

Alternative Future and Popular Protest

Sustainability and Community Participation: The Dilemma of Eco-friendly Development Pattern of Palawan, Philippines

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With an increasing emphasis on the environmental issues worldwide, we need a more collaborative approach combining the efforts from state policies and regulations, international and domestic NGOs, as well as the participation of local communities. The Palawan Island, known as “the last eco-friendly environment frontier of the Philippines”, pays more attention to environmental protection than the other places of the country, is facing the problems. In Puerto Princesa, the capital city of Palawan, the campaign against predatory exploitation (like the slash-and-burn cultivation) is the pattern of “people’s movement”. The management of eco-development is very detailed, and the Rules and Regulations Implementing the Strategic Environmental Plan for Palawan Act (SEP Law) form the state represented the spirit of development of the Province. However, after my fieldwork there, I recognize that the essence of the SEP Law lack a crucial aspect from the anthropological perspective: Its subject is the environment instead of the people themselves. As a consequence, the sustainability of Palawan is conservative concerning the environment and social development. By eradicating the potential destruction by prohibiting harmful activities of people, the “sustainability” further causes the conflicts between the people and the environment. My research reveals the negative part of what seems very “sustainable” from outside. After a complete analysis, I try to rethink the role of people in the protection and development. The case study of Palawan can be inspiring to China and other countries, which pushes us to understand the role of people in the environment better.

Making a Dream Capture: The Indigenous Movement and Their Local Network in Highland Philippines

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There is a famous indigenous movement called Cordillera Day in highland Philippines since 1984. During the end of April every year, some locals would host Cordillera Day as their strategy to fight large-scale development projects from the government or the international companies. This campaign was originally to commemorate one of the anti-dam movement leaders, Macliing Dulag, who was shot by the troops; it has since become an international indigenous movement celebrated yearly.

Before the Philippines government signed the Kyoto Protocol and even passed the Renewable Energy Act, there were only a few issues of mining, dam and other large-scale projects in Ifugao Province. That is, the locals face a new situation because there are more and more applications of mini-hydro and geothermal power plants. This article tries to figure out how locals use their indigenous organizational network alongside the international indigenous movement. On one hand, the residents organized each other through the people organizations in every village. On the other hand, they tried to introduce the Cordillera Day to make connections with other NGOs and indigenous people all over the world. In this kind of contemporary indigenous resistance, we can see these people use their rights of indigenous

identity and citizenship to let their struggles become more powerful. Furthermore, it shows the interdependence and friction between the international, national, and local levels of indigenous movements and their networks.

“More Good Hearted People than Worthy Beneficiaries?” - Emerging Ethics of ‘Doing Good’
Among China’s Grassroots Philanthropists

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In the past decade, there have been a fast-growing number of grassroots philanthropic projects addressing the welfare of local disadvantaged groups of children in Wenzhou, Southeast China. These projects are first self-organized by ordinary citizens, then increasingly supported by the local government. This paper is an ethnographic case study of one such county-wide grassroots philanthropic project that seeks to provide free nutritional lunch to poor students in selected primary schools in local rural areas. By tracing the project from its beginning in 2011 till 2015, it shows how the leading grassroots volunteer appropriate changing governmental policies and new fundraising technologies to form new alliances, mobilise resources and search for beneficiaries for the project. It also shows how the official definition of a ‘worthy beneficiary’ as ‘local, poor, rural and left-behind children’ are contested in practice among the current project operators including grassroots volunteers, retired cadres who run quasi-governmental charities, school teachers as well as governmental officials; how such contestation has resulted in a perceived “shortage of worthy beneficiaries” among the grassroots volunteers. By focusing on the grassroots volunteers’ ethical reflections on who, why and what is ‘doing good’ (zuo hao shi), this paper reveals the divergent moral experiences that underpins the emerging grassroots philanthropy in Wenzhou. The ethnographic data are drawn from my ongoing ethnographic fieldwork in 2013 and 2015 in a county of Wenzhou, Southeast China.