the Davao market and the international labour chain. Thus, childcare and reproductive tasks in households remain on women's shoulders, reinforcing the same logic of the labour substructure of gender relations discussed in Chapter 3.

Ethnic & urban communities

The first-generation Moro migrants to Davao City were few in numbers, but when they did make the move, they became bridges for many others. New migrants usually first test the waters and will be emboldened or supported by distant relatives or friends who may have married in the migration site. In this sense, networks become a more decisive factor for staying in Davao than cash or a diploma. The ties can be by blood or by ritual, such as marriage, and can extend in every direction. Beyond the clan and extended family, Moro networks in Davao City extend to encompass a person's immediate local community. The local community, in turn, is strongly entwined with the local government in Davao City. Moros need to maintain and fortify these networks as a survival mechanism.

This section distinguishes the variety of experience underclass Moros have of Davao City depending on their ethnicity, gender and generation, and the particular ways their subject positions are multiplied. I highlight the changes in the power substructure of gender relations among Moros in Davao City as they relate to a wider community beyond the nuclear family. I pay particular attention to the housing insecurity Moro communities face in Davao City to argue that in the urban environment, authorities in their *puroks* (settlements), *barangays* (residential communities) and the local government challenge the authority of men in the household.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity can be a factor determining where Moros settle in Davao City. There are a few Moro-majority settlements in Davao, some of them are actually called Muslim Villages. The settlement patterns suggest that most of these village subsections have one Moro ethnic group majority, with only the largest of them having more than three Moro ethnic groups. The majority of the Moros in Davao City therefore have neighbours from the same ethnic group. When the Kaderas moved back to Davao City in 2013, they stayed in a Maguindanao warlord's house for a few months and felt vulnerable to attack by the warlord's rivals. Even if they initially wanted to leave the enclave, they decided to rent a hut back in Kawayan with other Maguindanaos where they felt much safer.

While many Moros go back and forth between Davao City and their hometowns, some of them have brought their hometowns to Davao City. Moros in Moro majority *puroks* have been able to build mosques and *masjids* (small place of worship). They are able to support corner stores that sell exclusively *halal* (permitted according to the Qur'an) food and a neighbourhood tailor who can make culturally appropriate clothes for special occasions. They are the main market for ambulant vendors who sell only *amik, apam*, and other Tausug delicacies. In these pockets of Moro settlements, they can speak their mother tongue freely. The call to prayer in Arabic is broadcast five times daily. The laundry hanging out of windows includes robes for praying in the mosque. Men and women wore *malongs* (traditional tube wrap) on the streets. Thus, Moros recreated elements of their hometowns in their enclaves in Davao City.

Moros in Davao proudly observe rituals that are practiced in their hometowns. I enjoyed attending a Maguindanao pre-wedding concert called *Dayunday*, which featured three singers who travelled over five hours from Cotabato City and sang in turn from evening until dawn. Their songs were humorous commentary about love and politics in old-style Maguindanao, that even the young people in the audience had difficulty understanding. *Dayunday* was traditionally accompanied by the Maguindanao

string instrument *kutyapi*, a two-string fretted boat lute, but guitars are now more common. I also witnessed a wedding between a Tausug couple by the seawall, which ended in groups and individuals dancing traditional *Pangalay* (featuring elaborate postures and hand movements) and the more modern *Pakiring* (focusing on hip and hand movements). On these occasions, members of the Moro groups in Davao perform and teach their rituals to younger generations.

The rituals marked their ethnicity and religion, but also reinforced their family and community ties, honouring different Moro life stages. Relatives witnessed everything from hair-cutting ceremonies to burials. I knew there was a violent death in the community when I heard wailing of family members from inside a house. Many kin went in and out of their door to share in the grief and assist in preparations for the burial that had to take place before the sun set. Then there were the ceremonies remembering the loved ones on the seventh day, 40th day, and one-year anniversary of their death. Weddings, baptisms, and burials were community collaborations, premised on the commitment of relatives and neighbours to share in the preparations, with the emotions fitting the occasion.

I have just described how ethnicity is important in a Moro person's network-building in a new city. When newcomers to Angklahan, Black Beach, and Kawayan are settling in, they tend to depend on a network from their own ethnic group, going beyond their nuclear family. This is reinforced through rituals in which the immediate community participates. For example, it is unusual to see private weddings with a guest list. Instead, the bride and groom are presented to the whole community, and the expectation is that part of the dowry goes to the wedding feast for all attendees. While this is similar to what is expected in their hometowns, in Davao City people go further, reaching beyond their clans to include new neighbours who may come from elsewhere in Mindanao.

Gender

Gender further shapes a Moro migrant's experience of Davao City. Other than the Friday prayers in the mosque, older men who prayed five times a day hurried to the nearest mosque or *masjid* during times of prayer, while the women prayed at home. This pattern of men occupying more public spaces and women the more private spaces were similar to practices in people's hometowns. For instance, Datu Ibrahim chose male elders to advise him as the traditional leader of Kawayan as he would if he were back in Maguindanao. Thus, the gendered division between the public and private sphere is similar in the ARMM and Davao City.

In all Davao City field sites in which I immersed myself, girls and women were doing more housework than their brothers or male partners. It was unusual for me to find men and boys at home. If they were home, they were usually resting. When women take on jobs outside the house, it is commonly their children, not their partners, who take up the housework. Girls in particular take on a lot of the domestic tasks. Fatima Kadera, for example, shares housework with her daughters:

> I do not let the boys do women's work like the laundry and washing dishes. Because it is forbidden for them to do it when they have a lot of sisters. If they want to help, I tell them they can brush their own jeans and shoes. I cook as their father does not eat rice when it is not perfectly cooked (Fatima Kadera 2017).

The move to Davao City, however, allowed women and men to express themselves in a modern city. For Amina, living in the city allows her to be sexy as a young Muslim woman:

> Before, in Muslim [communities], there were a lot of restrictions. You couldn't be touched, and you couldn't whistle because you would be fined. Unlike now, even if you get touched you won't be fined. I'm different because I raised my children the Muslim way. I'm okay with

> everything except for some restrictions. If you want to be sexy, then so be it, because you are a lady. But if you are married, you should change the way you dress. When I was a single, I was sexy. My hair was long. I wore miniskirts. I didn't care about what people would say…. They couldn't do nothing about it. It's better to show it off than to hide it. While you're still single you must enjoy and be sexy. Just don't violate your body by letting men touch you (A. Abdul 2017).

Amina did not get into trouble wearing miniskirts as a young Muslim woman in Davao City. Without as much restriction and regulation as in rural locations, 'they couldn't do nothing about it', women and girls practice much more autonomy in the way they dress. Amina's daughter Tata fondly recalled joining a beauty pageant in school as a teen; she wore shorts in public and almost won the contest. Amina and Tata only started wearing the headscarf in public after they married, to show that they were not trying to attract men's attention. In Kawayan, however, Datu Ibrahim would call out young women for wearing clothing that he deemed inappropriate in their community. He thinks that this is part of his duty as a leader who should remind community members about their traditional practices. Since the issuing of the Women Development Code (1997, 2003) in Davao City, the local government has also been policing women and girls' clothing in public beauty pageants. The Davao City gender office monitors such pageants and prohibits swimsuits and other too-revealing clothing as part of their advocacy against women's sexual objectification.

In beauty pageants, Moro leader Amirah Lidasan observed potential signs of growing Moro community acceptance of *bayots* (effeminate gay man) in recent years:

> In Sulu, where it is very macho, where extremist ideas of Islam breed – they have had a gay beauty pageant. Even in Tawi-tawi, I heard that such existed as early as 2003 or 2004, and it has been some time since one was bombed. It used to be that even women's beauty pageants

> in Cotabato were bombed. And now they are allowed to display themselves in a parade, they are allowed to call themselves Tausug (A. Lidasan 2017).

Lidasan's statement suggests that Moro *bayots* were previously ostracised in the ethnic community, but are now more accepted as members of the Moro group. However, this acceptance might still be limited to the context of beauty pageants and similar circumstances. Common elsewhere in the Philippines, beauty pageants and parades entail the display of gendered bodies. While the growing acceptance of women and gays in beauty pageants may be positive, it does not follow that the recognition goes beyond objectifying bodies and entertainment.

Datu Ibrahim knew that lesbians and gays lived in their own Maguindanao community in Davao City , but he does not publicly recognise them. He insisted that there were no *bayot* or homosexuals in their hometown in the 1980s, and 'when there were no Christians, they were not recognised', and thus insinuates that non-heteronormative identities were products of modernity, urbanity, and Christianity in particular. This view was negated in both Amina Abdul and Fatima Kadera's recollections that in rural communities in the ARMM, identified *bayots* were present but were usually not welcomed in Moro people's homes, and when they were, the chairs or utensils they touched would have to be cleaned when they left. They, however, agreed that Moro gays and lesbians are more visible in Davao City compared to their hometowns. Yet, even in the city, homosexuality is still *haram* or forbidden. Moros who are questioning or challenging heteronormativity in their communities are only provisionally accepted. Amina said she respects homosexuals, but qualified that it is a different story if they are in a relationship with a person from the same sex. Fatima recognised that there are homosexual Muslims, but believed that they should hide that fact. These views, as I analyse in Chapter 6, express conservative religious interpretations that some Moros recite to show that they are aware of them.

Meanwhile, despite explicit or implicit pressures from the community leaders and neighbours, non-heteronormative Moros find ways to be themselves in Davao City. Harvey, a Moro transwoman, transformed slowly before her neighbours in Angklahan. She first changed her hair, then wore clothes that accentuated her curves, and, lastly, began wearing make-up in public. She reminded me, while she prepared her face before visiting her mother in jail, that I had not met her lesbian sister. In Black Beach, a Moro identifying as lesbian proudly said that Davao City recognised their rights and they were protected by an anti-discrimination law. She still goes to the mosque to pray on Fridays wearing traditional women's garb, and enjoys a lot of freedom in the community as a village hall employee.

Housing insecurity

Housing insecurity in Angklahan, Black Beach, and Kawayan in Davao coastal areas comes from the threat of demolition and disasters such as typhoons, floods, and fires. The Davao City government has the machinery to demolish the informal settlements. Officially, all residents living on what was once the Davao City boulevard beach are on government land, since the state declared its ownership of all the shorelines and unregistered lands in the country in 1905. Today, the beach along the Boulevard is long gone, and where it once stood, communities swell over sand and stilts. The urban poor communities in these sites are at the mercy of typhoons, fires, and the local government.

The coastal residents have faced storm surges from typhoons and flooding through the decades. The sea reclaimed former inhabited islands on the gulf before a seawall was built in the 1990s. In the last decades, these informal settlements have become so dense that fires are now more of a threat than floods. In these neighbourhoods, houses are usually made of light materials, are in close proximity to each other, and hooked up to overloaded electricity cables. Many sections of these villages are connected to main roads only through narrow footpaths of sand bags or wood planks inaccessible to fire trucks.

Fires are frequent in Angklahan, Black Beach, and Kawayan. More than 5,000 families lost homes from fires in Davao City coastal villages in April 2014 (Philippine Daily Inquirer 2014). One person died and 40 houses were destroyed in the Holy Week fires in 2015 (Locsin 2015), and yet another person died, three were missing, and practically the entire *puroks* were razed to the ground in the Holy Week fires of 2016 (Pates 2016). Throughout my fieldwork in 2016–2017, there were fires in all three of my field sites and I received more news of fires after I left. For example, an elderly person was killed and about 75 houses at the brink of the sea were destroyed in a fire along the Boulevard in August 2017. In fact, the fires were so common that most houses were in constant disrepair.

Some families have experienced fires a few times now, and are traumatised by the events. The Abubakars were victims of the 2016 fires in Angklahan. Instead of rebuilding on the ashes of their old home like the Abduls, they built a new house right on the main road in an adjacent street. Unfortunately, where they relocated was the site of yet another fire. Jasmin Abubakar said that she was only able to carry her younger sister to safety and was not able to save any of her belongings, even underwear! They joked that the fires have been following them.

For people who worked so hard for so little, losing property to the fire was particularly devastating. During the 2016 fire, Tata and Jamal Abdul were away from home and were left with only the belongings they had brought with them to work. Tata often alluded to the 2016 fire and how she lost all her school and workshop certificates, her wedding dress, and a beautiful bed that she received as part of her dowry. Amina Abdul lamented that they were only able to save the TV, which she was still paying for in instalments. In the commotion because of the fire, the TV was damaged and it just came from the repair shop when I first met them in July 2016. In the 2017 fire, Tata was thankful that they were all home and were able to ride the rush of adrenaline to take their best belongings to safety.

In Black Beach, Jamila Bilal made sure to lock her home to prevent looters from taking advantage of the commotion of the 2014 fire. She told me that based on their previous experience, it was unfortunate that in dire times, some people have the energy to steal from the poor. Since the 2014 fire, a health worker I knew in Black Beach always made sure that someone from her family was home to save their valuables in case of another fire. They took this into account whenever planning their family trips and daily errands. Thus, the fires highlight anxieties Moros have about their informal housing situation in Davao City.

The official police reports pointed to unattended candles, faulty wiring and gas tank leaks as the usual causes of the fires. Some Moros wondered if the fires were related to the Mega Harbour Project that threatened to relocate them to a different site. After all, a 'natural' tragedy of fire wiping out the area would save the company and the local government millions. Moros knew that the urban poor in other parts of the Philippines are familiar with this strategy of forced relocation. The pervasiveness of fires in other urban poor settlements in Davao City and the communities' high trust in the local government provided counterpoints to this narrative.

As Davao City Mayor, Rodrigo Duterte in June 2016 signed the ₱39 billion Mega Harbour Project that will rise at the heart of Davao Gulf. The developer planned the 'reclamation' of four artificial islands for business and residential purposes, 40 metres from the coast and parallel to the communities I immersed in on either side of the Davao River mouth. Unwittingly, the plan rebuilds the disaster-prone islands that disappeared over three decades ago. The design included a port facility, an industrial park, a commercial and financial centre, a call centre complex and a tourism hub. According to the project plan, the world-class harbour infrastructure would connect with a new coastal road that will stretch from Sta. Ana in the north to across the Davao River in the south (Alconaba 2017).

Publicity for the Mega Harbour Project claimed that the residents along the coast were the main project beneficiaries (Salveron 2017). According to those who have seen the blueprint plan, settlements along the coast would be transformed into residential and commercial zones. Some residents welcomed the potential jobs, better access roads, relocation land, or even the meagre compensation for eviction on land that was never formally in their names. Some lamented the potential loss of their homes, their communities, and the livelihood that they built in the belly of the city. The buzz in the communities was that even if there were jobs, settlement dwellers may not be eligible for them, that the road widening would mean demolitions, and that the increased land value spelled their impending relocation elsewhere. Rumours spread that relocation offered to those affected would be in Mintal, a more rural part of Davao City. A village official in Black Beach assured the people that there would be no relocations necessary, as no one would be negatively affected at all. Meanwhile, the joint venture agreement between the Davao City government and the Mega Harbour (2016) allocated ₱1.875 billion (US$37 million) for the housing of the estimated 3,500 families (40 per cent of them Muslims) that will be affected by the project.

After she took over from her father, Mayor Sara Duterte-Carpio terminated the contract with Mega Harbour in July 2017, a year after her father signed the joint venture agreement. Duterte-Carpio said that the decision was 'coupled with a resolve that Davao City can really move forward and answer the call of economic growth by implementing highly sustainable projects, both commercially and environmentally' (Perez 2017). Despite scrapping the Mega Harbour Project, the local government is still considering the building of a new coastal road (B. Castillo 2017). As it stands, there are only two roads connecting Davao Del Sur with Davao Del Norte through Davao City: Quezon Boulevard near the coast with two lanes each way, and the wider Diversion Road. A third road would potentially ease the traffic on Quezon Boulevard and expand the Davao City real estate.

Residents of Kawayan were hopeful that if the coastal road were built, only the houses within 50 paces from the seawall would be affected. 'Maybe only a few houses will need to be relocated, if at all,' said Datu Ibrahim. In Black Beach, Jamila gestured to her unpainted concrete walls, 'This is why I am not developing my house yet – who knows if we would need to move anyway'. 'In any case, we need to be always ready,' said an old man who lived near the seawall in Angklahan. Their statements disclose that migrant Moros in Davao live with utmost uncertainty.

Beyond the family in urban Davao

When new migrants decide that they can make a living in Davao, they need to create a new network for survival beyond the nuclear family. Their neighbours and new patrons can become as important as blood relatives and have similar influence on the family members as would clan leaders. For example, Datu Ibrahim Kudarat is an influential authority in Kawayan, able to perform functions from intervening in marital rows to policing girls' clothing in their community. Through his own network of group leaders, Datu Ibrahim monitors the households and distributes gifts from the local government. As sociologist Loic Wacquant (2007:62) observes, 'Mass unemployment and chronic underemployment in the hyperghetto compel its residents to seek public assistance'. Access to assistance is a precious commodity in urban poor communities.

In addition to kinship networks, local politics therefore have a lot to do with the growth of the population of Moros, Christians, and Lumads in Angklahan, Black Beach, and Kawayan. Along the shoreline, reclamation and building on water can make space for new migrants. Many newcomers to Black Beach have been invited to live there by well-connected local village officials with an eye to them potentially winning more votes in the next local elections. Some of the first-generation Moro migrants were invited to live in Davao City through these local political networks. When those who invited them were still in power, the families deferred to them as a sign of gratitude for their accommodation in the

village. Many migrants, however, have outlived the political careers of the *barangay* captains who welcomed them to Davao City.

Moros who moved to Davao live in close proximity to people of other ethnicities and religions. There is no village in Davao that is exclusively Moro, and even villages with a Moro majority have a large Christian population. A *purok* leader told me that he has mediated settlements of misunderstandings relating to language barriers, pride, and stereotypes among members of different ethnic groups living in one area. Although some Christians and Moros distrusted each other, they often qualified their statements: 'Like us, some of them are not trustworthy', they would clarify. I found that Moros in Davao knew a lot about Christian beliefs and practices. Christians in Davao are also familiar with Islamic beliefs and practices. This awareness and understanding are reinforced in everyday encounters among people of varied ethnic groups in Davao City. Still, Moros respect and value the mediation function community leaders perform in conflicts among Moro families and between Moros and Christians in their communities.

Davao attracted Moro migrants since the 1990s by posturing as an especially Moro-friendly city. Unlike other cities in the Philippines, the city government appointed Deputy Mayors from each of the Islamised ethnic groups recognised in the city. The city boasts a Madrasah Comprehensive Development and Promotion Program, which sets standards and implements a public Islamic education that enables students to make informed choices consistent with the spiritual and moral norms of Islam.[51] During Christmas holidays and at the end of the holy month of Ramadan, Davao City mosques receive gifts from the city government for distribution to their congregations. Notably, former Mayor Rodrigo Duterte each year sponsored nominated Muslims to go on a pilgrimage to

[51] From 2004, the public Madrasah Program in Davao has funded salaries of 13 personnel and 127 Arabic teachers for 49 traditional madrasahs in the city. Some of these madrasahs have served as halfway houses for Muslim children who have been displaced by the 2017 Marawi City Siege (City Information Office 2018).

Mecca. It was unclear even to beneficiaries where the funds came from. Because of all these policies, Davao City appears to be more open to Moros than other big cities in the Philippines.

In urban poor communities, some connection to the city government is valuable for landing a job. Through his in-laws, Rashid Basman gained access to jobs in the Davao City hall:

> He told me, 'You have job. You can sign your contract, but for us, we don't need a contract. As long as the mayor is there, you are a regular', he said…. That was when I was able to taste delicious food. I experienced eating at Luz Kinilaw [restaurant]. I thought, it was great to be in the city, you can eat well. You can relax. Before that, for three years I roamed the entire city from Panabo to Toril to sell my goods…. When I got the job at City Hall, I was able to taste *bulalo* [beef stew]. I thought of my grandmother, who had already passed away, because I thought, this was the good life. My in-law, he told me, I should just work [in City Hall] for the intelligence agency. What I know about guns and bad people, I should just tell on them. But I cannot tell on them because they are Muslims like me. It is difficult, they might come after me. So I opted to be a street sweeper instead. They told me that work was harder, but that was what I wanted. You can work at your own pace and time. But then the mayor finished his term. Everything was gone (R. Basman 2017).

The same person who got Rashid a job urged him to provide intelligence for the police or military, but he set his boundaries with regards to the work he was willing to do for the local government. Perhaps Rashid could have had a longer stint in local government had he taken on the intelligence job, but he recognised the risks it entailed and was satisfied with the safer option.

Moros covet positions working for the local government because of their predictability and relative stability. Because of the patronage-based system of hiring, jobs are goods distributed to clients who

are expected to be loyal in return. In Rashid's experience, his services were co-terminus with the incumbent politician that his in-laws had access to. When local government is under a family like the Dutertes for over twenty years, the office and the politicians occupying them blur. Davao residents including Moros establish deference and loyalty to the Duterte family, even if they are just doing their job of running the city and recruiting staff to run their own offices.

The blurring of the local government and the politician Rodrigo Duterte, a Davao City mayor for over 20 years, was reinforced in a TV program '*Gikan sa Masa, Para sa Masa* (From the Masses, to the Masses)' that ran weekly from the early 1990s. Through the program, Rodrigo Duterte addressed the people of Davao as if they were his friends and publicly threatened criminals and declared them his enemies. The show presented city reports and introduced policies. Citizens could also write to Duterte for their concerns to be read on air, and they expected action. Thus, it is no surprise that in Davao City, Rodrigo Duterte is a common part of the household. His face is on TV, on posters hanging on walls, on T-shirts that are given out for free. This also means that Duterte's words carried the weight of a patriarch in the household. When he made mistakes in public or did something offensive, Moro women I spoke with excused his actions and extended *pasensya* (patience) to him, as if he was their father or their son.

Class, ethnicity and gender determined where Moros could build a house in Davao, what kind of house it would be, and what power relationships existed between them and their neighbours. Datu Ibrahim in Kawayan, Omar the *imam* in Black Beach, and *barangay* officer Raul in Angklahan have qualitatively different encounters with Davao City than do Muslim men in gated subdivisions and the women in their own communities. Unlike men in gated subdivisions, these senior male community leaders are still connected by webs of intimate ties to their neighbours. Such men are ultimately authoritative in their homes because of their leadership in their wider community. While Amina, Jamila, and Farida, are from different ethnic groups and generations, and are all the primary earners in their household,

they can draw on the resources provided by local leaders and the Davao City local government to promote their own interests. For example, Tata can brandish the city's Women Development Code to her partner Jamal to avoid domestic violence. Across ethnicities and genders, fast urban living stands in sharp contrast to the slow rural life people have left behind, though that rural life was also punctuated by violent clan or counterinsurgency wars. Moros expressed relief and gratitude in being able to live in Davao City away from the wars in their hometowns, even as they struggled to live with the insecurities that come with it. Their status as Moro migrants living in precarity in the city prods them to appear submissive to authorities in their communities.

Talk on the street

Davao City's population diversity animates the downtown thoroughfare, Roxas Boulevard. Standing on a street island at the intersection of Roxas Boulevard and Daang Maharlika Highway, one will have the popular Aldevinco traditional goods market and one of the fanciest hotels in Davao on one side, and the Ateneo de Davao University and the City Triangle mall on the other. The street island itself is a narrow strip of green called Freedom Park, where Dabawenyos (Davao residents) hold protest rallies. It is also a good spot to observe Dabawenyos on their way to school, work, or markets during the day. At night, locals make Roxas Boulevard itself a destination.

At sunset, the southbound side of the Roxas Boulevard turns into a food and dry goods market that lures regulars with the aroma of seafood, meat and vegetables sizzling on grills. An array of *halal* food stalls stands a stone's throw away from kiosks specialising in pork chops and skewered chicken and pork intestines. A walk through the street food section close to the Freedom Park greets the passer by with smells of pickled mangoes and papayas, and a medley of fried balls, rolls, dumplings, and nuts. Vendors of coconut water and local ice cream offer refreshments that complete a meal for under ₱60

(US$1.25). At the other end of the night market are rack after rack of clothes, bags, and shoes. Between the food and dry goods is a station for back and shoulder, leg and foot massages. In the Roxas night market, Dabawenyos from across classes, ethnicities, and genders encounter each other.

The Davao City street as an institution is a physical and discursive space for new migrants to encounter other ethnic and political groups in the city. The street represents an open public space where people can interact and assert their positions but where, ultimately, the strong, loud, and dominant groups rule. The street is a theatre of aggressive masculinity with a 'currency of honour where the slightest pretext… can tip a banal impersonal encounter into a lethal pageant of brutality' (Wacquant 2007:211). In Davao City streets, boys and girls sell goods on the sidewalks, some women sell sex, and the men exert their dominance by cat-calling women and carrying weapons.

In this section, I introduce the Davao City street as an institution through a discussion of the 2017 *Araw ng Dabaw* (Davao Day) street parade. By examining Moro encounters with other people in Davao City, and the new configurations of kinship and friendships that arise from these encounters, this section explores the changes in the cathexis substructure of gender relations and practice among Moros in Davao City. I show that even as the streets of Davao City present sexual freedom, they also enable women's further emotional, mental and physical exploitation.

Araw ng Dabaw

The streets are witness to ordinary and spectacular events such as mass protests and parades. At sunrise on 16 March 2017, Davao civil society and government employees converged on Roxas Boulevard in preparation for the *Parada Dabawenyo* (Davao People Parade), the main event in the 80th *Araw ng Dabaw* celebrations. The street was still wet from the morning rain, but the sun shone on large paper mâché floats lining the avenue, casting shadows where people waiting for the parade to start took shelter. The floats portrayed scenes from the past eight decades. For instance, a yellow

float depicted Soledad Duterte (mother of Rodrigo Duterte), leader of the Yellow Friday Movement, which campaigned against Marcos' military rule. Another float representing Davao in the 1980s depicted scenes of Rodrigo Duterte hugging a man in military uniform and signing papers before the seal of Davao City Hall (Photo 2). Around these large decorated platforms, peddlers pushed food carts and vendors herded colourful balloons. In 2017, the festival theme was 'Stand tall. United. Resilient.'

Photo 2. A Float at the Davao Day Parade 2017

This float depicting Davao in the 1980s features (on the side) then Mayor Rodrigo Duterte embracing a military man in fatigue uniform before the public. Figures of indigenous women durian fruit harvesters are at the head of the float and winners of the Davao Day beauty pageant sit before an image of the Davao City Hall façade (Author's photo).

On occasions such as this, people from the different villages where I was conducting my research gather in one area. From an intersection, I recognised (by the way she walked) Ania Kudarat, a Maguindanao teenager and niece of Datu Ibrahim from Kawayan. She wore a checked headscarf and a long-sleeved top under a light-yellow shirt that said '*Araw ng Dabaw*' like others representing the Maguindanaos from her village. The older women wore colourful skirts and headscarves, but the men

and young people of both genders mostly wore jeans and T-shirts. The parade organisers issued official event shirts that were color-coded to distinguish different ethnic groups that had contingents in the parade. There were also elaborate floats from different sultanates, each with its own entourage of women and men flaunting royal dresses.

On the other side of the road was Tata Abdul, a Tausug from Angklahan. She had on a grey headscarf and a black shirt that proudly said 'MNLF' (Moro National Liberation Front) in bold letters. She was with mostly men who were clad in black and standing around in sunglasses and smiles. This MNLF group was considerably bigger than the contingents representing the various ethnolinguistic groups. At the corner of a side street, Jamila Bilal from Black Beach sat with her colleagues from a women's organisation, all dressed in uniform pink shirts, chatting over cup noodles. They were interrupted by music that played on the far end of Roxas Boulevard.

The music was from a marching band at the head of the parade. The drum line was at its edge, the brass instruments at midpoint, women in short skirts twirling batons front and centre. Tailing the band were men in uniform who carried flags bearing the parade's commercial sponsors. They practiced their act before the parade finally rolled out of Roxas Boulevard. Marching groups representing the Lumad ethnic groups of Davao City such as the Ata, Bagobo-Klata, Bagobo-Tagabawa, Matigsalug, and Obu-Manuvu followed the band in their embroidered clothes and beaded headdresses, but to the beat of their own drums and gongs. With the Lumad, and the different Moro and Christian settlers, Davao City is easily the city with the most diverse population in Mindanao.

The scene of diversity I have depicted underscores Davao City as a meeting place of indigenous peoples and migrants (Photo 3). *Araw ng Dabaw* was meant to showcase the diversity in the city founded in March 1937, diversity not only of ethnolinguistic groups but also of the residents' interests. Since the first celebration of the day in 1968, Davao City's population has multiplied over five times to 1.63

million in 2015. The diverse population requires a lot of tolerance among ethnic and interest groups. Within the Philippines, only in Davao City could an insurgent group such as the MNLF take part in the yearly celebrations. Davao City is also where the funeral of a slain New People's Army Commander, Leoncio 'Parago' Pitao, attracted a public march of 10,000 people in 2015. The vibrant Davao civil society expressed in the *Parada Dabawenyo* is a testament to the city's history of 'conquest and migration and the ensuing conflict over territory and resources' (Tiu 2005:2). For instance, advocacy groups such as those that campaign against human trafficking, and *Save Our Schools* (a group organised by Lumad children calling for the withdrawal of military troops from their schools) occupied space in the spectacle streaming on the streets. Not far behind the Lumad children were groups supporting Duterte's campaign for federalism and the War on Drugs.

Photo 3. Panagtagbo Ritual in Davao City's Kadayawan Festival 2016

In the Panagtagbo (coming together) ritual, representatives of Davao's Lumad and Moro groups weave ropes around a single pole to signify their unity. They draw closer to each other as the strands tightly reinforce the pole (Author's photo).

As a form, the parade I witnessed that day was both a military exercise and a people's protest. It was a show of bodies, gendered and ethnically marked bodies, some loudly, some quietly, standing and walking for *something*. In this celebration of diversity, the Davao Day procession was a mixed assemblage of contradictory messages broadcast by the parade participants and taken in by the crowds lining the sidewalks, watching the spectacle that concluded in front of the City Hall. It was unclear if Davao stood for the rights of Lumads in their call for the withdrawal of military troops from their schools and villages, while Rodrigo Duterte was pictured embracing a military man in one of the floats. It was unclear if Davao stood for promoting the rights of Moros in the city while the wars 'on drugs and terrorism' that was going on at the same time had profiled them as perpetrators. It seems to be a deliberate local government strategy to accommodate various interest groups and gather their support, only to abandon them when convenient. In practice, the local government has only been consistent in investing power in the military to regulate and discipline people in Davao City streets. While the street may provide the space for people like Tausug Tata Abdul, Maranao Jamila Bilal, and Maguindanao Ania Kudarat to be together in a Davao Day parade, in this instance, it did not foster lasting solidarity as Moro women.

Moro men's polygamy

In Davao City, the streets provide Moros a place to meet other ethnic groups. Sexual relationships open among different genders and ethnicities, challenging traditional patterns of desire, an element of the cathexis structure of gender relations. In a patriarchal social structure, the expansion of sexual freedoms in the city benefits more Moro men than women. Take the example of the evolving emotional relationships within the Kudarat and Basman families below.

After working in construction, Esmael worked as a taxi driver. In Davao City streets, he met and developed relationships with women from other ethnic groups in the 1990s. In the presence of his partner Taya, Esmael told me that Taya made him marry, in turn, two other women he had sexual

relationships with. It was more acceptable to Taya that Esmael had a *duaya* (second wife) than extramarital affairs with an ethnic Mandaya and then a B'laan woman. When I asked Esmael why he was attracted to the two other women, he said, 'nothing, it was just for fun.' Taya interrupted, 'what he saw in those women? Nothing, his penis was looking for the big vaginas of Christians'. When Esmael excused himself to use the bathroom, Taya elaborated:

> They eventually separated anyway. His [other] wives, they bathed at night and then roamed the streets. One had ten kids with different fathers…. Yes, they married [with Esmael] in Islamic rites but when they left, they didn't practice Islam anymore. They went back to their work at night, riding cars and motorcycles with different men (T. Kudarat 2017).

Rashid Basman's family has a similar story. Rashid said that his wife Almira was still mad at him because of his sexual relationship with other women:

> My father told me, among his children, I was the only one with an only child. 'You have a lot of *rido* and problems, you should have many children.' Our relative who had money also lived here. He went to clubs every day. I was on work duty then so sometimes I would just sign in and go on [field] monitoring… I would go with my relative who has money. Of course, that is how it really is with men. Men cannot avoid going to clubs. I don't drink much… I can only hold two beers. I can probably have more but I don't do it. I tell myself, if there's trouble I can't fight back, right?
>
> So there, I had women, but not a lot of women. 'If I do it every day', I told myself, 'I will have [bad] karma'. Because my wife is good to me, I love my wife. But it really cannot be avoided. Even if I refuse, our relative would get a woman for my table. He would say to the woman, touch him, *bayot 'yan* [he is gay]. So [the women] would ask me, are you really gay? *Bayot daw*

> *ako* [They accuse me of being gay]. I thought of my wife whom I love so much. Also my father who wants me to have more children. So I took one [woman]. When we go [to the club], I would always ask for her to sit at my table. We had a relationship. I rented a house for us, that's where I slept when I was supposedly on [work] duty. My wife did not know. When she found out, the other woman was already pregnant. Even though we moved house, my wife still found out. She was so mad! But she was also really hurt (R. Basman 2017).

Rashid left the Christian woman he met at a club, but when their son was nine years old, he took him to live with his grandmother. When Almira found out that the boy was with Rashid's relatives, she pitied the boy who could not go to school and urged Rashid to bring his son to Davao instead. Almira raised the child as her own. In 2016, Rashid's father visited them in Davao and invited Rashid to Lanao:

> My father said, 'You have two children, but one of them has a Christian mother. Have a look at someone I would like you to meet.' So I went home to Lanao without my wife knowing. I thought maybe she would learn to accept it too. I thought, I would be happy with four, or even three children. So if I die, my children will have each other. When I arrived in Lanao, everything was set. I walked into my own wedding! I didn't know that we would marry as my father had arranged it. I took her to Davao, without Almira knowing. But someone told her about my other wife. [Almira] looked for her and when she found her, she beat her up.
>
> I sent the other woman back to Lanao. We have one child, but I had to let her go back out of pity. I told her to just look for someone else because Almira could not accept her as my second wife. Until now, Almira is mad at me. She would tell me, '*kayong mga lalaki, iba kayo talaga* [you men, you are really different from us]!' But I had my reasons. I really love Almira. If I didn't love her, why wouldn't I choose the newer one instead? Like a car that is brand new, right? I

> would have gone for the newer one. But I really love [Almira]. We have gone through bad times together… I would not exchange her for anyone (R. Basman 2017).

The option to take sexual partners as wives via polygyny normalises adultery among Muslim men. The legal status of having multiple wives enables men like Datu Karim, Datu Ibrahim, Jamir, Esmael, and Rashid to have more than one sexual partner at a time. There was some pride in Datu Ibrahim's story that he had to sleep between his two wives. Esmael was not ashamed that he had sexual relationships 'for fun' with other women. For Rashid, the expectation to have many children rationalised his sexual affairs with other women. In contrast, Moro men expect women to be loyal to their partners. Women's stories, however, show that they do not accept adultery:

> I told [my husband], if he continues [seeing other women], I swore, in Allah's name, I will really cut his penis off. I will find a way to do that. He got scared, because I was serious. Really, I will do it! I don't care if I land in jail. I will really do that so he won't have anything to look at other women for. I would be the one to look for another man! [Laughs] (Fatima Kadera 2017).

Amina, Almira, Taya and Fatima, all threatened their husbands when they found out about their extramarital affairs. Yet it seems like only Fatima was effective in her message.

Women in Davao City streets

On the underside of men buying sex in Davao is Moro, Lumad, and migrant women's selling sexual services. When I visited Kawayan in November 2017 (one of several visits), I asked teenage girls about Dayang, a bubbly girl I had hung out with during my earlier, longer period of fieldwork and one of their *barkada* (circle of friends). Dayang's friends quietly told me that she was now in Cotabato working at a girly bar. The low tone communicated their worry about their friend. I am not sure if they were aware that, before they were born, in 1987, bodies of women accused of engaging in prostitution were found

floating in a Marawi City river. The women were allegedly abducted and executed by their own relatives, and 'thereupon the *imams* made pleas during Friday prayers that wayward Maranao women committing acts of lasciviousness will be dealt with harshly by their irate families' (Brecht-Drouart 2011:350). About the same time, female bodies also floated down the Pulangi River from liberated MILF areas, where MILF adjudicators dispense penalties similar to those traditionally imposed (McKenna 1990:468–69). In any case, we all hoped that Dayang would continue to be safe from the multiple risks she was facing.

Rural migrants to cities may well experience a liberating sense of autonomy from different forms of authority, but they also experience exploitation 'compounded in the case of women by sexual exploitation, discrimination, and abuse' (Jacka 2006:7–8). Jeanette Ampog, executive director of Talikala, a Davao-based non-government organisation working with prostituted and trafficked women and girls, disclosed that they have been working with Moro girls from Davao urban poor communities from the 1990s until today.[52] Talikala recognises that for Moro girls, the stigma of prostitution is even more severe than for non-Muslims, so that the girls hide their work from relatives and friends. Thus, the street may expand Moro men and women's freedom of movement and sexual practices, but brings with it more stigma and risk of exploitation and even death for Moro women working in prostitution.

As cities attract people from the provinces and business investors who are mostly men, entertainment and sex are a part of city transactions. As an economic hub in Mindanao, Davao City is a node for human trafficking and prostitution. For example, in August 2011, 10 girls from Sultan Kudarat, North Cotabato and Maguindanao who were promised deployment in the Middle East were rescued in Davao City (Mindanao Migrants Center for Empowering Actions Inc 2011). Ampog emphasised that prostitution hit the poorest in Mindanao, including Moros:

[52] Talikala's analysis is that sex workers are prostituted because of their social circumstances.

> In the Philippines, those from poor families dream of helping their families in whatever way. Unschooled children of farmers go to the city only to find heavy competition for jobs. Even high school graduates here find it difficult to land a job. They might find work as a *kasambahay* [domestic worker] but the salary is so low. Added to that is abuse from employers. Then they see advertisements for GRO [guest relations officer]. So they do anything just to be able to send money home. There is also city to rural trafficking because of the mining corporations and plantations, male-dominated industries (Ampog 2017).

Militarisation further heightened risks of women and girls' exploitation in urban Davao. During Martial Law in the mid-1970s, various women's groups organised in Davao City in a coalition called Women Against Rape (WAR). According to Lorna Mandin (2017), Officer-in-charge of the Davao City Integrated Gender and Development Division, WAR was the Davao City women's response to reports of rape of women held in police and military detention. The momentum from these women's organisations continued after Marcos' ouster in 1986 and produced the city ordinance Women's Development Code in 1997.

While Davao City was lauded for its Women's Development Code and won an award as a child-friendly city in 2016, Ampog spoke about the persistent child prostitution at the press conference that accompanied the award. Talikala estimated that 4,000 children and women provided sexual services in Davao City in 2017. This includes women in bars, massage parlours, and girls on the streets.[53]

> The women-and-children-friendly city laws raised awareness but did not make real changes in the system. We are still poor, and this economic deprivation made our women and children vulnerable to be trafficked or to be in prostitution. Even if we rescue a child and raise her

[53] 'Shine girls' give masturbation and blowjobs on the streets, their main customers are taxi drivers. Some girls accept drugs, ₱300 mobile phone credits, or a cheap mobile phone as payment (Ampog 2017).

> understanding of prostitution so that she can decide to leave, without opportunities outside prostitution, she will stay there. Despite laws supposedly protecting women and children, the implementation and appropriation are absent (Ampog 2017).

Talikala would like to have no purpose to exist. Ampog yearned to see strategic interventions by the local government, in the form of livelihood, employment and the mainstreaming of Talikala programs. Ampog is aware that the lifespan of a non-governmental organisation (NGO) depends on funding, while the government is 'forever'. Thus, while the organisation has a critical stance towards the local government, it also works with it. 'We told the government that there is no Talikala if you are doing your job,' Ampog said (2017). For sure, the local and national government can improve on the implementation of laws that protect women and children. Beyond these, the cathexis substructure of gender that shapes sexual and emotional relations between and among men and women needs to be configured at the level of the city street, community, and households. Thus, while the local government is in principle accountable to women in Davao City, all men in all other institutions must also account to women in practice.

In this section, I have shown that through the Moro encounters with other people living in Davao City, there are considerable changes to the cathexis structure of gender relations and practice among Moros. Moro relationships in the city can be more casual than in their hometowns where holding hands can be grounds for a wedding. In fact, sexual relationships can be transactional when sex is offered as a commodity in Davao City streets. Moros further encounter women and LGBT rights advocates in Davao City in face-to-face meetings and through Davao City legislation. A strong women's movement and LGBT groups lobbied for and won the Women's Development Code and the Anti-discrimination Code as integral city policy. Sociologists Mustafa Emirbayer and Anne Mische (1998:1007) suggest that actors who are located in more complex relational settings must learn to 'compromise with people of diverse positions and perspectives'. Thus, for example, transitional justice

advocate Mags Maglana (2017) says that Davao taught her how to work across groups and organisations. Migrant Moro individuals and families, too, need to demonstrate familiarity with city directives if they want to reside in Davao City. Yet the Davao City streets present militarisation, and in prostitution and trafficking, even more exploitation of girls and women.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I unpacked the operations of labour, power and cathexis substructures of gender relations in Moro households, communities, and the street in Davao City to show how gender structure changed as Moros participated in urban migration. In the city, migrant Moros experience the multiplication of different subject positions in the following ways. First, opportunities in the informal economy and domestic work abroad bolster women's economic power. Exigencies push Moro men and women to negotiate and adapt to the conditions of dismal male opportunities for urban employment, the rise of precarious female service sector jobs in urban areas (Ray 2018) and insecure conditions as migrants living in the fringes of the city. All these forces generate a crisis in traditional male roles. Second, networks beyond the nuclear family are key; thus, local authority figures in communities and the Davao City local government challenge the authority of men in households. Yet Moro men still find ways to exercise their power in their households. Lastly, in Davao City streets, Moro migrants encounter other ethnic and political groups that may appear to expand their sexual freedoms. Yet women and girls' emotional, mental and physical exploitation can also be extreme in the city. Thus, while there have been considerable changes in the household economic production and political bargaining in the Moro migration to Davao City, a durable patriarchal gender structure continues to constrain Moro relationships in their new urban environment.

Like in other regions in Asia (see for example, Kundu and Gupta 2000), migration, urbanisation, and regional disparity were strongly interrelated in the processes of Moro urban migration. I have argued that landlessness and the gendered division of labour have pushed Moro men from conflict areas and pulled Moro women to cities like Davao City. However, as in Tamara Jacka's (2006) study of women's rural to urban migration in China, migrants' narratives about migration are not mutually exclusive, and never focus on a single theme. They instead typically point to a combination of economic strategy, adventure, escape, and deciding their own future as motivations for migration. In any case, their labour in the city supports the state-enabled accumulation of domestic and international capitalists in Davao City, to make it the highest earning city in Mindanao and one of the wealthiest cities in the Philippines. For scholars Henri Lefebvre (1996) and David Harvey (2008), these outcomes earn migrants a 'right to the city', a democratic access to the surplus value the city produces to shape the city and their lives, even if the practice of this right is highly constrained. In Chapter 5, I zero in on Moro women's agency amidst the conflicts they experience in Davao City and demonstrate how they are already shaping their lives and their communities.

5 The women in the wars in Davao City

Jamila's parents migrated from Marawi City to Davao City in the mid-1970s, during Martial Law. Jamila looked up to her mother, with whom she sold plastic bags in a mall to finance her studies until high school. In Black Beach, as a teenager Jamila organised a youth volleyball club, which she thought helped young people avoid gangs and drugs. In school, she reported a teacher who sexually molested a Christian classmate to their principal. Later, she reported her experience of employment discrimination based on religion to local politicians, a report which helped propel the formulation of Davao City's 2012 Anti-discrimination Ordinance. Jamila initially volunteered and, for over 15 years now, has worked for a local chapter of a national women's organisation. She questioned the practice of giving *mahr* (dowry) and contributed a month's salary to her own dowry in her marriage, an unusual if not a radical gesture. In Davao City, Jamila Bilal told me, the main conflict their Moro community encounters is the 'war on drugs'.

When Moros left their hometowns to escape the crossfire between warring clans or insurgents and the state military, in Davao City, they found themselves facing a different kind of fire and fight. They swapped one conflict for another, while the insecurity of their lives and property remained. This chapter demonstrates that a gender analysis offers a new perspective to the War on Drugs, and the War on Terror in Moro urban poor enclaves. Like Chapters 3 and 4, I look at the labour, power, and cathexis substructures of gender relations in these 'wars' in the city. Unlike in the previous chapters, I examine all three gender substructures and three realms of gender, class and ethnicity together in each 'war'.

I argue that the gender inequality in economic, power, and emotional relationships defines the perpetrators and targets of violence, and those who benefit from the burden conflict, as well as those who suffer from it. I found that drug lords and the police recruit Moros as actors and witnesses of conflicts in the city, pressing Moros to negotiate with family members, neighbours, local leaders, and the police for security. The War on Drugs and the War on Terror target the urban poor, and while traditional gender roles are challenged in the city, the conflicts kill men and burden women. Despite the arduous responsibilities falling on Moro women, I show examples of women's agency across these conflicts. As we can see from excerpts of Jamila's story, unsung Moro women like her positively contribute to their households, communities, and the wider Davao City.

The War on Drugs

The spectacular record of human rights violations in the Philippine War on Drugs gained much local and international media attention after President Rodrigo Duterte launched the campaign in July 2016. The Philippine National Police (PNP) reported 5,526 deaths from July 2016 to June 2019, and over 29,000 deaths were under investigation as of March 2019 (Johnson and Giles 2019). The Commission on Human Rights and human rights groups cited significantly higher numbers of over 27,000 deaths, and growing, a figure closer to what the police consider as being under investigation (Human Rights Watch 2019). The campaign itself was scaled up from the local War on Drugs in Davao City, where Duterte served as Mayor for more than two decades. At the helm of both the local and national campaign was former Davao police chief Ronald 'Bato' dela Rosa (2012–2013), who was PNP Chief in 2016 until he retired in April 2018 to campaign for and later sit as a senator in the Philippine Congress.

Academics have written about various aspects of the War on Drugs, from the securitisation of drugs in the Philippines (Quimpo 2017) to public support for the campaign (Lamchek 2017). Scholars have

described the war as 'genocidal' in nature (Simangan 2018) and 'quixotic' in aspiration (Bautista 2017). My contribution to the literature is an intimate portrait of the War on Drugs based on ethnographic fieldwork and family stories to demonstrate its gendered operation and impact on urban poor Moro communities. I present how narratives on drugs feature gendered actors, sufferers, and spectators. My aim is to shed light on the everyday outcome of the War on Drugs on a small scale but in the long term, draw on the Davao city experience to project what the nationwide campaign might look like to local communities in 20 years' time.

In Davao City, the War on Drugs has been going on since the 1990s. More than 800 people were killed between 1998 and 2008 (Neistat, Seok, and Human Rights Watch 2009) and thousands more landed in local jails. But even with the raids, arrests, and killings in Davao urban poor communities for over two decades, the war on drugs has not yet been won. Since Duterte declared a nationwide war on drugs in 2016, many of the players in the drug trade were killed or imprisoned, reducing competition, with the result that prices for *shabu* reached an all-time high, making drug running a lucrative business, with high risk. When I visited the Davao City Police headquarters in November 2016, police officers joked that drugs now come at a cost of 'buy one, take life'.

Weaving together themes explored in earlier chapters, this section unfolds in three parts. First, I show how the poorest Moros labour in the informal drugs market, gambling their own lives. In this way, drugs persist in the Davao City underground economy, despite two decades of 'war'. Second, I focus on the police, paramilitary, and death squads' power to jail and kill in Davao City, and how it is supported by local authorities. Third, I convey the impact of the War on Drugs on emotional relations within Moro families and communities. I argue that a focus on gender relations is productive in understanding underlying conflicts in the War on Drugs, and its burdening effect on women who need to provide for and patch relationships within their households and communities.

In the business of drugs

Illegal drug markets are an important feature of Mindanao's shadow economy (Schoofs 2014), yet they are tightly entwined with the state. Rufa Cagoco-Guiam and Steven Schoofs (2013:115) argue that criminal entrepreneurs including drug lords 'derive their power and protection from capturing public offices across the ARMM' and that, prior to Duterte's campaign, 'the relative absence of violence can be explained by the protection offered by colluding public officials and politicians'. This nexus makes drug money an important currency in high-stakes political contests. Bolstering the lucrative drug empire are sellers and consumers, including people from impoverished communities in Davao City.

Drug retail sale was a source of livelihood in the poorest households in Angklahan and Black Beach when I conducted my research there. While finding a job in the city is challenging even for college graduates with limited personal connections, there are many openings for entry into the underground economy of Davao. The only requisites are *lakas ng loob* (daring) and discretion, and these jobs pay enough to feed families and put children to school. The retail trade is the small-time dealers' domain. Their clients are also mostly poor drug addicts who can only afford the drug in small sachets.

The labour involved in drug running is typically irregular and always high risk, and operates on a trust basis. According to stories I heard in Angklahan, the people involved in drug running on the ground know only a small-time distributor and have little knowledge of where the drugs come from. In this business, the less one asks, the better for the suppliers. Maranao Rashid Basman shared that in the early 1990s, he was offered a role as point person in Davao to distribute drugs coming from a contact in Lanao. He refused, but said that the job was probably offered to someone else who accepted.

Rashid observed that under Mayor Rodrigo Duterte's punitive rule, everyone involved in the drug trade, including the drug runners, were treated like drug lords. Rashid claimed his own relatives who were involved in the drug trade left Davao City in fear. Still, Rashid's immediate family was affected by

an incident related to the drug trade in Black Beach. He was telling me how his family lost the house he built as a government employee when his brother killed someone, just in passing, as if that was a most ordinary thing. When he finished a story about his different work experiences, I asked, why his was brother involved in a killing. Rashid indulged me with a long backstory:

> That was about drugs. So, we had relatives [from Lanao] who were very poor. One went into the drug trade. He told his friend, give me a little bit so I can have some capital. His friend loaned him the goods he asked for. He went here [in Davao], found a buyer, but he didn't pay him. The problem was, the collateral for the drugs were his child and wife. How much was it? For the drugs, ₱50,000 [US$1,000]. If it wasn't returned, his wife and kid are gone. They took them. So of course our relative was crying. 'Help me', he said, 'my child and wife will die…'. The one who took the drugs could not pay, he told my relative that he could go ahead and kill him because he has nothing. Other relatives tried to help by telling the police….
>
> My relatives found the man who didn't pay and was in hiding here [in Black Beach]. They asked him, 'Are you going to pay or not?' He said, 'I don't have any money.' But he had a revolver which he waved around. Three of my relatives tried to hold him down. That was when my brother passed by and thought our relatives were under attack, so there! He used a *kris* [a sword or dagger with a wavy blade] to cut the man! My brother was not even involved in the drugs (R. Basman 2017).

Rashid reached a settlement with the family of the man his brother killed to avoid a *rido*. He solicited and borrowed money from relatives, and in the end sold his house to raise ₱100,000 [US$2,000]. Rashid reflected that, just like when he had come to Davao the first time, he was back to square one: homeless and broke.

In many cases, dealers become patrons to small-time drug runners as they develop a relationship based on transactions of loans, advances, and gifts. Family members are not only made collateral, as in Rashid's story above, but drug runners may tell their own family member of their involvement as a small insurance, just in case anything happens to them. This may be the reason why the drug runner Harvey in Angklahan had 'inherited' their incarcerated mother's dealings and clients. In this way, young people can be socialised into the drug trade when they find few other options available to them.

The practice of masculinities contributes to the risk-taking behaviour Moro men display not only in insurgent wars, but in daily life. Consequently, drug dealers in Davao City police watchlists are mostly male. Rashid justifies men's participation in the drug trade as a means for men to provide for their family:

> Men should work for the family. A man will do anything so his family can live, endure whatever hardship, even to pass through a needle hole. That is how men are. That's why people now, many are in the drug business – there's a reason for that. A man, will enter the drug business because they have nothing, nowhere else to lean on or to take out a loan… (R. Basman 2017).

Though I did not particularly ask questions about the drug trade, people in the communities shared facets of it as part of their personal stories. Rashid's stories show that the drug trade is an economy that exploits the labour of destitute Moros. Like in insurgent wars, impoverished men are the foot soldiers in the drug war. Moro men involved in the trade are killed when drug lords need to assert their authority or fight rivals for territory. For sure, a different kind of inquiry and ethnography can offer more insights about the business of drugs in Davao City.

My limited findings match earlier ethnographies on drug-related conflicts. Anthropologist Philippe Bourgois (1989) found that in shady commerce, violence is a business requirement: it helps establish

commercial credibility and prevents takeovers by competitors and robbery by customers or police. The drug trade becomes a particularly violent enterprise when there are turf wars (Friman 2009) or anti-narcotics agencies that signal a state crackdown (Reuter 2009). Retired AFP Colonel Nelson Estares' take on the killings related to the War on Drugs in Davao City is that the drug enterprise provides profits and jobs:

> It is a business, so there are many people killed because, if you touch my business, I will kill you. So the police in the 'war on drugs', you have to commend them because they are courageous. Not all police would like that job. If you committed a crime, I can personally arrest you as part of my job. But if you took away my business, that's different (Estares 2017).

My interpretation of Estares' analysis is that drug lords and some police profit from the business of drugs in Davao City, and were hurt by the local and national government crackdown on drugs. To cover their own tracks, drug personalities (through paid goons) and the police kill small-time drug dealers and runners. Police who are knowledgeable about the underground economy are not suicidal and so do not willingly pursuing big drug lords who have the power to retaliate. Instead, the police conduct operations against small-time drug dealers to show that they are complying with directives and to meet the quota their superiors assign to them.

As a result, the crackdown on the drug trade has in fact only seemed to centralise the drug trade, with the help of the apparatuses of the local and central governments. In Davao City, after two decades, the War on Drugs has not been won because it was only successful in eliminating the competitors of the biggest drug lords in the area. The survival of the few powerful and well-connected players on the drug watchlist (Johnson and Fernquest 2018) support the business centralisation hypothesis. Women in Angklahan, Black Beach, and Kawayan believe that members of the Davao City police are still profiting from the protection and other services they extend to the key drug lords.

The power to jail and kill

The police, the paramilitary, and death squads have the power to jail and kill in Davao City. These armed men get orders, funding, and protection from the local government (Neistat et al. 2009). Given that the Dutertes have been in charge for so long, police powers to use violence against alleged drug dealers in Davao City have gained some permanence. Police deployments enable the local government to 'give itself the feeling of responding to the demands of the "people" while at the same time exculpating its own historic responsibility in the making of urban outcasts of the new century' (Wacquant 2007:12). Meanwhile, the surveillance and punishment used as policing instruments permeate relationships in homes and communities, and manifest in the absence of fathers and brothers. The armed men of the police, paramilitary and vigilante groups are the most dominant actors on Davao City streets.

In Angklahan and Black Beach, there were many stories of *tokhang*, the police program that has been pursued since 2012 and which officially entails house-to-house solicitation of support for their campaign, but is in fact a euphemism for police arresting or killing suspected drug pushers and users in the community. *Barangay* officials compile a drug suspect watchlist that the police use for *tokhang*, perhaps to give the operation some legitimacy, perhaps to share the accountability. The power of lists, after all, is in their semblance of order. But the drug watchlists can be arbitrary. People can end up on them without evidence backing their inclusion. Any villager suspecting another community member of potential involvement in drug trafficking or use, from methamphetamine to marijuana, can volunteer a name. Any villager with a gripe about their neighbour can float that neighbour's name for inclusion. Yet, in the hands of the police, the drug watchlist can become a list of obituaries.

I have seen the police doing their rounds in Angklahan and Black Beach. On these occasions, they would walk single file through alleys for visibility. At other times, they would come with a particular purpose.

Two of Jamila's sisters are now in jail for alleged illegal possession of drugs and drug paraphernalia. The husband of her sister was on the police's drug watchlist, but when the police came to arrest him, they took her and a visiting sister along:

> My sister was standing at the doorway when the police came and pushed her in. [I thought] the police were going to execute them because the police shut the door behind them. I was screaming outside, 'Why behind a closed door, sir? What are your plans?' I was really scared (J. Bilal 2017).

Jamila was alarmed because the police notoriously abuse their power to arrest suspects in the war on drugs. In Metro Manila, the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women Asia-Pacific (CATW-AP) reported that in addition to killings, errant policemen offered '*kama o kulong*' (literally: 'sex or prison') to alleged female perpetrators or the wives and children of men caught violating the law. Fear or desperation can thus lead to rape. This sex-for-freedom scheme worsened under President Rodrigo Duterte's War on Drugs, according to the CATW-AP executive director Jean Enriquez (See 2018). The coalition asserted that because death is a possibility in the crackdown on drugs, the police officers feel they have greater power to sexually assault and rape women.

Like in the case of Jamila's sisters, the police commonly round up people who just happen to be in the vicinity of their suspect. For example, PNP Regional Director Marcelo Morales said that in their drug operations during 1–19 May 2019, the police rounded up 101 individuals, only 23 of whom were included on the police drug watchlist (Revita 2019b), a figure that suggests that up to three in every four arrests may be arbitrary. The arrest of other people in the vicinity of the person on the watchlist might serve a dual purpose for the police: meeting the quota of arrests imposed by their superiors, and establishing the police report that the suspect was in a 'drug session' during the arrest.

A closer look at the drug-related police reports reveals that they are uncannily similar. In their study of the police reports on suspects killed while resisting arrest, Theodore Te of the Free Legal Assistance Group assessed that the spot, incident, progress, and investigation police reports submitted to them by the Office of the Solicitor General were 'nearly verbatim' (Lagrimas 2019; Villegas 2019). The suspect was either entrapped in a buy-bust[54] operation or caught in a raid using drugs and with drug paraphernalia in plain sight. In the case of deaths at the hands of police, the standard narrative was that the suspect tried to resist arrest and fought back (*nanlaban*). Thus, according to the nearly verbatim reports, the police had no other recourse but to shoot the suspect down. The uniform language used in the reports suggests that the police were not concerned about documenting the particular facts of each case. The uniformity further casts doubt on the competency of the police and their stake in the operations. Independent forensic scientist Raquel Del Rosario Fortun commented that '[the police] do the shooting, they do the killing – and they investigate themselves. Impunity, that's what's happening' (Baldwin and Marshall 2017).

Once arrested, impoverished drug suspects including Moros tended to languish in jail. The sheer volume of cases that the Davao City public attorneys have to deal with lengthens the processing of drug-related hearings. As a result, prison overcrowding in Davao City jail went up 30 per cent from 2015 to 2016 (Katilingbanong Pagtambayayong 2017). Many families in Angklahan and Black Beach have at least one relative in jail. Jamila visited her sisters in Davao City Jail regularly while they waited for their case to move in court. I too have visited the Davao City Jail with a group providing social services in Davao jails. There I learned that 90 per cent of the city jail inmates have drug-related cases. One of the inmates also told me about a scheme called *palit-ulo*, where one can tell the police one's drug supplier in exchange for freedom and protection. The scheme seemed to be available only to those who have connections within the police.

[54] 'Buy-bust' are police operations where they entrap drug buyers using marked money or drugs.

‘At least, raids done by men in uniform increased the chance of suspects landing in jail rather than the mortuary,’ sighed Nora Abdul in Angklahan. Nora was referring to the fact that when men in plain clothes pursue drug operations, the likely end is killings. By saying that it ‘increased the chance’ instead of ‘guaranteeing’, Nora acknowledged that a number of police officers were partisans to the drug trade as protectors or dealers themselves. She suspected that the police keep a hefty portion of confiscated drugs to themselves or to plant as evidence in other cases. News of the arrest of a policeman and a brother of an official of the Davao City Police Office in a police buy-bust operation (Palicte and Saron 2019) fed Nora’s suspicions. As well as admitting to hiring paid killers, a Metro Manila police officer disclosed that the police carried out vigilante operations themselves:

> The police officers usually [act as unknown persons] when they feel the target does not have the capacity to fight back, or if the family has the ability to file a case. If the target is a woman… we cannot conduct a police operation, because that would be an obvious rub-out since a woman can’t fight back. So we would carry that out as vigilantes (in Amnesty International 2017:37).[55]

The police and death squads thus blur together in Davao City, but death squads are usually identified by their modus of operating in small teams, with a hitman and a motorcycle driver to quickly get in and out of the crime scene. The ‘war on crime’ started when bodies of petty thieves, usually adolescent boys living off the streets, were found lifeless in Davao streets in 1998. From the start, the killings were attributed to the Davao Death Squads (DDS), a vigilante group that killed suspects in public spaces. The DDS was allegedly formed to combat so-called ‘sparrow operations’ of the New People’s Army, recruiting rebel returnees of the communist army to target these communist hit squads (Neistat et al. 2009). It moved on to target drug pushers and users in urban poor communities, believed to

[55] This police confession shows how premeditated, anti-poor, and sexist the murders are since they would consider the class and sex of their targets in their operation method.

perpetuate crimes like theft and rape. The crime rates in Davao City for theft and rape did fall, but the low theft was at the expense of murder. The normalised murder gave Davao residents an intimate familiarity with death that desensitised people. For example, an activist found dead in Davao City streets in the 1970s would have sparked instant protests; these days, a killing in broad daylight does not have the same effect (Maglana 2017). I interpret this as a kind of structural violence at the level of the city landscape where actors like the DDS and the police enjoy impunity.

Human rights groups became concerned with the DDS in 2004–2007 when then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo made Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte her adviser on crime prevention. During her term, Macapagal-Arroyo unleashed a severe counter-insurgency campaign that tagged legal organisations as communist fronts, making activists and community workers targets of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances. International attention brought United Nations Special Rapporteur for Extrajudicial and Arbitrary Killings, Phillip Alston, to the Philippines in 2007. Alston (2008) published a scathing report that branded the military accountable for the killings and disappearances, and said the police and local government were complicit in DDS operations in Davao City. Arroyo was forced to create investigative bodies in the wake of Alston's visit. Then Human Rights Commissioner Leila De Lima initiated the investigation of the DDS. At the end of Arroyo's term in 2010, there were over 1,700 unsolved killings and 340 disappearances, in addition to the victims of the DDS.

The Human Rights Watch report '"You Can Die Anytime": Death Squad Killings in Mindanao' (Neistat et al. 2009) details the anatomy of death squad operations based on the investigation of 28 killings, mostly in Davao City. Deepening and extending the findings of the 2008 Alston report, Human Rights Watch provided evidence of complicity and direct involvement of government officials and the police in the DDS killings. The handlers of DDS members were usually police or ex-police officers, who provided the training, weapons, motorcycles, and information on the targets. The handlers obtained

information about targets from police or village officials, and notified police stations to ensure that police officers were slow to respond (Neistat et al. 2009).

During my fieldwork in September and October 2016, there were televised Senate investigations on the DDS. Witnesses were professed former DDS member Eduardo 'Edgar' Matobato, who provided numerous details of DDS operations from the start of the inquiry, and former police officer Arturo Lascanas. After initially denying Matobato's account of the DSS in October, Lascanas made a turnaround in February 2017, claiming in the second hearing that he was forced to lie, because he was worried for the safety of his family. Lascanas recanted because 'decades of extrajudicial killings in Davao weighed on his conscience' (Lamb 2017a). In his February testimony, Lascanas narrated how then Mayor Rodrigo Duterte himself gave him his first death squad assignment in 1989. Under oath, he told the Senate that the squad was formed as an anti-crime unit within the Davao police tasked to eliminate criminals, and later Duterte's political opponents and critics. He claimed that he was a DDS leader and personally killed 'about 200 people' (Lamb 2017b).

During the Senate investigations on the DDS, the Moros in the communities I visited were glued to the televised proceedings. Most commented that other than the testimonies, no other evidence linked Duterte to the DSS. One resident along the coast commented that the details provided were too elaborate to make up, but believed the political opposition paid Matobato to destroy Duterte. Tata Abdul recognised the names that Lascanas mentioned in his testimony and believed his story, but wished that he let Duterte off the hook. Not a few of them were disappointed at Matobato and Lascanas, as if they had blurted out Davao's secret in public.

Like in insurgent wars, armed men held power over urban poor communities. In Davao City, these armed men are state agents empowered by the local government. A resident from Angklahan assessed that the DDS put to 'good use' the trigger-happy and the *loko-loko* (mad) in Davao. The DDS was the

alleged perpetrator of the killing of the two teenagers in front of the Black Beach mosque in 2012. The teenagers were not from Black Beach but were killed there to warn drug dealers in the community. The DDS was also the culprit in the killing of a Moro couple in broad daylight in 2016. Only one of the two was the target, but both of them were killed, leaving behind five orphans. In August 2017, an alleged drug user was killed by unidentified assailants in Angklahan. Neighbours witnessed these incidents and kept the stories alive in their own communities.

The core power substructure of gender is defined by the hierarchy and workforce of institutionalised violence (Connell 1987). The military presence in Mindanao began long before, and persisted long after Marcos' Martial Law. Martial Law is back in Mindanao in 2016 and 2017 in the form of President Rodrigo Duterte's State of National Emergency on Account of Lawless Violence in Mindanao (Proclamation 55) and an official Martial Law declaration (Proclamation 216), respectively. In his study of the spectacle of violence in the War on Drugs in Mindanao, Danilo Andres Reyes (2016:130) concludes that 'by using his executive power to guarantee impunity, Duterte conferred on the police and the military a license to kill.' It is notable that Senator Ronald 'Bato' dela Rosa led the vicious anti-communist vigilante group Tadtad during Marcos' Martial Law (Wild 1988) before rising to the rank of Davao City Police Chief and then Philippine National Police Chief. New vigilante groups backed by drug lords and Duterte himself have thrived in many parts of the Philippines since the president announced his 2016 War on Drugs.[56]

Negotiating with neighbours

Neighbours have multiple roles in the War on Drugs: they witness, facilitate or contradict police and *barangay* officials, and deal with the aftermath of operations. As people living in close proximity to each other, neighbours know each other's activities quite well. It is difficult to hide anything in dense villages where walls can be cardboard-thin and alleys narrow. This is why neighbours who disapprove

[56] Duterte publicly enjoined the police and civilians to go kill drug addicts (Associated Press in Manila 2016).

of their neighbour's entanglement in illegal activities can spread rumours about them, warn their neighbour, or report them to *barangay* officials. In communities where drugs are rampant like in Angklahan and Black Beach, neighbours develop complex emotional relationships, shaped by their own security and safety considerations. '[Drug users] were warned,' shrugged Tata Abdul, 'but it would be best if they were just jailed than killed'. Neighbours are well positioned in the community to understand the problem of drugs and the problems in the War on Drugs operations in their neighbourhood. Crucially, neighbours, especially women, take on the burden of holding communities together in the War on Drugs in Davao City.

Neighbours have a good vantage point for a holistic view of the war on drugs. They see the problem drugs bring, but also know those involved in the drug trade as people with families, who have a past and a possible future. In fact, they probably know people in the community who have had a history with drugs, but found *bagong buhay* (moved on to a new life). For instance, Datu Ibrahim said of their settlement Kawayan, 'even former [drug] addicts ostracised in their communities [in Maguindanao and Cotabato] have turned over a new leaf here. Now they are doing good and are respectable.' They knew that their neighbours involved in the drug trade are ordinary Moros like themselves, struggling to make ends meet and wanting a better life. But it is also clear to them that the drug trade mostly benefits the big drug lords and their protectors.

Myths and rumours betray the uneasy relations in the communities. For example, one constant narrative I heard in the field was that areas consumed by fire (see Chapter 4) were drug dens. Thus, fires were seen as fitting *gaba* or cosmic punishment for dwellers believed to be involved in the drug trade. 'The fire did not reach us because we don't do anything funny here,' said Datu Ibrahim, after one such event. Other residents expressed that when the reported source of fire was unattended candles, that meant a drug-related activity stoked the fire. Drug sessions required lighting up or cooking chemical substances, and users on a high might have negligently caused fires. These

statements echoed Duterte's own (Velez 2014) and exposed people's distrust and blame towards their own neighbours and other Moro neighbourhoods along the coast. The unfounded beliefs made fire prevention efforts less coordinated and effectual, and also had repercussions on how people felt about the support extended to survivors of fire. Branding the Moro communities as drug dens created ambivalence from the general public about the value of Moro lives and properties.

Moro neighbours thus have complex feelings about the war on drugs. Moro parents do not want their children to be hooked on drugs that may impede their contribution to the household and cost their very lives. The high cost of drugs means that a family member's addiction will drain resources. Even sober drug runners enable addicts' drug dependence, and are still part of the enterprise that can wipe out other families' finances. Many Moros also believe that drug addicts can steal to feed their addiction and can, under the influence of drugs, commit heinous crimes. Yet drug retail sale had become a source of livelihood in the poorest communities. It is often a back-up plan to meet a family emergency when all other doors have closed. Unfortunately, for the poorest families, life is a constant state of emergency and most doors are permanently closed to them.

For Moros I spoke to, drug running was acceptable for family emergencies, but not if runners fall into addiction themselves or go up the drug trade ladder. In Angklahan, a community worker estimated that 70 per cent of the jailed drug pushers were also drug users. Meanwhile, neighbours tended to gossip if a family could suddenly afford to buy a Crosswind SUV or a unit in a gated subdivision, whereas their only visible means of support was selling DVDs. Such surprising display of wealth attracted suspicion that they were taking bigger dealings in the drug chain. For Tata and Jamila, as long as drug dealers remained poor, they were small-time. Tata was furious when the media portrayed a poor neighbour of hers who was killed by the police as being one of the top drug dealers in Davao City. 'How could that be? His house looks like an animal cage [because of its small size]. He bothered others because of his drinking problems and occasional drug use when he could afford it, but he certainly

wasn't a top dealer!' Tata assumed that a neighbour complained to *barangay* officials about how the man harassed passers-by to give him money, and an official wrote his name on the drug watchlist.

In both Angklahan and Black Beach, *barangay* officials claimed that all the people who have been killed during operations were positive for drug use with no death resulting from mistaken identity or some 'other blunder'. Without due process under the law, however, the claim that only the 'guilty' get killed in the war against drugs is unconvincing (Neistat et al. 2009). Some immediate family members of alleged drug users deny their relative's alleged involvement, saying 'they were falsely suspected,' or 'in the wrong place at the wrong time'. 'Of course a mother will say that her son is innocent – she has no idea what her son was doing when he was out of the house', countered a cheerful man in Angklahan. In fact, not all turn a blind eye to drug users and dealers within the family. Jamila admitted that one of her brothers was an addict. 'Even when he was still single, he was into sniffing glue and was involved in riots with his friends.' Based on my fieldwork, family members and neighbours provided credible character references about alleged drug suspects. In any case, the rumours in the neighbourhood negate or reinforce village official narratives.

Barangay officials who were complicit to the drawing up of the local drug watchlist are expected to be accessible to their constituents. They wield some power while in office, but their term is dictated by votes. Some Moros found ways to negotiate with select officials, especially officials who are Muslims who think of Moros as their voters. For example, a *barangay* official warned Omar's son Abu that he had lost a lot of weight fast – alluding that he might be taking drugs. Abu clarified that he was just stressed about his divorce and was 'addicted' to basketball. It was unclear if Abu made it into the *barangay* drug watchlist because he looked too thin, but his ex-wife and her new husband had been jailed for drug possession. What was clear was that Abu took the opportunity the village official gave him to explain his personal circumstances.

During raids and arrests, neighbours of the accused played the important role of being *saksi* (witness). Many times, the police handling of the suspect, indeed, the life of the suspect, depended on it. When the police thought no one was watching, they tended to be more violent. Furthermore, witnessing shaped the conversations about events after the fact. Consider the police brutality that led to the killing of 17-year-old Kian Lloyd Delos Santos on 16 August 2017. Neighbours who were witnesses and those of us who watched the CCTV footage (Rappler 2017) that caught the police dragging the body of the student can contrast the '*nanlaban*' narrative of the police.[57] It is the same in Davao City, where neighbours consciously witnessed police operations and took photos with their mobile phones when they could to later identify the armed men participating.

It takes courage to be a witness against the police when you live in an informal settlement and experience housing insecurity, and when the police have the power to kill, jail, and frame anyone. For instance, Tata Abdul witnessed a police operation where the police raided a neighbouring fisherman's house. Noticing that the police were rough on the fisherman, Tata asked to see their search warrant, which they did not show her. Finding nothing suspicious in the fisherman's house, the police took the man's money in a classic case of *hulidap* (a hold-up disguised as a police operation), and left. Tata reported the incident to the police station and fears that the police she identified may get back at her.

Tata's neighbour in Angklahan attested that the alleged top drug dealer in Davao was sleeping when the police came in an operation and killed the suspect, so that the 'buy-bust' narrative of the police was far-fetched. Because she knew this woman since they were children, Tata believed this neighbour more than the police reports. Like many in Angklahan, they disapproved of the common police practice of planting evidence like packets of drugs and a hand gun at the crime scene to legitimise their

[57] Police claimed that Delos Santos fired the first shot, but the CCTV footage that circulated the internet and witnesses testified that Delos Santos was beaten, handed a gun, then shot at (Buan 2018). Based on ballistic, chemistry, and autopsy reports, a Caloocan judge ruled that, three police officers were guilty of Delos Santos' murder in November 2018 (Criminal Case No. C-102925-27 2018), the first conviction related to the War on Drugs (Tan 2018).

operation and show that the suspect attempted to fight back. Because they witnessed these incidents themselves or their trusted neighbours did, they believed that this was rampant elsewhere in Davao City and the Philippines (Jopson and Sakaran 2020).

When communities are riddled with extrajudicial killings and arbitrary arrests of neighbours as they have been in Angklahan and Black Beach, to witnesses, the neighbourhood's landscape becomes a memorial to the violence. For Nora Abdul and her family, their proximity to the scene of the killings in Angklahan means that they encounter these sites in daily life. It reminds them that Moros are not safe in their community. Here, the killings do not represent mere numbers but real people with family and friends. After a next-door neighbour was killed in Black Beach, Monina Basman shared that for many nights afterwards, she could not sleep, haunted by her neighbour's restless ghost. To me, Monina's sleeplessness conveyed her empathy and a conception of the injustice done to her neighbour.

When the police or unidentified assailants have left, neighbours need to deal with the aftermath of the War on Drugs. The very design of the police operations set up its tragedy. As I have shown in the previous section, the police implementing the anti-drug campaign are prone to corruption. Thus, in the cover-up and quota systems, the poorest of the suspects are killed. Meanwhile, those who are jailed or placed in rehabilitation programs often relapse in drug use or in their involvement in the drug trade. This is partly because rehabilitation centres do not meet the demand, and the rehabilitation program itself is inadequate. For example, the after-care required after the residential-type rehabilitation program is not available as an in-community service, preventing clients from completing their rehabilitation. In other words, the War on Drugs does not effectively address the 'drug problem' in Davao City, leaving communities worse off.

In *purok* Angklahan alone, a community with around 50 extended households, community workers documented that from 2008, police or unidentified assailants killed eight people. This meant that

almost one in five households lost a parent to the War on Drugs. In the same community, over 100 were jailed from 2008, of whom three died of illness in jail and one was killed in an anti-drug operation inside the jail. It follows that most households in Angklahan have had family members in jail in recent years. A result of the killings and arrests was that over 100 children were orphaned or separated from one or both parents (Jopson and Sakaran 2020).

The report by the Philippine Human Rights Information Center, 'The Killing State' (2020) details how the physical and psychological health of family members killed in the War on Drugs deteriorates when they lose their primary earners. In Angklahan, the children who were orphaned or separated from parents were vulnerable to gangs and drug syndicates that offered a source of income. Thus, in the government performance of waging a War on Drugs that does not address poverty but rather kills and jails the poor, a cycle of poverty and involvement in the drug trade persists (Jopson and Sakaran 2020). Without any community support in the aftermath of the operations, the local and national government assigns the women left in the communities the task of generating income to feed and care for their remaining family members. But to resist their deepening poverty, Moro women need to find ways to prevent young Moros from involvement in the drug trade and provide those who have undergone rehabilitation programs with quality after-care and monitoring within their community.

In Black Beach and Angklahan, it was mostly the women who were mending and building new relationships, and holding the communities together through the decades of War on Drugs. In Black Beach, Jamila organised a youth volleyball club, while in Angklahan, *barangay* councillor Raul organised basketball teams to keep young people away from gangs and drugs. In Angklahan, Tata volunteered and trained as parole officer and monitored those who had been released from rehabilitation centres. She assisted community worker Aliya Sakaran to provide quality after-care in the community, helping to prevent her neighbours' relapse into drug use and giving referrals for any treatment and intervention community members might need. Despite the isolating stigma attached to the families

with members involved in the drug trade, Aliya Sakaran realised that they needed to organise themselves and struggle together to amplify their voices.

In 2007, Aliya Sakaran, Tata Abdul and their neighbours set up Moro Youth Organization or MOYO, an organisation of Moro children who have had a parent killed or jailed in the War on Drugs. MOYO embodies a community-based drug prevention strategy. The children's organisation helps develop the knowledge, skills and confidence of the young people. Through private donations, MOYO supports over 100 children through feeding programs, skills training and facilitating their participation in community activities. For example, MOYO members were active in the 2015 coastal clean-up drive and were yearly delegates in Davao City's children's month activities. Accountable to their neighbours and the children themselves, women volunteers negotiate among many different actors in the community, including the police, to run the organisation. Their primary concern is the safety and wellbeing of the children, and their main worry is that despite all their efforts, the promise of money in the drug trade may in the end lure children out of the program, which cannot offer alternative livelihood. The success of Angklahan's community-based drug prevention efforts remains to be seen. Despite the challenges, volunteers Aliya and Tata described their work as a 'jihad in the community', a fight for survival and to defend the honour of Moros.

As we can see, the impact of the War on Drugs in urban poor Moro communities in Davao City has been divisive and disruptive of family and community life in the last decades. The methods used in the War on Drugs, such as the drug watchlist, were successful in separating families, dividing poor communities, and fostering suspicion among neighbours. The violent arrests, assaults, and killings prodded neighbours to dissociate lest they become implicated in the violence. A certain triumphalism is fostered among the poor whose households were not affected by *tokhang*. The design and implementation of the War on Drugs in Davao City jailed or killed men, and the women bore the brunt of the aftermath. I suggest that these results provide a glimpse of what the nationwide campaign might

look like to local communities beyond Duterte's term. The dire situation pushed Moro women in Angklahan and Black Beach to dare to witness and confront their own neighbours, their local leaders, and the police, even if means additional burden and potential danger to themselves and their families. Faced with the task of mending and healing their households and communities, women like Tata and Jamila meaningfully contribute in addressing the drug problem in their communities.

The War on Terror

As the regional capital of Mindanao, Davao City is an important site of power and contestation. Moro armed groups allegedly bombed the Davao City Airport and the Sasa Wharf Seaport a month apart in 2003, and an overland terminal in 2005. There were 22 people killed and 155 wounded in the Davao airport bombing, which was blamed on the Jemaah Islamiyah, amid controversy over the Philippines' participation in the US-led War on Terror.[58] The government quickly blamed the insurgent group Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) for the wharf bombing that killed 16 and injured 46.[59] Meanwhile, the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) claimed responsibility for the bombing of the Davao City Overland Transport Terminal that killed a boy and wounded five others. These incidents prompted Davao officials to further militarise the city.

More recently, in the evening of 2 September 2016, a bomb blew up at the Roxas night market, killing 14 and injuring 70 others. The ASG claimed responsibility for this bombing and, soon, Davao authorities found that it was in collaboration with the Dawlah Islamiya led by the Maute brothers. In response, the national government declared a 'State of National Emergency on Account of Lawless Violence in Mindanao' in all of Mindanao. Under the State of Emergency, the government deployed army and

[58] The US military presence in Mindanao is part of the post-2001 Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines.
[59] Later, mutineers pointed to Defense Secretary Joel Reyes and AFP Chief Intelligence Victor Corpuz as the bombing masterminds. The government then promised to drop charges against the MILF (Jubair 2007:85).

police to suppress all forms of lawless violence in Mindanao and to undertake measures to prevent violence from spreading to other parts of the Philippines. It also acknowledged the threat of further terror attacks by lawless elements in other parts of the country, including the metropolitan areas. Nevertheless, the militarisation of urban areas in Mindanao was not able to prevent the ASG and Dawlah Islamiya from occupying Marawi City from May to October 2017 (see Gunaratna 2017).

Rather than discounting any threat that Davao City may face from terrorist activities, in this section, I am adding to the literature on ordinary Moros' experience of the War on Terror. Expounding on the economic, political, and emotional relationships introduced in earlier chapters, I build the argument that the Davao City military forces' conflation of drugs and terrorism legitimises the harassment and extrajudicial killing of Moro men. Yet, where militant Moro men were tagged as terrorists or peace spoilers, I show how Moro women stepped up as leaders to defend and protect their communities.

Integrated shadow economies

Shadow economies have a long history in Mindanao, though they were not initially hidden or prohibited. In precolonial sultanates until the early years of the American occupation of the Philippines, Moro datus garnered the most profits from the traffic of people and goods in broad daylight (Warren 1985). Foreign traders have historically trafficked opium and gunpowder through Mindanao. Historian James Francis Warren (1985:21) however notes that beyond Tausug aristocrats in the early Sulu Sultanate (1772–1775), opium was 'never used' and 'not in great demand'.[60] The Spanish colonisers fought the Moro wars under the pretext of anti-piracy (Majul 1999), but it was the American colonisers who forced the unregulated trade through Mindanao into the shadows by labelling it as slavery and piracy.

[60] In 1814, Sulu consumed six chests of opium and by 1839, up to 25–30 chests of 100–120 pounds each year (Warren 1985:22).

In the early American colonial occupation, Lara (2014:149) argues that the terms of the 1899 Kiram-Bates Treaty gave the impression that 'some economic activities such as slavery were permissible so long as they were out of sight and out of reach, laying the ground for future evasive strategies among the elites'.[61] When the treaty was abrogated in 1904, elites found direct relations with the military authorities for businesses beyond the scope of colonial regulation and taxation such as gambling, production of weapons, human trafficking, and illegal sale of former communal lands to settlers (Lara 2014:151–52). Institutional, geographical, and political factors account for the resilient shadow economy from the colonial period to independence in 1946, and its persistence today. Lara maintains that the Mindanao shadow economy flourishes because the informal economy intertwines with clan institutions that developed close connections with the central state, and due to the weak fiscal authority of the central state, the porous borders with neighbouring countries, and the persistence of conflict from 1969. In fact, Lara underscores, the shadow economy is interchangeable with Mindanao's 'real economy'.

In Mindanao, traffic in arms and kidnap for ransom enable the ASG to maintain activities that the Philippine government brands as 'terrorism'. Moving away from their initial ideological stance, the ASG has resorted to kidnap for ransom activities since the early 1990s, using the profits to upgrade their boats and expand their support networks. Retired AFP Colonel Nelson Estares mirrored the prevailing state notion in describing the ASG as terrorists who used impoverished Moro communities to hide their captives (Estares 2017). Yet the Arroyo government in 2007 and 2008, after years of waging war against the ASG in the Philippines' War on Terror, declared that the group was a diminishing assortment of gangs (Ugarte 2010:383, 395). Like Eduardo Ugarte (2008, 2009, 2010), who dispelled the notion that the ASG are radical terrorists, Eric Gutierrez (2013:141) argues that the ASG is better understood as a resilient network of criminal entrepreneurs who are embedded in local communities

[61] In this treaty between the United States and the Sultanate of Sulu, US colonisers recognised Muslim customs and traditions, but also provided for slaves to purchase their freedom.

and interdependent with powerful state and non-state actors. The ASG's resilience was also due to the fact that they used all possible networks to garner support. Recently, the ASG pledged allegiance to the Islamic State and accessed international ideological and financial support.

Links between the drug trade and terror activities has been made for Latin America and Central Asia. Scholars have written about the insurgent group Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia's regulation and direct participation in the cocaine trade as a strategic response to pressures from paramilitaries and narcotics traffickers (Norman 2018; Otis 2014). In Central Asia, the opium economy thrived in the collapse of the Afghanistan state (Goodhand 2005). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2019) speculated that even a small percentage of Afghanistan's opium harvest, estimated at USD 3.1 billion in 2006, was sufficient to carry out terrorist acts. In Mindanao, Cagoco-Guiam and Schoofs (2013) describe the prolonged conflict and weak state as favourable conditions for the illicit drug economy. It is to be expected that in areas where the state is weak, and where wars and conflicts are ongoing, shadow economies and armed groups will develop a symbiotic relationship (Schoofs 2014).

Yet in the Philippines, no direct link has been established between drugs and terrorism before President Rodrigo Duterte came to power under the platform of addressing the Philippines' 'drug problem'. On 23 May 2017, the military's attempt to arrest ASG leader and ISIS-appointed emir of Islamic forces in the Philippines, Isnilon Hapilon, led to Dawlah Islamiya's siege of Marawi City. More than 400,000 people living in Marawi and surrounds were displaced and 1,000 militants were killed in the subsequent conflict that lasted five months. Duterte quickly claimed that drugs were fuelling extremism in Marawi, and in September 2017 released a 'drug matrix' of politicians and drug lords whom he claimed to have financed the siege (Philstar.com 2017). International Alert Executive Director, Francisco Lara Jr., affirmed the president's analysis that money from drug deals, extortion, and ransom payments from families of kidnap victims allowed the Maute group to lay siege to Marawi

in 2017 (Dancel 2017). The Institute for Policy Analysis of Conflict (IPAC 2017) reports, however, that ISIS directly funded the Marawi Siege.

President Duterte's response to the Marawi Siege was to immediately implement Martial Law throughout Mindanao through Presidential Proclamation 216. The military operations clearing Marawi following the siege allegedly seized 11 kilos of shabu and uncovered evidence of drug money (Dancel 2017). In June 2017, security officers at a checkpoint in Davao City captured a Maute patriarch, who was wanted for involvement in the Siege (Lopez 2017). The link between drugs and terrorist activities, Moro homelands and Mindanao cities like Davao was in part made through the shadow economy, but it was also forged in official Duterte administration policy and popular news.

Who are the terrorists?

In Davao City, The Task Force Davao (TFD) leads action against terrorism. TFD was created in 2003, primarily to keep terrorists out of Davao City. TFD is classed as a Special Citizen Armed Force Geographical Unit (CAFGU) Active Auxiliaries under the operational control of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP). Local government units or companies can also employ it to secure areas or business establishments. The TFD consists of soldiers, militiamen and volunteers, and it works with the city police in tasks such as intelligence gathering and checkpoint operations. The 10th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army absorbed the task force in 2006. In a sense, the paramilitary group is the military presence in the urban areas of Davao City, whose members are tasked to do community service, intelligence work and control checkpoints, while regular military units engage the New People's Army in more rural parts of the city. In 2019, 'aside from preventing terrorism', TFD reported apprehending 84 individuals involved in illegal drugs with ₱4.7 million worth of illegal drugs seized (Revita 2019a). In TFD's recent work against terrorism, they have also thrown in a campaign against drugs.

In the communities I engaged in, I observed the TFD holding medical and dental missions sponsored by corporate or civic groups. But a particularly striking TFD activity I encountered was a village meeting about the War on Drugs and terrorism. Early in my fieldwork, I was in a Moro household when members of the community were called to a public meeting. Initially, the attendees sat randomly before a stage at the village basketball court. They were then asked to sit in separate groups – the Muslims to the left and the Christians to the right of the stage. There were about 50 adults in attendance, plus the odd researcher and spies in plain clothes on the periphery of the crowd. Around us stood officers from the TFD in fatigue uniforms. The first main speakers in the public meeting spoke about preventing the spread of drugs in the community. The last speakers spoke about preventing the spread of terrorism, as if terrorism was already a problem there. The TFD was scheduled do similar meetings in all villages with Moro populations. Both drugs and terrorist activities may be a problem in Davao City, but it struck me that the TFD was linking drugs and terrorism in its campaign, and was profiling Moros as both potential drug traders and terrorists.

Moros in general have been primary suspects for terrorism-related crimes in Mindanao and the Philippines. As part of the US-led War on Terror, several perpetrators of high-profile terrorist attacks have been identified as Muslim men from Mindanao, but the government has tended to identify this entire demographic group as a source of threat. For instance, after the bombings in Davao in 2003 and 2004, the police and paramilitary cracked down on Moro communities in the city and bombed three mosques (Malan and Solomon 2012:64). After the 2016 bombing in Roxas Boulevard and the 2017 Marawi Siege, Moro communities were again suspected of harbouring criminals. A day after the 2017 Martial Law was declared, 250 people were rounded up in a Maranao-majority village for not carrying ID cards (Javier 2017). Similar searches were not carried out in other villages in Davao City, indicating that ethnicity was a major factor in identifying someone as a suspect in the War on Terror. Rounding up the Maranaos in Davao City was further proof that the military suspected the links between Maranaos in Lanao and Maranaos in Davao City, and were focused on the constant movement of

people in Mindanao. Yet there has been no proof that Moros in Davao were connected with terrorist activities in the city.

In fact, even without the TFD campaigning for them to be on the TFD side, Moros in Davao City are the city's best allies against Islamic State-related groups. A community leader shared with me that one evening in August 2017, locals in Black Beach observed that a large, fast boat about 100 metres from the seawall had tried to land along the Davao coast. Not responding to light signals known to fisherfolk in the vicinity, locals alerted the police coast guard. The fast craft had left when the coast guard arrived, and the estimated 15 people who were on board were not identified. The locals suspected that ISIS members escaping Marawi may have tried to contact villagers in their area, but Moro migrants themselves foiled their plans.

New Moro women leaders

When the state tagged militant Moro men as terrorists or peace spoilers, they became legitimate targets of the state. The United Nations Working Group on Terrorism (2002:6) expressed that labelling opponents as terrorists offered a time-tested technique to delegitimise and demonise them. The strategy thus threatened groups critical of the administration into silence or submission. In this subsection, I reflect on the life stories of Amirah Lidasan and Bai Ali Indayla, two women leaders, to explore how and why they lead militant Moro organisations. In doing so, I highlight Moro women's agency in widening and deepening the peace process in Mindanao.

In her current role as National President of the Moro political party Suara Bangsamoro, Amirah Lidasan reflected, 'The concept of terrorism obligated men to take the back seat, and women the front seat'.[62] When Moro men speak up, they risk being branded or suspected by governments as being from the

[62] Suara Bangsamoro was formed in 2002, and in 2004 contested in the partylist representation in the Philippine Congress with Amirah Lidasan as a nominee, but lost.

MNLF, MILF, ASG, or associated with extremist groups.[63] Or, if they speak, raising any of a litany of concerns and seek the government to stop the war, fellow Moro men criticise them as an all-talk weakling. 'After all,' Amirah commented, 'macho men would like to tell the government to bring on the war! They don't want to be seen as *reklamador* [a protester who does not act]'. On behalf of Suara, Amirah can speak eloquently during rallies and she can petition the government to stop war in Mindanao.

Class, clan, and educational background all have a bearing on Amirah's opportunity to speak as a Moro. Amirah comes from an elite family of mixed Iranun and Maguindanao ethnicity. Her adoptive parents were respected professionals who explained to their daughters the Mindanao situation. Amirah grew up in an MNLF and MILF hotbed in Maguindanao where she was exposed to guns and warlords, but also to MILF women's committee meetings. Early on, she also learned about the 'mother of the MNLF revolution', Desmonda Tan, an intellectual and first wife of Nur Misuari.

In Manila, where Amirah studied, she was the only hijab-wearing Muslim in class (this was during the Islamic resurgence) and took it upon herself to represent Moros. The hijab pushed her to play a leadership role because she was identified as Moro, and she felt obliged to introduce her culture, religion and struggle. She contrasted this to the experience of her brothers, one of whom was given 'The Best Christian Award' at the La Salle University. This meant that boys and men blended in with non-Muslims in Metro Manila, while hijab-wearing girls and women were more likely to experience discrimination. At the University of the Philippines, Amirah learned more about the left-wing national democratic movement, which to her had a holistic view of the Moro struggle.

[63] One example is Amirah's colleague Jerome Abas, who was denied entry to the United States in 2017. Jerome is a Moro and Chairperson of Sandugo People's Alliance, an organisation of indigenous peoples and Moros in the Philippines founded in 2006. In contrast, Amirah was able to go to the United States in 2019 to speak about human rights violations against Moros in the Philippines.

Through exercising her leadership, Amirah hopes that Moros in Suara Bangsamoro can become more conscious of gender inequality. Amirah says that it was others who urged her to speak:

> Sometimes they are patronizing when people tell me, 'Sister, speak for us because you are the one knowledgeable on the topic', but I take the opportunity to speak because what I say is not nonsense and they won't admit it, but they are listening to me. So let us say that I am here because of this abnormal time when Moro men are accused of being ASG and they think, I can defend myself [against attacks] (A. Lidasan 2017).

Some Moro men, however, accused Amirah of enjoying the limelight and not giving more to the Moro cause. Instead of confronting her, they went through her family. Amirah's father defended her and pointed out that Amirah was doing what the men were not, and that the men were hiding behind Amirah: 'Who among you can do what she does, being so exposed that it seems like a gun is pointed at her every day?' The way he composed the rebuttal alluded to the Hadith that says women can lead if she is the most qualified person for the job (al-Mu'jam al-Kabir 785 in Elias 2013). Her father's comment further alluded to the Muslim elite's high regard for *purdah* or women's seclusion. To her immediate family, the media and other attention Amirah gets does not mean fame but vulnerability.

According to members of her extended clan who are active in the MILF, Amirah needed 'reformation'. 'When [my MILF uncles] found out I was an activist, they told my mother that they could detain me in Camp Abubakar to straighten me out.[64] I was so annoyed!' Yet when Camp Abubakar was bombed in 2000, Amirah with her Moro organisation joined other civil society organisations to protest the US-backed war in Mindanao and the campaign to oust then President Joseph Estrada. Amirah recalled

[64] Camp Abubakar (al Siddique) was an MILF camp in Barira town, Maguindanao established in 1980. It is a self-sufficient entity with its own mosque, prison, schools, solar energy system, weapons factory, and residential and commercial areas. According to Amirah Lidasan, they also had their own rehabilitation centre, where her relatives wanted to admit her.

that to elide the US terrorist tag under Estrada's successor Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, 'the MILF switched in their framework, and even more after the MOA-AD. They even called Gloria the bringer of peace! So I had to remind them, no, she bombed Moro communities!'

Amirah criticised the MILF for, in the course of the MILF-Philippine government peace talks, narrowing their aspirations and the space for mass movement participation. Ideologically, the MILF placed itself in a difficult position when it conceded that its concept of development was the same with the Philippine government. As a result, MILF lost its militant constituencies to the BIFF. To Amirah, this is why the MILF had nowhere else to go but the Bangsamoro Basic Law route and the establishment of the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). It was a win for the Philippine state in its counterinsurgency campaign, she concluded (A. Lidasan 2017).

Many Moro male activists in the last two decades have gotten tired of 'the struggle' and have taken positions in government. Amirah said that others use that against her and taunt her: 'Look at your former *kasamas* [comrades]! They now have money and a car while you are still commuting. Why don't you stop rallying in the streets and just take up a post yourself?' She would answer back, irritated, 'Don't we [Moros] have any pride left?' To which they respond with more ridicule: 'What will you do with that pride? Just eat what is on the table.' Amirah's actions demonstrate her commitment to the Moro struggle for social justice.

The task Suara Bangsamoro has faced since the Marawi Siege of 2017 is huge. The organisation needs to attract young people who are disappointed with the peace talks, or angry at the state for bombing Marawi and for implementing military rule in Mindanao, and convince them to fight for their rights instead of joining ISIS-related groups. 'Through struggle, not destruction,' Amirah told a young journalist (Datuin 2017). In this way, legal organisations like Suara are crucial actors against extremism in Mindanao.

Women leaders are still unusual in Mindanao, but non-elite Moro women leaders are rarer still. In contrasting with Amirah's class and clan background, Bai Ali Indayla, the Secretary General of the Kawagib Alliance for the Advancement of Moro Human Rights, came from a peasant Maguindanao family that was displaced from Shariff Aguak in the 2000 all-out-war. From the seat of the Ampatuan clan's political power, Bai Ali's family moved to Cotabato City. She said that it was in Cotabato where she emerged as a student leader, a campus journalist, and an activist. She is now based in Davao City where she mobilises Moro women from communities like Angklahan, Black Beach, and Kawayan.

Bai Ali shared with me two stories about her brand of leadership in dealing with conservative Moros in Mindanao. The first was when Bai Ali was nominated as president of her university's student government, which was her first taste of the struggle to be heard as a Moro leader:

> The main challenge I faced when I ran for president of the student government was the College of Islamic Studies. They were the first to campaign against me, [saying] that I cannot be president because I am a woman. The *ustadz* and students in the college invoked the 'culture' card, but I also found out that the university administration campaigned against me too, because I was an activist. Activists don't believe in God! They tried to discredit me. Teachers even caught some students from the Islamic Studies college who were 'flying voters' [i.e. voted twice] so that I wouldn't win.
>
> A disqualification case was also filed against me, accusing me of being a working student [which was not allowed] and that I campaigned ahead of the campaign period – but these were proven false. They even delayed canvassing so there would be opportunity to rig the elections. In the end, they were not able to disqualify me, not able to steal the ballots, and I won the elections. Our university had a first female [student government] president (Indayla 2017).

As student body president, Bai Ali was faced with a school administration that was antagonistic and she had to work with male student leaders. 'I was really assertive. I showed that leadership is not about gender but how you take up the interests of the students you lead. You don't have anything to fear as a woman if you have the rest of the students behind you.' This was the case when she led students in publicising a complaint against a college dean who sexually abused a female student. The administration got angry that the students did not keep the case quiet to make an amicable settlement possible. In the end, the students were able to get the dean fired.

The second story concerned Bai Ali's work as a human rights advocate in Moro communities. Bai Ali recounted a time when male community leaders urged her to speak about yet another all-out-war in 2008 before the men after the *Salah* prayers (Islamic ritual prayers performed five times daily). During prayers, men take up the space in front of the prayer room, clearly separated (usually with some physical divider like a curtain) from the women at the back of the space. 'My heart was pounding. Because I knew that women should not cross the [space-diving] line…. What I appreciated in the community is that they listened to what I was saying, about the all-out-war.'

I asked Bai Ali if her religious practice has ever been questioned. 'No, because all my life and practice has always been with Muslim communities.' As part of her organisation, Kawagib, the issue was not her religious practice but what Kawagib was fighting for. What about her peasant background, was that ever an issue as a Moro leader? Bai Ali recognised that her leadership was possible because of the kind of organisations she had been involved in: i.e. those that value a leader's capacity and commitment more than one's family background.

Bai Ali recently moved to Davao City and was still learning Cebuano when I met her, but I noticed that when she spoke in public protests, she moved or fired up the audience.[65] Bai Ali reflected, 'My credibility as a leader came from my own experience of the war and displacement. This is why I become emotional when I speak at rallies because I draw from my own experiences of militarisation and worsening poverty.' Bai Ali said that when she was recording human rights violations related to conflict as part of her work, she remembered some details from her own experience of conflict and displacement:

> We left our home in the late 1990s to move to Cotabato, it was a part of my life that I had forgotten because the city was far removed from farm life. When I first documented human rights violations with Kawagib, I was interviewing a mother who said she had to drag her kids as they ran because the bombs were falling. She did not know if anyone in her family was hit – then it hit me. I can hear my mother say, 'run! Hide in the mosque so you won't get hit!' What is sad is that – that is the situation of Moros for decades. That is why we Moros need to fight so our situation can change (Indayla 2017).

Comparing her experience in human rights work and community organising in Davao City and in Maguindanao, Bai Ali said that both the situation and the geographic characteristics differ:

> Davao City feels larger and pockets of Moro communities are more spread out. Here [in Davao City], the conflicts are related to housing and the means to live. In Maguindanao, direct violations of human rights can be felt. Almost every day in Maguindanao and North Cotabato, I would be on QRTs [quick reaction teams] because another Moro has been held captive,

[65] Unlike other Moro migrants in this dissertation who moved pulled by economic opportunities, Bai Ali moved to Davao because of her political commitment to her organisation.

> another bombing, a civilian was killed, or an evacuation. The immediate problem is heavy militarisation (Indayla 2017).

Bai Ali's work in Davao City enabled her to work with Moros from other ethnic groups. For her, the Moro as a people is forged in their common fight against government oppression. She gave the example of the War on Terror as being an attack on Moro communities, which does not distinguish between ethnicities. In her work, she is interested to organise and serve all Moro women.

Amirah and Bai Ali are two women leaders who emerged because of the War on Terror. Their own life stories reveal how the War on Terror itself has shaped their life trajectories and decisions, their economic situations and their political commitments. It also defined their emotional relationships with other Moro individuals and the Moro people as a collective. In unarmed social movements in Mindanao, women leaders emerge when men are branded as extremists and in the wake of massive human rights violations that prod communities to organise themselves.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I demonstrated that Moros engaged in the vibrant shadow economy in Mindanao to provide for their families. In the national and local government's crackdown on drugs and terrorism, the military, police, and vigilantes targeted ordinary Moro men. In the aftermath of drug-related killings, the state does nothing more than stigmatise the families of those killed. Tata Abdul and women in Angklahan engaged in a 'jihad in the community' that entailed sharing their own resources, and physical, emotional and mental energy to develop community-based drug prevention among youth. Some *barangay* officials, local government leaders and police officers acknowledged their efforts, but

have no funding to extend. Two decades of lack of official support for women's reproductive role has contributed to the poverty of Moro women in Davao City.

When the state branded Moro men as terrorists, Moro women stepped up as leaders in progressive Moro organisations in Mindanao. Yet, with the War on Terror and continuous militarisation of Mindanao, they staked their own lives and their families when taking a critical stance against the state. For Amirah Lidasan and Bai Ali Indayla, the struggle is worthy because it serves the Moro people and actually addresses layers of social injustice in Mindanao. To support their roles, they invoke progressive interpretations of Islamic teachings and the radical equality they believe women and men are promised in Islam. Amirah and Bai Ali's work is potentially more effective against extremism than the government's militarisation of Mindanao, and helps normalise Moro women's leadership.

In their affirmation of their ethnicity and membership in the Bangsamoro community amidst the challenges posed by the War on Drugs and the War on Terror, Moro women challenged segregation and conservative gender roles. Their motivations betray their commitment to defend and develop their communities. Ordinary Moro women in the community shared with me their dreams of sending their children to college and improving their homes. Plumbing and sanitation, safe electrical wirings, and access roads were on their list of community improvements. Enterprising adults were keen on microloans that had less severe terms than the five-six scheme. A man who had had an accident walking on wooden planks at night underscored the need for safer walkways. Young people were interested in spaces for sports, a community library and affordable internet access. This was why the Mega Harbour Project was attractive to residents of Angklahan, Black Beach, and Kawayan in dangling the possibility of improving their communities. In contrast to the War on Drugs and War on Terror, the government can address both the problem of drugs and terrorist activities in Mindanao through a war on poverty. The method is simple: the government does its job of providing secure housing, social services, and livelihood opportunities.

Part III.

6 Gender order in war and peace

The Moros encountered in this dissertation have provided evidence of how a gender order as a social structure constrained their lives. They also articulated how they affirmed or pushed the boundaries of this structure through their own gender practices. The Moro gender order is thus a dynamic structure, but also a discourse (i.e. a way of talking about-and-acting upon the world). As the sum total of patterns of gender relations in a particular society, a gender order can be visualised as an inventory of varied gender constructs. By a 'gender construct' I mean a distinctive articulation or framing of a gender relationship. In the case of my particular research, these gender constructs are expressed in Moros' portrayals of themselves and others. A gender construct might thus be an image, description, characteristic, or role of particular women and men in Moro homes, communities, in Mindanao, the Philippines, and in the world. In the narratives presented in preceding chapters, we encountered many such gender constructs. Some of them were particular to certain individuals, but others recurred so frequently that they seem to be constitutive components of the wider gender order in Mindanao.

My analysis of a Moro gender order in this chapter thus proceeds through three steps of discourse analysis that respectively support three components of my dissertation argument. First, I start by building an inventory of the most prominent gender constructs that appeared in the narratives we have considered in preceding chapters. The narratives were examined through the gender substructures of labour, power, and cathexis; thus, the constructs we arrive at are also economic, political, and emotional/sexual. I differentiate among gender constructs at different institutions, and note the place and periods where they occurred to chart the contexts and changes over time. It is important to ground my analysis of the discursive construction of gender relations and practices in the material world, because gender is lived in physical bodies that relate to physical realities. I will show

that just as gender inequality contributed to Moro landlessness, landlessness shapes gender constructs. I do so by studying the precarity or the perpetual state of emergency landlessness entails, and by showing how gender practices shift as a result of conflicts and displacements Moros frequently confront.

Second, I explain how some of these gender constructs cohere into distinctive femininities and masculinities that either reinforce, are in an ambiguous relationship to, or challenge the dominant gender order. As collective patterns that go beyond individuals, they constitute ideologies of what women and men aspire to or embody. In this discussion, I am particularly interested in what I call Moro masculinity and insurgent femininity. I offer that understanding Moro duty can illuminate Moro men's and women's participation in varied wars: insurgent conflicts, the War on Drugs, the War on Terror, and even domestic conflict (see Figure 5). Thus, I study Moro masculinity and insurgent femininity to show how the gender order sustains recruitment and defines the participation of Moros in the many wars in Mindanao.

In the third and final section, I explain how the gender constructs that I identify through the analysis – and the wider gender order in which they are embedded – do not just operate within the social world, but also have a productive, and often destructive, effect on political action. I do this by looking at how the state and armed groups' actions create the subject of a 'disposable' Moro man and 'resilient' Moro woman, and how these in turn shape the way conflicts are addressed in Mindanao, through the language and conduct of war, and in peacebuilding.

Through the three steps, I sort through constructs and their contexts, uncover ideologies, and access the discourse of gender inequality expressed in a Moro gender order. Understanding the current Moro gender order can illuminate Moro peoples' landlessness, their recruitment to wars, and the way conflicts have been discussed and addressed in Mindanao. The particular gender order in Mindanao is

therefore constitutive of the conflicts here: it is a structure and a discourse of inequality that defines the forms of, and participation in war and peacebuilding in the region.

Moro gender order across wars

In this section, I identify a Moro gender order by compiling Moro gender constructs from the narratives in previous chapters and analysing the contexts in which they emerge. Focusing on Moros of the same class allows me to highlight the difference gender makes to Moro experiences of conflict. My inventory differentiates constructs about Moro men and women at the levels of the household, the street, the Bangsamoro, the Philippine state, and internationally. I am conscious that historical and material experiences shape individuals' and institutions' gender constructs. In fact, specific gender constructs are linked to geo-political processes, including conquest and colonisation and economic imperatives of a particular stage in the world economy (Morrell 2001). Thus, I note references to the times and places where these constructs were shaped.

Table 3 presents an inventory of Moro constructs in this dissertation. Each row contains paired constructs of Moro men and Moro women, each connected to the other in that they exhibit degrees of opposition or complementarity. For example, the colonial or postcolonial state's depiction of Moro men as 'violent fanatics' contrasts with its depiction of Moro women as victims, which was used to legitimise war and other interventions. In most depictions, unequal relations are apparent. For instance, even if both men and women are embroiled in the War on Drugs, men are generally depicted as being killed or jailed as a result of deliberate targeting, whereas women are said to be jailed or killed only as casualties caught in the crossfire. The exceptions are the constructs of Moro men and women as partners in providing for their families, and as witnesses and allies in Davao City's War on Drugs.

Table 3. Inventory of Moro gender constructs

Level	Moro Men	Moro Women	Reference Chapter, Section, Time and Place
Regional/ State	Loyal supporters	Imposters	Ch2, S1, Precolonial Mindanao
	Violent fanatics	Victims	Ch 2, S2, Colonial-current, Mindanao
	Revolutionaries, rebels	Mothers	Ch2, S2, 1972-current, Mindanao
	Followers	(Missing, Downplayed)	Ch 2, S3, in texts
Family/ Household	Decisive participants	Unlucky casualties	Ch 3, S1-2 (1968-86) Muslim Mindanao
	Strategic	Follows elders	
	Active actors	Spontaneous supporters	
	Abductor	Abducted	Ch 3, S3, (1972-present) ARMM & Davao City
	Polygamous	Rejects but rationalise polygamy	
	Disciplines women	Fights back, flees violence	
	MNLF members	MNLF officer	
	Adventurers	Prioritises family	Ch 4, S1, Davao City (1950-90s, Women - 1990-now)
	Pioneers	Overseas worker	
	Entrepreneurs	Decisive breadwinner	
Community/ Village, Street	Submits to authority	Invokes legal mechanisms	Ch 4, S2, Davao City
	Pays for sex	Sells sex; cheated, angry wife	Ch 4, S3
	Targeted, killed, jailed	Jailed, raped, killed as casualty	Ch 5, S1, Davao City
	Victim, witness, ally	Witness, negotiator	
	Daring drug dealer	Community volunteers against drugs	
Global/ Interstate	Terrorist	Militant leaders	Ch 5, S2, Philippines, World

The image of Moro women as 'unlucky casualties' or Moro men as 'terrorists' in the conflicts in Mindanao are simultaneously gender, ethnic, and class constructs. These constructs hold in the stories of both the actors in conflict themselves, but also in community gossip, media representations, state policies (e.g. Estrada's and Arroyo's all-out-wars), and the United States' War on Terror. Further afield, they are mirrored in the international system, for example in UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and international aid agencies' assumptions about women and girls being (only) victims in wars and

inherently peaceful (Gibbings 2011; Pratt and Richter-Devroe 2011; Shepherd 2011).[66] This is an example of a pair of constructs that are reinforced at multiple levels. Constructs like the 'overseas worker' also link the household to the world economy. I concur with Anna Agathangelou (2004; Agathangelou and Ling 2004:519), that the reproductive labour of female migrants from income-poor states underwrites both household relations (maids, madams) and intimacies in other social spaces (pimps, prostitutes, clients).

Domestic violence, which is typically occluded from the story of conflict in Mindanao as told by both academics and journalists, is a power relationship that is crucial in understanding family dynamics in Mindanao, and which is shaped by constructs of Moro men and women in conflict situations. In the family as an institution, Moro men portrayed themselves as decisive and strategic while depicting Moro women and girls as casualties, depriving women and girls of agency when discussing them. Moro women, in turn, often stated that, as girls, they dutifully followed their elders. When women spoke about joining or helping armed movements, they described their role as mere supporters. The disparity has economic, political, and emotional/sexual implications in Moro couple relationships. In the Abdul family story, for example, the men disciplined the women by deploying physical, psychological and emotional violence. Women have fought this violence through active resistance and retaliation (in Nora's case who, it will be remembered, withheld sex, and Tata's case, who physically hit back). There is also some internalised sexism, as in Amina's acceptance of men's adultery.

I now draw attention to the way the constructs shifted through different times and places. The varying relationships provide us insight into the agency of individuals and vitality of institutions. Let's zoom in on the constructs 'MNLF members' and 'MNLF officers'. During his own Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) training in the early 1970s, the Maguindanao man Esmael perceived that the women in his

[66] Feminist IR scholar Laura Shepherd (2011) noted that the subsequent Resolutions add a discursive representation of women as actors, agents, and heroines.

cohort did not train as rigorously as the men (for example, they did not carry out tunnel survival techniques). While telling this story, his partner Taya interjected that this was the first time that Moro women started wearing trousers, 'because it is difficult to run wearing a *malong*.' By the time she was active in the MNLF 35 years later, Tausug Tata insisted that the men and women got the same training in combat. Tata wore the full fatigue uniform of an officer. Tata could be an officer in the MNLF because her household supported her training in the MNLF, and the MNLF itself valued her skills. Perhaps the MNLF had also changed in the last five decades, as women officers like Tata influenced the internal dynamics within MNLF camps.

Of course, not all of the experiences of Moros match the dominant constructs, as demonstrated by the examples of boys' and men's vulnerability in conflict situations (that Rashid and Jerry suffered), and women's active participation in armed struggle (Taya, Amina, Tata). It is therefore useful to account for outlier portrayals of Moro women as MNLF officers and as militant leaders in movements against the War on Drugs and the War on Terror. In doing so, I illustrate how in their own lives, Moro women and men have been challenging dominant constructs and narratives about themselves, even as they are subjected to the gender substructures governing labour, power, and cathexis. Their challenges can potentially transform the structure of gender inequality by confronting the narratives and ideologies about gender as well as the contexts in which they are produced and reproduced. The contexts in which the gender constructs were created across places (rural, urban Mindanao) and times (Marcos' Martial Law to Duterte's Martial Law) are landlessness and the resulting precarity.

Precarity

Precarity, for philosopher Judith Butler (2010:25), is the differential distribution of precariousness to populations suffering from failing economic and social support and distinctly subject to injury, violence and death. Precarity describes a political condition of urban poor Moros' unjustified uncertainty in life that results from landlessness. The intermeshing of precarity and conflict is not coincidental but

deliberate. As Butler (2010:xix) puts it: 'War is in the business of producing and reproducing precarity, sustaining populations on the edge of death, sometimes killing its members, sometimes not; either way it produces precarity as the norm of everyday life.' People in the midst of war often do not know where they will get the next meal, they face the constant fear of being evicted or accosted by armed men like the police or military, and they find it difficult to plan for the future. Such experiences are common among the poorest Moros in both conflict areas and in urban poor communities.

People forged the gender constructs I inventoried above not just at specific points in time but in precarious living situations in the context of insurgent wars, the War on Drugs, the War on Terror, and domestic 'wars' in Mindanao. Hunger can take different forms: as well as involving a lack of food supplies, it is a lack of healthy or good quality food, arising as a result of unemployment. The armed men are sometimes soldiers, paramilitary, gangs, private armies, or the police, but they can also be people's own loved ones. In these tough situations, men and women can join the MNLF, leave their family to work abroad, or be employed in the underground drug economy. All of these choices are, in different ways, responses to the inherent precarity of life during a time of conflict.

Maranao Rashid explained that men involved in the dangerous business of drugs are desperate and can take a fatalist gamble, risking their lives to earn money:

> A man will do everything he can to get money so his family can live…. It doesn't matter if he might die, or if he might get jailed, as long as his family lives. That is how it is with us. It doesn't matter if I die as long as my family can get a chance. That is how much I love my family (R. Basman 2017).

Thus, Moro men become 'daring drug dealers', the image of which is actively created in the very condition of desperation in poverty. In contrast, Moros used other depictions to describe elites

engaged in the drug trade: greedy or devious drug lords who exploit others for easy money. In turn, poor Moro men are 'targeted, killed, jailed' while the big fish remain at large in the War on Drugs.

Unusual times call for extraordinary measures. Men and women do what they need to do to survive. In his work on impoverished urban communities in Chicago and Paris, Wacquant (2007:62) had observed that to subsist day to day, people living in ghettos 'have little choice but to "moonlight" on jobs, to "hustle" for money through a diversity of schemes, or to engage in illegal commerce of various kinds.' The illegal commerce in Mindanao is wide-ranging, and in urban poor communities includes the drug trade, human trafficking, and prostitution. While men dominate the drug trade, girls and women are primarily embroiled in human trafficking and prostitution in Mindanao.

Experiencing precarity, people typically make judgments about means of survival on the basis of a very small pool of potential choices – choices which are shaped by the social milieu and gender ideals in which they operate. For Talikala, a non-government activist organisation providing psychosocial and other support to women and girls involved in sex work in Davao City, prostitution hits the poor, marginalised groups in society, and mostly women and children. In a play therapy that Talikala conducted in 2017, young girls aged 14–15 from poor rural families reported having been in the trade for up to five years, as they had taken it upon themselves to help feed their families. One 14-year-old girl shared that her parents were okay with her 'selling herself', as long as she insisted that customers use condoms and she brought money home (Ampog 2017). Talikala believes that because there are few options open for these girls, they will stay in prostitution to contribute to their households.

Gender inequality in precarity creates the conditions in which young girls from poor households are more vulnerable to sexual violence and internalise the need to help their families. Jeanette Ampog, Director of Talikala, explains how the high value the general Filipino population gives to virginity figures in the stories their clients tell about their entry into prostitution:

> How would a child who was raped understand why [our society expects her] to be a virgin when she has been a victim? And the saying that [virginity] is the best gift to your husband-to-be – makes the rape victim wonder – what else can I give? It would be better if I sell [sex] – I would even have some money. We have a saying, *nakaligo ka na, magkuskos ka na rin* [literally, when in the shower, why not go further and scrub yourself? In this case, meaning, those who have been raped can further endure the exploitation of their bodies and sexuality]. They are easy to recruit [into prostitution] because their self-esteem is very low, they have a lot of unresolved personal issues, and they have nowhere else to go (Ampog 2017).

For Ampog, prostitution in poor countries like the Philippines is a human rights violation. Even when international funders are dangling money for them to support legalisation of the sex industry locally so they can better monitor HIV rates, Talikala insisted that that they 'will never support legalising violence against women and abdicating the government of their responsibility to protect women and children' (Ampog 2017). Ampog accurately described how gender inequality and precarity act violently upon girls and women in the poorest communities in Davao City and the Philippines. Yet, in light of this precarity, Talikala and the girls and women they support in Davao City may have different views on the legalisation of commercial sex work.

While bleak, the extraordinary circumstances associated with war and precarity also provide room for some Moros to challenge dominant gender practices. According to Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) Minister for Social Work Raissa Jajurie, the norm in Moro families a hundred years ago was that only the male household heads worked. This is not the case today:

> Ideally, if you breastfeed a baby, your husband will pay you for this as there is an economic value to it. Women should not work outside [the home] unless you want to and that is agreed

> between the couple. If you earn anything, it is voluntary to share it with the husband and the children. In reality, everybody works because you cannot rely on a single income system. Men cannot feed everyone, especially in big Bangsamoro families (Jajurie 2016).

Most Moro men I spoke with in the Davao urban poor communities now accept Moro women's full employment outside the home, and abroad, in the context of neoliberal market economy demands that burgeoned in the late 20th century. In Mindanao today, family members pool their labour to help run the household. Recall that in Chapter 4, young Amina Abdul sold fish in the market to help her parents and siblings. Tata's unpaid care work as a pre-adolescent helped her family to have two streams of adult income. For the Kadera family, moving to Davao City allowed older children to contribute to their household through informal jobs. Farida Kadera left her children with her mother Fatima while she took a job in the Middle East. As these examples show, pooling paid and care work within the extended family is the new normal.

As the previous chapters illustrated, experiences of conflict and migration challenged gender roles and expectations through the decades. Mussolini Lidasan, the executive director of Al Qalam Institute of Islamic Identities and Dialogue in Southeast Asia and member of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority, observed:

> Conflict really changes so many things. In the early '70s to '90s, usually it was the men who went to work in the Middle East. But because of the conflict, men took up arms and became members of armed groups. So women were the ones in evacuation centres. Because of conflict, they could not build good houses, and the roles in the families also changed. Women are now the ones leaving for abroad. The women became the breadwinner (M. Lidasan 2017).

Conflict thus caused changes in gender practices and the labour structure of gender relations over time, including increased participation by women in political movements and economic activities, as well as the movement of people. Considering the limited jobs available, women like Amina Abdul and Farida Kadera went abroad to increase their household income. The economic opportunities that arose from urban migration and domestic and care work abroad in the 1990s and 2000s gave women economic power; new locations gave them space to take up new roles.

In the exigencies of precarity, the power substructure of gender also changes. Moro women lead the response to their identified needs. In this light, Moro women working in the Middle East in the 1990s became mass leaders who organised their fellow migrants to fight for their rights following the case of Sarah Balabagan, a young Moro worker who was tried in the Middle East for murdering her rapist. Militant Moro women claimed opportunities to lead their organisations in denouncing the US-led War on Terror when the government branded Moro men as 'terrorists' merely for criticising it (examples of Amirah Lidasan and Bai Ali Indayla in Chapter 5). To justify their position to conservative Muslims, progressive Moro women leaders like Amirah Lidasan invoked interpretations of the Qur'an that in 'unusual times' or in a 'state of war', women are allowed to take on roles as public leaders and in the armed movement.[67]

What happens when 'unusual times' or the 'state of war' extends through lifetimes, as it does in Mindanao? What happens when Moros always find themselves living in sites of conflict, no matter where they go? Many Moros tried to escape insurgent and clan conflicts in the ARMM by going to Davao City, only to find other sorts of conflicts once they arrived. Some Moros reflect on these dangerous and deadly encounters across rural and urban sites as unfortunate but ordinary circumstances that the poorest Moros just have to live with. In the life stories they shared with me,

[67] For example, even conservative Islamic scholars like Mohammed Arafa, author of *Women's Rights in Islam* (1980 in Mernissi 1996), interpreted women's active participation in battles during Prophet Muhammad's lifetime as acceptable as an alternative to the death of male Muslim soldiers in situations of emergency.

they spoke of precarity as '*laging balik sa pagkauno* [always going back to zero or to square one]', '*ganoon talaga* [normal, that's how it is]', and *jihad* (everyday struggle). In conflict and crisis situations, anthropologist Anna-Maria Walter (2014) finds a great creative potential for negotiation among peoples who have limited resources. I found the same creativity in Moro communities in Davao City, where Moro women invoked their duty of 'everyday jihad' and resourcefulness to be 'witnesses', 'allies', and 'leaders' in defence of their communities in the War on Drugs and the War on Terror.

While ongoing conflict and the attendant precarity changed some gender practices, it is important to note what has not (yet) changed. The Moro women working in the Middle East who found their voices as migrant worker leaders abroad realised that they were not respected as community leaders in their Mindanao hometowns. Parallel to Siapno's (2002) critique of women formerly involved in the national struggle, the migrant women had to cede leadership roles to male leaders in the community and go back to their domestic roles (A. Lidasan 2017). Both men and women bear the brunt of the conflict, but in qualitatively different ways. Men are recruited and killed in insurgent wars and the drug trade. Women suffer the burden of conflicts when their partners or parents are jailed or killed and they have to take on multiple roles and defend or rebuild their communities. In a patriarchal society, men discount or dismiss women's labour but rely on them in many ways. Such experiences show that despite internal and external pressures, gender inequality is a durable structure that has shaped family stories across generations.

In this section, I have inventoried gender constructs that figured in Moro family stories and examined shifts in gender practices through time and across rural and urban locations. I showed that the gender constructs are built to negotiate and survive the context of precarity generated by landlessness. Moro men and women faced different challenges and responded differently to crisis situations, and how they did so was expressed in changes in gender constructs over time. In the next section, I focus on

how Moros perceive 'duty' to examine Moro masculinity and insurgent femininity within a Moro gender order.

Moro masculinity and insurgent femininity

Describing a Moro gender order involves aggregating the constructs inventoried above with the organising logics of labour, power, and cathexis substructures and relating them to masculinity and femininity. I follow Mimi Schippers (2007:92) in referring to masculinity and femininity as contextually symbolic and culturally specific sets of meanings of what men and women are and should be. Thus, it is possible to study configurations of masculinities and femininities as *ideologies* that represent coherent sets of beliefs which people subscribe to and practice. For Todd Reeser (2010:21), ideologies are created and propagated through social forms like images, myths, and practices. Through repetition, such social forms can make ideologies seem natural and evade interrogation. Reeser (2010:20) further argues that in the same way that no single group or institution can be considered to create an ideology, no one group is responsible for constructing masculinity, even if some groups articulate and propagate it more than others. He gave the example of cinemas (casting particular males as heroes) and corporations (manufacturing military toys for young boys) as both producing military masculinity. As ideologies, we can examine how certain common beliefs and practices relate to specific masculinities and femininities, and understand their employment in conflicts and potential resolutions.

Instead of generating a typology of Moro men and women, to support one of my arguments in this dissertation, I only examine Moro masculinity and insurgent femininity to identify the historical relationships that recruit men and women in the conflicts in Mindanao. To be sure, there are multitudes of masculinities and femininities among Muslims in Mindanao that can be explored to

generate insights into the power relations that configure the Moro gender order.[68] This dissertation takes up the humbler task of highlighting what I call Moro masculinity and insurgent femininity based on my own fieldwork that helps explain Moro gender relationships and Moro men and women's participation in various wars. I use the label 'insurgent' for the specific Moro femininity I am examining because of its potential to challenge the Moro gender order.

To begin, I give a brief background of key ideas such as hegemonic masculinity and emphasised femininity to relate and contrast them with Moro masculinity and insurgent femininity. Next, I discuss divergent invocations of Moro duty among men and women to identify social and religious beliefs and practices that make a distinctive marginalised Moro masculinity. Finally, I analyse Moro duty as linked to aspirations towards social justice and insurgent femininity's radical potential to challenge the Moro gender order.

Hegemonic masculinity, emphasised femininity

In studying gender in a society, it is useful to identify the hegemonic form of masculinity among the multiple masculinities that typically reinforce or contrast each other. Raewyn Connell's (1987, 2005) concept of hegemonic masculinity helps clarify gendered power relations among men and illustrates the way masculinities legitimise a gender order. Hegemonic masculinity is 'the currently most honoured way of being a man, [which] required all other men to position themselves in relation to it, and it ideologically legitimated the global subordination of women to men' (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005:832). Hegemony is a form of dominance achieved through institutions that assumes the appearance of a universal truth or everyday common-sense, though it can also be

[68] For example, we might revisit Thomas Kiefer's (1972) 1960s ethnography and interpret his descriptions of Tausug Muslim leaders as having particular ideals that cohere into a headman masculinity, ordinary Tausug men as having a soldier masculinity, and the *bantut* Tausug men as embodying femininity. We may also speculate from writings about clans in Mindanao that the infamous Mohamad Ali Dimaporo (Bentley 1994), and the ruthless patriarchs of the Sinsuats (Beckett 1994) and the Ampatuans (Lara 2014) all embody a warlord masculinity.

supported by force (Connell and Messerschmidt 2005, following Gramsci). Schippers (2007:94) reformulated hegemonic masculinity to 'the qualities defined as manly that establish and legitimate a hierarchical and complementary relationship to femininity and that, by doing so, guarantee the dominant position of men and the subordination of women.' Studying hegemonic masculinity as ideology or a *political ideal* that mobilises and enables modes of representation helps prevent the slippage to describing a particular type of men as hegemonic (Elias and Beasley 2009:288). For my purpose, identifying hegemonic masculinity in Muslim Mindanao helps to socially locate a more common Moro masculinity and a distinct insurgent femininity.

The Philippines state formation in the early 20th century helped generate hegemonic masculinity in the Mindanao region. As explained in Chapter 1, the formation of the Philippine state subjugated the majority of Moro people, not least through the enforcement of new state land laws and neglect of social services provision. In this context, powerful clans accumulated lands for themselves and local politicians acted as brokers, representing Muslim populations in their geographic area to the Philippine state. The elite men heading these clans have profited from their positions of power in such a way that we may call them businessmen-politicians. In Muslim Mindanao, such individuals currently define the ideal, most honoured way of being a man. The image attached to this hegemonic masculinity is a generous provider to the clan and a persuasive conduit to the state. Their economic and political power means they can require all other men position themselves in relation to them, and, ideologically legitimates the subordination of women to men through their provision and protection. They experience privilege rather than precarity, and whereas for most Moros the forces shaping their life experiences often seem beyond their personal control, these men can often call the shots in their locales. In my analysis, the ideological businessman-politician is the hegemonic masculinity in contemporary Mindanao, in part because the Philippine state has itself not established hegemony, or at least credibility locally.

The Philippine government supports the hegemony of the businessman-politician masculinity through its endorsements of particular male leaders, its neglect of job creation and social services, and its war-making in Mindanao. The last three governments of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Benigno Aquino III, and Rodrigo Duterte all had partner businessmen-politicians in Mindanao whom they protected as long as the partners delivered votes and political support to their administrations. These same presidents also deemed these partner local politicians as exemplary Muslims, even while they mounted wars in Mindanao. The businessman-politician masculinity is an ideology that the state co-creates with actual businessmen-politicians who endeavour to perpetuate their positions of power in Mindanao. The media popularises the ideology by depicting local elites as noble partners of the national government.

Emphasised femininity is the direct complement of hegemonic masculinity. Femininities are formed in 'a double *context*' of the image and experience of a female body and the social definitions of a woman's place and cultural oppositions of masculinity and femininity (Connell 1987:179). Femininity can be emphasised in the way psychologists Sarah Murnen and Donn Byrne (1991:480) define hyperfemininity as an exaggerated adherence to a stereotypical feminine gender role. But more than a style, for Connell and Messerschmidt (2005), emphasised femininity is the most honoured way of being a woman in a particular society, requiring all women to position themselves in relation to it in a specific society. In the folk narratives and life stories shared with me in Mindanao, the emphasised femininity among Muslim women is the idea of the prayerful virgin bride.[69] This is reinforced in the wider Catholic-majority Philippine society, where the acceptable or 'authentic' femininity stems from socio-religious symbols such as the Madonna, and virginal martyr figures (Hilsdon 1995; Roces 2009). With associated virtues such as modesty, humility, and deference to men, the prayerful virgin bride femininity is idealised across groups and institutions as the good female Muslim.

[69] The ideal female marriage partner in the Maranao epic *Darangen* is 'not the powerful queen or the witch, but the devoted princess who gives her consent when her husband wants to take other wives to strengthen the clan and who would rather die than to be a source of shame to her clan' (Brecht-Drouart 2011:303).

Most Moro women who shared their life stories with me in Davao City explained that their families expected them to embody the emphasised femininity of the prayerful virgin bride, and as a result, they married early. For example, the Maguindanaos Karimah Kudarat, Taya Kudarat, and Fatima Kadera all used the term '*kasal dayon*' (a very short courtship, if at all, before marriage) to describe how they did not know their partners well before their marriage. The prospective groom approached male members of the potential bride's family to arrange the marriage after meeting her once or twice, also not knowing her well, but expecting that she would be a prayerful virgin. Fatima's daughter Farida also recalled that a decade ago, 'when my boyfriend followed me into my uncle's house [in Manila], my uncle told me: call your mother [in Mindanao]. It is unacceptable that you are together like this. You need to get married. So there, we were married right away.' While Moro women may subscribe to the ideal of the pure and prayerful virgin, their stories reflect more complex practices in their real lives.

Following Connell, I do not refer to emphasised femininity as 'hegemonic' as Schippers (2007) suggested, to avoid putting it on par with hegemonic masculinity. A particular femininity is emphasised to reinforce the position of hegemonic masculinity in the gender order. For example, the way Muslim men approached the father or other male relatives of the woman they wanted to marry affirms men's masculinity as legal guardians of women and girls in their family. Muslim women who embody emphasised femininity in Mindanao are further a source of family pride as they tend to have high symbolic capital as a 'fetishized measure of masculine reputation' (Thieme and Siegmann 2010:724). When they choose to marry, the families of pure and prayerful virgin brides expect a high dowry corresponding to their class status. We can recall from Chapter 3, how family representatives settling the dowry for Tata's marriage to Jamal engaged in two rounds of negotiation. In turn, high dowries or bride prices can be a barrier to men's marriage and facilitate their recruitment to armed groups in conflict areas (Hudson and Matfess 2017), supporting a kind of military masculinity. Indeed, after the first round of negotiations fell through, Jamal kept his combatant position in the MNLF until he got married. I agree with Schippers that the relationship between masculinity and femininity should be at

the centre of any analysis of gender hegemony, but I contend that we can do this analysis without calling emphasised femininity hegemonic.

I have so far described how hegemonic masculinity in the form of the ideal businessman-politician and the emphasised femininity in the ideal prayerful virgin bride are crucial ideological gender markers in the Bangsamoro. From these, we can begin to contrast and study the relative positions of a more widespread Moro masculinity, which Connell might call a marginalised masculinity, and an insurgent femininity that challenges dominant gender roles. Through the comparison, we can also see how the hegemonic masculinity in Mindanao that the Philippine state honours is different from the masculinities that social movements idealise. In the following, I examine divergent invocations of Moro duty among men and women to identify different sets of beliefs and practices that move and compel Moros to act, and thus shape their participation in wars.

Moro duty and Moro masculinity

Many of my Moro research participants employed gender constructs that combine a pan-ethnic Moro identity with an emphasis on religious duties that vary among men and women. Within the household, being a Moro *man* means one's duty is to provide for and protect the family; a Moro *woman*'s duty is to care for the family, mirroring a classic gender role theory dichotomy. Thus, it is no surprise that the hegemonic businessman-politician masculinity and emphasised prayerful virgin femininity in Mindanao have high currency. Schippers (2007:90) interrogates these naturalised and normalised complementary roles assigned to men and women and argues that the hegemonic significance of masculinity and femininity is in the symbolic quality content of categories 'man' (physically strong and authoritative) and 'woman' (physically weak and vulnerable). She concludes that heterosexual desire (erotic desire for the feminine object) is the basis of masculinity, and importantly, the basis of the difference between and complementarity of femininity and masculinity. In this light, we can see the

idealised variation in the perceived duty of Moro men and women to be reifying masculine hegemony in social practice.

Having acknowledged the hegemonic significance of the different duties that Moros associate with men and women, it is productive to analyse these with the historical and social contexts, the structures and institutions in which they arose. The emphasis on duty is a response to the precarity described in the preceding section, which Moros confront both in their daily lives and across major points in their life cycles. While I recognise the set of roles, expectations, and socialisation attached to Moro men, my aim is to show how most, but not all, Moro men embody a particular ideological Moro masculinity.

Moros I spoke with referred to *tungkulin* (duty) that they have as Moros, indigenous and Muslims in Mindanao. Many of the Moro men said that taking up arms was part of their duty *as Moros*. I interpreted this claim as a result of Moro people's precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial experiences, when leaders mobilised Moro men towards their own ends. Their knowledge of Islamic doctrines and the backlash of the War on Terror after 9/11 also impact Moro men's conceptions of their duties as Muslims today. Let me expound on these influences in turn below.

The Moro emphasis on duty has deep historical roots. Ethnic Tausug, Maranao, Maguindanao, and neighbouring groups all had degrees of pre-colonial social hierarchy in which local societies were governed by leaders and warriors. When these ethnic groups became Muslims in the 14th to 15th centuries, proud young sultanates emerged in Mindanao, fighting off Catholic Spanish colonisers in the 16th century (see Chapter 1). Through colonisation, Muslim leaders mobilised their men to fight against their adversaries. Thus, the duty that Muslim men invoked here is usually a reciprocal duty to fight for their main protector and provider.

The Moros' historical marginalisation and material disempowerment described in Chapter 2 and illustrated in Chapters 3–5 created their subaltern position in the modern Philippine state. At the same time, political Islam has risen in the 20th century as states failed to meet Muslim people's material and other needs. Islamic movements scholar Norani Othman (2005:4) argues that, 'the failure of authoritarian Muslim governments and their governing ideologies and economic system open up spaces for Islamist groups to consolidate their support base'. The same is true in non-Muslim states with marginalised Muslim populations like the Philippines. Thus, Moro social and armed movements have access to cultural resources in Islamic doctrine that make them appealing to ordinary Muslims.

In postcolonial Mindanao, Moros asserted their being Muslim by invoking Islamic doctrine in everyday practices. Later they did so by adopting it in armed movements like the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). Insurgent movements popularised the reference to 'Moros' as fighters over the last 60 years; before that, the term was not used by people in Mindanao to refer to themselves. In my discussion with Moro men in Davao City about how they would like to be referred to, most believed that the term Moro captures their identity as a people with a long history as warriors. In contrast, both Moro men and women humbly reserved the label Muslim to the most pious among them. 'It is easier to be a Moro than a Muslim', they would tell me, although being a good Muslim is an everyday aspiration.

To be sure, underpinning many of the Moro gender constructs that my research participants described to me in Davao City are discourses involving orthodox Islamic doctrines. When Datu Ibrahim Kudarat and Fatima Kadera shared their conceptions of gender roles and male privilege and supremacy, they did so in ways that were shaped by elite men's multiple interpretations of the Qur'an, Sunnas, Hadiths and other Islamic texts in specific times of Islamic history (Othman 2005). Conservative interpreters and instructors of Islamic norms such as Mohammed Arafa (1980:149 in Mernissi 1996) have in many contexts sought to control women, while also vilifying homosexuality (Jahangir and Abdul-latif 2016; Zaharin and Pallotta-Chiarolli 2020). Local *ustadz* and *ulama* (religious preachers) promote these

views, making them common in Moro communities in Davao City. For example, Fatima saw women's deference to men as *halal*, deemed it moral and encouraged it. Further, she views women prioritising the family and following elders as positive depictions of Moro women, while women who feel anger or as fighters are negative.

Yet Islam is dynamic: it 'is constituted and constitutes different ways through which believers perceive and live in the world' (Hoel and Henderson-Espinoza 2016:2). Like other religious traditions, Islam draws from materials that invite competing interpretations. Moro women's rights advocate Bai Ali Indayla critically observed:

> Religion is man-made and is used by people for specific ends. The message depends on who articulates and to what ends. Men who are able to pursue Islamic studies, they can articulate teachings of the Qur'an more authoritatively [and these men can] say that men and women are not equal. But those who want liberty for women can also find it in the religious doctrines, [and find] support for their participation in the struggle (Indayla 2017).

While recognising the important role of religion in Moro life, this dissertation does not delve deeply into Islamic ideas for the reasons that Bai Ali described: religion can be used for highly divergent ends. In fact, there are many standing divergences in the interpretations of the Qur'an and other Islamic legal texts (Heck 2004; Hegghammer 2010). As I explained above, Moros usually accessed Islamic texts second-hand, already mediated by interpreters. Another reason is that scholars like Thomas McKenna (1998) have questioned Moro peoples' grasp of Islamic doctrines. So instead, I paid attention to the way the Moros I conversed with referred to gender and religious practice in their own lives, especially in the context of conflict and migration. The Moros I conversed with referred to religion as a moral compass providing guidance for fighting for what is right and serving others. Moros definitely valued

what they understood of Islamic teachings and this mobilised them to act towards what they perceived to be just, even if it meant some sacrifice.

Moro men's efforts to fulfill their perceived duties in the context of precarity cohere into an ideology of Moro masculinity. As we have seen in the preceding chapters, a confluence of structural and political factors converges to undermine Bangsamoro people's rights to their ancestral domains, and to give rise to armed conflict in Mindanao. Moros like Jalani Abubakar, Omar Bilal, and Jerry Basman grew up in places of conflict, had barely attended school, and received no formal training other than soldiering. In the context of precarity, Moro men face serious obstacles in fulfilling what they perceive to be their duties of providing for and protecting their households. Men who lose their ability to be breadwinners and are less desirable workers in the global economy still have access to institutionalised violence, and their masculinity may increasingly rely on ideologies of nationalism (Ray 2018). Thus, without land or capital, and with limited options, Moro men are pushed into using their labour and gambling their lives as foot soldiers in various kinds of wars.

Participating in an armed movement can be a way for Moro men to survive in the context of day-to-day precarity. Armed conflict is a form of labour in the international economy. Just as interstate war is a profitable venture for imperialist states, internal armed conflict creates jobs for people in the locations where it occurs. In participating in this enterprise in Mindanao, Moro men are able to fulfill the Moro duty of feeding and protecting themselves as single men, and later providing for and protecting their families, where the state prevents them from doing so in the regular economy. Thus, Jalani Abubakar joined an armed gang in Zamboanga and later took a job as a security guard in Davao City. Omar Bilal joined the militia Barracudas, the MNLF, and the MILF. Jerry Basman also joined the MILF and relied on his commander to help raise a dowry for marriage, and, when he got in trouble with his in-laws, to protect and defend him.

In the context of precarity and the pressing nature of Moro men's duty to provide, it is likely that most Moro men do not scrutinise the ideological stance of armed groups that they join. For example, the unpopular Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) is never short of soldiers in their kidnap-for-ransom activities in the Sulu archipelago. Sharing their bounty with participant communities and their kinship networks, the ASG found supporters who are desperate for goods and protection (Gutierrez 2013). The ASG has become a successful 'entrepreneur of violence' in a place of insecurity, where the state is unable to provide security and locals seek protectors (Turner 2003). At different points in recent history and in different locations in Mindanao, the Moro men in my study sought to join whatever groups were immediately available around them. All the Moro men in this study, however, actively considered maintaining or severing support for a particular group based on their experiences within it. For example, Omar Bilal left the Barracudas, and the MNLF, dissatisfied with the extent of these organisations' Islamic goals.

While insurgent groups like the MNLF and MILF can be structurally more complex organisations than gangs, on the ground they are all centred around local leaders or commanders. Thus, armed groups in Mindanao are reminiscent of the nebulous kin relationships in indigenous groups in the Philippines with tribal leaders that are also military chiefs at the centre. Kiefer (1972:85) notes that at the turn of the 20th century in Tausug communities, it made more sense to ask, 'To what political leader do you look to for support' rather than 'To what group do you belong?' The soldier's loyalty is contingent on the material and other support that his leader provides. This largely remains the case. An armed group commander told Moro leader Amirah Lidasan, 'I will not be a commander if I cannot feed the people in my command.' In fact, an unwritten agreement between leaders and foot soldiers is that the commander usually 'takes care of everything, including their burial, and the welfare of the soldier's families' (A. Lidasan 2017). Moros therefore look to armed group commanders for economic welfare for their families.

In the relationship between local commander and soldiers, Moro men subscribe to the projected images, expectations, and practices of an ideological Moro masculinity. The images associated with Moro masculinity are of tall and tanned soldiers from humble backgrounds, wearing fatigues and carrying guns. The values associated with Moro masculinity are courage and camaraderie. Ideal Moro men are fearless, loyal, and ever-ready to risk all for their families and communities. In armed groups, Moro men experience combat and encounters that test their skills and values. The images, expectations, and the Moro men's actual experiences affirm Moro men's social place in armed groups. Moro men's practice of their ideological Moro masculinity helps them perform their job as soldiers, and earns the approval of their local commander. Subscribing to a Moro masculinity therefore keeps soldiers in jobs within armed groups, while embodying another version of masculinity, let alone a femininity, could jeopardise their positions.

As well as providing them with economic benefits, joining an armed group provides social benefits too. For Moro clans, their rebel relatives are their own link to armed groups, a kind of investment or insurance, in case they need to seek material or military support in the future (Canuday 2007; A. Lidasan 2017). Moro men proudly declared that they joined because it was respectable to take up arms and support the 'Moro cause'. This implies that to their relatives, they are doing something that is worthy by feeding themselves, using their bodies to work, and serve as a link to an armed group, rather than being unemployed.

The ideological Moro masculinity takes on a postcolonial character when the 'Moro cause' is unpacked. In explaining the 'Moro cause', the Moro men participating in this research alternately spoke about protecting their cultural practice of Islam and contributing to the 'good of their Moro communities' or improving their quality of life. These are positive aims that also betray underlying conflicts: they see Islam as under attack and that impoverished and oppressed Moro communities need support. Thus, the idealised Moro masculinity comes from a subordinate position in society, in contrast to the

businessman-politician masculinity that Muslim elites may embody, to say nothing of the gender constructs associated with the dominant Catholic majority in the Philippines as vestiges of a colonial past in a racialised world.

The Moro men's reference to a 'Moro cause' is also crucial in underplaying the economic utility of their involvement in armed groups, and gives it a noble character to rationalise their own recruitment. I see validity in the Moro men's explanation that the Moro duty to provide and protect their families requires them also to protect a Moro way of life. Even the sceptical McKenna (1998:286) concludes that fighting for their Moro communities was one of the genuinely held reasons for Moro support for armed separatist movements.

Standing up for Moros implies protecting their religious practices. The armed groups' appeal to Moro men to defend their religion finds great resonance with ordinary Moros. Maguindanaos like Taya and Esmael Kudarat in the 1970s saw the state's attack on Moros only in terms of their religion, rather than seeing it as robbing them of lands or political voice (Chapter 3). When Esmael Kudarat and Omar Bilal took arms, they did so to defend Islam and Moros in general. In fulfilling their Moro duty, armed groups' leaders ask Moro soldiers to honour their duty to their armed group too. Esmael had to leave his family when he engaged in combat in other towns, and on his last engagement, he left a very sick daughter at home. He said he made these sacrifices because he had taken an oath: '… if we are not sick, as long as we can manage it, we will turn up if we are called upon to fight' (E. Kudarat 2017). Thus, the armed groups shape a Moro masculinity in Moro men, encouraging them to make sacrifices even of their own families for the sake of their comrades, presented as representing a wider Moro family.

Further examining the rationale of the 'Moro cause', I argue that Moro men are attracted to armed groups as a platform to practice their own masculinity and challenge the hypermasculine (military hardliner) Philippine state represented by its armed forces. Given the Moro economic and political

disempowerment, carrying arms is a way for Moros to wield a masculine and military power that equips them to defend themselves, threaten others, and kill. For example, a think tank argued that the resilience of the ASG lies in its attraction to young recruits who are interested in guns and money (Banlaoi 2010). The interest in guns can be interpreted as an expression of Moro masculinity. Rather than tolerating the state forces' abuses, Moros take up arms to actively resist and defend themselves and their communities.

Of course, when a Moro man participates in armed conflict, he does so at the cost of his own and others' suffering. Writing of recruits into armed movements from impoverished ethnic groups in Bolivia, Lesley Gill (1997:527) comments that the poor 'are foot soldiers who risk death in warfare to a greater degree'. We see the same in the United States, where Deborah Cowen and Amy Siciliano (2011) studied the classed racialisation of military education. They made explicit in their analysis how military recruiters target the 'surplus' bodies of poor, non-white young men. These studies suggest that the poor and ethnic minorities, having nothing but their labouring bodies, typically lose the most in wars. This situation is familiar in Mindanao, where Moro men embodying Moro masculinity risk their lives as soldiers for various groups.

One way insurgent groups in Mindanao make Moro masculinity attractive is by their reverence of soldiers as potential martyrs and by promising them rewards in the afterlife. Religious teachings are important cultural resources here, especially in the description of the afterlife reserved for martyrs. Muslim insurgents carry out suicidal acts in war 'to merit paradise as recompense' in writings on Muslim warrior *juramentados* and jihadists (Majul 1999:419). Hilsdon's (1995:19) observation that, 'the interiority of the Filipino male and female body has been characterised by martyrdom, which in the military takes the form of patriotism' is intensified in Mindanao, where martyrdom has both religious and nationalist meanings. As MNLF members Tata and Jamal Abdul (2017) said, they do not cry for those who died in combat, in fact, they envy them for having a good death.

The Moro public's support for the armed groups also endorses Moro masculinity. For example, Tausug proverbs (Tan 1981) and traditional oral narratives (Tan 2010) give primacy to *parang sabil* (holy war), a local term for martyrdom. From the 1970s, rebel pop songs about the Moro struggle for self-determination that McKenna (1998:187–89) recorded have shown how soldiers were admiringly described as 'unafraid to be martyred' and 'revolutionaries'. In ballads about love and loss, the soldiers from poor families are 'fighting for the homeland/ offering his life/ in the struggle for the faith'. Moros can therefore practice Moro masculinity in armed groups and be publicly honoured for it, a contrast to the diminishing weight of their masculinity in their homes and communities described in Chapter 4.

Moro masculinity, of course, goes beyond insurgent groups. Moro men bring this masculinity in their households, communities, and on city streets. The legal possession of firearms and the proliferation of unregistered guns in Mindanao (Oreta 2012; Quitoriano 2013) have repercussions not only for the insurgent war, but also for the 'drug war' and in domestic violence in rural and urban locations in Mindanao. As Haleh Afshar (2003:48) argues, 'once distinction between the home and the battlefield has been eliminated, it is not surprising that the armed forces should lose sight of boundaries: not only do the homes become the target of invaders but also sexuality becomes a domain of power struggle'. Moro men subscribing to the militarised Moro masculinity can use force to claim entitlements that patriarchy promises men, such as deciding their future and controlling women, that are otherwise difficult to attain in light of their subalternisation. I illustrated this in the stories of domestic violence in Chapters 3 and 4. These parallel Mamphela Ramphele's (2000:116) analysis that, 'violence, particularly sexual violence, directed at women and children tends to be the dominant form of communication to assert the right to claim the entitlements the male body has been promised'. At the level of the household, Moro masculinity sheds light on gender relationships in domestic violence.

The practice of Moro masculinity in Davao City streets also challenges the hypermasculine state that at this level is represented by the police. To provide for their families, Moro men are recruited in the city as drug retailers, runners or couriers, and lookouts. Like in insurgent armed groups, drug dealers expect Moro men to be fearless, loyal, and ever ready to do what it takes to achieve a goal. Unlike Moro membership in armed insurgent groups, the immediate family and community of the Moros involved in the drug trade usually do not support this practice of Moro masculinity. In any case, the Moro masculinity expressed in Davao City streets invites the state to demonstrate its security hegemony and results in community violence.

Thus far, I examined how Moro men, armed groups, and the general Moro public invoke versions of Moro duty that support an ideology of Moro masculinity. Contrasting the hegemonic businessman-politician masculinity, the symbols related to Moro masculinity are those of the soldier, ever ready to fight and sacrifice for his family and community. Moro masculinity is the common masculinity in the region. I also illustrated how Moro masculinity fuels recruitment into armed groups and the drug trade, and how it is related to domestic and community violence.

Social justice and insurgent femininity

In contrast to the emphasised femininity of the prayerful virgin bride described in detail above, the images, expectation, and experience of Moro women living in precarity in Davao City resemble those of a hustler. A hustler does everything she can to make ends meet (Wacquant 2007) *and* care for her family and community. This is a too-common story of women in many urban poor communities in the Philippines and indeed in many parts of our increasingly neoliberal world. In the preceding chapters, we can observe this in the stories of Amina Abdul and Fatima Kadera who care for and hustle to provide for their families. What I found striking, however, was the way some Moro women spoke of Moro duty as related to their rights and dignity, producing an ideology that coheres into an unexpected insurgent femininity. Schippers (2007:95) might recognise this as a *pariah* femininity, one that is contaminating

to the general relationship between masculinity and femininity when its practitioners access authority and/or physical strength that is normally reserved for men. In my analysis, Moro women make this crucial link to rights and dignity because of the everyday struggle and care work they shoulder amidst precarity, generating a terrible burden that needs to be eased and addressed. Moro women practice insurgent femininity as a means to address such burden.

Moro women embodying insurgent femininity embrace opportunities and spaces that are not expected to be associated with Moro women, such as leadership positions in their communities and the wider Bangsamoro, and as soldiers in the armed movements themselves. Looking back on past chapters, we can identify insurgent femininity in practice in militant Moro women leaders Amirah Lidasan and Bai Ali Indayla, women's group organiser Jamila Bilal, and MNLF training officer Tata Abdul. Of course, women embodying insurgent femininity can hustle too. For example, Jamila's living area has shelves of catalogue goods for sale. Tata had no trouble being a member of the MNLF and being enlisted as a government air-force military reserve at the same time. In fact, the MNLF was not Tata's first choice for employment since it was less stable than a government job. But like her male comrades, joining a Moro armed group was desirable for Tata because of what she felt was her duty to work for the 'Moro cause'.

Like Moro men, Moro women who were part of armed insurgent groups often blended their discussion of religion with talk about 'Moro duty', the 'Moro cause', and their self-assigned role of challenging the state. For example, whenever Tata met women in the MNLF training camps, she asked them if they were there because their husbands forced them to join. These women, Tata recalled, always told her that they were there of their own accord: 'They wanted to be there [in the MNLF] themselves, because, what I see is their status, their stand as a Muslim. They ask [themselves], how can they contribute [to the Moro cause]?' (T. Abdul 2017). For Tata, taking a stand as a Muslim meant contributing towards

the good of the Moro people, including joining an insurgent group and recognising the orders of its military leaders.

Because of the ubiquitous nature of wars in Mindanao, Moro girls in the rural areas are normally exposed to firearms and conflict from an early age. For example, Farida Kadera observed, 'in our hometown, there were guns in every house. Even in small skirmishes, parents warned their children to be careful as guns may be pulled out' (Farida Kadera 2017). Many Moro girls have been told or practiced what to do when a clan or an insurgent war breaks out in their vicinity. In fact, 'women as well as men commonly carry arms for protection in Mindanao' (Davies, True and Tanyag 2016:467). Given such a context – and the economic pressures they experience – the women's and girls' involvement in armed groups is not surprising. Tata passionately commented:

> In times of need, [women] will take up arms – you cannot say that they won't. She can't just do nothing; wouldn't she think about herself? She will fight! Human nature is that when push comes to shove, you will be forced to fight (T. Abdul 2017).

Tata alluded to the way wars are not restricted to battlegrounds. Women may not have gone towards the fighting, but the fighting has gone towards their neighbourhoods, tearing down their front doors and entering their own backyards. 'There are no longer war fronts and as it were, "backs" or areas "behind the lines"', writes Muslim feminist Haleh Afshar (2004:3), 'since homes, schools, hospitals, public highways, and even personal relationships are often part of the arena of war.' In this context, we can assume that the distinct insurgent femininity found in Mindanao may not be rare at all.

Yet women subscribing to insurgent femininity meet serious social challenges. The armed Muslim woman is not the standard image, expectation, or experience of the majority of Moro women. Despite women's participation in armed groups, Moro men expected women members to prioritise having

children and caring for their families. Accordingly, Moro women Amina Abdul and Taya Kudarat withdrew from their armed groups after they wed in the 1970s. Perhaps preoccupation with childbearing and domestic work had closed the military option for them, since the Moro men in their lives barely shared in the household and care work. In contrast, Esmael Kudarat could leave a very sick child at home to go on an MILF operation, because the child was in the care of his partner Taya. We know from the experiences of women combatants in the communist-led groups Hukbong Mapagpalayang Bayan (HMB) (Lanzona 2009) and the New People's Army that electing to not have children or mobilising another woman in the extended family to care for children allows women to continue performing tasks within an armed group. Because of the ideological duty that Moro men assigned to Moro women, finding such alternative arrangements for women was not a standard approach in Moro insurgent groups. Thus, some Moro women tended to subscribe to an insurgent femininity only at particular points in their life when they were not burdened by care responsibilities.

Women subscribing to insurgent femininity might also find other ideologies compelling. In fact, Taya and Amina depicted their engagement in insurgent movements as nothing spectacular. Perhaps because their Moro husbands defined their Moro duty for them, what they most passionately spoke about were the pains and sorrows they experienced as a result of infidelity by their life partners and the loss of children. When these women told their stories, the challenges they remembered most vividly were the mental and emotional labours they experienced during migration and war (see Chapters 3 and 4). In contrast, Tata more animatedly shared her experiences within the MNLF and the many places she reached as a training officer, and more seriously spoke about her personal struggles at home. Tata was proud of her accomplishments in the MNLF, but expressed disappointment that she had 'married late' and did not have biological children. In all these accounts, therefore, Moro women seemed to internalise that building and caring for their families was the primary duty of Moro women.

The practice of insurgent femininity further causes tension as it threatens Moro masculinity. Although they had participated in military activities together before marriage, Tata's comrade husband Jamal kept her from joining actual combat after they wed. For example, when MNLF commanders called for soldiers to reinforce their ranks in the Zamboanga siege of 2013, Jamal left Davao City without telling Tata, knowing that she would want to join their comrades. At this point, Tata and Jamal were newlyweds hoping to have a child. Jamal believed that Tata could do other valuable work without risking her own life. Jamal's actions prevented Tata from doing what she believed was her Moro duty, namely to answer their superior's call. In other words, Jamal took it upon himself to define Tata's Moro duty for her, suggesting she should mobilise medical supplies and other support, rather than use her skills in combat. In their household then, Jamal embodying Moro masculinity sought to control Tata who embodied insurgent femininity.

Despite the challenges, women embodying insurgent femininity define their own Moro duty. When they spoke of joining the MNLF and the MILF, none of the Moros I encountered framed their participation as being part of jihad or holy war – despite the fact that many observers described the motivations of Moro armed groups in this way, especially after 9/11.[70] Of course, some armed groups in Mindanao invoke jihad when explaining their military activities. The Moros in Mindanao were also aware of the deadly effects of the US-led War on Terror after 9/11 among Muslim populations in the world and the rise of the Islamic State groups (ISIS). When I asked about her thoughts on this, Tata passionately dug up a meme she had downloaded from Facebook onto her smart phone, which described what jihad is for her – an everyday struggle to do good in everything you do.[71] In light of Tata's life story, I interpret this statement as Tata's assertion that doing good as a Muslim in everyday

[70] Jihad is an Arabic word that literally means to struggle or exert effort. In the Qur'an, it is used both in a military and non-military contexts, and Islamic scholars have interpreted its use for different ends (Heck 2004). Islamist groups and the United States in their 'war on terror' after 9/11 popularised an orthodox interpretation of jihad as a holy war against non-believers to support their agendas (Kellner 2004).

[71] This corresponds to what the Prophet Muhammad referred to as the greater or 'superior jihad', one that is an inner battle against the evil of one's soul and a self-exertion to comply with Islamic teachings, in comparison to physical battle as a 'minor jihad'.

life meant struggling for a better life, a better social arrangement. Thus, dire conditions push Moro women to explore insurgent practices to solve community problems.

In contrast to the conservative interpretations that Moro women's jihad is limited to the home, this dissertation shows that on the contrary, Moro women embodying insurgent femininity embark on an 'everyday jihad' in their communities. In Moro communities in Davao City, jihad is the struggle against oppressive conditions for the good of the community. Elsewhere, I describe 'jihad in the community' as an intimate war won when the family and community are thriving, and in which the victory comes in the form of inner peace (Jopson and Sakaran 2020). Thus, even when the thankless work for the community can be dangerous in light of multiple wars, women soldier on to lead the defence of their communities. We can recall from Chapter 5 that women have taken up the Moro duty of everyday jihad as community workers or militant leaders working against the government's all-out-war policies, the War on Drugs, and the War on Terror in Mindanao. To guide and justify their actions, Moro women invoked interpretations of Islamic teachings that is legible and acceptable to other Muslims. In their own spheres of struggle, they challenge power structures from the ground up.

Aspirations for a better life fuelled Moro armed movements and community activism. Moros I conversed with spoke of a range of ideals (*sana*) and rights (*dapat*, *karapatan*) and freedoms (*kalayaan*) that they associate with peace: the acknowledgement of truths and the historical injustices against Moros, freedom of movement, decent housing and livelihood, the chance to provide for and protect their loved ones. Their views mirror understanding of human rights norms that commit to justice, development, and equity as the basis for positive peace (Ackerly 2018; Bunch 2003). They also cited armed struggle as a way for Moros to reclaim their dignity and their way of life. They were a stone's-throw away from proclaiming their actions and aspirations as being *about social justice*. In my role as listener and interpreter, I link their ideals about rights and expanding freedoms to social justice, and thus take their life struggle as being linked to other movements for justice. Political scientist Ben

Kerkvliet (2010) suggests that the Moro insurgency be called an insurgency for justice, because that is what it is, rather than for Moro nationalism. The Moro pursuit of social justice highlights the need for human development in the region and, if addressed adequately, helps to counter rebellion.

The transformational potential of insurgent femininity is in the witting or unwitting challenge its practitioners mount to the hypermasculine state and Moro masculinity. Moro women asserted their autonomy as Moros and as women in their participation in armed groups and the work they perform in their communities. The terms they used in their vision of peace, *karapatan* and *kalayaan,* are associated with collective rights that concern group entitlements and freedoms. The women I associate insurgent femininity with related their Moro identity to other oppressed and disadvantaged groups. To ease their own multiple burdens meant fighting the multiple oppressions that keep them impoverished and voiceless, and uplifting their own status in the community. In their everyday jihad towards social justice, Moro women embodying insurgent femininity sought more equal class, ethnic, and gender relations in their households, communities, and within the state. The intertwined inequalities in the Bangsamoro and the Philippines are entangled in global inequalities too. When Moros link their oppression to the disadvantaged economic and political position of the Global South in relation to the Global North, they can pose an internal challenge to the Moro gender order.

To summarise, Moro women's embodiment of insurgent femininity is characterised by women's authority and/or physical strength that men usually reserved for themselves, to embrace leadership positions in community organisations and armed groups. They do so by invoking interpretations of Islamic texts that support their Moro duty, in pursuit of social justice that encompasses multiple ideals of a better life for others and themselves. While it may not be a popular femininity among Moro women, and especially among Moro men, Moro women seem to see the need for and value of this femininity in the context of the precarity they experience every day. Indeed, some of them modestly or reluctantly took on leadership roles because no one else was as available, capable, or effective, in

light of the dangers generated by the War on Drugs and the War on Terror. In fact, the Moro women prove to be effective leaders in the face of the War on Drugs and the War on Terror when they bring holistic perspectives to their analysis of problems. In stepping up to leadership and soldiering roles, they actively shape the Moro gender order in contemporary Mindanao.

While martyrdom features in both Moro masculinity and insurgent femininity, it takes contrasting forms. For armed insurgent groups, Moros embodying Moro masculinity must be willing to die. For women embodying insurgent femininity, the concept of jihad in the community takes the form of devotion, and therefore involves living rather than dying for others. This difference may not be particular to Mindanao but arises in conflict and crisis situations throughout the Philippines. As Anne-Marie Hilsdon (1995:169–70) observed, during Martial Law and in post-Edsa Philippines, Filipino male leaders risked their lives in the service of a masculinist discourse of conquest and honour. In contrast, Hilsdon found that Filipino women migrated when they received death threats, taking their children into safety with them: 'thus the feminine discourse of nurturance and the protection of life contradicted the masculine one of martyrdom'. In my own fieldwork in Mindanao I found that in chronic conflicts and precarity, households and communities depended on Moro women's self-sacrificing care and volunteer work that risk their own well-being. Yet, as Rai, Hoskyns and Thomas (2014), point out, the bodies that meet demands for intensive care end up depleted. Women's sacrifice is thus not as dramatic as dying, but it requires physical, mental and emotional endurance.

In this section, I illustrated how Moro images, social expectations, and actual experiences in precarity cohere into ideologies of Moro masculinity and insurgent femininity that Moro men and women subscribe to or embody. I argued that Moro masculinity and insurgent femininity, linked to social and religious norms and the struggle for social justice, can help explain Moro recruitment in armed groups, and thus sustain armed conflict in Mindanao. The perseverance of Moro fighters in the last two decades also brought peace negotiators to discuss the future of Mindanao, including in ways that have

a potential to challenge the gender order. In the next section, I turn to the way gender inequality has shaped discourses about war and peace in Mindanao.

Gender in war-making and peacebuilding

The Moro gender order is expressed in symbolic gender relationships and language-embedded discourse; it is a 'way of talking about and acting upon the world which both constructs and is constructed by a set of social practices' (Candlin and Maley 1997:202). In this section, we turn away from how the gender order is lived in the day-to-day lives of ordinary Moros, to observe the way the hypermasculine Philippine state and insurgent groups adopt and reproduce gender inequality in their discursive production of 'disposable' Moro men and 'resilient' Moro women, both when waging war and when pursuing (elitist) peace efforts. Discourse analysts argue that discourses construct social reality through articulation (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999; Laclau and Mouffe 1985), or the repetition of a particular configuration to make it appear 'natural', accurate, and objective; and interpellation (Althusser 1972), or the way subject positions are constituted and adopted or accepted by the subjects themselves. I will show how state and insurgent groups' gender discourses have serious real-world effects in their articulation and interpellation.

'Disposable' men

Colonial and postcolonial governments in the Philippines have over the years presented varying portrayals of Moro men that position them as enemies. We can recall from Chapters 1 and 2 that the Spanish colonisers portrayed Moro men as 'pirates' (Majul 1999) and the Americans called them 'violent fanatics'. For post-war Philippine administrations, Moros are 'dangerous rebels', and, post-9/11, 'terrorists'. The unifying theme of these state articulations is that Moro men are 'disposable'. They are 'disposable' because, for the state, they are ungrievable, which Judith Butler (2010:xix)

describes as those who, 'because they already inhabit a lost and destroyed zone' are 'from the start, already lost and destroyed, which means when they are destroyed in war, nothing is destroyed'. As I have shown in Chapter 2, the absences and silences about Moro women in Mindanao historiography support the state's various portrayals of Moros as enemies and Moro men as surplus bodies that are not integral to the state body.

For insurgent groups, Moro men are decisive and daring, loyal and sacrificing, the ideal soldiers. Moro men embodying Moro masculinity are the key actors in armed social movements, and they stand their ground as tough adversaries for the colonial and postcolonial states. When they do sacrifice themselves, someone else will take their place. It is not that their deaths do not matter, in fact for insurgent groups that address their members as *mujahideen*, Moro men matter more in their death. Moro men's deaths mark their individual will and courage, and their commitment to the Moro cause. Thus, in their ultimate sacrifice, Moro martyrs represent the gravity and depth of Moro support for their organisations. By the same token, their sacrificial deaths contribute to the building of a Bangsamoro entity in Mindanao. It is in this light that for insurgent armed groups, Moro men's bodies are 'disposable' too.

The convergence of the state's and insurgent groups' articulation of Moro men as disposable lies in their militarisation of Mindanao, which signifies a convergent view of Moro men as able bodies that can be used to pursue political and security ends. For the Philippine government, militant Moro men can legitimise all-out wars in Mindanao. With state resources channelled to war-making, the state also attracts Moros to join the state military and police. For leaders of armed movements, committed Moro men give the group credibility and power. Moro men are ultimately 'disposable' in that *both* the state and armed groups use their bodies to claim Mindanao. The Filipino metaphor *kapit sa patalim* (to do something dangerous for lack of options) applies to Moros holding guns for the state or insurgent

groups. Moro men thus constitute the foot soldiers of resistance groups and are also among the government troops (Canuday 2007:254), which creates tension in communities.

The national government and Davao local government under Duterte's rule further carried out a War on Drugs that assumes the disposability of underclass men, including Moros. A survey of Duterte's language describing drug users in the Philippines betrays a dehumanisation: drug users are good for nothing, criminals, rapists, and murderers. For example, to show his tough stance against drugs during the 2016 presidential campaign, Duterte promised that he would kill 100,000 drug users and dump them in Manila Bay, which would be red from the blood of drug addicts (Curato 2016). When elected, Duterte encouraged the public to join his crusade, and the police to kill drug suspects: 'Feel free to call us, the police, or do it yourself if you have the gun – you have my support,' he told a Davao City crowd. Duterte instructed the police that if a drug dealer resists arrest, 'shoot him and I'll give you a medal' (Associated Press in Manila 2016). He also compared the scale of his project to the Holocaust: 'Hitler killed three million Jews, there [are] three million addicts [in the Philippines], I will be happy to slaughter them' (Holmes 2016; Moss 2016).[72] Duterte's use of the verb slaughter, usually reserved for the killing of animals, expressed how he sees drug addicts as sub-human. As of March 2019, over 27,000 had been killed in the War on Drugs (Human Rights Watch 2019) through police operations and vigilante killings. International relations scholar Dahlia Simangan (2018) argues that Duterte's rhetoric and policies satisfy Gregory Stanton's stages of genocide: classification, symbolisation, dehumanisation, organisation, polarisation, preparation, extermination, and denial.

As I have shown in Chapter 5, the War on Drugs has been going on for over two decades in Davao City, where Duterte was city mayor. The so-called Davao Death Squad initially killed poor, juvenile repeat offenders accused of petty crimes, and then other suspected criminals and drug offenders (Alston

[72] This figure is only over half of the estimated deaths during the Holocaust. Nazis under Adolf Hitler murdered an estimate of 5.4 million to 5.8 million Jews during World War II (Stone 2019:1).

2008). Later, the uniformed or plain clothed police carried out the killings of civilians suspected to be drug pushers or users, especially in Davao Moro communities. Human Rights Watch (2009) notes that both police and vigilante slayings used the same modus operandi: police or *barangay* officials warn suspected drug offenders that they were on the watchlist; soon, hooded men would barge into their houses without a warrant and gun them down. For journalist Sheila Coronel (2017:169), Duterte's 'bloody purge of drug offenders was possible only because the PNP was a ready, willing, and able killing machine', and thus, the post-2016 drug-related killings were similarly styled as executions the police have conducted in the past. In fact, for decades, presidents and local strongmen have used the police surveillance and coercive power to crack down on crime and dissent, emasculate political rivals, or collect revenues from illicit activities (McCoy 2009:474–78). Moreover, the view of the poor as dangerous or as an inherently criminal class of people 'is a constant refrain in the dominant discourses about poverty from the time of liberalism' (Venn 2009:221). In this light, the War on Drugs uses old methods and 'logic' for the killings, but the imagining of drug offenders as disposable bodies makes Duterte's campaign distinctive.

Meanwhile, the Philippine government further renders Moro men disposable in the War on Terror. In the US-led global War on Terror, which the Philippine government supported, allied states adopted anti-terror laws to implement in their respective territories and gave the US government leeway to join their domestic 'anti-terror' activities. The Philippines' first Anti-Terror Law or Human Security Act (HSA 2007) was heavily criticised for its very broad definition of terrorism as 'sowing and creating a condition of widespread and extraordinary fear and panic among the populace in order to coerce the government to give in to an unlawful demand' (HSA 2007, Section 3).[73] The vague definition gave the government leverage to use the law against opponents and local insurgencies. State implementation

[73] Duterte replaced the HSA 2007 with the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2020, which authorises a president-appointed anti-terror council warrantless arrest and detention without charge for up to 24 days. Security professionals Bundela and Kandpal (2020) assessed that like its predecessor, the scope and definition of terrorism in the new terror law fails to distinguish among government critics, criminals, and real terrorists.

of such a vague law created human rights violations in the form of mistaken arrests, mass arrests, torture in custody, and high penalties of 12 years imprisonment. Ambiguity seems to be a strategy in the local rendering of the War on Terror, so that the state can tap it to target dissent and insurgents in Mindanao.

In practice, Muslims have been routinely suspected of performing terrorist activities in the post-9/11 period (Bhattacharyya 2008; Coppock and McGovern 2014; Patel 2017; Rowe 2012). What I emphasise here is the way the Philippine state milked the War on Terror and its impact in Mindanao. Anja Jetschke (2010) argues that the state deliberately shared in the slippages between Moros and terrorists to tap resources in the War on Terror to finance its domestic counter-insurgency campaigns. The Philippine state categorised domestic conflicts [Moro and communist] as terrorism issues at the level of rhetoric to justify the Philippines as a Second Front in the War on Terror (Jetschke 2010:223). Former presidents Estrada, who claimed that the MILF engaged in acts of terrorism, and Arroyo, who called critics of the US intervention in the Philippines 'protectors of terrorists, allies of murderers and Abu Sayyaf lovers' (Feb 9, 2002) did this rhetorical work smoothly. The administrations after them used slightly different language. Aquino launched military offensives against 'lawless elements' and 'rogue MILF commanders' in 2012, and Duterte declared a 'State of Emergency against Lawless Violence' following the 2016 bombing in Davao City, and Martial Law in Mindanao to address the 2017 Maute Siege of Marawi City. In their different wars in Mindanao, the governments identified a broad category of terrorists, lawlessness, and rogue enemies that on the ground meant Moro men.

The state rhetoric has devastating effects in Mindanao. After the Davao City bombings in 2003, the 'armed forces retaliated by throwing grenades at three mosques' (Conde 2003; Malan and Solomon 2012:64). In 2007, Moro human rights group Kawagib criticised the Arroyo administration for declaring a series of bus liner bombings as work of terrorists, even after extortionist group Al-Kobar admitted to the bombings. Kawagib (2007) also condemned the arbitrary arrest and torture of Kaharudin Talib,

who was forced to admit that he has links to Jemaah Islamiyah and MILF. In their report to the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights, the Moro-Christian People's Alliance (2012) highlighted how the state tagged the bandit ASG and alleged local cells of Al-Qaida and Jemaah Islamiyah and ordinary Moros as terrorists.

> Moro people are subjected to indiscriminate terrorist-tagging and arbitrary arrests based on a 'defective' warrant of arrest issued for the ASG crimes in 2000-2001. The warrant was amended several times to add new names of suspected 'terrorists' using aliases of accused ASG members (Moro Christian People's Alliance 2012:4).

The AFP later admitted targeting the MILF even if their stated intention was the pursuit of the Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom gang (Pazzibugan 2003). Thus, under the Arroyo administration, military offensives supposedly against the ASG or other lawless groups were directed against the MNLF and MILF, displacing Moro communities more than five times. In one of these instances, over half a million Moros were cramped in 123 evacuation centres, where Moros endured inhumane conditions and soldiers seized, beat, detained, and slapped evacuees with false charges (Moro Christian People's Alliance 2012:2–3). The Kawagib Human Rights Network and the Moro-Christian People's Alliance documented Moro experiences that confirm how the state surveillance and other 'pre-emptive' efforts targeted Muslims as suspects, or risk groups, taking on the status of a 'would-be terrorist' (Coppock and McGovern 2014:242).

'Resilient' women

Resilience – '[the] ability of people, households, communities, countries, and systems to mitigate, adapt to and recover from shocks and stresses in a manner that reduces chronic vulnerability and facilitates inclusive growth' (USAID 2012:5) – is idealised in international development. In the last two decades, development groups and humanitarian institutions have sought to build resilient

communities in a crisis-prone world, exemplified in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals agenda. Multiple institutions thus use resilience as a 'mobilizing metaphor' to expand multilevel capabilities amidst threats (Smyth and Sweetman 2015:406). Yet feminist scholars like Maria Tanyag (2018a, 2018b) criticise how resilience narratives in post-disaster settings are premised on women's altruism, deplete female bodies, and reinforce structural gender inequalities. I argue that the same is true for conflict and post-conflict Mindanao: Moro communities survive chronic conflict and precarity by relying upon Moro women's unrecognised care and volunteer work.

The state and insurgent groups articulate Moro women as 'resilient' in deliberately leaving women out of their war-making strategies. In their invisibility and silence, the state justifies the scale and strategies of their multiple forms of war-making in Mindanao: the all-out wars, War on Terror, and War on Drugs. In Chapter 1, I showed how women are stereotypically associated with peace and commonly portrayed across academic, media, and in development talks as victims in wars. In the indigenous communities in the Philippines, including among Moro groups, women also act as peace mediators (Hilsdon 2009; Dwyer and Cagoco-Guiam 2012). Thus, to warrant war in Mindanao, administrations strategically avoided referral to Moro women. In the state's wars in Mindanao – Marcos' anti-insurgency campaign in the 1970s, and Estrada's (1999–2000) and Arroyo's all-out wars (2003, 2008) – Moro women are absent in the state portrayal of Moro rebels and Moro people. The state's appeal for public support for war was effective when it depicted Mindanao as a place of conflict and lawlessness populated (only) by combatant Moro men. For example, Estrada's tough stance in public addresses against the MNLF, MILF and ASG, militarily masculine organisations and represented by Moro men, boosted his dipping approval ratings (Labrador 2001:225). If Moro women had figured prominently in state depictions of Mindanao, the public support for the Estrada's war might have been different.

The conduct of the state's indiscriminate all-out wars is premised on the fact that women and civilians can bear the burden of wars, and the wars are bearable because of women's work. State military forces

can kill and destroy families and communities, but do not have to deal with the aftermath of this destruction. In the state's lack of rehabilitation programs in Mindanao, they rely on the silently suffering, self-sacrificing and self-effacing Moro woman to hold families and communities together during and after wars. Post-conflict reconstructions depend on women's undervalued and unpaid social reproductive labour. Moro women are further more likely than men to ask for humanitarian assistance (Sifris and Tanyag 2019:408). The state, like communities and households, depends on Moro women to mend and clean up, heal and care.

In Duterte's War on Drugs, the main strategy to reduce drug use and sales is to kill or jail suspected drug users and pushers. This deadly campaign has torn Moro communities in Davao City like Angklahan and Black Beach. Rehabilitation and other support services from the national government are inadequate. Only six new rehabilitation centres have opened since 2016, to make a total of 10 public facilities out of the 50 existing rehabilitation centres nationwide. These facilities can hold only a small fraction of the thousands of drug users who have voluntarily turned themselves in to the police since 2016. While the Dangerous Drugs Board (2016), the main agency directing the program under the Office of the President, mandates local governments to support community-based rehabilitation, communities in Davao City have not felt any effect of this policy. Instead, as I have argued in Chapter 5, it is the local women who have been mending broken relationships in households and communities in response to the police-led war on drugs. In communities like Angklahan, Moro women led community-based drug prevention and after-care programs (Jopson and Sakaran 2020). In the face of national and local government's violence and inadequate services, Moro women again hold their households and communities together.

Insurgent groups, too, assume the resiliency of Moro women in the insurgent war. First, they take for granted that women in Mindanao can adapt to new situations like displacement and war when insurgent groups clash with government or other armed groups. They trust that women can flee with

their families, negotiate dismal conditions in evacuation camps, and hustle to make ends meet. Second, insurgent leaders also assume Moro men can be free to be soldiers as Moro women care for their families and communities. Recall that Esmael Kudarat could be an MILF soldier because Taya cared for the family he left. In these cases, insurgent group leaders reinforce the belief that women's jihad is in the home, and that in the service to the Moro cause, soldiering is the greater service.

Third, when Moro women are active in parts of the male-dominated military units of insurgent groups, insurgent men assume that the women can adapt to their practices, fend for and take care of themselves. While insurgent groups like the MNLF may welcome women officers like Tata Abdul, and the MILF may have a women's auxiliary brigade, they invest little in making them equal to male combatants. Insurgent groups' assumption of Moro women's resilience within their platoons takes women's survival mechanisms for granted. Instead of concentrating on her work in the MNLF, training officer Tata Abdul divided her attention to ensure her personal safety and to educate her peers and colleagues about women's rights. Lastly, insurgent men expect that Moro women will keep troops healthy and healed for free (Enloe 1983). Consistent to these assumptions, the MILF was not initially open to women's voices in the peace negotiations (Brecht-Drouart 2011:146).

How do insurgent groups benefit from overlooking women's labour in their own ranks? On the one hand, they may rationalise making Moro women's role invisible in war to save Moro women from being seen as enemies of the state. This is reminiscent of *purdah* or the segregation of women, that men enforce to protect and honour them. On the other hand, failing to acknowledge Moro women's contributions mystifies the labour that goes into armed movements and misses the immense value of women's productive and reproductive labour. Within their own ranks, recognising women's work to legitimise and enable their operations and defend Moro communities is a first step to seeing women as indispensable partners in the Bangsamoro.

State and insurgent groups' portrayal of Moro women as resilient may be accurate, as Moro women do have the ability to mitigate, adapt and recover from chronic conflicts, but they can be damaging. The gendered division of labour and authority in households, communities, and organisations systematically disadvantages women while increasing their work burden (Agarwal 2000:289). From the family stories in this dissertation, women demonstrated resilience despite the emotional, psychological, and physical violence they experienced. But the discourse of resiliency that the state and insurgent groups endorse assumes that care work is in women's nature, and therefore does not require much effort on their part. In fact, women can expend much of their physical, mental and emotional energies every day on care work. Of course, the state and MILF are dynamic institutions with its own internal debates. In recent years, the MILF has invited women members in the peace panel and leaders in the BARMM. Both state and insurgent groups are in positions of power that can undermine or substantively represent women's interests.

Women's invisible labour constitutes an immense amount of unacknowledged capital that the state and insurgent groups heavily rely on for the survival of Moro communities amidst their war-making. The invisible capital that women generate in Mindanao has been absorbing the shocks of conflict and migration for years. Women's capacity to endure is an advantage to their families, clans, communities, and the state; in my analysis this capacity to endure is abused in the articulations of 'resilient' Moro women. In their study of social networks, Susan Thieme and Karin Astrid Siegman (2010:272) suggest that an individual woman's work may strengthen the resilience of a clan. Men, and especially patriarchs in particular family networks, may not invest the most, but can use the networks' capital to reproduce their dominant roles within them. Their point is that women may invest more in social institutions without benefitting as equal partners. In Mindanao, while Moro women hold Moro communities together, their own well-being may not be important for Moro men. This is certainly the case when it comes to war-making. The same applies, as I show in the next section, in peacebuilding.

Gender in peace efforts

Rape and sexual violence are widely used in wars to humiliate and violate women, men, and their communities (D'Costa 2014; Kirby 2012; Petchesky 2005; Žarkov 2007). Traditionally, when scholars and practitioners paid attention to gender in conflict situations, this meant recognising and offering redress for rape and other sexual abuses in wars. In this section, I argue that a broad understanding of sexual and gender-based violence in the Mindanao conflicts includes not only the violence perpetrated by armed groups, but also by political elites and ordinary Moro men. In my analysis of recommendations submitted to the peace panels, interventions are disproportionately intended for women, bringing a new meaning to 'resilient' women and 'disposable' men.

In Mindanao, severe underreporting makes sexual and gender-based violence in wars ambiguous. Dwyer and Cagoco-Guiam (2012:10) note that rumours of rape potently spiked fear among women, but that 'rape has generally not been deployed as a weapon of war in conflict-affected regions of Mindanao'. Though they suggested that Mindanao may be an exception in the use of rape as a weapon of war worldwide, they recognised that understanding gender-based violence in the Mindanao conflict zones can only be gained through longer-term research rooted in established relationships of trust (Dwyer and Cagoco-Guiam 2012:30). In contrast, Davies and True (2015) argue that existing gender norms that prohibit and constrain reporting are stark indications that such violence is widespread. Overall, rape and sexual violence are an unexplored and unspoken topic in Mindanao.

In the Mindanao peace negotiations, the Normalization Annex (2014) of the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro mandated the creation of an independent Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC), to study and formulate recommendations on issues related to transitional justice and reconciliation. Given the tight timelines, the TJRC embarked on intensive studies in 2015 under a 'dealing with the past' model, engaging with more than 3,300 persons across 211 Moro, indigenous, and settler communities in Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago. The storytelling across locations

revealed recurrent themes, and 'brought narratives of collective trauma to the surface that would otherwise have remained hidden. During the listening process sessions, some of the participants revealed for the first time the lingering pain and deeply-felt suffering that they had suppressed for years' (TJRC 2017b:34). The TJRC submitted its main report to the Philippines and MILF peace panels in March 2016, and its supplementary reports on the TJRC Listening Process and its reports on land dispossession in February 2017.

In fact, the TJRC reports (2016:37, 2017) crucially provided insights into the extent of rape and sexual violence in Mindanao that 'was meant to destroy the moral fabric of the Moro society where women are seen as bearers of honour and culture'. The TJRC presented findings that the state military and paramilitary groups committed war rape and sexual violence especially during the first four years of Marcos' Martial Law (1972–1986).[74] They highlighted rape as the most common form of sexual violence against women and men in Moro and indigenous communities, but other recurring themes were sexual slavery in military naval boats, sexual abuse and human trafficking, and abused women's forced marriage to their rapists (TJRC 2017b:143–44). None of the survivors of rape and sexual assault filed any case in court, and the state dismissed allegations of military rape and sexual abuses.[75] Beyond the Human Rights Victims Reparation and Recognition Act (2013),[76] which recognised all kinds of human rights violations during the Marcos regime, there has been no official acknowledgement and

[74] The TJRC reports did not record any rape perpetrated by insurgent armed groups.

[75] To give a picture of impunity for rape perpetrated by the military in the Philippines during Martial Law, let me relay the Amnesty International Report (2001:10) at length: In 1983, former church worker Hilda Narciso was arrested in a raid of a pastor's house in Davao City. Military brought her to an unofficial detention, raped and sexually assaulted her. Former Minister of Defense, now Senator Juan Ponce Enrile, allegedly responded to Hilda's claim as the 'one and only case of military sexual abuse in the Philippines'. Hilda struggled for years to bring her perpetrators to justice but to no avail. The military officials accused of raping her were never charged and even promoted.

[76] Also known as Republic Act 10368, this law comes 27 years after the Marcos dictatorship. The law mandates that a Human Rights Victims' Claims Board receive, evaluate, process, and investigate reparation claims made by victims of human rights violations during Martial Law. The Board received 75,000 claims for recognition and reparation. The Board determined 11,103 claimants eligible for monetary reparations. Over 60,000 have been denied for not meeting criteria established by law.

redress for sexual violence committed by the military during the Marcos and later administrations (Amnesty International 2001).

There were also reports of sexual violence in the different wars conducted after Marcos' Martial Law. In the 2000 all-out war, about 60 per cent of the AFP were deployed in Mindanao, reinforced by militias such as the CAFGUs. Kalinaw Mindanao, a coalition including legislators, peace and human rights advocates, church and Muslim leaders, investigated in a fact-finding mission the plight of civilians affected by conflict in Central and Western Mindanao in June 2000. In a press conference, they revealed reports that military personnel had raped at least 12 Muslim women, and groped women's breasts in evacuation centres when allegedly searching for grenades. No official investigations followed as the women and their communities were reluctant to report the rapes and sexual harassment out of fear and shame (Amnesty International 2001:25–26). This is echoed in Lanao, where NGOs and displaced persons' anecdotal stories serve as tell-tale signs of sexual abuses in evacuation sites but were not publicly reported (Dela Torre & Gloria 2007:34). From the TJRC and fact-finding mission reports, we can see evidence of recurrent patterns of rape and sexual violence where state military and paramilitary soldiers operate.

What about the private armies that proliferated in the context of the state's intense militarisation of Mindanao? Rape and sexual violence perpetrated by political elites and their private armies in Mindanao fall below the radar of the TJRC and other data collection mechanisms. For example, the TJRC (2016:33) records the Ampatuan clans' human rights violations including the massacre in November 2009 resulting in the murder of 58 people including some 30 journalists, but misses the many anecdotal reports of Ampatuan men's sexual violence against indigenous women and young girls in their decades in power in Maguindanao. In Sulu, scions of influential families were accused of gang rapes but remain at large (Kreuzer 2011:30). As Davies, True and Tanyag (2016:465) critically observe, 'as long as powerful clans in Mindanao remain invisible within the national peace and conflict

negotiations, the [sexual and gender-based violence] crimes they commit will continue to go unrecognised'. As the state and insurgent groups engage in the peace process to address the conflict between themselves, the ceasefire between them will not stop military violence, including the sexual and gender-based violence that powerful clans perpetrate.

Redress for sexual violence is overdue and crucial, but as I have shown in this chapter, paying attention to gender entails so much more. In Mindanao, the way rape and abuse of women and men in war remain unspeakable begs understanding not just of the abuses reported or rumoured, but also the abuses ignored or excused. Moros tend to hide the rape and abuse of women to preserve the honour of the women's families (*maratabat*), not necessarily the honour of the women themselves. Reporting of sexual violence is low as Moro women opt to remain silent to keep the peace, knowing that male relatives may launch clan wars or *rido* in pursuit of reclaiming their 'lost pride' and being aware that there are no secure justice institutions that can adequately respond. Women's constant displacement presents a further barrier to public infrastructure for reporting sexual violence (Davies et al. 2016). Moro men, for their part, may opt to remain silent when they are the perpetrators of abuse or if they deem that state actors' abuse of women signifies men's failure to protect their households. When rebel leaders or other actors make declarations about such abuses in public, they generally do so in order to fuel antagonism towards the state and recruit potential members to their movements. When Moro men themselves are victims of abuse, they may keep silent rather than exhibit vulnerability. Collecting data on sexual violence might thus be challenging, but understanding the Moro gender order allows us to recognise the power dynamics at play.

Like wartime rape, sexual violence in domestic partnerships is spoken about only in hushed whispers in Moro communities. Moro men and women I spoke with in Davao City subscribed to the concept of

male authority (*qiwamah*).[77] In everyday Moro life this meant wives who do not want to have sex feel obliged to submit to their husband, and wives who do not want their husbands to have other wives feel obliged to accept polygamy. For example, Maguindanao Farida Kadera explained, 'They say that it is in the Book [Qur'an], I didn't read it myself but I heard from older people and in the mosque. Women are worthless, men are number one for Muslims…. So women only go to heaven based on how she is with her husband. Men hold the key to heaven.' This view is mirrored in a recent Oxfam study of dominant narratives and norms on women's sexual reproductive health and rights in the former ARMM. Here, Kristine Valerio and Anam Parvez Butt (2020:31) find that 'For [both men and women], there is no rape between couples because women should always respect and fulfill their husbands' wishes…. Because what men say is that women should be submissive for you to reach heaven'. In this light, there is reason to believe that marital rape and other domestic violence may be common though hidden in Mindanao. In my fieldwork, Moro women shared with me stories of violence in intimate relationships – the assertion of male authority on women's bodies – of a sexual and physical, psychological, and emotional nature that harmed and scarred them.

The TJRC report provides an analysis of conflict in Mindanao that fails to encompass many of the sources of violence and insecurity affecting many Moro women (and men). For the TJRC (2016:70), state neglect, violence, and impunity caused the Moros' legitimate grievances and marginalisation through land dispossession, and the historical injustice and human rights violations against Moros. In their analysis (2016:79), the conflict's root cause 'lies in the imposition of a monolithic Filipino identity and Philippine State by force on multiple ethnic groups in Mindanao and Sulu that saw themselves as already pre-existing nations and nation-states'. While I very much admire the efforts of the TJRC, the analysis points to granting greater autonomy to and supporting the Bangsamoro government as the solution to violence. This glosses over the way Moro elites have been shielded from state violence and

[77] Male Islamic jurists have cited Qur'an's Verse 4:34 as the reason men have control over wives and female family members (Mir-Hosseini, Al-Sharmani, and Rumminger 2015).

historically enriched in the deep state neglect of Mindanao, expanding their lands at the expense of the majority of the Moro people.

If gender and land issues are left up to the new and old elite in the Bangsamoro, it is probable that gender and land inequalities will be preserved, and that ordinary Moros may benefit little from peace.[78] International relations scholar Renée Jeffery (2018) notes a managed impunity in the Bangsamoro peace process, where confidence-building measures are put in place to get keep the talks going and encourage parties to sign and abide by agreements. Sidestepping issues on gender and elites is another layer of impunity to kept parties engaged – at the jeopardy of both justice and peace. As International Alert (Schoofs 2014) shows that the dominant form of violent conflict in the Bangsamoro is among clans, tribes, and local elites over illicit trade rather than insurgency-related conflict, many ordinary Moros may not even notice the transition to peace.

Because the definition of the conflict used in the peace process is limited to the wars between state forces and insurgent groups, we can expect that the violence from general militarisation, abusive elites, and ordinary Moro men are occluded as features of the Mindanao conflict. Unfortunately, this narrow view of conflict means that the goal of peace may be built on existing gender inequality. As I have shown in this dissertation, gender inequality perpetuates conflict in shaping its form and the recruitment in wars. Gender inequality is reflected in the Moro gender order, showing how hegemonic masculinity and emphasised femininity reinforce each other, and how Moro masculinity and insurgent femininity are linked. It follows that addressing inequality needs to be the business of both women and men. Yet the peace process interventions on the ground are restricted to women. Take for example, the steps the TJRC (2016) recommends to the MILF-GPH peace panels in order to close the gender gap. These are worth quoting in full:

[78] Davies, True & Tanyag (2016:463) noted that perpetrators of rape and sexual violence in Mindanao are commonly members of elite clans and their private armies targeting poor women in rival clans, or within indigenous communities.

a) Institutionalize capacity building for women in the Bangsamoro towards their empowerment and the recognition of the integrality of their rights, including property rights.
b) Support the future Bangsamoro authorities in continuing, strengthening, or expanding existing structures and mechanisms for women at different levels (e.g., the Regional Commission on Bangsamoro Women or RCBW and provincial women's councils).
c) Ensure the meaningful political participation of Moro and indigenous women in national, regional, and local bodies.
d) Enhance the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security to include a Regional and/or Local Action Plan on UN Resolution 1325 and 1820 in the ARMM (TJRC 2016:89).

The new BARMM government, which replaced the ARMM in 2019, is likely to support these positive recommendations. However, the discourse of 'resilient' women infuses the approach: support women and communities will prosper. Likewise, men are 'disposable': they can be left out of the picture. The same holds true in the MILF's 2015 Bangsamoro Development Plan, where development projects targeted women and left out men (Jopson 2017). The implication of addressing the gender gap in this way misses the opportunity to mobilise men as partners invested in gender equality.

Paying attention to the gender order may better equip peacebuilders to work towards non-recurrence of insurgency-related conflict in Mindanao. This requires critically calling out elitist and patriarchal arrangements that have an impact on the subordination of Moros to elites, and Moro women to Moro men. Further, revealing the gender order helps actors to see how conflict can take on various forms in rural and urban Mindanao. Masculine domination as a defining feature of a Moro gender order shapes the multiple forms of conflict in Mindanao, recruits men and women to armed groups, and manifests itself in the silence around elite-perpetrated and domestic violence. In fact, masculine domination links

'wartime' and 'peacetime' violence. Analytically connecting these conflicts is important for understanding how ordinary Moros experience varied kinds of human insecurity in their everyday lives in Mindanao, and for enabling us to address these problems rather than simply taking ceasefires and silences as indicative of peace.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that paying attention to Moro gender order and its component gender constructs, ideologies, and discourses sheds light on the forms, sustainment, and strategies of war in Mindanao. The Moro gender order I described is built on the landlessness and precarity that shape the multiple forms of conflict that Moros encounter in Mindanao. Constructs of Moro men as 'daring' and Moro women as 'pure', and narratives that insist that men must provide for and protect their families, and women are subordinate to men rationalise Moro men's deaths as foot soldiers in warfare and the gradual depletion of Moro women's bodies. Furthermore, Moro gender inequality is adopted and reproduced in the strategies of both the state and insurgent groups in military war-making and the elite-preserving peacebuilding.

Women's resilience hides or absorbs social costs in locations far beyond Mindanao. At the macro scale, societies around the world constantly engage in everyday forms of coping by relying on the hidden work of women. Women contribute much to world health care by providing intensive reproductive labour in their homes and communities. Around the world, women act as 'shock absorbers' in economic, financial, and environmental crises and conflict situations. Women compensate income losses in the formal economy by performing informal work. The opportunity costs women absorb from their labour on subsistence and reproductive tasks means they forego income and experience greater vulnerability than men (Moser 1998). While policy-makers, journalists and academics have tended to

ignore the roles women play as active agents in war-making and everyday survival in Mindanao, women are disproportionately the subject of peace and development interventions. The discourses of 'disposable' men and 'resilient' women are therefore part of the Moro gender order that have real-world, empirical effects. The quality of the peace being built in Mindanao depends on the gender discourse it employs and implements.

To counter the perpetuation of inequalities in the Bangsamoro, I showed that the practice of insurgent femininity linked to a struggle for social justice has the potential to challenge the current gender order. I also suggested that the broadening of the discussions about sexual and gender-based violence in Mindanao to include clan and domestic violence, and to acknowledge the gender inequality that underpins relations of power in both vertical and horizontal conflicts could improve the quality of peacebuilding in the region. I will build on these ideas in the next and final chapter to give concrete suggestions on how to integrate gender justice in the peacebuilding in Mindanao.

7 Gender justice

After four decades of war, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) has made peace with the Philippine government (GPH). Following a series of negotiations through different administrations, the MILF-GPH made a string of breakthroughs: a Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro in 2012, its Annex on Normalization in 2014, and the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro in the same year. In July 2018, the Philippine Congress passed a law to fully implement these agreements in Republic Act 11054, the Organic Law for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). By January 2019, voters in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and local units that formerly voted for inclusion in the ARMM ratified the law. This meant that it was the voters who technically abolished the ARMM and legitimised their membership in the BARMM that took its place. From then, the MILF-led Bangsamoro Transition Authority (BTA), appointed by the Philippine President, has been leading the BARMM until its parliamentary members are elected in 2022.[79]

This period of transition for the Bangsamoro is an exciting but also a most challenging time. While the MILF has reconciled with the Philippine government, other armed groups in Mindanao have not, and the region continues to be heavily militarised. The crucial difference is that the MILF is now at the helm of running the Bangsamoro. The MILF leaders in the BARMM might exercise their new authority to police armed groups and private armies. However, given that the MILF is disarmed and overextended, there may be limits to the organisation's efficacy in this regard. Given the immediate challenges of running a government, it is easy for MILF leaders to get lost in the details of each policy, program, and

[79]Following its mid-term review in October 2020, there were petitions to move the first BARMM parliamentary elections from 2022 to 2025 to give both the BTA and national government time to accomplish task and duties that need to be jointly implemented. For example, the national government has not accomplished its task to transfer or turnover agencies, offices, and government-owned and controlled corporations to the BARMM (Arguillas 2020).

project they need to roll out. The BTA is mandated to pass codes (administration, revenue, elections, local government, education, civil service, and indigenous peoples) and tasked to organise the bureaucracy, approve and implement a transition plan, and set up necessary institutions for the smooth operations of the first elected Bangsamoro Government. All in all, the MILF and the BTA have a lot of work to do in a short amount of time, almost as if the former insurgent group and the new entity have been set up to fail. The stakes are high. The failure of the MILF and the BTA to deliver on their promises might fuel more conflict. This juncture further tests the implementation of the Philippine National Action Plan on UNSC Resolution 1325 or the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. Afterall, meaningful peacebuilding matters to ordinary Moro women and men like that of the Abduls, Abubakars, Basmans, Bilals, Kaderas, and the Kudarats whose family stories were shaped by the conflicts in Mindanao.

In this dissertation, I have illustrated the way gender inequality shaped the forms, dynamics, and effects of the conflicts in Mindanao. In the crucial transition period currently underway in Mindanao, and during the early years of the BARMM, the implication of my study is that taking concrete steps towards achieving the goal of gender justice could meaningfully transform conflict in Mindanao. Feminist scholar Anne Marie Goetz (2007:31) uses the term gender justice to describe a *process* that *enables* women to ensure that power-holders in the household, community, the market, or the state *can be held to account* for actions that limit women's access to resources or capacity to make choices. In this definition, women are empowered, and institutions are directly accountable to women. The gender justice process shows that we need to change institutions so that they do not compromise on women's interests; merely paying lip service to gender equity through the language of gender sensitivity and mainstreaming is not enough to change the prior system that produced and reproduced the conflict. In fact, a transformative politics requires us all to share in the responsibility of exposing and confronting normalised injustices to make our larger [world] community more just (Ackerly 2018). Doing so is a foundation for positive peace.

In this concluding chapter, I review the insurgent research approach and family stories as method that made my specific theorising on gender in Mindanao possible, and what it might offer to studies of gender and conflict in a comparative frame. I then draw attention to the analytical contributions I made through the dissertation, in part by offering practical suggestions on how the analyses can be woven into peacebuilding efforts. Doing so, I illustrate how gender justice can help build a sustainable and durable peace.

Insurgent research approach and family stories

To prepare this dissertation, I practiced an insurgent approach to research. Drawing from feminist, postcolonial, and participatory research methods, I actively involved research participants in defining the scope and direction of the research according to their own needs and interests. The crucial components of this approach are *meaningful collaboration* between research participants (going beyond informed consent and passive correspondence to extend accountability and reciprocity as far as possible) with the goal of *meaningfully contributing to the community* involved in the research (i.e. making a contribution that explicitly helps them achieve their own self-defined goals). In this project, applying this approach meant putting people at the centre, daring to transform knowledge and expose injustices to improve peacebuilding strategies in Mindanao.

In my pursuit of this approach in this dissertation, I engaged with the research participants' interpretations of conflict and their aspirations for justice and peace. Following their lead, I explored the way conflict manifests in their lives through different forms, not just through the insurgent wars but also through the War on Drugs, the War on Terror, domestic violence, and the multiple burdens Moro women bear from the aftermath of wars. Thus, participants in this research broadened the scope

of my research and guided me in setting its direction. The result is a dissenting inquiry critical of both state and insurgent group discourses on gender, that may be uncomfortable to authorities but I hope will be helpful in building sustainable and durable peace that is accountable to Moros. In hindsight, the resulting dissertation may not be insurgent (daring, revolutionary, transformative) enough, as in its final content and form is still centred on my own analysis and writing. Yet my pursuit of an insurgent approach enriched the research process and sharpened my analysis.

Another contribution I make to research methods is my work on family stories. Individual life story or life history is already a familiar method in the social sciences (Brown and Gilligan 1991; Etherington 2009; McAdams 1985, 1993, 1996). Extending this to capture further context and insights on relationships, I wove together at least two life stories to form a partial family story. Through family stories, I have shown that it is possible for a researcher to uncover greater nuance in relationships because of the multiple perspectives involved: intergenerational, lateral, and in one case in this dissertation, interethnic. In the family, the emotional and sexual relations come in sharper view, as with the economic and political relationships. Rather than dismissing or discarding them, I deliberate feelings and their articulation as ways of perception and action. For example, I consider the anger and betrayal Amina, Almira, Karimah, Taya, and Fatima felt when they discovered their husbands' adultery as an aspect of their experience of conflict in their households. In meaningfully considering the emotional and sexual relations in conflict through family stories, then, I am able to offer an intimate portrait of the conflicts in Mindanao. I also deliberately use family stories as an empathetic bridge for readers to perceive Moros as family members and understand their struggles not just as economic and political but as emotional/sexual as well.

In my study of conflicts in Mindanao, family stories help illuminate the paradox of Moro individuals' engagement with both insurgent groups and the state forces, with some changing their armed group affiliation over time. For example, in the Abdul family story, Amina's convictions and militancy

facilitated her membership to the militia Black Shirts but does not negate her utilitarian patronage of the state police to land her husband Jamir a job. Their daughter Tata admired her father Jamir as a police officer but was also disgusted at his womanising 'when he wears the [police] uniform'. In turn, Jamir inspired Tata to be a Philippine Military reservist but also an officer for the Moro National Liberation Front. I found that by looking at the level of intimate relations, or the emotional and sexual relationships involved, we can understand that there is no easy binary to the conflict, helping to understand the boundary crossing between opposing sides in the insurgent wars. In my retelling of the family stories through the gender substructures of labour, power, and cathexis, we can see how the economic, political, emotional/sexual relationships explain the seeming paradoxes.

Theorising the Moro gender order

My study has been animated at a theoretical level, above all, by an attempt to conceptualise and map the Moro gender order. Identifying the Moro gender order transforms the way we understand and address conflicts in Mindanao. In inquiring how gender inequality shapes conflict and migration in Mindanao, I privileged an intersectional gender lens to examine interlocking inequalities in the Bangsamoro and identify potential pathways toward social justice. I have argued that the gender inequality manifest in the Moro gender order is constitutive of conflicts in Mindanao. I made this case by examining how gender is implicated in the conflict driver landlessness, the recruitment in wars, and how it infuses the discourses supporting war-making.

I followed Raewyn Connell (1987) in analysing gender as a structure, with the substructures of labour, power, and cathexis and related economic, political, and emotional/sexual relations. For Connell (2002), gender as a structure also produces a symbolic relationship of gender inequality. I showed in this dissertation that gender inequality can be observed in discourses or a way of talking about and

acting upon the world, common to the state and insurgent groups in Mindanao. Consistent with an intersectional analysis of gender, I supported my arguments through the study of gender as a structure in Chapters 3 to 5, *and* by identifying a durable discourse of gender inequality in Chapters 2 and 6.

In the preceding chapters, I illustrated through family stories how gender structured relationships in households, communities, and insurgent groups. In Chapter 3, I examined the gender aspects of landlessness, the gender dimensions of men and women's participation in wars, and the domestic violence that lurks in the background of insurgent wars. I followed the same families through their stories of migration to Davao City in Chapter 4, and examined what changed in their gender relationships in the urban setting. I found that landlessness pushed Moros to the city, where the gender relationships within their families were challenged anew by the pressures and promises of the informal economy, the authoritative local government, and prostitution in Davao City streets. In Chapter 5, I examined the way Moros negotiated the War on Drugs and the War on Terror in Davao City, and how women took opportunities to lead the defence and rehabilitation of their communities.

Gender inequality as a structure and as discourse reinforce each other. When ordinary people normalise and naturalise the structure of unequal gender relationships they do so through a discourse, using a language and symbols that express gender inequality. When powerful institutions reproduce discourse valorising gender inequality, they intensify its symbolic power and make it even more durable. In Chapter 2, I showed how gender discourses formed a particular type of Moro man and Moro woman as subjects of the state and insurgent groups (but also in academia and development institutions). In Chapter 6, I presented my analysis of a Moro gender order through an inventory of constructs, discussions of ideological Moro masculinity and insurgent femininity, and the discourse of gender inequality that renders Moro men 'disposable' and Moro women 'resilient'.

Combining insights from both structural and discourse analysis, I am able to study both the material and ideological struggles in Mindanao. It is important to synthesise the arguments I make about landlessness, recruitment, and Moro strategies here in order to provide an overview of how gender shapes conflict dynamics in Mindanao. Three points are key.

First, a major point my analysis emphasises is that gender inequality contributed to Moro landlessness. Moro land dispossession is one of the key conflict drivers in Mindanao, repeatedly cited in academic literature (Borras 2002; De la Rosa and Abreu 2003; Gulane 2013) and in peace documents (TJRC 2016, 2017a). But very few analyses have hitherto focused on its gendered aspects, and none have disaggregated Moros from Muslim elites in Mindanao. I have argued that Moro landlessness is gendered, in large part due to the gendered nature of economic and power relations and legal institutions in Mindanao. Thus, women are deprived of lands due to Muslim and Christian elite men's land grabbing, but also due to the practice of titling lands under men's names in the Mindanao land squeeze, and the difficult procedures for transferring titles after men are rendered 'disposable' in wars. By the same token, the fight for land has gendered effects. The contest for dwindling lands sparks *rido* (clan wars) that kill men and harm women. During Marcos' Martial Law (1972–1986), vigilante groups drove more Moros out of their lands, killed men and violated women to sow fear among Moros who might want to reclaim their lands. Gender inequality therefore contributes to, but also results from, Moro landlessness. At the same time, while Moros lost lands, Muslim elites were less affected and some even increased their landholdings.

Complementing studies of scholars like Judy Gulane (2013:145), who argued that landlessness provided fertile ground for the decades-old Moro rebellion, I have shown in this dissertation that the landlessness created the precarity that conditions Moro engagement in conflict. Landless Moro men soldiered for armed groups, including insurgent groups, private armies, and bandit gangs. The landlessness and the wars in the countryside further pushed Moros to cities like Davao to find

opportunities in the informal economy, including the drug trade. Thus, my study shows how the precarity produced by landlessness shapes the forms of war the state wages in Mindanao – insurgent wars, the War on Drugs, and the War on Terror, as well as indicating how ordinary Moros are drawn into these conflicts.

A second intersection of gender and conflict highlighted by my study is the processes by which gender inequality facilitates recruitment into armed groups. Through my study of Moro family stories, and Moro masculinity and insurgent femininity, I have explained how gender relations and ideologies structure the pathways through which ordinary Moros join armed groups. In the family stories in Chapter 3, I discussed the reasons and circumstances which explain Moro men and women's involvement in armed groups. More than Islamist or nationalist ideologies, I found that Moro men and women pointed to conceptions of Moro duty – conceptions that varied by gender – to explain how and why they participated actively in destructive wars and in the constant rebuilding those wars necessitate. In my interpretation, both Moro men and women who joined armed groups deemed it their duty to take up arms to strive for a range of ideals related to social justice: they wanted official acknowledgement of historical injustices and a decent way of life for themselves and their families. My view resonates with Ben Kerkvliet's (2010) interpretation of the Moro insurgency as a movement that, when viewed from the perspective of ordinary adherents, is above all about achieving justice. It expands Thomas McKenna's (1998) earlier findings about ordinary Moros' participation in armed groups being driven by local reasons rather than by an aspiration to build an Islamic state. My particular contribution is to show how Moro men, armed groups, and the general Moro public invoke multiple versions of Moro duty that support a dominant ideology of a soldiering Moro masculinity. Although they are rare, a few Moro women who embody insurgent femininity also take up arms and provide active support for armed groups. Beyond the insurgent war, Moro women used peaceful means to lead the struggle against the War on Drugs and the War on Terror in their communities.

A third way by which my dissertation highlights how gender and conflict intersect in Mindanao is by highlighting the constitutive role played by gender inequality in the state and insurgent groups' strategies for war-making. In the language the hypermasculine state uses in pursuit of its all-out-war, War on Drugs, and War on Terror policies, and through the language insurgent groups use to justify their rebellion, both sets of actors articulate Moros as either 'disposable' men or 'resilient' women in order to rationalise, draw support for, or downplay the effects of their respective campaigns. The state's and insurgent groups' adoption, naturalisation, and reproduction of the symbolic relationship of gender inequality in their war-making have devastating effects on the material realities of Moro women and men. Thus, my dissertation shows how gender inequality has shaped the multiple conflicts in Mindanao, facilitated recruitment to violence, and directed the way conflict is discussed and addressed. Given the importance gender plays in conflict, the state, insurgent groups, civil society organisations, and international donors' attention to 'gender' in the peace process must address sexual and gender-based violence, but also the economic, political, and social needs of women and men. To go beyond acknowledgement of human and women's rights, leaders, policy makers, and peacebuilders need to employ a gender justice framework to facilitate the material and discursive empowerment of Moros in Mindanao.

In sum, my original analytical contributions are the focus on Moros as a unit of analysis in both vertical and horizontal conflict in Mindanao, testing the actual use of gender order as an inventory, and the theorising on insurgent femininity. Scholars working on related themes in other locations might find useful my unorthodox disaggregation of an ethnic and racialised category of Moro. Using Moros as a unit of analysis distinguishes Moro experiences from Muslim elites to help illuminate their interests apart from their political leaders and representatives. Focusing on Moro women and men brings gender (instead of class and ethnicity) into sharper focus. Gender studies scholars might find it interesting that I tested the use of Raewyn Connell's conception of the gender order as an inventory of social relationships. I inventoried paired gender constructs as iterations of gender relationships,

studied related ideologies in the form of masculinities and femininities, and the discourses in which they are reflected and reproduced. In studying femininity in the Bangsamoro, I proffer that an emerging insurgent femininity illuminates Moro women leadership and recruitment in armed groups. In their material and discursive challenge to Moro men as authority and defender of their communities, collectives of Moro women subscribing to insurgent femininity potentially challenge the gender order. My intersectional structural and discourse analyses can be fruitfully adapted to examine gender and conflicts in former colonies in Asia, Latin America and Africa. Scholars pursuing comparative analyses may find Mindanao a significant and evocative case to complement or contrast other post-conflict peacebuilding projects.

Conclusions, indications, implications

While my dissertation is, of course, an exercise in academic research, I hope that its theorising can offer practical tools and strategies for the pursuit of justice and peace. Fully aware that 'it is not uncommon for [gender] to be seen as neither essential nor urgent in peace building' and that 'changes in gender relations are even cast as jeopardising the survival of peace' (Pankhurst 2004:12), I argue that as the gender order shaped conflict sources, maintenance, and resolutions, it is essential and urgent to struggle towards gender justice for meaningful, positive peace. Paying only lip service to women in peacebuilding efforts is a longstanding problem in the region that helps to maintain the status quo (Jopson 2017).

The challenge is that both the MILF and the state are prone to compromising equity in the name of peace. Such compromises are already apparent in their avoidance of criticising Muslim political and religious elites and in their limiting their development strategies (BDP 2020) to very broad objectives. For example, couching women's entitlements in terms of rights is important, but any plan needs to

include concrete related actions that protect and prevent the violation of these rights. Studying peacebuilding in Pakistan and Afghanistan, Bina D'Costa (2015:52) warns that 'one detrimental outcome of [local religious and political elite] compromises and strategies is that many projects claiming to be gender sensitive are not only explicitly un-feminist but are gender-biased'. Without the gender justice emphasis of accountability to Moro women, the likely outcome of the MILF's nation-building agenda in the BARMM is that traditional elites will maintain control over women. Given that the local elites were complicit to injustices in the past means they cannot simply be expected to implement gender justice in the future. Crucially, the MILF and the state have internal negotiations and are evolving through time, influenced by civil society and social movements. My hope is that the BARMM can early on commit to gender justice and steer Mindanao towards sustainable peace.

Gender justice as a process needs to engage not just gender advocates and the BARMM's Commission on Women, but Moros in different institutions to work towards peace in challenging the structure and discourse of gender inequality. Achieving gender justice would mean empowering ordinary women. It would mean enabling Monina Basman to hold her husband Jerry and the local health providers accountable in their support for family planning, and it would enable young women like Jasmin Abubakar to demand quality education from the authorities. A gender justice project demands a lot from every Moro, but it is worthwhile because it builds individual and collective capacities, and generates more accountable and credible institutions; even slight changes in these can make a difference in the quality of life of Moros in Mindanao. When Moros move from individual and covert contestations of gender inequality to collective and overt ones (Agarwal 1994), they can make greater demands and seek stronger bargains from authorities. As Hilsdon (2003) and Brecht-Drouart (2011) documented, there are already active women's and feminist movements in Mindanao. They will need to build more support from ordinary Moro women and men to push BARMM authorities to recognise gender justice as essential, urgent, and compatible to their goals of serving the Moro people.

In the following final pages, I revisit the plans for Normalisation (integrating former combatants into society) and Bangsamoro development and offer insights from this dissertation about how these agendas might be directed in ways that pursue gender justice.

Normalisation for the entire Bangsamoro

Post-conflict Normalisation is an aspect of the peace process where actors involved in the conflict reintegrate in everyday community life. According to the Normalization Annex of the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro, this involves three components. The first covers security arrangements and decommissioning, redeployment of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, policing reforms, and disbanding private armies. The second, the BARMM's socio-economic development, and third, a transitional justice. The national government's commitment towards this goal includes a socioeconomic package as part of the MILF decommissioning. For each of the 40,000 decommissioned combatants, a total package worth ₱1,000,000 [US$20,800] is allotted: ₱150,000 [US$3,120] cash assistance, ₱400,000 [US$8,320] for personal social security such as health insurance and education scholarships, and ₱450,000 [US$9,360] worth of housing assistance. For sure, this support will make a big difference to the former combatants and their families. What this dissertation shows, however, is that, first, women's work in armed organisations like the MILF is largely unrecognised. Thus, these payments will not go into women's pockets. Second, involvement in the armed groups could be intermittent and in an on-call basis, as the stories of Esmael and Omar tell us. It is unlikely that either of these two individuals, now elderly persons living in Davao City, would be beneficiaries in the decommissioning. The point of the normalisation is to ensure human security and enable all communities to achieve their desired quality of life. To this end, and to benefit all former combatants and their families, social security and housing should be made available for all in the Bangsamoro. Another good use of any normalisation fund would be long-term investments in quality education. In this way, normalisation can make a difference in ordinary lives, instead of normalising inequalities in the Bangsamoro.

Related to normalisation is the economic development of BARMM as a region. To address the brain drain and out-migration from the BARMM, migration scholars Amitabh Kundu and Shalini Gupta (2000:274) argue that the state needs to 'adopt a policy of balanced regional development and disperse economic and employment opportunities'. This means that the BARMM's economic goals must include development of industries, non-military job opportunities, and support for small and medium enterprises.

Women as land reform beneficiaries

To change the structure of gender relations, governments, development agencies, and other actors need to address the interlocking character of class, ethnic, and gender inequalities. The 1st Bangsamoro Development Plan (BDP 2020) goes in the right direction in addressing poverty by striving to provide jobs, and improve social security through universal health coverage within the BARMM. But the plan so far fails to adequately address landlessness and land dispossession. In terms of land use, the BDP recognises Mindanao's comparative advantage in agriculture and endorses the national government's Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program implementation in BARMM. Meanwhile, the Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC), in its Land Report (2017), recommended the formation of the National Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission on the Bangsamoro with Sub-Commission on Land Dispossession in the Bangsamoro to contribute to the resolution of outstanding land disputes in conflict-affected areas in the BARMM. The TJRC recognises the challenges in creating a dispute mechanism, a database of actual land ownership, and a legal framework and procedures involved in land titling, registration, taxation, and management, and the long-term commitment all these entail. When the Department of Agriculture or BARMM get around to redistributing land, they need to prepare for potentially intense conflicts when Moro and Lumad migrants to other parts of Mindanao come back to their hometowns (Gulane 2013).

Any land program and conflict management in the BARMM must be accountable to women like Taya Kudarat, who may be interested to recover lands that were taken away from her family, and to Fatima Kadera, who may be interested to go back to farming in her hometown if land was available. Taya and Fatima are examples of women whose rights to land have typically been overlooked. In their study of welfare, migration, and intra-household decision-making among beneficiaries of agrarian reform in the Philippines, Castro-Zarzur et al. (2020:58–59) recommend that authorities ensure that information about land distribution and services are provided in a gender-sensitive way, and that titles are issued in the names of both spouses.[80] Given the historical land dispossession of ordinary women in the BARMM, they should be actively offered a chance to work on land and have titles under their own names. In fact, deliberately prioritising women to be land title holders can function as social security in the form of an economic 'floor'. In this way, women will have greater legal claims and power in household decision-making.

Revisiting the terms 'gender' and 'culture'

The BDP recognises gender and ethnic inequalities within the Bangsamoro. In its formulation, proponents 'considered cross-cutting concerns such as gender-responsiveness, cultural sensitivity, and volunteerism' and the 'priority issues and concerns of women and other vulnerable sectors' (2020:42). There is an obvious positive intention here, but using the language of 'gender' when the plan actually means women, and 'culture' as a blanket term, are potential pitfalls. As I have shown in Chapter 6, addressing women's concerns (such as sexual and gender-based violence and multiple burden of roles) is necessary, but it is as crucial to chip away at the conditions and circumstances which give rise to such concerns, and to interrogate why they are presented as concerns *only* for women. Following the analysis in this dissertation, gender-responsiveness means identifying men's concerns too, and

[80] Castro-Zarzur et al. (2020: 59) found that despite Administrative Order 7, Series 2011 stipulating that land distributed under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program is conjugal property for married agrarian reform beneficiary (ARB), meaning both spouses should have their names on the title, only 6 per cent of their study's control group ARBs or their spouses stated that the spouse's name is on the title.

ensuring that men's and women's common concerns are taken up as *social concerns*. For example, domestic violence does not concern only women, but everyone who has the right to live in a non-violent household. In this light, legal institutions in the Bangsamoro must be accountable to all Moros, including women like Amina Abdul and Karimah Kudarat and men like Jamal Abdul, by providing sensitive and just handling of domestic violence complaints.

My intersectional analysis in Chapter 6 also shows that gender inequalities can be accepted and reproduced in everyday life as a 'cultural' practice, preventing people within and outside the cultural community from interrogating beliefs and practices that produce injustice. Thus, while respectful of diversity, we can still reject relativism and analyse the power and inequalities embedded in the blanket term 'culture' – a potential trap in the BDP's recognition of the need for cultural sensitivity. Beyond considering women's and 'cultural' concerns in development plans, BARMM authorities need to confront the contexts, structures, and discourses producing these concerns. Unless policy makers integrate gender justice as a goal in such development plan, proposed solutions may be cosmetic.

Shaping ideologies and representations in policies and programs

Enacting gender justice as a process that makes institutions accountable to women rather than only or primarily to men means confronting the hegemonic and dominant masculinities in the Bangsamoro. When assumptions of classed and racialised masculinities become embedded in policies and practices, they require undoing if we are to achieve gender justice (Messerschmidt 1997). Because gender structure and gender discourses reinforce each other, altering the ideology of Moro masculinity means addressing poverty, health, and violence, with the goal of ultimately altering the social structures where the ideology takes root. Furthermore, discursive practices need a makeover. The state and MILF practice of rendering men invisible across development blueprints needs to be rectified. As beneficiaries of the current gender order, men are indispensable partners of women in the struggle

for equality. Moreover, Moro men may contribute to the peacebuilding in Mindanao when they articulate their own economic, political, and emotional/sexual vulnerabilities invisible to elites.

Gender justice as a process can begin to address women's marginalisation and interrogate their representation across texts and media. For example, the state and MILF discursive practices shape the ways historical injustices are imagined in the Bangsamoro. In this dissertation, I have argued that this particular historical injustice discourse gives excessive attention to Muslim elite history and erases, dismisses, and downplays Moro women's historical contributions. The portrayal of Bangsamoro history as constituting a series of wars makes for a masculinised memory of the Bangsamoro. Meanwhile, the Moro women who are missing from historical accounts are disproportionately represented in development programs. A gender justice balancing is in order: academics need to restore Moro women's place in Moro history, and public officials need to ensure women's substantive participation in building the Bangsamoro, beyond making them passive beneficiaries of government protection. Ultimately, memory and the challenge to actively engage women in the Bangsamoro are intertwined. This means that Moro women community leaders like Tata Abdul and Jamila Bilal should be part of collectively producing the memory of Bangsamoro and actively involved in directing its future. This process of historical imagining can be facilitated in schools and promoted in popular media.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals, the Philippines Development Plan, the BDP, and development institutions working in Mindanao all proclaim the goal of achieving community resilience. While this is a noble aspiration when building communities, I have illustrated in Chapter 6 that when assigned only to women, community 'resilience' burdens and depletes women's bodies. It does so by designating women the tasks of caring for their family and repairing relationships in households and communities amidst scarcity and insecurity. Instead of assuming and assigning reproductive tasks to women through development projects, government and development institutions can build genuine resilience through education, employment, housing, and in supporting community initiatives such as the community-

based drug prevention in Davao City. State and local government support can make these initiatives sustainable, attract local collaborators, and directly benefit the wider communities they serve.

One of the key analytical points I have presented in this dissertation is that Moro women – especially leaders at the community level – already espouse, even if sometimes only nascently, an ideology of insurgent femininity, linked to wider goals of social justice. I have argued that the collective practice of insurgent femininity challenges the Moro gender order. I reiterate here that whether or not Moro women and men subscribe, embody, and support insurgent femininity is up to them. In choosing to engage with non-elite Moros, I was able to study the contradictions as well as coalitions between Moro women and men. In situating the gender, class, and ethnic inequalities they experience within a context of broader state and global inequalities, Moro women and men can link their struggles with other struggles for social justice in the Philippines and the world. My research has convinced me that Moro women and men have more in common with each other than with elite women and men. In practice, both Moro women and men can provide, care for, and protect their households, communities, and the wider Bangsamoro collective, support positive masculinities and femininities, and struggle together for gender justice. The joys of body integrity, expanded freedoms, and healthy relationships are at stake in the democratisation of the gender order. Both Moro women and men will benefit from structural and discursive changes to the gender order that aim to achieve greater equity and social justice.

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